

# Payroll Management Buyers Guide

Software Provider and Product Assessment



MARKET  
REPORT

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# Payroll Management

In the ever-changing world of enterprise operations, payroll is a critical function that sits at the intersection of HR, finance and compliance. To say that payroll is complex is an understatement. Beyond ensuring accurate and timely payments to workers, payroll leaders must navigate a maze of regulatory requirements that vary by location, creating significant challenges. Payroll, therefore, becomes more than a routine process; it plays a pivotal role in minimizing risk, driving operational efficiency and enhancing the employee experience.



**Advanced technologies enable organizations to adapt to the dynamic needs of a diverse workforce, streamline processes and deliver accurate, timely compensation, regardless of location.**

Payroll technology has evolved in response to new business models, a rapidly expanding remote workforce and the increasing demand for real-time, automated systems. As digital transformation in the workplace accelerates, enterprises are under pressure to adopt payroll systems that keep pace with regulatory changes and align with broader HR and organizational strategies.

ISG Research defines Payroll Management as the end-to-end administration of worker compensation across various geographic and regulatory landscapes, encompassing domestic, international, multicountry and global operations. Effective payroll management requires navigating the intricate web of local, national and international tax laws; labor regulations; and employee benefit structures. For domestic (U.S.) payroll, this means maintaining compliance with federal, state and local requirements. In international and multicountry contexts, payroll must account for cross-border complexities such as currency conversions, expatriate packages and jurisdiction-specific tax treatments. On a global scale, payroll management demands a unified approach that ensures compliance while providing centralized reporting, artificial intelligence-driven analytics

and automation to reduce manual effort and minimize errors. Advanced technologies enable organizations to adapt to the dynamic needs of a diverse workforce, streamline processes and deliver accurate, timely compensation, regardless of location.

Keeping pace with regulatory changes—whether related to payroll taxes, overtime rules or benefits contributions—presents a major challenge, as failing to stay compliant can result in financial penalties, legal risks and damage to an organization’s reputation. Additionally, many enterprises are forced to manage payroll processes with limited resources, often requiring payroll teams to do more with less. This challenge is particularly pronounced for organizations that operate across borders or in multiple regions, where local expertise is necessary to ensure accuracy and compliance.



Data accuracy is of the highest importance when examining the topic of payroll. Payroll data must be precise not only for the sake of timely payments but also to meet compliance obligations. Errors in payroll calculations can lead to discrepancies that frustrate workers and may attract regulatory scrutiny. While many enterprises have turned to automation to help address these issues, the complexity of managing large-scale payroll operations means that technology alone is not always sufficient. Human oversight, thorough audits and continuous process improvements are often necessary to ensure payroll data accuracy.

Remote workforce strategies have introduced additional payroll concerns for many organizations. The shift to remote work, accelerated by global events, has created new layers of complexity. Payroll teams must now account for employees working in different locations, sometimes across state or national borders, which brings up questions of tax withholding, jurisdictional payroll laws and the classification of remote workers or contractors. For many organizations, existing payroll systems were not designed to handle the nuances of remote work, requiring rapid adjustments to accommodate this new reality. By 2027, the need for managing payroll globally will require software providers to have a unified offering for enterprises.

Several trends have emerged in payroll, driven by the demand for more dynamic, real-time software. The demand for automation continues to grow as enterprises look for ways to streamline payroll processes, reduce manual interventions and improve overall efficiency. Automated systems that handle everything from tax calculations to compliance reporting are essential for organizations looking to scale payroll operations. While automation reduces errors and frees up valuable human resources, it also requires a payroll system that integrates seamlessly with other enterprise software, such as human capital management systems and time and attendance tools.

Another key trend is the increasing use of AI and machine learning in payroll. These technologies are detecting anomalies in payroll data, ensuring compliance with local laws and forecasting payroll expenses based on historical data. AI-driven systems help organizations reduce errors and mitigate compliance risks by identifying potential issues before they become critical problems. While AI offers promising solutions, it's important to recognize that these technologies are still evolving, and enterprises must balance innovation with practical concerns about specific operational needs.

Additionally, the role of payroll within the enterprise is shifting. HR's influence on payroll has grown as payroll increasingly intersects with broader HR functions such as worker experience,

**Payroll Management**  
Market Assertion

By 2027, the need for managing payroll globally will require software providers to have a unified offering for enterprises.

**Matthew Brown**  
Director of Research, HCM

**ISG** Research

The graphic is a dark blue rectangular box with a light blue border. It contains the title 'Payroll Management' in white, followed by 'Market Assertion' in a smaller font. Below this is a white text block stating the market assertion. At the bottom right is a circular portrait of Matthew Brown, with his name and title below it. The ISG Research logo is at the bottom left.



benefits administration and workforce planning. This shift highlights the need for payroll systems that integrate seamlessly with other HR technologies, providing a more holistic view of the employee life cycle.

Innovations in payroll technology are transforming how large enterprises manage this critical function. One of the most significant developments is the rise of cloud-based payroll systems, which offer scalability, flexibility and enhanced security compared to traditional on-premises systems. Cloud-based platforms enable organizations to manage payroll operations from anywhere in the world, providing real-time updates and ensuring that payroll teams stay on top of regulatory changes without delay. These platforms also allow for greater collaboration between payroll, HR and finance teams, ensuring that payroll processes align with broader business goals.

Another important innovation impacting payroll software is continuous payroll (or real-time payroll) which enables on-demand wage access. Real-time payroll allows workers to view and access their earned wages in real-time rather than waiting for the traditional pay period to end. This feature has become increasingly popular among employees who seek greater control over their finances and has proven to be a valuable tool for employee retention in industries with high turnover rates. Offering on-demand wage access requires an agile and responsive payroll system capable of processing real-time wage requests without compromising accuracy or compliance. By 2027, one-quarter of enterprises will offer their workers financial wellness support such as personal budgeting and planning tools and services and earned wage access offerings at no cost to employees.

**Payroll Management**  
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By 2027, one-quarter of enterprises will offer their workers financial wellness support such as personal budgeting and planning tools and services and earned wage access offerings at no cost to employees.

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AI-driven compliance is also transforming how enterprises navigate the complex web of tax laws and labor regulations. AI-powered payroll systems analyze local labor laws, apply them to payroll calculations and ensure that organizations remain compliant across multiple jurisdictions. These systems reduce the risk of human error and streamline the compliance process, freeing up payroll teams to focus on more strategic tasks. However, while AI and automation are providing new tools for compliance, many organizations are still grappling with the challenges of adapting legacy systems to today's software.

Despite these technological advances, many enterprises are missing opportunities to capitalize on payroll systems for more than just processing payments. Payroll as a communication tool is often overlooked, yet it provides a unique touchpoint between the organization and its workers. Organizations can use payroll to communicate important updates, share benefits information or highlight key company initiatives. By integrating



communication into payroll, enterprises engage workers in more meaningful ways, fostering a stronger connection between the workforce and the organization.

As payroll technology continues to evolve, the role of payroll within large enterprises is transforming. Once considered a back-office, transactional function, payroll is increasingly seen as a strategic pillar that impacts worker satisfaction, operational efficiency and compliance. Payroll teams collaborate more closely with HR and finance departments, ensuring that payroll processes align with broader organizational goals. This shift underscores the importance of adopting contemporary payroll systems that integrate with other enterprise systems, providing a more holistic view of workforce management.

Enterprises that fail to update payroll operations risk falling behind in an increasingly competitive landscape. By embracing cloud-based platforms, real-time payroll, AI-driven compliance and innovative communication tools, organizations streamline payroll processes and drive better business outcomes. The payroll systems of the future must be agile, adaptable and deeply integrated with other HR and business technologies to meet the needs of a dynamic and evolving workforce.

In an era where payroll is rapidly evolving from a back-office function to a strategic asset, the



**In an era where payroll is rapidly evolving from a back-office function to a strategic asset, the need for contemporary, integrated and scalable payroll systems has never been greater.**

need for contemporary, integrated and scalable payroll systems has never been greater. As enterprises face increasing complexity, shifting regulations and evolving employee expectations, it is essential to rethink how payroll systems can better serve both the business and its workforce. Whether addressing compliance challenges, leveraging automation or seeking to enhance employee engagement, the next step in the payroll journey is to embrace innovation. Enterprises can transform payroll into a tool for operational efficiency and worker satisfaction by evaluating current processes; exploring new technologies like AI, real-time payroll or cloud-based platforms; and ensuring alignment with broader HR strategies.

The future of payroll is not just about processing payments; it's about creating a more agile, compliant and worker-centered function that supports the long-term success of the organization. Now is the time to take the next step and make payroll a driving force for

positive change.

The ISG Buyers Guide™ for Payroll Management evaluates software providers and products in key areas intended to explore all aspects of payroll technology, including core payroll capabilities, global payroll capabilities, international payroll capabilities, multicountry payroll



capabilities, domestic (U.S.) payroll capabilities, IT capabilities, manager capabilities, payroll administration capabilities, payroll analytics, payroll strategies and process needs, integrations and overall support for worker pay needs.

This research evaluates the following software providers that offer products to address key elements of Payroll Management as we define it: ADP, Dayforce, Infor, Neeyamo, Oracle, Paylocity, SAP, UKG and Workday.



## Buyers Guide Overview

For over two decades, ISG Research has conducted market research in a spectrum of areas across business applications, tools and technologies. We have designed the Buyers Guide to provide a balanced perspective of software providers and products that is rooted in an understanding of the business requirements in any enterprise. Utilization of our research



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methodology and decades of experience enables our Buyers Guide to be an effective method to assess and select software providers and products. The findings of this research undertaking contribute to our comprehensive approach to rating software providers in a manner that is based on the assessments completed by an enterprise.

The ISG Buyers Guide™ for Payroll Management is the distillation of over a year of market and product research efforts. It is an assessment of how well software providers' offerings address enterprises' requirements for payroll management software. The index is structured to support a request for information (RFI) that could be used in the request for proposal (RFP) process by incorporating all criteria needed to evaluate, select, utilize and maintain relationships with software providers. An effective product and customer experience with a provider can ensure the best long-term relationship and value achieved from a resource and financial investment.

In this Buyers Guide, ISG Research evaluates the software in seven key categories that are weighted to reflect buyers' needs based on our expertise and research. Five are product-experience related: Adaptability, Capability, Manageability, Reliability, and Usability. In addition, we consider two customer-experience categories: Validation, and Total Cost of Ownership/Return on Investment (TCO/ROI). To assess functionality, one of the components of Capability, we applied the ISG Research Value Index methodology and blueprint, which links the personas and processes for payroll management to an enterprise's requirements.

The structure of the research reflects our understanding that the effective evaluation of software providers and products involves far more than just examining product features, potential revenue or customers generated from a provider's marketing and sales efforts. We believe it is important to take a comprehensive, research-based approach, since making the wrong choice of payroll management technology can raise the total cost of ownership, lower the return on investment and hamper an enterprise's ability to reach its full performance potential. In addition, this approach can reduce the project's development and deployment





time and eliminate the risk of relying on a short list of software providers that does not represent a best fit for your enterprise.

ISG Research believes that an objective review of software providers and products is a critical business strategy for the adoption and implementation of payroll management software and applications. An enterprise's review should include a thorough analysis of both what is possible and what is relevant. We urge enterprises to do a thorough job of evaluating payroll management systems and tools and offer this Buyers Guide as both the results of our in-depth analysis of these providers and as an evaluation methodology.



# How To Use This Buyers Guide

## Evaluating Software Providers: The Process

We recommend using the Buyers Guide to assess and evaluate new or existing software providers for your enterprise. The market research can be used as an evaluation framework to establish a formal request for information from providers on products and customer experience and will shorten the cycle time when creating an RFI. The steps listed below provide a process that can facilitate best possible outcomes.

1. Define the business case and goals.  
Define the mission and business case for investment and the expected outcomes from your organizational and technological efforts.
2. Specify the business needs.  
Defining the business requirements helps identify what specific capabilities are required with respect to people, processes, information and technology.
3. Assess the required roles and responsibilities.  
Identify the individuals required for success at every level of the enterprise from executives to frontline workers and determine the needs of each.
4. Outline the project's critical path.  
What needs to be done, in what order and who will do it? This outline should make clear the prior dependencies at each step of the project plan.
5. Ascertain the technology approach.  
Determine the business and technology approach that most closely aligns to your enterprise's requirements.
6. Establish software provider evaluation criteria.  
Utilize the product experience: Adaptability, Capability, Manageability, Reliability and Usability, and the customer experience in TCO/ROI and Validation.
7. Evaluate and select the technology properly.  
Weight the categories in the technology evaluation criteria to reflect your enterprise's priorities to determine the short list of software providers and products.
8. Establish the business initiative team to start the project.  
Identify who will lead the project and the members of the team needed to plan and execute it with timelines, priorities and resources.



# The Findings

All of the products we evaluated are feature-rich, but not all the capabilities offered by a software provider are equally valuable to types of workers or support everything needed to manage products on a continuous basis. Moreover, the existence of too many capabilities may be a negative factor for an enterprise if it introduces unnecessary complexity. Nonetheless, you may decide that a larger number of features in the product is a plus, especially if some of them match your enterprise’s established practices or support an initiative that is driving the purchase of new software.

Factors beyond features and functions or software provider assessments may become a deciding factor. For example, an enterprise may face budget constraints such that the TCO evaluation can tip the balance to one provider or another. This is where the Value Index methodology and the appropriate category weighting can be applied to determine the best fit of software providers and products to your specific needs.

## Overall Scoring of Software Providers Across Categories

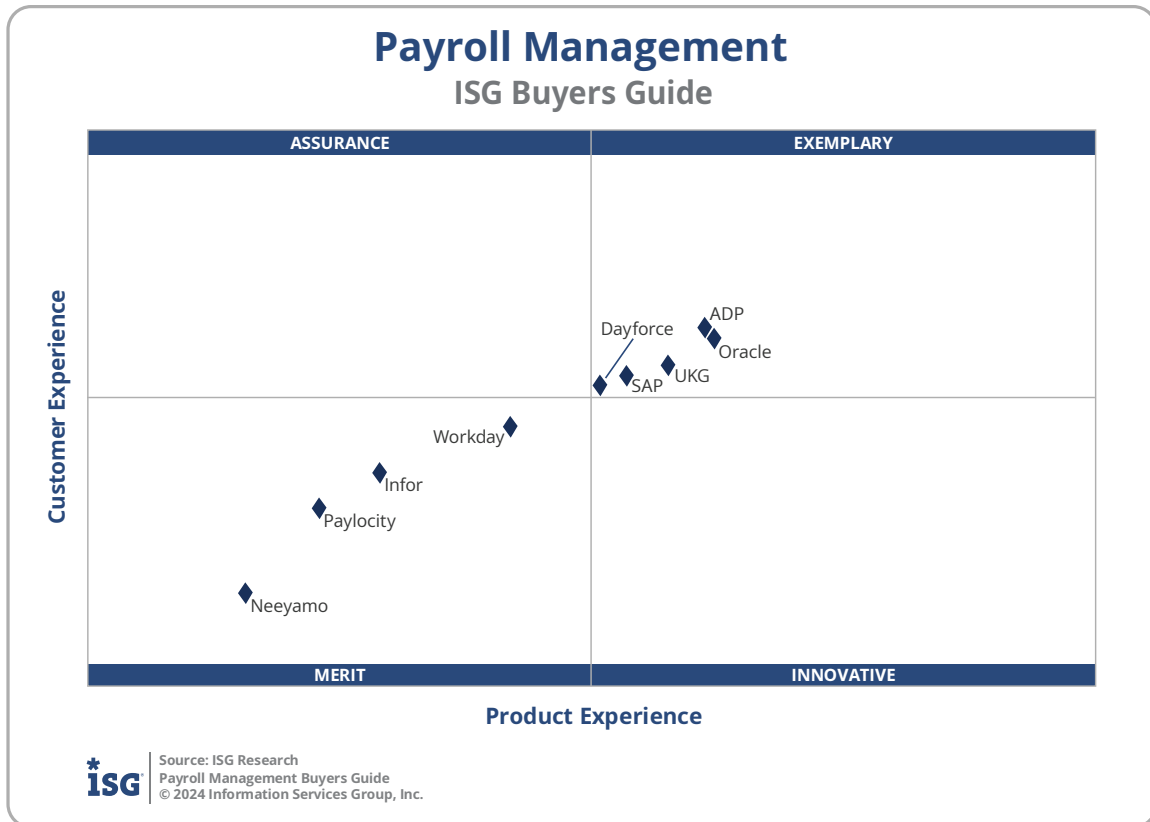
The research finds ADP atop the list, followed by Oracle and UKG. Providers that place in the top three of a category earn the designation of Leader. ADP has done so in seven categories, Oracle in six, UKG in four, SAP in two and Dayforce and Workday in one category.

The overall representation of the research below places the rating of the Product Experience and Customer Experience on the x and y axes, respectively, to provide a visual representation and classification of the software providers. Those providers whose Product Experience have a higher weighted performance to the axis in aggregate of the five product categories place farther to the right, while the performance and weighting for the two Customer Experience categories determines placement on the vertical axis. In short, software providers that place closer to the upper-right on this chart performed better than those closer to the lower-left.

Payroll Management Overall		
Providers	Grade	Performance
ADP	A	<b>Leader</b> 88.8%
Oracle	A	<b>Leader</b> 87.5%
UKG	A-	<b>Leader</b> 86.0%
Dayforce	A-	84.1%
SAP	A-	83.5%
Workday	B++	77.2%
Infor	B+	69.4%
Paylocity	B+	69.1%
Neeyamo	B	63.0%

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The research places software providers into one of four overall categories: Assurance, Exemplary, Merit or Innovative. This representation classifies providers’ overall weighted performance.



**Exemplary:** The categorization and placement of software providers in Exemplary (upper right) represent those that performed the best in meeting the overall Product and Customer Experience requirements. The providers rated Exemplary are: ADP, Dayforce, Oracle, SAP and UKG.

**Innovative:** The categorization and placement of software providers in Innovative (lower right) represent those that performed the best in meeting the overall Product Experience requirements but did not achieve the highest levels of requirements in Customer Experience.

**Assurance:** The categorization and placement of software providers in Assurance (upper left) represent those that achieved the highest levels in the overall Customer Experience requirements but did not achieve the highest levels of Product Experience.

**Merit:** The categorization of software providers in Merit (lower left) represents those that did not exceed the median of performance in Customer or Product Experience or surpass the threshold for the other three categories. The providers rated Merit are: Infor, Neeeyamo, Paylocity and Workday.

We warn that close provider placement proximity should not be taken to imply that the packages evaluated are functionally identical or equally well suited for use by every enterprise or for a specific process. Although there is a high degree of commonality in how enterprises



handle payroll management, there are many idiosyncrasies and differences in how they do these functions that can make one software provider's offering a better fit than another's for a particular enterprise's needs.

We advise enterprises to assess and evaluate software providers based on organizational requirements and use this research as a supplement to internal evaluation of a provider and products.




## Product Experience

The process of researching products to address an enterprise’s needs should be comprehensive. Our Value Index methodology examines Product Experience and how it aligns with an enterprise’s life cycle of onboarding, configuration, operations, usage and maintenance. Too often, software providers are not evaluated for the entirety of the product; instead, they are evaluated on market execution and vision of the future, which are flawed since they do not represent an enterprise’s requirements but how the provider operates. As more software providers orient to a complete product experience, evaluations will be more robust.

The research results in Product Experience are ranked at 80%, or four-fifths, of the overall rating using the specific underlying weighted category performance. Importance was placed on the categories as follows: Usability (15%), Capability (30%), Reliability (10%), Adaptability (15%) and Manageability (10%). This weighting impacted the resulting overall ratings in this research. Oracle, ADP and UKG were designated Product Experience Leaders.

Providers	Grade	Performance
Oracle	A	<b>Leader</b> 70.5%
ADP	A	<b>Leader</b> 70.3%
UKG	A-	<b>Leader</b> 68.7%
SAP	A-	67.0%
Dayforce	A-	65.5%
Workday	B++	62.2%
Infor	B+	56.6%
Paylocity	B	54.3%
Neeyamo	B	51.2%

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### Adaptability of the Product

This category assesses the degree to which products and technology can be adapted to an enterprise’s specifications via configurability and customization while still maintaining integrity of integration across the worker, device, business, processes, application and data.

Adaptability is also related to the ability to readily integrate with other internal and external systems—for example, integrate data and information securely across processes and systems—and support bidirectional data flows to support synchronization and migration. It also examines the investment by the software provider in resources and improvements.

The research weights Adaptability at 15% of the overall rating. Oracle, ADP and SAP are the Leaders in this category.

Adaptability is an essential evaluation metric as it determines the flexibility and interconnectivity of the software provider’s product related to enterprise requirements. It also enables enterprise software to operate across the variety of platforms and cloud computing environments that exist today and in the future.

Software providers that evaluated well in the Adaptability category understand the criticality of preparing and using information to optimize business execution. These providers meet the specific customization and integration support requirements in these areas, enabling enterprises to process data across business processes, workflows and applications as they operate.

**Payroll Management**  
Adaptability

Providers	Grade	Performance
Oracle	A-	<b>Leader</b> 87.1%
ADP	A-	<b>Leader</b> 86.4%
SAP	A-	<b>Leader</b> 84.1%
UKG	A-	83.8%
Workday	B++	76.3%
Dayforce	B++	75.6%
Infor	B+	69.3%
Paylocity	B	64.4%
Neeyamo	B-	62.4%

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### Capability of the Product

The Capability criteria evaluate payroll providers on the ability to deliver essential features such as compliance, tax filing and payment distribution, alongside advanced capabilities like mobile accessibility, analytics and AI-driven insights. This also considers providers' support for diverse organizational needs, including integration with workforce management and financial systems, as well as the complexities of operating across multiple regions and formats. The goal is to ensure payroll systems not only optimize operational efficiency but also support strategic workforce goals.

ISG Research evaluated more than 130 different function points in 12 sections to assess the full scope of payroll management capabilities. It also examined the investment by the software provider in resources and improvements.

The research weights Capability at 30% of the overall rating. ADP, Dayforce and UKG are the Leaders in this category. While not a Leader, Oracle was also found to meet a broad range of enterprise capability requirements.

The significant, in-depth Capability evaluation framework for payroll management provides a substantive challenge for many software providers. The research largely focuses on how providers apply payroll management and the specific processes where some specialize, such as AI-powered experiences and localization. Software providers that have more breadth and depth and support the entire set of needs fared better. The varying levels of specialization and capabilities for business found across software providers give enterprises a significant choice in payroll management products.

Payroll Management Capability		
Providers	Grade	Performance
ADP	A	<b>Leader</b> 90.2%
Dayforce	A	<b>Leader</b> 88.9%
UKG	A-	<b>Leader</b> 87.0%
Oracle	A-	86.8%
SAP	A-	83.9%
Workday	B++	77.4%
Paylocity	B+	73.0%
Infor	B	68.1%
Neeyamo	B	66.1%

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## Manageability of the Product

Manageability is evaluated by how well the products can be managed technologically and by business, and governed, secured, licensed and supported in a service level agreement (SLA). Also important is the flexibility of the privacy and security provisions built into the technology with respect to user identity, role and access, how effective that security is, to what extent it supports auditing and compliance, and what licensing or subscription is available from the software provider. It also examines the investment by the provider in resources and improvements.

The research weights Manageability at 10% of the overall rating. Oracle, ADP and Workday are the Leaders in this category. While not a Leader, SAP was also found to meet a broad range of enterprise manageability requirements.

Manageability is an essential evaluation metric to indicate whether the software provider’s product can be administrated and supported throughout its life cycle in the enterprise. It also ensures the overall efficiency, compliance and security of the enterprise software.

A software provider’s performance in the evaluation criteria is especially critical when examining business and technology administration. Providers that did not perform well had challenges in technology administration, and providing information to validate investments in manageability. The significance of information security cannot be overstated as the insights and knowledge of an enterprise are present in the data. The growing importance of simplifying manageability is critical and should be a priority for all software provider evaluations.

**Payroll Management**  
Manageability

Providers	Grade	Performance
Oracle	A	<b>Leader</b> 88.7%
ADP	A-	<b>Leader</b> 86.3%
Workday	A-	<b>Leader</b> 85.6%
SAP	A-	85.3%
UKG	A-	83.2%
Dayforce	B++	75.4%
Infor	B+	70.4%
Neeiamo	B	68.6%
Paylocity	B	64.8%

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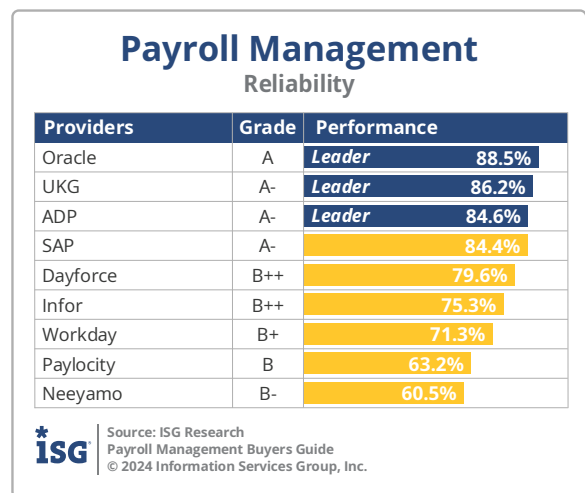
## Reliability of the Product

For payroll management processes to operate efficiently and for workers to engage the applications, the software on which they run must reliably deliver the necessary performance and scalability using the existing architecture operating across the enterprise and cloud computing environments. The criteria include depth in the performance and scalability of a software provider’s products and architecture, including the metrics to ensure operations and configurability across data, users, instances, activities and tasks. It also examines the investment by the provider in resources and improvements.

The research weights Reliability at 10% of the overall rating. Oracle, UKG and ADP are the Leaders in this category, providing the highest level of confidence for operation at any level of reliability 24 hours a day. While not a Leader, SAP was also found to meet a broad range of enterprise reliability requirements.

Reliability is an essential evaluation metric as it indicates the product’s ability to perform and scale to the defined enterprise requirements and how well it supports the continuous processing required for business continuity and operational resilience today and into the future.

Evaluating the performance and scalability readiness of software is not always easy as it depends on the type of product information and the volume at which the data is being updated and used by processes and systems. Software providers that did not perform well in this category were not able to provide this level of information in great depth, even though it is necessary to establish the confidence required for provider selection.





## Usability of the Product

Usability is necessary for meeting the varying business needs of executives, management, workers and analysts, along with IT and others involved in payroll management processes. Products are evaluated on the intelligence in the Usability across user experience, the use of AI and ML and adapting to the diverse competencies of an enterprise’s workers. Usability criteria also include the sophistication of the product’s support of mobile and web technologies, and the extent to which the product design enables its use by workers of varied skill levels, including conversational experiences using chat and voice. It also examines the investment by the software provider in resources and improvements.

The research weights Usability at 15% of the overall rating. Leaders in this category are Oracle, ADP and UKG.

Usability is an essential evaluation metric as it provides indicators as to whether the product can be utilized by designated workers within the enterprise. A demonstrated commitment by the software provider to the digital experience of its products is also key.

The importance of usability and the digital experience in software utilization has been increasing over the past decade as is evident in our market research. The requirements to meet the needs of a broad set of roles and responsibilities across an enterprise’s cohorts and personas should be a priority for all software providers. Many technological advancements in applying ML and natural language processing are available to provide a universal, intuitive experience of being able to hear, read and talk to systems.

Software providers that performed well in this category have fully embraced the value of usability as a critical element in product experience across all roles and have invested in areas that address user skills and challenges.

Payroll Management Usability		
Providers	Grade	Performance
Oracle	A	<b>Leader</b> 91.0%
ADP	A	<b>Leader</b> 88.3%
UKG	A-	<b>Leader</b> 87.1%
SAP	A-	81.6%
Dayforce	B++	80.1%
Workday	B++	79.2%
Infor	B+	74.7%
Paylocity	B	66.0%
Neeyamo	B-	60.6%

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## Customer Experience

The importance of a customer relationship with a software provider is essential to the actual success of the products and technology. The advancement of the Customer Experience and the entire life cycle an enterprise has with its software provider is critical for ensuring satisfaction in working with that provider. Technology providers that have chief customer officers are more likely to have greater investments in the customer relationship and focus more on their success. These leaders also need to take responsibility for ensuring this commitment is made abundantly clear on the website and in the buying process and customer journey.

The research results in Customer Experience are ranked at 20%, or one-fifth, using the specific underlying weighted category performance as it relates to the framework of commitment and value to the software provider-customer relationship. The two evaluation categories are Validation (10%) and TCO/ROI (10%), which are weighted to represent their importance to the overall research.

The software providers that evaluated the highest overall in the aggregated and weighted Customer Experience categories are ADP, Oracle and UKG.

These category leaders best communicate commitment and dedication to customer needs.

Software providers that did not perform well in this category were unable to provide sufficient customer case studies to demonstrate success or articulate their commitment to customer experience and an enterprise’s journey. The selection of a software provider means a continuous investment by the enterprise, so a holistic evaluation must include examination of how they support their customer experience.

**Payroll Management**  
Customer Experience

Providers	Grade	Performance
ADP	A	<b>Leader</b> 17.7%
Oracle	A	<b>Leader</b> 17.6%
UKG	A-	<b>Leader</b> 16.7%
SAP	B++	16.2%
Dayforce	B++	15.8%
Workday	B+	15.0%
Infor	B	13.7%
Paylocity	B	12.6%
Neeiamo	C++	10.3%

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### TCO/ROI of the Software Provider

The TCO/ROI category applies evaluation criteria designed to assess how effective the software provider is in demonstrating the business case, including the product’s strategic value, total cost of ownership and total benefit of ownership. The criteria also include an evaluation of the tools and documentation it provides to enable customer evaluation of TCO and ROI, and what the software provider cites as its investment and services to support it. It also examines the investment by the provider in resources and improvements.

The research weights TCO/ROI at 10% of the overall rating. ADP, SAP and Oracle are Leaders in this category.

TCO/ROI is an essential evaluation metric when determining a software provider’s commitment to the customer experience and whether the costs associated with deployment and adoption of the provider's product align with its value. A provider should also demonstrate its ability to support an enterprise’s current and future goals.

Software providers that evaluated well in this category provided buyers and customers with the TCO/ROI-related support needed to effectively build the business case and get funding for investment. Those that did not struggled to make available the tools and documentation needed for enterprises to make a sound buying decision.

Payroll Management TCO/ROI		
Providers	Grade	Performance
ADP	A	<b>Leader</b> 88.7%
SAP	A-	<b>Leader</b> 85.8%
Oracle	A-	<b>Leader</b> 84.8%
UKG	B++	79.7%
Dayforce	B++	78.8%
Workday	B++	76.3%
Infor	B	66.1%
Paylocity	B	64.2%
Neeyamo	C+	48.4%

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### Validation of the Software Provider

The Validation category assesses the software provider’s ability to support a customer through the life cycle of working with its products. It examines the provider’s commitment to the customer experience from leadership, processes and systems, and evaluates a software provider’s ability to assess its customer experience across front and back office and the marketing and communication of that experience. The viability of a software provider from financial growth, management and customer growth are evaluated, as are customer references and studies on the provider’s website and the use of feedback to improve the provider’s operations.

The Validation category also evaluates the customer journey across sales, onboarding, support, services and partners as well as examining the product releases and roadmap, and how the software provider utilizes formalized interactions with customers to improve products. Validation looks at the services, the support provided and the provider’s digital effectiveness to facilitate the customer relationship. It also examines the investment by the software provider in resources and improvements.

The research weights Validation at 10% of the overall rating. The Leaders here are Oracle, ADP and UKG.

Payroll Management Validation			
Providers	Grade	Performance	
Oracle	A	Leader	91.0%
ADP	A	Leader	87.9%
UKG	A	Leader	87.5%
Dayforce	B++		78.9%
SAP	B++		76.4%
Workday	B+		73.7%
Infor	B+		70.4%
Paylocity	B-		61.8%
Neeyamo	C++		54.2%

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## Software Providers Evaluated

Software providers that were included in this research are highlighted in this section. For each, we provide a product description taken from the provider’s website. Our assessment details individual software provider’s ratings compared to others and then looks at levels of overall and category-specific performance. Enterprises can utilize this information to determine which software providers best meet organizational needs.



## ADP

### Company and Product Profile

ADP Global Payroll, Celergo, Global View, ADP Vantage HCM, v. SaaS, released November 2024  
*“Running payroll online is one of the most important aspects of any successful business, but that doesn’t mean it has to be stressful. With first-class payroll software, you’ll experience peace of mind knowing you have the resources to pay your employees and taxes correctly and on time.” – ADP*

### Summary

Our analysis classified ADP as Exemplary, receiving an overall grade of A with an 88.8% performance. ADP's best grouped results came in Product Experience with an 88.9% performance and an A grade, due in part to its A in Capability. In Customer Experience, ADP received an A grade with an 88.3% performance due to its 88.7% performance in TCO/ROI. ADP was designated a Leader in all categories.

### Challenges

ADP's A in Customer Experience was impacted by its A in Validation, where it could improve its references and case studies. Product Experience was impacted by its A- in Reliability, where it could improve customer-managed data backup capabilities.

### Strengths

ADP performed best in Product Experience with an A grade, notably receiving an A in Capability due to the capabilities to comply with government regulations. ADP received an A grade in Customer Experience, with an A in TCO/ROI due to the value of documentation demonstrating the ability to deliver innovation, sustainability, agility and competitiveness.

Payroll Management ADP		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	Leader 88.8%	A
Product	Leader 88.9%	A
Adaptability	Leader 86.4%	A-
Capability	Leader 90.2%	A
Manageability	Leader 86.3%	A-
Reliability	Leader 84.6%	A-
Usability	Leader 88.3%	A
Customer	Leader 88.3%	A
TCO/ROI	Leader 88.7%	A
Validation	Leader 87.9%	A

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## Dayforce

### Company and Product Profile

Dayforce Payroll, v. Saas, released November 2024

*“Running payroll accurately, efficiently, and on time is a complex undertaking — especially with ever-changing business conditions and regulations. With Dayforce Payroll, you can effectively manage your payroll with a unified platform for time and pay, run payroll at scale, and boost employee wellness and retention with on-demand pay.”* – Dayforce

### Summary

Our analysis classified Dayforce as Exemplary, receiving an overall grade of A- with an 84.1% performance. Dayforce's best grouped results came in Product Experience with an 85.1% performance and an A- grade, due in part to its A in Capability. In Customer Experience, Dayforce received a B++ grade with a 78.8% performance due to its 78.9% performance in Validation. Dayforce was designated a Leader in Capability.

### Challenges

Dayforce's B++ in Customer Experience was impacted by its B++ in TCO/ROI, where it could improve the quality and thoroughness of tools for documentation. Product Experience was impacted by its B++ in Manageability, where it could improve the flexibility and fairness of licensing options.

### Strengths

Dayforce performed best in Product Experience with an A- grade, notably receiving an A in Capability due to its regional compliance management. Dayforce received a B++ grade in Customer Experience, with a B++ in Validation due to the effectiveness of the organizational structure to deliver quality CX.

Payroll Management		
Dayforce		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	84.1%	A-
Product	85.1%	A-
Adaptability	75.6%	B++
Capability	<b>Leader</b> 88.9%	A
Manageability	75.4%	B++
Reliability	79.6%	B++
Usability	80.1%	B++
Customer	78.8%	B++
TCO/ROI	78.8%	B++
Validation	78.9%	B++

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## Infor

### Company and Product Profile

Infor HR Payroll, v. Saas, released November 2024

*"Infor HR Payroll is a proven solution delivering one global system of record for all employees. The solution provides complete in-house payroll processing capabilities with multiple options for service partners to manage back-end payroll processes, including employment tax filing, wage payments, wage garnishments, and other value-added services."* – Infor

### Summary

Our analysis classified Infor as a provider of Merit, receiving an overall grade of B+ with a 69.4% performance. Infor's best grouped results came in Product Experience with a 69.5% performance and a B+ grade, due in part to its B++ in Reliability. In Customer Experience, Infor received a B grade with a 68.3% performance due to its 70.4% performance in Validation.

### Challenges

Infor's B in Customer Experience was impacted by its B in TCO/ROI, where it could improve the quality of demonstrated value from investments in improving TCO/ROI. Product Experience was impacted by its B in Capability, where it could improve earned wage access to be utilized before payroll.

### Strengths

Infor performed best in Product Experience with a B+ grade, notably receiving a B++ in Reliability due to its architecture characteristics and rationale. Infor received a B grade in Customer Experience, with a B+ in Validation due to the breadth and quality of company support available to buyers.

Payroll Management		
Infor		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	69.4%	B+
Product	69.5%	B+
Adaptability	69.3%	B+
Capability	68.1%	B
Manageability	70.4%	B+
Reliability	75.3%	B++
Usability	74.7%	B+
Customer	68.3%	B
TCO/ROI	66.1%	B
Validation	70.4%	B+

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## Neeiamo

### Company and Product Profile

Global Payroll Core, v. SaaS, released November 2024

*“As organizations prioritize global expansion, unforeseen payroll processing challenges present a clear threat. Neeiamo’s technology-first approach, coupled with a scalable delivery model and hyperlocal presence, provides the perfect solution for all your global payroll needs – for employees working in primary geographies, the long-tail region, remote or internationally located.”*

– Neeiamo

### Summary

Our analysis classified Neeiamo as a provider of Merit, receiving an overall grade of B with a 63.0% performance. Neeiamo's best grouped results came in Product Experience with a 65.0% performance and a B grade, due in part to its B in Manageability. In Customer Experience, Neeiamo received a C++ grade with a 51.3% performance due to its 54.2% performance in Validation.

### Challenges

Neeiamo's C++ in Customer Experience was impacted by its C+ in TCO/ROI, where it could improve the tools customers use to evaluate TCO with examples. Product Experience was impacted by its B- in Reliability, where it could improve configurability by authorized users to optimize scalability.

### Strengths

Neeiamo performed best in Product Experience with a B grade, notably receiving a B in Manageability due to the breadth and depth of capability for routine technology administration. Neeiamo received a C++ grade in Customer Experience, with a C++ in Validation due to its geographic scope of services by providers and partners.

Payroll Management Neeiamo		
Category	Performance	Grade
<b>Overall</b>	63.0%	<b>B</b>
<b>Product</b>	65.0%	<b>B</b>
Adaptability	62.4%	B-
Capability	66.1%	B
Manageability	68.6%	B
Reliability	60.5%	B-
Usability	60.6%	B-
<b>Customer</b>	51.3%	<b>C++</b>
TCO/ROI	48.4%	C+
Validation	54.2%	C++

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## Oracle

### Company and Product Profile

Oracle Payroll, v. 24D, released September 2024

*"Simplify how you pay your workforce with a highly configurable solution, fully unified with Oracle Fusion Cloud Human Capital Management (HCM) for efficient, compliant payroll processing across the globe—no matter your industry, company size, or worker types."* – Oracle

### Summary

Our analysis classified Oracle as Exemplary, receiving an overall grade of A with an 87.5% performance. Oracle's best grouped results came in Customer Experience with an 87.9% performance and an A grade, due in part to its A in Validation. In Product Experience, Oracle received an A- grade with an 87.5% performance due to its 91.0% performance in Usability. Oracle was designated an overall Leader as well as a Leader in Product Experience, Adaptability, Manageability, Reliability, Usability, Customer Experience, TCO/ROI and Validation.

### Challenges

Oracle's A- in Product Experience was impacted by its A- in Capability, where it could improve the scope of payroll metrics natively tracked and delivered. Customer Experience was impacted by its A- in TCO/ROI, where it could improve its examples of investments.

### Strengths

Oracle performed best in Customer Experience with an A grade, notably receiving an A in Validation due to senior management longevity. Oracle received an A- grade in Product Experience, with an A in Usability due to its ability to minimize the time required to execute tasks through screen design and flow.

Payroll Management Oracle		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	Leader 87.5%	A
Product	Leader 87.5%	A-
Adaptability	Leader 87.1%	A-
Capability	86.8%	A-
Manageability	Leader 88.7%	A
Reliability	Leader 88.5%	A
Usability	Leader 91.0%	A
Customer	Leader 87.9%	A
TCO/ROI	Leader 84.8%	A-
Validation	Leader 91.0%	A

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## Paylocity

### Company and Product Profile

Paylocity Global Payroll, Blue Marble Payroll, v. SaaS, released November 2024

*“Employees rely on their paychecks, so you have to get your payroll right. Use our software to simplify payroll, automate processes, and stay tax compliant, all in one spot.” – Paylocity*

### Summary

Our analysis classified Paylocity as a provider of Merit, receiving an overall grade of B+ with a 69.1% performance. Paylocity's best grouped results came in Product Experience with a 70.1% performance and a B+ grade, due in part to its B+ in Capability. In Customer Experience, Paylocity received a B grade with a 63.0% performance due to its 64.2% performance in TCO/ROI.

### Challenges

Paylocity's B in Customer Experience was impacted by its B- in Validation, where it could improve its references and case studies. Product Experience was impacted by its B in Reliability, where it could improve the quality of examples of reliability improvements achieved.

### Strengths

Paylocity performed best in Product Experience with a B+ grade, notably receiving a B+ in Capability due to its Affordable Care Act Reporting. Paylocity received a B grade in Customer Experience, with a B in TCO/ROI due to the completeness of examples demonstrating customers achieving benefits.

Payroll Management		
Paylocity		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	69.1%	B+
Product	70.1%	B+
Adaptability	64.4%	B
Capability	73.0%	B+
Manageability	64.8%	B
Reliability	63.2%	B
Usability	66.0%	B
Customer	63.0%	B
TCO/ROI	64.2%	B
Validation	61.8%	B-

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## SAP

### Company and Product Profile

SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central Payroll, v. 2H2024, released November 2024  
*"The SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central Payroll solution helps you make payments to your workforce in a timely and efficient way. It does this by automating and accelerating payment processing, reducing the risk of errors, and simplifying payroll management."* – SAP

### Summary

Our analysis classified SAP as Exemplary, receiving an overall grade of A- with an 83.5% performance. SAP's best grouped results came in Product Experience with an 83.9% performance and an A- grade, due in part to its A- in Manageability. In Customer Experience, SAP received a B++ grade with an 81.1% performance due to its 85.8% performance in TCO/ROI. SAP was designated a Leader in Adaptability and TCO/ROI.

### Challenges

SAP's B++ in Customer Experience was impacted by its B++ in Validation, where it could improve its references and case studies. Product Experience was impacted by its A- in Usability, where it could minimize the time required to execute tasks through screen design and flow.

### Strengths

SAP performed best in Product Experience with an A- grade, notably receiving an A- in Manageability due to the breadth and depth of capability for routine technology administration. SAP received a B++ grade in Customer Experience, with an A- in TCO/ROI due to the quality and resources provided to guide preparation of a business case.

Payroll Management		
SAP		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	83.5%	A-
Product	83.9%	A-
Adaptability	<b>Leader</b> 84.1%	A-
Capability	83.9%	A-
Manageability	85.3%	A-
Reliability	84.4%	A-
Usability	81.6%	A-
Customer	81.1%	B++
TCO/ROI	<b>Leader</b> 85.8%	A-
Validation	76.4%	B++

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## UKG

### Company and Product Profile

UKG Pro Payroll, One View, v. 2024.R2, released September 2024

*“UKG payroll software streamlines complex processes by automating workflows, limiting manual errors and saving time and money. Remaining compliant can be difficult with several federal and state mandates, updates to tax rates, and new laws. If missed, this can result in costly fees and can take time to bring a system up to date.” - UKG*

### Summary

Our analysis classified UKG as Exemplary, receiving an overall grade of A- with an 86.0% performance. UKG's best grouped results came in Product Experience with an 86.4% performance and an A- grade, due in part to its A- in Usability. In Customer Experience, UKG received an A- grade with an 83.6% performance due to its 87.5% performance in Validation. UKG was designated an overall Leader as well as a Leader in Product Experience, Capability, Reliability, Usability, Customer Experience and Validation.

### Challenges

UKG's A- in Customer Experience was impacted by its B++ in TCO/ROI, where it could improve the breadth of documentation to assist buyers in calculating TCO. Product Experience was impacted by its A- in Manageability, where it could improve the method of allocating investments.

### Strengths

UKG performed best in Product Experience with an A- grade, notably receiving an A- in Usability due to its facilitation of communication and collaboration. UKG received an A- grade in Customer Experience, with an A in Validation due to the effectiveness of the organizational structure to deliver quality CX.

Payroll Management		
UKG		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	<b>Leader</b> 86.0%	A-
Product	<b>Leader</b> 86.4%	A-
Adaptability	83.8%	A-
Capability	<b>Leader</b> 87.0%	A-
Manageability	83.2%	A-
Reliability	<b>Leader</b> 86.2%	A-
Usability	<b>Leader</b> 87.1%	A-
Customer	<b>Leader</b> 83.6%	A-
TCO/ROI	79.7%	B++
Validation	<b>Leader</b> 87.5%	A

Source: ISG Research  
Payroll Management Buyers Guide  
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## Workday

### Company and Product Profile

Workday Payroll, Strada v. SaaS, released November 2024

*“Don’t just run your business—run it flawlessly. When your HCM and payroll are synced up, you can leverage automation to pay people accurately, on time, and compliantly so every pay period is right on the money.” – Workday*

### Summary

Our analysis classified Workday as a provider of Merit, receiving an overall grade of B++ with a 77.2% performance. Workday's best grouped results came in Product Experience with a 77.6% performance and a B++ grade, due in part to its A- in Manageability. In Customer Experience, Workday received a B+ grade with a 75.0% performance due to its 76.3% performance in TCO/ROI. Workday was designated a Leader in Manageability.

### Challenges

Workday's B+ in Customer Experience was impacted by its B+ in Validation, where it could improve its references and case studies. Product Experience was impacted by its B+ in Reliability, where it could improve the quality of current reliability investment examples.

### Strengths

Workday performed best in Product Experience with a B++ grade, notably receiving an A- in Manageability due to the breadth and depth of capability for routine technology administration. Workday received a B+ grade in Customer Experience, with a B++ in TCO/ROI due to the depth of documentation for strategic value to specific roles or departments.

Payroll Management Workday		
Category	Performance	Grade
Overall	77.2%	B++
Product	77.6%	B++
Adaptability	76.3%	B++
Capability	77.4%	B++
Manageability	<b>Leader</b> 85.6%	A-
Reliability	71.3%	B+
Usability	79.2%	B++
Customer	75.0%	B+
TCO/ROI	76.3%	B++
Validation	73.7%	B+

**ISG** | Source: ISG Research  
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## Appendix: Software Provider Inclusion

For inclusion in the ISG Buyers Guide™ for Payroll Management in 2024, a software provider must be in good standing financially and ethically, have at least \$100 million in annual or projected revenue verified using independent sources, sell products and provide software for payroll support on at least three continents, more than 50 countries (including US), and have at least 25 customers. The principal source of the relevant business unit's revenue must be software-related, and there must have been at least one major software release in the last 18 months.

The research is designed to be independent of the specifics of software provider packaging and pricing. To represent the real-world environment in which businesses operate, we include providers that offer suites or packages of products that may include relevant individual modules or applications. If a software provider is actively marketing, selling and developing a product for the general market and it is reflected on the provider's website that the product is within the scope of the research, that provider is automatically evaluated for inclusion.

All software providers that offer relevant payroll management products and meet the inclusion requirements were invited to participate in the evaluation process at no cost to them.

Software providers that meet our inclusion criteria but did not completely participate in our Buyers Guide were assessed solely on publicly available information. As this could have a significant impact on classification and ratings, we recommend additional scrutiny when evaluating those providers.





## Products Evaluated

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Product Names</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Release Month/Year</b>
ADP	ADP Global Payroll, Celergo, Global View, ADP Vantage HCM	SaaS	November 2024
Dayforce	Dayforce Payroll	SaaS	November 2024
Infor	Infor HR Payroll	SaaS	November 2024
Neeiamo	Global Payroll Core	SaaS	November 2024
Oracle	Oracle Payroll	24D	September 2024
Paylocity	Paylocity Global Payroll, Blue Marble Payroll	SaaS	November 2024
SAP	SAP SuccessFactors Employee Central Payroll	2H2024	November 2024
UKG	UKG Pro Payroll, One View	2024.R2	September 2024
Workday	Workday Payroll, Strada	SaaS	November 2024



### Providers of Promise

We did not include software providers that, as a result of our research and analysis, did not satisfy the criteria for inclusion in this Buyers Guide. These are listed below as “Providers of Promise.”

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Customers</b>	<b>Capability</b>	<b>Geography</b>
Darwinbox	Darwinbox Payroll	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Rippling	Rippling Global Payroll	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
CloudPay	CloudPay Global Payroll	Yes	Yes	No	Yes



## Appendix: Value Index Methodology

To prepare this Buyers Guide, we utilize our Value Index methodology that draws on our more than two decades of market research, which includes benchmarking and advising thousands of enterprises. Our continuous market research provides the context of the real needs of buyers, complemented by our research on software providers, knowledge of the market and subject matter expertise in this area.

The following guidelines were presented to potential participants that met our inclusion criteria:

- A software provider could submit one or more products that best meet the scope of the Buyers Guide and the inclusion criteria.
- Any products that were submitted for this Buyers Guide must be listed on the provider's website and be generally available to enterprises.
- Software providers were requested to complete a comprehensive questionnaire covering the product and customer experience it provides.
- Verification of the product was required through documentation and/or a demonstration of the actual product.

To ensure the accuracy of the information we collect and ensure that the Buyers Guide reflects the concerns of a well-crafted RFI, we require participating software providers to provide evaluation information across all seven categories. ISG Research then validates the information, first independently through our knowledge base of software providers, product information and extensive web-based research, and then through consultation.

After validation, we grade and aggregate each software provider to determine performance in each evaluation category. Then, through weighted analytics, the ratings in the product and customer experience categories and the overall ranking are assigned. If a provider submitted more than one product for evaluation, we assessed the additional product(s) using our Capability and other evaluation categories.

We have made every effort to encompass the overall requirements that best meet an enterprise's needs today and into the future. Even so, there may be aspects of the software provider that we did not cover but affect which products best fit your particular requirements. Therefore, while this research is complete as it stands, utilizing it in your organizational context is critical to ensure that products deliver the highest level of support for your requirements.



## About ISG Software Research

ISG Software Research provides expert market insights on vertical industries, business, AI and IT through comprehensive consulting, advisory and research services with world-class industry analysts and client experience. Our ISG Buyers Guides offer comprehensive ratings and insights into technology providers and products. Explore our research at [www.isg-research.net](http://www.isg-research.net).

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