

**BUYER'S GUIDE**

# 7 Questions to Ask Before Purchasing HR Software



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HR software is a significant investment. To ensure you get the right vendor, here are seven questions you should be asking.

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## QUESTION ONE

# What pain points am I trying to solve?



It's tempting to jump straight in and start exploring different HR software vendors. But if you rush the process, it's easy to get overwhelmed by promises. Despite what vendors may tell you, not every provider will be the right fit for your organisation or offer what you need.

Instead, the first step should be to take time to identify your HR challenges by mapping out all of your regular core processes and workflows, from hiring to offboarding, and ranking your pain points by priority.

### Why prioritising matters

Routine HR functions are often filled with manual processes. Trying to automate everything at once can be daunting.

Ask yourself, 'what's draining the most time?' Calculate the hours spent and translate that into cost. This will help you distinguish 'must-haves' from 'nice-to-haves.'

#### DID YOU KNOW?

According to the **Total Economic Impact™ study\*** conducted by Forrester Consulting, HR professionals in ANZ can **save 2,184 hours per year** on routine HR tasks **with ELMO.**



## Common HR pain points

To get you started, here's a range of common pain points we hear from our ELMO customers. Do these sound familiar?



### Onboarding

Are you confident every new starter completes the right checks and paperwork before day one? When onboarding is inconsistent or manual, it's easy to miss critical steps, from unsigned contracts to expired licences. That can lead to compliance issues, delays in time-to-productivity and a shaky first impression.



### Recruitment

Is making an offer harder than it should be? If you're still juggling approvals over email or chasing updates in spreadsheets, you're not alone. Manual processes slow everything down and risk losing your best candidates to competitors who are moving faster.



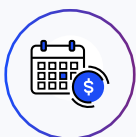
### Performance management

Are performance reviews falling off the radar? Without structured, consistent reviews, it's hard to track progress, reward high performers or address underperformance early. This lack of visibility can hurt engagement, alignment, retention and impact business productivity.



### Learning management

Do you know if every compliance course has been completed (and can you prove it)? When training records are scattered or hard to access, your risk grows. Missed certifications, outdated policies and incomplete learning can expose your business to audit risks.



### Payroll

Are payroll errors costing you money? Manual data entry increases the chance of mistakes, from incorrect leave balances and super calculations to under or overpayments. That doesn't just frustrate employees, it can expose your business to compliance breaches and financial penalties.

## Consider your organisation's size and complexity

The size and complexity of your organisation will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in pinning down your most pressing pain points.

Small, single location businesses may look for simplicity or leaner operations, while larger or multi-site organisations may require scalability and deeper insights. You also need to look to the horizon. Even if you're small now, it's wise to plan for growth.

That's what Katie Hirst, People and Capability Manager, at Construction Tech company Donovan Group did when considering her software choice - considered growth.

*"We were on a growth path, and with the amount of new roles that I could see coming through the business, and knowing what our resourcing was like, I needed software to streamline those manual processes."*

**Katie Hirst,**  
**People and Capability Manager, Donovan Group**



## QUESTION TWO

# What are my must-have features?



Once your pain points are clear, you're ready to map them to functionality. First up, decide whether you need point solutions or an all-in-one HRIS. What's the difference?

- **Point solutions**

Solve specific needs, like recruitment or payroll, but often lack integration. It might go deep on one function but require workarounds elsewhere.

- **All-in-one platforms**

Like an HRIS offer broader functionality that spans the employee lifecycle. It can streamline HR workflows, reduce data silos and often prove more cost effective in the long run, especially if they offer modular add-ons.

**Pro Tip:** Modular solutions are often quite attractive as they offer more flexibility. With modularity you can start with the essentials and scale your system over time, adding new functionality as your business grows or your needs evolve.



## Popular features ELMO customers love



### **Modularity**

Choose the modules you need now, with the flexibility to add more as your organisation grows.



### **Self-service**

Empowers employees to manage leave, update details and complete tasks, freeing HR from admin.



### **Automation**

Reduces repetitive steps, such as document collection or onboarding tasks, and ensures consistency.



### **Workflow builder**

Enables you to customise multi-step processes and tailor them to different roles or business units.



### **Dashboards**

Get instant visibility from key metrics, like onboarding progress or learning completion. They save time, eliminate the need for manual reports, and provide real-time access to data.



### **Personalisation**

Brand the platform to match your organisation, supporting employee engagement and change management.

*"ELMO just really seemed to take all the boxes that we were looking for. It covers every piece of documentation from an employee and manager perspective. It's all just in that one system."*

**Ellie Hutton,**  
HR Advisor, Neumann Steel

## QUESTION THREE

# Can the software grow with your business?



HR software is a long-term investment. Your needs will evolve and your solution should grow with you. Whether you're expanding your headcount, entering new markets, or building more mature processes, scalability is important.

Modular and scalable platforms really shine here as they let you start small and scale up, integrating new products without disrupting existing workflows.

For example, your immediate need might be hiring and onboarding. You can easily start there then expand your solution into performance management or learning management as you need them.

That's exactly what Cassandra Paterson, People and Capability Manager at Chiel needed to consider - finding software that matched their current size but with the ability to scale.

*"We're in a stage of growth and want software that is ideal for a medium-sized organisation like ours now but also has the scope to grow with us."*

**Kassandra Paterson**  
Head of People & Culture, Chiel

## Connecting growth to data led decisions

As your business grows, so will your need for better data. HR teams must move beyond admin and into strategy, using insights to guide decision-making. The right software should provide dashboards, workforce analytics, and easy data exports to track trends and inform planning.

Data helps you prepare for the future by understanding the past. As research shows, HR's use of metrics is becoming increasingly sophisticated. Choosing a platform with strong reporting capabilities ensures you can adapt and make smarter, evidence-based decisions as your organisation evolves.

## DID YOU KNOW?

According to the 2025 HR Industry Benchmark Report, **30%** of organisations now see themselves as **advanced in tracking HR metrics**. And while **78%** of HR professionals feel confident **reporting performance** in financial terms, **37%** still find it **difficult to connect** HR metrics to business goals in a **meaningful way**.

Scalable HR technology gives you the ability to layer workforce data such as recruitment and performance trends, showing how different aspects of the employee experience contribute to outcomes like retention, career growth and engagement.

These insights make decision-making smarter and more strategic, setting your business up for long term success. Before choosing your HR software, check that it can scale with you by adding new modules and functionality that integrate seamlessly, so your data can flow freely across the system.



## QUESTION FOUR

# What does the implementation process look like?



Your implementation can absolutely make or break your experience. It sets the tone for user adoption and long term success.

Even if you've chosen the right product, a poorly planned, executed, or supported implementation can derail the entire project. To set yourself up for success, you'll need to ask detailed questions about how your vendor supports implementation from day one.

### What to ask:

- How long does implementation typically take?
- What resources do we need to allocate (technical, change management and everyday user)?
- What support is included?
- Is the training standardised or tailored?
- How will data migration and testing be handled?
- Are there any integration challenges with our existing systems?
- What happens if we get stuck post-go live?





At ELMO, these are all key questions our sales consultants will ask during the discovery phases and the sales process. Our customer- first approach ensures that our HR software implementation process prioritises efficiency, clarity, and empathy every step of the way.

Emma Liston, HR Manager for construction company Lipman, is an ELMO customer who has gone through an implementation process herself. She sees the value in an in-depth implementation process that helps set users up for success, rather than leaving them high and dry. Emma's implementation philosophy is simple: Do it well, do it once.

*"My advice to anyone would be that an in-depth implementation process is worth the time because once you get there, all the work you've done has given you the toolkit to continue to evolve that process.*

*"From then on, you can tweak or add to your workflows very quickly so the software keeps up as your organisation grows."*

**Emma Liston,**  
**HR Manager, Lipman**

**Pro Tip:** Look for vendors who treat implementation as a true partnership, not just a product sale and handover.

## QUESTION FIVE

# What's the depth of customer support?



No software is completely free of the occasional glitch or user issue. The difference is how quickly and effectively those issues are resolved. A responsive support team keeps your HR processes running smoothly, reduces disruption and saves your team time and frustration.

Buying HR software is a big commitment. Asking the right questions about support gives you confidence that once you've signed, you will be backed by a team that is there for you.

Find out if the vendor provides dedicated Account Managers or Customer Success Managers, and whether that service is included in your package or comes at an additional cost. For more complex systems, aftercare is essential to ensure help is always available when you need it.

For Heather Compton, Learning and Capability Manager at Awanui, that ideal level of support came from a structured Customer Success partnership with ELMO. Instead of relying on ad hoc support, Awanui set up regular monthly sessions with their dedicated CSM.

Heather admits she wasn't sure initially.

*"At first I thought monthly was too often, but we've needed it. Sometimes other team members join with questions. The monthly cadence keeps us moving forward. We can keep adapting without losing momentum."*

**Heather Compton**  
Learning and Capability Manager, Awanui

Their CSM's breadth of experience quickly proved invaluable. As Heather tells us, "Our CSM is truly excellent because he's worked in development, implementation, and now success, so he knows how everything fits together. That breadth makes a big difference."

### Choose a partner, not just a vendor

The real test of your HR software provider often starts after go-live. You want more than a helpdesk, you should be seeking a partner who understands your business.

## What to ask:

- Will we have an ongoing Account Manager or Customer Success contact?
- Are there local support teams who understand ANZ compliance and context?
- Can we be part of product pilots, feedback loops, or roadmap discussions?

## ELMO customers can benefit from:

- Dedicated account managers
- Customer Success teams when additional support is required
- Local knowledge and responsive guidance
- Opportunities to join customer communities and influence the product roadmap

You should be looking to choose a vendor who really invests in your success and becomes part of the team, not just someone who sells you software.

*"My ELMO consultant went above and beyond to guide me through every step of the process. It wasn't just about the system, it was about having someone who truly cared about helping us succeed. She was like an extension of my team."*

**Laura Malone,**  
**Director of People and Culture, Australian Dental Council**

## Finding your true fit

Choosing the right HR software is more than a decision, it's actually a vital step towards managing your organisation with more confidence, efficiency and a clearer focus on growth.

When you're dealing with sensitive employee information, it's not only about robust data security. It's about having peace of mind when it matters most.

Success is never one size fits all. As your organisation grows, your software should grow with you. Adaptable and scalable technology helps you avoid gaps and manual workarounds, giving you a system that truly reflects your needs.

With the right choice, you're not simply buying software. You're equipping your business with a secure, future ready HR solution. The return on investment is more than financial. It is about freedom, confidence and the ability to transform how you work for the better.

Your journey to better HR starts here.

## QUESTION SIX

# What's the pricing structure?

As with many purchases, your budget will naturally guide which solutions are viable. Having already mapped your 'must-haves' and 'nice-to-haves', you can now match these to your budget. But pricing in HR software isn't always straightforward, so it's important to ask the right questions to find a good fit.

### Common pricing models include:

#### Per-user pricing

This is one of the most common approaches, also referred to as seat-based pricing. You pay for each person who needs access to the system. It is simple to manage, easy to scale as your team changes, and works whether your workforce is steady or fluctuates throughout the year.

#### Module-based pricing

Think of this like picking items off a menu. You only pay for the parts of the software you actually need, such as payroll, recruitment or performance management. It is a flexible way to tailor the system to your organisation and your budget.

#### Tiered pricing

Tiered pricing, also referred to as package-based pricing, offers different tiers of HR software features bundled into packages like Basic, Standard or Premium. This makes it straightforward to start small with the essentials and then upgrade to a more comprehensive plan when your HR needs grow.

#### Subscription-based pricing

Here you pay a monthly or annual fee, usually with updates and support included. The advantage here is that it spreads costs out over time and makes it easy to add more capacity if your organisation expands or requirements change.

#### Usage-based pricing

With this model, you only pay for what you use. Costs might be tied to the number of employees or transactions. This model is especially useful if your HR needs are seasonal or change often, offering better cost efficiency.

#### Freemium model

Some providers offer a free version with limited features. It's a good way to test the software and see if it fits your needs before investing in a paid plan that unlocks more advanced functionality.

**Pro Tip:** It's worth taking your time to deeply understand exactly how each model works and what's included. In particular, implementation and service requirements. Most HR Software is not a plug-and-play solution and these offerings are often essential.

## QUESTION SEVEN

# What's your approach to data security?



This is a crucial area of concern, as data security threats are becoming more sophisticated and prevalent the world over. Data privacy and compliance are non-negotiable in HR. Your software must meet stringent standards and demonstrate best-practice security.

### What to look for:

- ISO 27001:2022 certification
- Local data hosting in Australia or New Zealand
- Secure data encryption and access controls
- Regular penetration testing and third-party audits
- Responsible handling of automation and AI features



## 4 data security must haves



### Encryption

Sensitive information should be encrypted in transit and at rest, making it unreadable to anyone without the correct keys. This ensures protection during storage and transmission.



### Access controls

Only the right people should have access to HR data. Strong passwords, multi-factor authentication, and role-based permissions are essential safeguards.



### Regular security audits

Independent audits and penetration testing uncover vulnerabilities before they become risks. At ELMO, six-monthly surveillance audits are a cornerstone of our ISO 27001:2022 certification.



### Clear security policies

A transparent, publicly available information security policy demonstrates compliance with legislation and best practice in data handling, deletion, consent management, and third-party oversight.

## WANT TO SEE HOW ELMO PROTECTS YOUR DATA?

Head to our [Data Security Hub](#) to access our ISO 27001:2022 certificate, Information Security Statement and Security & Vulnerability Testing Policy. You'll also find helpful resources to guide you through evaluating the security credentials of any potential HRIS provider.

# Buyer's guide checklist

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Now that we've run through the nuts and bolts of choosing HR software, sanity check your decision with 7 simple questions:

## STEP ONE

Have you prioritised pain points and ranked them based on priority?

## STEP TWO

Are you clear on what's essential now versus later?

## STEP THREE

Can the solution scale with your growth?

## STEP FOUR

Do you understand pricing and what's included?

## STEP FIVE

What's the scope of implementation support?

## STEP SIX

Will we get proactive support beyond go-live?

## STEP SEVEN

Is data secure, compliant and locally hosted?

# Releasing HR's Full Potential

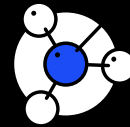
The **only** HR platform that truly fits the needs of mid-sized businesses in Australia and New Zealand.



Onboarding



Recruitment



HR Core



Payroll &  
Remuneration



Performance  
Management



Learning  
Management

Founded in 2002, the ELMO Group comprises ELMO Software, Breathe HR and RotaGeek. ELMO Group is a multinational provider of category-leading people management solutions, trusted by over 18,000 organisations across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

ELMO Software empowers businesses to manage the entire employee lifecycle with confidence. With a modular platform that's backed by ISO-certified security, Australian-based data hosting, and a local support model, ELMO is a trusted partner for organisations seeking reliable, scalable and future-ready people management solutions.



Find out how ELMO can help your organisation.

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