Partners for Life:
REDEFINING CUSTOMER SERVICE

Ultimate
SOFTWARE

The advent of the technological age has made our lives infinitely easier and exponentially increased our productivity, making us far more efficient on a whole than we ever could have imagined. But is it really the technology—the hardware and the software—that makes the difference? Or do we have the hardworking men and women behind the technology to thank?

Imagine for a second that you've just purchased the best software on the market. Reviewers say it's completely transformed the way they do business, and you're hoping this solution can do the same for your organization. However, your IT department runs into a snag during implementation after completing the purchase. What happens next? Who do you turn to?

PEOPLE.

At the end of the day, the software you purchase is only one part of the equation. The service you receive after the purchase is equally important—especially when it comes to human capital management (HCM) solutions.

In Service: The Missing Factor in HCM Software Satisfaction, we uncovered the results of a recent study on customer service conducted by Kelton Global. As it turns out, when organizations are dissatisfied with their HCM selection, the software is not their biggest gripe. It is the customer service, or lack thereof, that leads as the number one cause of regret in HCM software selection.

However, when a vendor takes as much pride in their customer service as they do their product, you receive the full value of your purchase—powerful technology coupled with the continuous support your organization needs to create change and growth. Prioritizing great customer service in HCM software selection is more than just a precautionary measure. Renewing the focus on service affords businesses a number of unique benefits. When selecting an HCM vendor, you're not simply purchasing technology, you are investing in a partner for life.

A Partner for Life

The power of exceptional customer service is not lost on most organizations. 67% of HR buyers believe customer service is as important, or more important, than product functionality.[1] In light of the aforementioned Kelton Global study, HR buyers are beginning to put more weight on customer service during the decision-making process, but it's not always as easy as it seems to differentiate a run-of-the-mill vendor from a true partner for life. What does that really mean?

The customer service your organization receives from a true partner extends far beyond deployment. As your organization grows and evolves, the level of service and available options should follow suit to ensure that your business is ready to quickly adopt new features when the need arises. Whether your organization is in a time of growth or simply looking to expand its global reach, a partner for life will invest in your success by providing you with the tools you need right now and in the future.

When your HCM vendor is a partner for life, you'll also have the peace of mind of knowing that you are working with industry and solution experts who understand the unique needs of your business. They take a personalized approach to customer service by providing a range of specialized services that your organization can access at any time to help you grow and transform the way you do business.

Ultimately, your business is earned over time through continuous and customized service—not just at the point of sale.

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Implementing Lasting Impressions

First impressions are everything, and the old adage is no less true when it comes to selecting an HCM vendor. Your journey with a new vendor starts with implementation. Implementation is the foundation of any organization's success with a new HR solution, and the numbers don't lie—a positive first impression is mission critical.

Organizations who had access to provider-led implementation (vs. using a third party) were:

Almost **twice as likely** to be extremely satisfied with training

88% more likely to be extremely satisfied with educational resources

67% more likely to be extremely satisfied with their customer support team

In addition to the statistics shown here, research also found that those organizations utilizing implementation services directly from their solution provider were **61% more likely** to have achieved on-time delivery of their solution, and **48% more likely** to have come in at, or under, budget than those using a third party provider for implementation.[2]

Seeing it Through

How easy is it to find the answers you need when you need them? Is there someone you can call directly, or are you expected to wait indefinitely until a third-party customer support representative answers the general line? Can you continue to learn about the solution that your organization has just invested in?

These are all questions that must be asked, and when you're dealing with a partner for life, the answer to each of these will be a resounding, "yes." When you're treated as a lifelong partner, the service you receive extends well beyond the onboarding experience, and permeates throughout your entire partnership with a vendor.

A promise of continued support after onboarding is another unique identifier of a partner for life, and you can often gauge this commitment with a simple phone call. Finding help should never feel like an uphill battle. If your vendor is truly committed to supporting you, there will be a dedicated point of contact ready to assist you at a moment's notice.

Having to wait in a phone queue to reach someone who is unfamiliar with your account is a waving red flag and one that should be avoided. A dedicated account manager is the ideal gateway between you and a team of subject-matter experts, giving you the answers you need without having to jump through hoops.

An Experience Just for You

An educated workforce, skilled in using your new HCM solution to its full potential, means a more productive workforce and a faster return on investment. And top vendors understand that your successful use of their HCM solution is mutually beneficial. If they truly acknowledge this symbiotic relationship, your vendor will make it a priority to ensure that you and your people have a full understanding of how to utilize their solution.

It can be difficult to feel like a true partner when your vendor offers the same support solutions to every customer. Your business is unique, so a one-size-fits-all offering of services simply won't do. People-centric training means meeting your people where they are. Flexible learning-delivery options make it simple and convenient to participate, leading to increased adoption and performance.

The Partner for Life Checklist

Use this checklist to help you identify an HCM vendor that places equal value on their product and customer service— a true partner for life.

- ☑ **Initiatives to bridge the transition from implementation to adoption and use**
- ☑ **24/7 instant support**
- ☑ **A dedicated point of contact**
- ☑ **Both phone and online support, at no additional cost**
- ☑ **Complimentary training and educational materials for life**
- ☑ **Online collaboration tools and user communities**
- ☑ **Customer surveys to provide feedback**

Access to a wide variety of services from your HCM vendor are crucial to your long-term success—beginning with your launch and continuing with the transition to on-going support. When you choose to work with a partner for life, your success is always the center of attention.
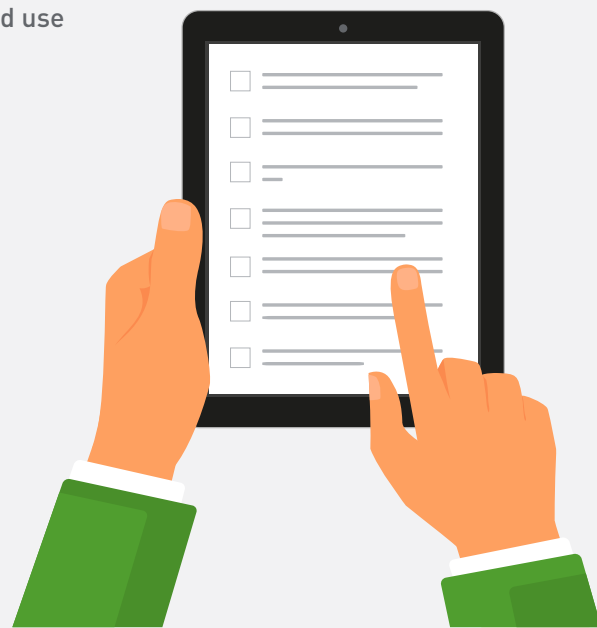
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