How to Choose
Staffing Software

tempworks SOFTWARE

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Today's leading staffing software systems integrate everything from your mobile phone to your deep back office and touch everyone from your sales manager and customer to your candidate and back office staff. The industry is changing so fast that companies face a dizzying array of product choices that can overwhelm even the most disciplined business planner.

To help with your decision-making process, here are nine items that staffing companies should evaluate when selecting staffing software.

1. PROVIDE TOP SERVICE FROM FRONT TO BACK

Evaluate your needs for a centralized database that combines both front and back office. If both deliver critical benefits to your clients and candidates, then give more weight to solutions that fully integrate those processes and make it easy to do payroll and invoicing off the same transactions.

Be careful in this evaluation because some systems will advertise themselves as fully integrated when, in fact, they are two different systems that have been bridged together. In other words, each has its own employee and client table and you need to move from one interface to another to fully service a candidate or client.

Other systems claim full integration when they really rely on third party invoicing or payroll engines. Although these systems may appear cohesive in a demo, the vendor lacks control over the source code and can't respond to special processing like combined weekly, bi-weekly, and semi-monthly processing.

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *How does your software achieve full front and back office integration?*
- *What third party software products do you rely upon for full front and back office integration?*
- *How rapidly can you process a transaction through payroll and invoicing?*
- *How can branch personnel easily respond to back office service requests from customers and employees?*
- *How does the system allow me to pay weekly and bill monthly or pay bi-weekly and bill weekly?*

2. MAKE SELF-SERVICE A GREAT OPTION FOR CLIENTS & CANDIDATES

If you make it easy, clients will welcome the opportunity to do their own self-service. Although some question whether self-service negates the human touch that underpins great staffing relationships, the reality is that it augments it by cutting out the busy work that makes personal service possible.

Clients are excited when they can retrieve detailed reports online about their staffing spend. They feel in control when they can review and approve timecards via the web. When you automate things for them, you are sending a message that you care more than the next agency.

Candidates similarly feel empowered when they can search for jobs and apply online, and they like the ability to review their paychecks online or declare their availability for a job. Ultimately, your candidates are your products, and when you respect their time, you can recruit and retain better as well as become more profitable.

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *How does your software enable self-service?*
- *How do your customer and employee portals work?*
- *Can I style them according to my brand?*
- *Can candidates apply online?*
- *Can I build my own set of interview questions for them online?*
- *Does it automatically store I-9s, W-4s and other documents?*

3. CHOOSE SOFTWARE THAT WORKS FOR YOUR STAFFING INDUSTRY SEGMENT

Determine the software needs of your staffing specialty. If you do nursing, can the software do day pay? If you do large commercial accounts, does the software do VMS and consolidated billing? If you recruit professionals, does the software integrate with a wide array of job boards using standard interfaces? If you do labor, does it help manage transportation or labor hall dispatching? If you sell skilled services, does the software do key-skill selling?

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *What current clients do you have that service my niche market?*
- *When can we visit them?*
- *Can I do industrial in one branch and clerical or technical in another, all using the same system?*
- *If I start up a new niche, how can I be sure that the software can adapt to it?*

4. CHOOSE WEB-BASED SYSTEMS THAT MAKE IT EASY TO USE YOUR SYSTEM

If you want flexible access to your system, make sure that you examine its fit for the web.

Although most software today gets described as 'web-based', not all web-based software is alike. Some for example, can't provide you with access via an iPad, iPhone or Android. Others allow you access via the browser, but don't provide a robust desktop version.

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *Is your software web-based?*
- *Can I access the system with my mobile phone? From my iPad? From my Android?*
- *Do you provide a robust desktop app for heads down use that works through the web? Does it support n-tier (cloud) access?*

5. CREATE EXCELLENT EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES WITH FAST, EASY & MOBILE ONBOARDING

Although many systems offer some form of document management, great employee relationships require efficient handling of the entire employment process – from onboarding to assignment transitions and even terminations.

When you transition an employee from one assignment to another, the software must make it easy to ensure that the employee completes new documents that may be required. Extraordinary accuracy is often demanded from temporary staffing suppliers regarding documents.

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *Describe your document management capabilities?*
- *How does it handle the life cycle of an employee?*

6. IMPROVE CASH FLOW WITH AUTOMATED BILLING & ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

How quickly and completely you get paid by clients can make or break a staffing business, and your software can play a big role in which way that goes. Examine your software for its ability to quickly get invoices processed and securely delivered by mail or email.

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *Does the software do e-billing? Can electronic timesheets accompany those invoices?*
- *Can I invoice weekly, monthly or without any set schedule? Can I sort and split up invoices based on shift, department, hiring manager or any other way that I track job orders?*
- *Can I easily show on the invoice header or online items purchase order numbers, project and location codes, or supervisor names?*
- *In A/R how easily can I create reports? How quickly can I post payments? How flexibly can payments be posted?*

7. HELP CLIENTS REDUCE THEIR COSTS VIA TIME CLOCKS AND BETTER REPORTING

Efficient time collection can mean everything to your clients. It serves as both a security mechanism and as a cost containment, and premium contracts are not infrequently awarded based on the staffing supplier's ability to accommodate time collection requirements.

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *What time clock solutions do you offer? Does the data flow automatically to payroll and invoicing? How much do the clocks cost? Can I connect them to the web? How robust are the devices? How will they be serviced and by whom?*
- *How can I accommodate special requests from clients regarding start times, missed punches, breaks and extra input data?*

8. CHOOSE MORE THAN YOUR SOFTWARE, CHOOSE YOUR SUPPORT TEAM

Take no short cuts in evaluating your software vendor's customer support. The value of a knowledgeable and responsive support team should never be underrated.

QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL VENDORS:

- *Can you call and expect to get a knowledgeable support person on the phone at any time of day (good)? Or is it a call-back or email based system (not so good)?*
- *Can I have both a positive and a negative client reference regarding your service levels? Note that most mature vendors retain a large client base of good references.*

9. TAKE A TEST DRIVE

Often the only way to truly get comfortable with software is to use it. Ask your vendor how you can use the software on a trial basis. Have different people in your organization take it for a test drive. Solicit feedback and use the information to help drive your decision.