2023
Onboarding Technology
BUYER'S GUIDE

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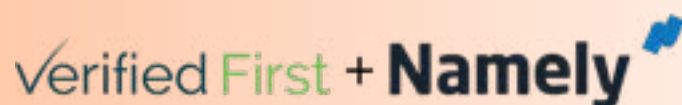
INTRODUCTION

According to Aptitude Research, 73% of companies increased their investment in TA technology in 2022 and 52% plan to increase their spend in 2023. Yet, many companies did not see the value of their investments and only half of surveyed companies measured the ROI. As the landscape continues to transform, companies must be strategic about what is driving value for the future and how to trust their partnerships. Companies must carefully consider every aspect of TA technology, from recruitment marketing to onboarding, and they must do so with a focus on the challenges and priorities influencing today's talent market.

Aptitude Research has surveyed over 1,500 TA and HR leaders, and interviewed over 50 companies to learn more about recent developments in TA technologies and their influence on how companies invest in solutions for a changing market.

The goal of this Buyer's Guide is to help organizations understand the technology landscape better and make strategic decisions around their technology options. This guide is specific to internal mobility solutions.

WHAT IS DRIVING TECHNOLOGY DECISIONS?

For the past two years, efficiency remained the number one driver of investment in TA tech. Companies look at providers to improve time to fill, increase recruiter productivity and speed, and improve overall decision-making in talent acquisition technology. Improved efficiency benefits the candidate as well as the employer by helping candidates receive communications, stay informed, and move through the process. The reality is that recruiters and hiring teams need help. The average time to fill a position is 45 days and many companies, especially in high-volume industries, cannot afford to wait that long.

Although efficiency continues to remain critical to TA, the pendulum is swinging back to quality of hire as the number one driver in TA investments in 2023. One reason is the increased focus on retention. With more business leaders aware of TA tech decisions this year, recruitment serves as the first line of defense for turnover and identifying quality hires early helps organizations prepare for future needs. Quality of hire and efficiency can at times conflict, but companies looking at technology should not have to sacrifice one over the other.

THE TALENT ACQUISITION TECHNOLOGY LANDSCAPE

Half of companies surveyed have seen business leaders become more concerned with technology decisions over the past several years. This increased interest is not surprising, as companies discover more options for their technology investments and the market grows more crowded and confusing. A better understanding of current technology trends begins with a closer look at the markets, the challenges faced by companies today, and the priorities influencing buyer decisions.

What is behind the changing technology landscape? The answer starts with the influence of today's technology buyer. Based on that influence, three factors are shaping the demand for TA technology today:

- **Companies are increasing their investment.** Roughly 73% of organizations increased their investment in TA technology in 2022. Additionally, 70% stated that they would continue to invest the same or more during a recession. Companies are looking at technology to support every area of TA, from recruitment marketing to onboarding.

- **The landscape is more complex than ever.** On average, a company invests in more than 10 different technology solutions for its recruitment function, yet only one in two companies measure the ROI of their investment. This measurement gap can erode the value of the investment, as traditional technology providers reinvent themselves and new providers enter the market every month. Navigating market complexity is a challenge for even the most sophisticated buyer.

- **Data and analytics are critical.** One of the most significant changes over the past two years is the growing importance of data and analytics in TA. Half of companies stated that data is more important today than in 2020. Yet, most TA professionals do not trust the data they have from multiple systems. At the same time, putting that data-driven intelligence to work is also challenging, as most TA functions are immature in communication between TA and various stakeholders.

ONBOARDING

Onboarding is a critical aspect of any talent strategy. It is the first impression between an employee and employer and the transition between talent acquisition and talent management. According to Aptitude Research, onboarding has a significant impact on retention, employer branding, and quality of hire.

86%

Retention:
Eighty-six percent (86%) of employers believe that new hires make the decision to stay at a company in their first 90 days.

75%

Employer Branding:
Three-quarters (75%) of new hires share their first day of work experience on social channels.

83%

Quality of Hire:
Eighty-three percent (83%) of employers believe managers know if a new hire is a quality hire within the first 90 days.

But, as companies prepare for the future of work and invest in talent transformation, onboarding is often overlooked. Companies are twice as likely to spend on talent acquisition and employee experience than onboarding, and 42% of companies do not have a dedicated onboarding solution. Only 26% of companies are fully automating the onboarding process. Lack of clear ownership, limited technology capabilities, and poorly defined metrics make it difficult for companies to adjust their onboarding strategies. If companies want to maximize their investment in talent acquisition and employee experience, onboarding must be a priority.

KEY TRENDS:

Onboarding solutions can have a dramatic impact on the new hire experience. They ensure that companies are staying compliant and that new hires are being productive and contributing to organizational goals from the beginning. Companies need to consider providers with deep domain expertise in onboarding. Companies using technology are three times more likely to improve first year retention and two times more likely to improve new hire engagement. One in two companies focus more on forms and compliance when evaluating providers than in the new hire experience.

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KEY REQUIREMENTS

Key requirements for selecting an Onboarding System include:

Forms Management:

- Do you support I-9 compliance and eVerify?

- Do you have automated forms completion?

- Do you have eSignature?

- Do you integrate with ATS or HRMS providers?

- Do you have forms compliance?

- Can companies see a candidate's application status from the ATS?

Tasks Management:

- Do you have automated scheduling?

- Do you have manager dashboards?

- Do you automate assignments?

- Do you automate reminders and notifications?

Socialization:

- Do you have a new hire portal?

- Do you have new hire communication (SMS, messaging, conversational AI)?

- Do you have video capabilities?

- Do you have mentoring and coaching?

- Do you have integration with learning management systems and learning content?

- Do you have collaboration capabilities?

IMPLEMENTING TECHNOLOGY

Once companies understand their unique requirements and trends influencing this market, they begin the buyer's journey of organizational readiness, selection, implementation, and adoption. The first step is gaining buy-in from key stakeholders.

This section outlines how companies communicate and engage key stakeholders from the early research phase to internal needs analysis and selection. Each of these key stakeholders may have a different set of priorities and metrics to consider.

Key Stakeholder	Priorities	Metrics
HR Leaders	Ensuring that employees are being developed and are meeting their performance expectations	• Quality of Hire • Conversion Rates • Employee Productivity • Employee Performance
Talent Management Leaders	Ensuring that the employee experience is positive and that employees are engaged throughout the lifecycle	• Employee Experience • Employee Engagement • Employee Performance • Employee Retention
Business Leaders	Ensuring that they are recruiting, developing, and engaging the best talent	• Quality of Hire • Employee Engagement • Cost Savings
IT	Ensuring that solutions are integrated with core HR systems	• Compliance • Adoption • Integration
Finance	Ensuring that the system fits into the overall HR budget	• Cost savings • Adoption

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Selection

This phase typically involves the identification of use cases, RFP/RFI collection, customer references, on-site demonstrations, short-listing, and negotiation.

Some of the differentiators for selection include:

- Strong customer support and services
- Customer acquisition and retention rates
- Mobile-responsive design
- Strong partnerships and integration with the larger ecosystem
- Level of innovation and product enhancements

Implementation

Most companies are not prepared for implementation – regardless of how many times they may have purchased a solution. Implementation can require additional resources, time, and money. And, too often, companies do not take the time to understand their own requirements before implementing a system. Many solution providers are notorious for misleading customers with unrealistic timeframes or resources that may cost extra or are not available. Over the past year, companies increasingly cited that implementations were not delivered on-time or on-budget, and satisfaction with providers dropped to 20% as a result.

Several ways that solution providers differentiate themselves across implementation include:

- Implementation resources included in the cost
- Implementation support team to help meet expectations, set goals, and be available for customer support throughout the process
- Educational materials to support companies

Adoption

Companies need to look at not only how their provider will partner with them during implementation, but also how they will make that relationship stick after year one, year two, and beyond.

Below are a few of the ways that providers differentiate themselves for adoption:

- Change management resources
- Customer advisory boards and councils
- Customer feedback sessions and "idea labs" where customers are free to voice concerns and connect
- High customer retention rates

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INTERNAL NEEDS ANALYSIS

Before evaluating technology options, organizations should conduct an internal needs analysis and be prepared to answer some questions internally. Companies need to identify and communicate expectations before evaluating solutions. Before signing on with a provider, companies should ask how confident the provider is in meeting these expectations and what plans they have in place to meet and even exceed them.

Companies should start with their business goals and then consider how they will achieve those goals. This internal assessment involves:

Evaluating how much time it takes to achieve those goals with the resources at hand.

Considering how well companies are achieving their goals today.

Measuring the ROI of the investment.

What Is It?

Internal Needs Analysis is an exploration of an organization's strengths and weaknesses, focusing on internal factors.

Why Is It Important?

Companies need to understand what requirements they have before they can begin to know what technology providers they need.

How to Do It?

SWOT analysis, interviews with key stakeholders, assessment of existing technology solutions, budget planning, long-term vision and alignment with corporate objectives, and readiness assessments.

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INTERNAL
QUESTIONS

- What is the formal process for evaluating technology and who is involved?

- What is the cost to your organization if you lose talent or do not hire quality candidates?

- Do stakeholders look at projects individually or as a portfolio?

- What is the budget cycle at your company?

- What resources do you need and are they available?

- Who will be a champion for this project?

- What other solutions does this need to integrate with at our organization?

- By when do you need it implemented?

- How will you measure success?

- How many TA systems does the organization rely on? Of these, how many are standalone solutions?

- Are there activities that are still being done manually? If so, are there systems that can help you automate?

- How effectively are these HR systems working together?

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EXTERNAL
QUESTIONS

- How financially secure is your provider?

- How do they demonstrate ROI with clients?

- What type of clients do they support?

- What is the retention of their leadership team and employees?

- What is their product roadmap?

- What level of customer support can you expect?

- How often do they release product updates?

- Who do they partner with and how will they expand their partnerships?

EXPERIENCE
QUESTIONS

- What will be the experience of working with this provider to our business?

- What will be the experience to candidates? Recruiters? Hiring managers?

- Is this solution mobile-friendly vs. mobile optimized vs. responsive design?

- Does this solution require IT resources?

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ROI ANALYSIS

As talent acquisition is being held more accountable to the business, being able to show the value and the timeframe is critical. Measuring and demonstrating ROI is a crucial part of any technology decision and does not need to happen after a company makes its investment - it should actually be considered before.

The ROI analysis looks at the financial value of an investment in technology and weighs the costs and benefits. This section of the guide examines the timeframe for seeing ROI and the expected costs and benefits. It also includes several examples for calculating ROI.

The ROI is calculated simply as the *Net Benefit* compared to the *Total Cost* of the project - the time period is also an important consideration.

TIMEFRAME
THE TIMEFRAME FOR WHEN YOU START TO SEE THE VALUE.

ROI
THE BENEFITS DIVIDED BY THE COSTS.

SAVINGS
THE AMOUNT SAVED DURING THE PAYBACK PERIOD.

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Examples of
BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Less time and money spent on ineffective solutions
- Increased conversion rates
- Improved candidate experience
- Improved accuracy of hire
- Improved productivity for recruiting teams
- Improved quality of applicants
- Improved hiring manager experience
- Improved diversity, equity, and inclusion hiring
- Reduced bias in the hiring process
- Improved quality of hire

Examples of
COSTS INCLUDE:

- Solution provider costs (products, licensing, services)
- Other external costs
- Third-party costs (consulting firms, implementation specialists)
- Total costs of ownership (IT's role in technology integration and data management)
- Internal costs (implementation labor, management, support, training, facilities, etc.)

Examples of
TIMEFRAMES INCLUDE:

- First month
- Three months
- Six months
- Nine months
- One year
- Two years
- Three years

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*What are your **estimated costs and benefits** to your organization? Below is an ROI template for organizations to use to track costs, benefits and timeframe.*

Get started with this template

COST TYPE	COST AMOUNT	BENEFIT TYPE	BENEFIT AMOUNT	TIMEFRAME

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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Talent acquisition functions have had to adjust to new pressures, new requirements, and a new environment. Companies are rethinking the strategies and solutions they have in place to stay more efficient and improve quality. The talent acquisition leader will be challenged with providing more solutions for less, being able to adjust quickly to unpredictable demand and to cover a broader range of services.

With a better understanding of what a modern talent acquisition function should include and how the technology landscape can support that function, organizations should consider not only their current needs but their future needs as well.

Identify Requirements:	Invest in a Talent Acquisition Partner:	Build a Comprehensive Recruitment Plan:
Companies must start by looking internally at their own processes and requirements before evaluating providers. By including stakeholders, identifying capability gaps, and setting priorities, companies are better prepared for their technology investments.	In order to overcome the complexities of talent acquisition and improve processes and efficiencies in their talent acquisition strategy, organizations need partners that can support everything from attracting to recruiting to onboarding talent.	Organizations need a clear understanding of all of the elements included in a high-performing recruitment function. As the workforce changes, companies will need to continue to reevaluate the talent acquisition model and adjust it.

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ABOUT US:

Aptitude Research is a leading human capital management (HCM) research and advisory firm. Our in-depth research and vendor assessments help HR leaders develop a deep understanding of the HCM technology landscape, including talent acquisition and engagement, to ultimately make better purchase decisions.

Our flagship research, The Aptitude Index Report, delivers a comprehensive look at talent acquisition trends and technology. This knowledge, combined with our consulting and advisory services, enables companies to save time, money and improve the recruiting, hiring and workforce management experience.

Founded by leading analyst Madeline Laurano and based in the Boston area, Aptitude Research provides a wealth of HCM expertise to companies, vendors and investors. View our recent and upcoming research at AptitudeResearch.com or connect with us on Twitter or LinkedIn.

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