

PAYTECH

Why the Perfect Payroll Starts With the Right Payroll Vendor

BY RACHEL RAPOZA, FPC

When considering a payroll vendor, there are a lot of technical questions to ponder. Does its solution eliminate manual processes and improve efficiency? Will it help you deliver the perfect payroll faster? Does it have the functionality to help you with compliance? Will your employees and managers find it easy to use?

Your decision likely will be based on the vendor's answers to those questions. But to deliver the most value possible, a payroll vendor should offer solutions that unify all aspects of the payroll process while providing a positive customer experience that starts on Day One. A unified solution could make all the difference to the efficiency and accuracy of your payroll process.

Sounds great—but exactly what do we mean by a unified solution?

Unified, Integrated Payroll Are Not the Same

Perhaps you've heard the terms "unified payroll" and "integrated payroll" used interchangeably in your vendor search. However, you should know that these two terms do

not mean the same thing. To make an informed investment decision, it's important to understand the differences between these platforms and how they can significantly impact payroll (see Table 1 below). Those differences include the following:

- **Unified payroll systems**—These are human capital management (HCM) solutions that have been developed by a single vendor and have one employee record, database, and codebase that provides all payroll, tax filing services, HR, and workforce management capabilities in one solution
- **Integrated payroll systems**—These HCM solutions are typically developed by multiple vendors or consist of grouped modules with multiple employee records, databases, and codebases to provide payroll, tax filing services, HR, and workforce management capabilities. Often these separate modules are connected by application programming interfaces (APIs), flat file transfers, and other methods of transferring data.

Rachel Rapoza, FPC, is a Product Marketing Manager at UKG.

Table 1—Unified, Integrated Payroll Solution Differences

	Unified solution	Integrated solution
Does the solution offer a consistent, easy user experience?	All areas are consistent across the platform, making it easy for users to find and use them.	May have elements that look different or have disparate naming conventions that could be confusing to users as they navigate the platform.
Does it offer comprehensive reporting?	All data is accessible in one place, so there's no need to pull one report from payroll and another from the timekeeping module, and then use a spreadsheet or other solution to combine the data and analyze.	Limits the data that can be accessed from various modules, which could necessitate manual work to analyze and gain insights from the data.
How does it reduce errors and increase payroll efficiency?	Data is updated in real time across the entire platform for a seamless flow of the most information.	Data may need to be manually re-entered or administrators may need to wait for data to update across the system, causing potential efficiency and accuracy issues.

So, now that you have a clearer definition of each of these platforms, let's drill down into their differences.

Unified or Integrated Payroll Platform?

It isn't always immediately apparent which type of platform a vendor offers. Here are some areas to help you determine whether what you're looking at is an integrated platform, which may not be the most ideal solution for your needs:

- Multiple tabs open when accessing different areas, such as HR, timekeeping, and payroll
- Employees need to download multiple mobile apps to access different capabilities
- Some pieces of data can't be accessed in certain areas
- Different colors, fonts, or terms are used in different modules



The Importance of Great Customer Service

Regardless of platform, a list of impressive high-tech features won't mean a thing unless your potential payroll vendor offers a great customer experience. In fact, [according to a 2019 study by Kelton Global](#), poor customer support was among the top reasons companies regretted their selection of an HCM vendor.

So, when researching a vendor, ask yourself how do they engage with their customers and how do they ensure that their customers get the most value possible from their solution?

Here are three key areas on which your potential vendor should clearly be focusing to provide you with the best possible customer experience:

1. **A personalized approach**—Most vendors sell, implement, and support their solutions in a fairly standard way. However, a great vendor will customize the entire experience to their customers' unique needs.
2. **A culture of support**—A product's value can be diminished by poor or lacking customer support. Exceptional vendors establish a culture of customer support within their organizations that enables them not only to provide timely and helpful support but also to be proactive in anticipating customer needs and offering support before there are issues.
3. **Connecting and collaborating**—There's no better way to navigate a payroll solution than with insight from someone who's been there. So the best vendors offer multiple ways for customers to connect with each other to gain knowledge and expertise and collaborate with the vendor on product enhancements.

Once you've determined a payroll vendor's focus, it's also important to ask the right questions to help you better understand what kind of customer experience you can expect from it. Here are five questions to help you get the details you need to make your best decision:

1. Does the vendor segment its implementation and support teams by industry and organization size?
2. How does the vendor facilitate a smooth transition from implementation to go-live?
3. What are the ways in which customer support is accessed, and what is the average response time?
4. How does the vendor collaborate with customers on product enhancements?
5. What opportunities does the vendor offer to improve the skills and expertise of their customers?

Choosing a new technology vendor is a big decision—and it can be difficult to ensure that you're evaluating them based on what matters most to you, your business, and your people. All these tips are designed to help you make it in the most informed way possible.

You can experience unification of all aspects of your payroll process, including positive customer service, with UKG™ (Ultimate Kronos Group).

The UKG Difference

UKG is the result of a historic 2020 merger of two of the great companies in the workforce management and HCM industry: Ultimate Software and Kronos.

Throughout our histories, the legacy Ultimate and Kronos organizations each have worked to inspire people—and over time, our approach to doing so has become more closely

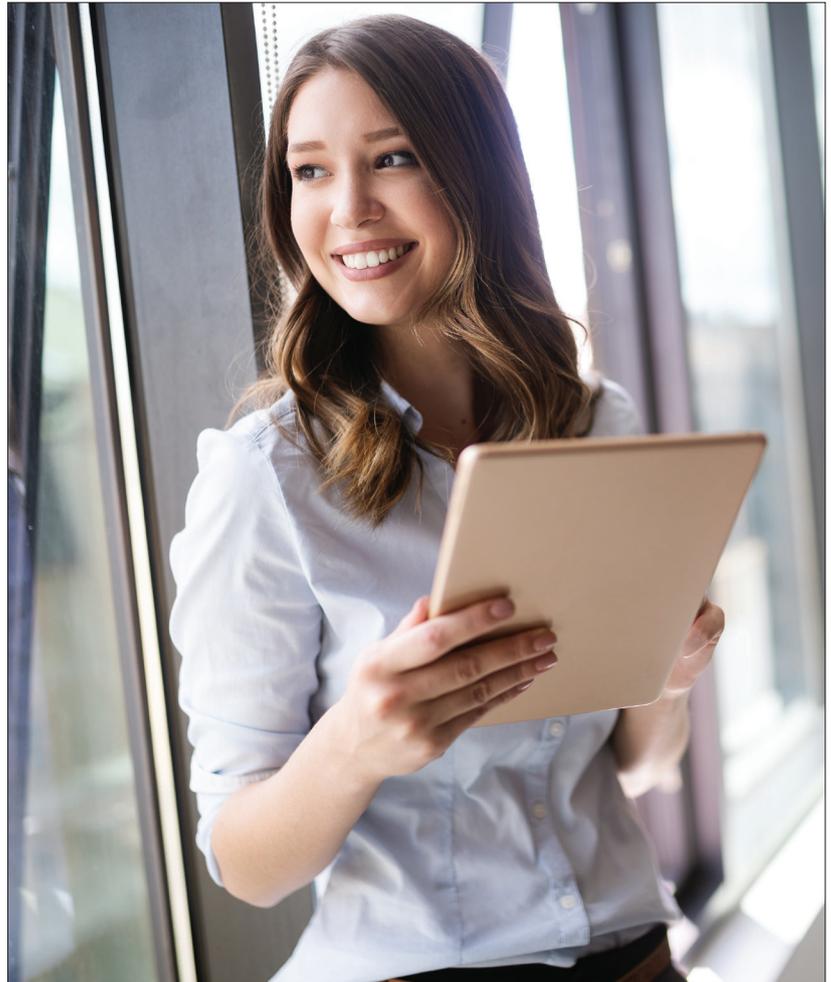
aligned. Starting from a core of industry-leading HR solutions, Ultimate Software dramatically expanded its footprint over the years to deliver an end-to-end, premium HCM solution to its customers. Similarly, a longtime global leader in workforce management (WFM), Kronos evolved into a cloud powerhouse that also provided award-winning HCM solutions covering the entire employee lifecycle.

Not only do our strengths complement one another, but together, our technologies represent the best the WFM and HCM industries have to offer. This merger has enabled:

- **Rapid innovation** powered by the minds behind two of the most highly regarded HR and payroll technology providers in the industry
- **Purpose-built solutions** for every level of organization, from small and medium-sized businesses to large enterprises
- An **even stronger commitment to service** from two award-winning professional services and support organizations aligned to deliver an unparalleled level of care around our products
- An **expanded community** of peers with whom our customers can network for best practices, thought leadership, and a deeper sense of belonging

At UKG, our entire customer experience is tailored to your organization and personalized to each administrator. Here are just a few of the ways in which we stand out:

- **Personalized services**—Our implementation methodology leverages our decades of HCM and WFM experience to implement a product with best practices unique to your industry. From there, customers enter our Hypercare program, which provides additional training and support tailored to your role and organization as your solution goes live.
- **Award-winning support**—Our innovative customer support and success model proactively reaches out to you before big events (such as year-end reconciliation) to ensure your confidence and success. And because we know you're working under tight deadlines and need help quickly, especially in payroll, our product offers live, in-application chat so you can reach someone from our team of payroll and HR experts in seconds.



- **Engaging experiences**—Beyond services and support, UKG offers a customer community as well as live and virtual events that enable customers to connect with each other, earn RCHs, and much more—all designed to help our customers build their payroll expertise. Our focus on collaboration helps us build productive partnerships with our customers through frequent surveys, customer advisory boards, and user testing days.

Choosing the right payroll vendor or type of platform doesn't have to be difficult or confusing. Armed with the right information and knowing what questions to ask and features to look for should help you move your buying decision forward with confidence.

Learn more about the award-winning UKG customer experience and how it helps our customers gain maximum value from their payroll solution at [UKG.com](https://www.ukg.com). ■

If you want to make a better
connection with your people,
connect the dots.

Two leaders in workforce management and HR
are now **Ultimate Kronos Group.**



UKG

Our purpose is people