



# TIGHTEN UP YOUR BACK OFFICE

**I**n a never-ending effort to decrease costs, a number of staffing companies are considering back office process and technology improvements. Back office improvements yield operational efficiencies and enable staffing companies to grow revenues while maintaining or even shrinking their operations' head count. Staffing Industry Analysts surveys have shown that billing timeliness and accuracy is an important driver of client satisfaction levels. Supporting one-off client billing or reporting requirements can be enticing if that's what it takes to win new business, but staffing companies can find themselves requiring more and more back office personnel to deliver on these promises. Putting robust yet flexible

back office business processes and supporting technology in place is important for managing both operating costs and customer satisfaction levels.

Three key trends for achieving back office improvements are streamlining back office workflows, replacing paper forms with electronic data capture mechanisms and upgrading back office technology.

## **Tone BO Workflows**

Today's back office best practice is to streamline back office processes and automate as much as possible, while remaining flexible enough to support customer requirements. The process itself is first optimized and then automated and measured.



# TIGHTEN UP YOUR BACK OFFICE

## Document

Before streamlining, current processes must be documented and then refined. While this may sound like an obvious step, many staffing companies find it difficult to take the time to follow through on documentation. The typical staffing company does not have much experience with process documentation, and the activity is further complicated by the fact that business processes change frequently.

## Consolidate

Staffing companies are known for serving multiple industry segments and for acquisitions. Both of these characteristics result in unnecessary process complexity and process variations. A key component of streamlining processes can be consolidating, aligning and sharing processes across all brands, staffing segments and branches.

## Minimize Manual Effort

Once processes are simplified, manual steps and workarounds must be identified and eliminated. Reducing manual work steps in the back office helps manage costs and eliminate human error, but it also allows the back office operation to rapidly scale.

Common streamlining tactics include eliminating: manual tasks, rekeying of data, root cause drivers of pay and bill adjustments, and system workarounds. "A great indicator of a streamlining opportunity is the use of Excel spreadsheets in the back office. With Sarbanes-Oxley and the rest of

today's requirements, there really is no room for staffing companies to rely on Excel in their business process," explains John Weston, managing partner of Newbury Consulting Group, a professional services firm that focuses on PeopleSoft implementations for staffing firms.

In order to minimize manual steps, it is critical to understand the business process that your back office software actually supports. Workarounds and manual steps are a result of requiring work steps that your systems do not support. When streamlining processes, the capabilities and constraints of your technology must be understood. In some cases, your existing technology may not be able to be configured to accommodate your required process. In these cases new technology may be required. Back office software options are presented later in this article.

## Exchange Data

Manual keying of time and rate data into multiple software applications to enable pay and bill processes is an all-too-common business practice today. A number of staffing firms and back office vendors are enabling business processes and applications to be seamlessly connected via automated data exchange. Eliminating duplicate, manual data entry will reduce costs, improve throughput times and reduce downstream errors. Over the years, data exchange has become much more common. Vendors have developed tools and expertise in this area, and



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it is much easier and cheaper to automate data exchange than in the past.

## Automate Exception Handling

Even if processes have been standardized and the data flow enabled through data exchange, there will always be process exceptions that need to be handled. Most back office technology can be configured to help manage the necessary alerts, notifications and reports.

## Measure Performance

Key performance indicators (KPIs)

must be defined for the streamlined and automated processes. At the same time, KPIs must be measured, reported and managed. A key trend across the industry is the rapid improvement of reporting and business intelligence capabilities of back office solutions.

“With the advent this year of back office solutions that finally offer pay/bill systems along with general ledgers and accounts payable systems, staffing firms of all sizes can now understand the true dynamics of their cash flow and profits,” says Bond eEmpACT CEO Tim Giehll. He continues, “By having

the ‘four horsemen of cash’ (payroll + invoicing/AR + General Ledger + Accounts Payable) in a single integrated database, true analysis can begin. This is critical to many small and medium-sized staffing firms who work with their funding partners to balance their cash needs.”

## Cutting Out the Paper

Another complementary approach to achieving a cost-effective and efficient back office is to depend more heavily on electronic data capture. Replacing paper time cards, paper



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paychecks, printed invoices and paper remittance slips strips costs out of the back office.

### **Electronic Time Capture**

“Self-service time entry with online client time card approval is a very popular functionality these days,” explains Weston. “Electronic time capture saves staffing companies the cost of manual time entry and processing. However, the bigger gain is in accuracy and the reduction of days sales outstanding (DSO), fewer credit memos and fewer adjustments.”

Defining and agreeing to e-signature policies, the automation of time processing rules (e.g., California overtime calculation) and managing how and when these rules are applied, can make e-time implementations complex.

There are several vehicles used today to capture time electronically including VMS, Web portals, kiosks, time clocks and optical character recognition (OCR).

**VMS.** Typically, staffing firms have dedicated staff who log into each VMS, print out each time card and manually re-key the time data into their internal back office. The key to streamlining operations is to automate the data exchange of time data from the VMS and import it directly into the back office. VMS vendors report that this type of data exchange is increasingly common.

**Web time capture.** Candidates are issued a Web portal user name and password, log onto a Web site and enter their time. Entered time flows to the client for approval. Time card rejections and missing time cards are also handled through the system.

In some cases, the front and back office portals are provided by two separate software applications, and creating a single sign-on for the candidates and clients can be challenging.

**Kiosks.** Web time entry may not be practical for contingent labor that is not office-based. In these cases, candidates can use free-standing kiosks to self-enter time. Time data is then electronically sent to the back office.

**Electronic time clocks.** In commercial and industrial staffing, electronic time clocks are enormously popular. Candidates are issued a plastic swipe card, which is used to clock in and clock out.

**OCR.** For staffing firms that continue to rely on faxed or paper time cards, many have added OCR and imaging

# TIGHTEN UP YOUR BACK OFFICE

software. Time cards must be standardized and OCR software configured. The OCR system reads the scanned time card, translates the handwriting into electronic characters and files the time card image for retrieval. Back office staff may review the data for correctness.

## Paperless Pay

Electronic forms of pay, such as direct deposit and pay cards, have greatly increased in popularity over the last several years. More recently, the trend has been to replace printed advice with online advice. Electronic pay methods save on printing, handling and postal costs.

## Electronic Invoice

For years the industry vision was to send an electronic bill directly to a customer's accounts payable department. While staffing companies have not made that big of a leap, many firms are generating PDF-formatted invoices and emailing them to clients. A PDF is a very simple way to create the invoice and quickly get it into a client's accounts payable department, reducing the average days sales outstanding (DSO).

Systems can support this functionality by making it easy to create the PDF-formatted bill. The best systems allow easy set-up and processing of e-invoices, and make it easy to copy multiple client contacts.

## Electronic Remittance

Electronic payment has not caught on as fast as expected. Staffing companies may offer credit card payment methods for small transactions, but support for larger transactions, such as automated-clearinghouse (ACH) transfers, has not yet taken hold.

## Automated Cash Application

Most staffing companies accept receivables data from an electronic lockbox and have their system automatically apply the cash to clients' open invoices.

## Online Client Reports

Clearly, staffing customers want more and more access to data and reports. Business intelligence (BI) capabilities are expected, and back office solutions continue to offer more and more complex data analysis and reporting func-

tionality. In some cases, ad hoc reporting using powerful BI tools are offered to clients via Web portals rather than printed monthly or quarterly reports.

## Upgrade Technology

Many staffing firms will need to replace or upgrade their back office technology in order to support their newly refined business process and electronic data capture goals.

This article identifies 32 vendors that offer back office software, and provides introductory information about their products as a starting point for staffing companies embarking on a vendor selection process.

While our vendor list will not eliminate the need for you to spend time analyzing and deciding on your high-level needs, it will help you to start to hone in on those vendors that are able to support your organization's goals, direction, functional and non-functional requirements.

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## Solutions for Small Firms

Many smaller staffing companies choose to avoid the investment in back office software. These smaller firms may provide pay data to a payroll provider (e.g., ADP) and export data from the payroll provider directly into their general ledger (e.g., QuickBooks).

“Some smaller firms decide to keep their software systems simple by not having a back office system, but there is a big tradeoff,” explains John Long, Avionté CEO. “Having pay data in one location and bill data in another makes timely and accurate access to fundamental financial data, such as gross profit, more labor intensive.” Long adds that “hosted back office solutions are increasingly available and many target small staffing firms, enabling even the smallest of firms all of the benefits of having a back office.” **SI**

**Target market.** Only a portion of the back office vendors out there are offering the features and functions you are looking for, at the price point you are willing to pay. It is best to consider those vendors who are familiar with the needs of staffing companies that are your size, as they are more likely to cater toward your specific set of needs and priorities.

Vendors focusing on companies your size are more likely to provide the level of service you expect and are more likely to deliver features and functions that are most valuable to your firm. Products that target larger staffing firms may build out functionality that supports a process or service complexity that you don't need. Feature-rich software can also result in higher implementation and maintenance costs. While it may be tempting to use software with more bells and whistles than you actually need, you may want to stick with a vendor that delivers features that are core to your business.

**Geographic reach.** Geographic reach of back office software can be a key requirement for staffing firms. Our vendor list identifies where the back office vendors have existing implementations and whether they support multiple currencies. While vendors may operate on a global basis, their user interface may support English only and have other limitations. You will want to clearly specify your needs to vendors.

**Delivery model.** Our vendor list

identifies those vendors that offer on-site license, hosted license or hosted delivery models.

In the on-site license model, software is purchased for each user. In some cases a server license is also required. Both the software and hardware is owned, installed, implemented and maintained by the staffing company.

In the hosted license model, the staffing company purchases the software license and dedicated hardware, but it is maintained by the vendor in the vendor's hosting facility.

The hosted model requires that the staffing company pay a subscription to lease the software license and hardware, which includes maintenance fees.

Factors that influence which delivery model you prefer include: willingness to store back office data offsite, the amount of cash you are willing to invest up front, internal IT capabilities and the amount of customization your implementation will require.

**Functionality.** Another consideration in short-listing vendors is whether you will need additional functionality. Our vendor list identifies vendors that offer a variety of optional back office functionality.

**Front office integration.** All back office vendors that focus on the staffing industry also offer an integrated front office package. ERP vendors, such as Oracle PeopleSoft, Microsoft Dynamics and SAP, do offer a back office solution on a stand-alone basis and may or may not offer a front office solution.



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## Staffing Back Office Vendors

Company Name	Product Name (Year of Last Release)	Target Market	Staffing Sectors	Staffing Customers	Geographic Reach			
					U.S.	Canada	Other	Multi-Currency
<b>Agresso</b> <i>www.ingresso.com</i> Founded in 1980 3000 employees	Agresso Business World (2007)	Medium-Very Large	All	Adecco, Agilon, Poolia, SKILLED Group	●	●	●	●
<b>Akken</b> <i>www.akkens.com</i> Founded in 2005 40 employees	Akken Staffing™ (2007)	Small-Medium	All	Century Staffing, Orbis IT, ROI Recruiting	●	●	●	●
<b>AmiStaff</b> <i>www.amistaff.com</i> Founded in 2003 10 employees	BlueSky Medical Staffing Software (2007)	Small-Large	Healthcare	Axis Healthcare, Chino Registry, Consult-a-Nurse, CSA Medical, Halo Staffing-TMP Medical, Moon Lighting Inc.	●			
<b>Applied Systems Technology</b> <i>www.astusa.com</i> Founded in 1985 26 employees	Persona (2007)	Small-Large	Clerical, Healthcare, Hospitality, IT, Legal, Light Industrial, Professional, etc.	Not Available	●			
<b>Automated Business Designs, Inc.</b> <i>www.ultra-staff.com</i> Founded in 1982 17 Employees	Ultra-Staff (2007)	Small-Large	All plus Medical	Not Available	●		●	
<b>Avionté</b> <i>www.avionte.com</i> Founded in 2005 20 employees	Avionté (2007)	Small-Large	Clerical, Healthcare, Industrial, Technical	CornerStone Staffing Solutions, Hawkins Personnel, People 2.0	●			
<b>Bond eEmpACT Software</b> <i>www.eempact.com</i> Founded in 1990 44 employees	eEmpACT 14.0 (2007)	Small-Large	Accounting, Clerical, Industrial, Legal, Technical	ASAP Staffing Services, Automation Personnel Services, Cone Financial Group, Molly Brown Temps, Snelling Staffing Services, Stevens Resource Group, WillStaff Worldwide	●	●		
<b>Bond International Software, Inc.</b> <i>www.bondadapt.com</i> Founded in 1973 400+ employees	Adapt Financials (2007)	Small-Large	Commercial, Healthcare, IT, Professional	Not Available	●			
<b>Bridgware Systems, Inc.</b> <i>www.bridgware.net</i> Founded in 1983 20 employees	Temps Plus JKM 4.0	Small-Large	All	Not Available	●	●	●	
<b>Business Ware Services, Inc. (BWSI)</b> <i>www.bwsi.com</i> Founded in 1981 12 employees	TempWizard (2007)	Small-Medium	All	Not Available	●	●		
<b>Clearview Staffing Software</b> <i>www.clearviewtss.com</i> Founded in 2000 47 employees	TSS 6.8 (2007)	Small-Large	Healthcare plus Nursing & Allied	American Nursing Services, Kforce, Mediscan, Progressive Nursing Staffers, TravelMax	●	●	●	
<b>Complete Computer Service, Ltd.</b> <i>www.completecomputerservice.com</i> Founded in 1969 10 employees	Ultra32 7.72 (2008)	Small-Medium	Clerical, Day Labor, Healthcare, Hospitality, Light Industrial, Professional, Security	Not Available	●			
<b>DCT Computer Systems, Inc.</b> <i>www.microstaffer.com</i> Founded in 1998 5 employees	MicroStaffer 8.0 (2007)	Small-Large	Healthcare	MinuteClinic-CVS, Rehabworks	●	●		●
<b>Dialog Information Technology</b> <i>www.dialog.com.au</i> Founded in 1979 600+ employees	Labour Hire Suite Microsoft Dynamics NAV™ 5.00 (2008)	Small-Large	All	Not Available			●	●
<b>Greenfield Software, Inc.</b> <i>www.gfsw.com</i> Founded in 1981 6 employees	TempServ (2007)	Small-Large	Clerical, Light Industrial, Medical	Not Available	●			
<b>Health Systems Solutions (HSS)</b> <i>www.healthsystemssolutions.com</i> Founded in 1982 Number of employees Not Available	VividNET	Small-Large	Healthcare	Healthcare Alliance, Maxim, Northwest	●	●		
<b>iNetgen, Inc.</b> <i>www.inetgen.net</i> Founded in 2001 47 employees	Alchemus 4.2.1 (2007)	Small-Large	Engineering, IT, Manufacturing, Distribution	Intertek, Moody, PRC	●	●	●	

Delivery Model			Functionality									Platform				Common Integrations	Typical Implementation Time & Price
On-Site License	Hosted License	Hosted	Front Office	Web Portal	Time & Expense	Payroll	Billing	A/R	A/P	G/L	BI	Web-based	Client/Server	SQL Database	Oracle		
●	●	●		I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	●	●	●	●	Not Available	90-180 days Cost varies
		●	I	I	I	S	I	I	I	I	I	●				QuickBooks	1-10 days Hosted: \$50-\$99 per user per month
	●	●	I	I	I	S	S	I	S	S	I	●		●		All ODBC-compliant accounting software	Time varies Hosted: \$41-\$92 per user per month, \$10 per month per user support fee, 10% set-up fee for data migration.
●	●	●	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	●	●	●	●	AP Technologies, IBF, InstaStaff, Kronos, Resume Mirror, TALX	3-9 months Price varies
●			I	I	I	I	I	I	S	S	I		●	●		ADP, Microsoft Dynamics, Paychex, QuickBooks, etc.	6-8 weeks Price varies
●	●	●	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	S	I	●	●	●		Greenshades, Microsoft Dynamics, Microsoft Outlook, QuickBooks, Resume Mirror, Vertex	6+ weeks Price varies
●	●	●	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	●	●	●		Citrix, InstaStaff, Microsoft Dynamics, Prognos, TALX	60 days License: \$1,599 per user Hosted: \$110 per user per month
●	●	●	I	I	I	I	I	I			I	●	●	●	●	Greenshades, Microsoft Dynamics, QuickBooks, Symmetry	Not Available
●			I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	●	●	●		Not Available	Not Available
●	●	●	I		I	I	I	I			I	●	●	●		ADP	3+ weeks License: \$65-\$135 per license with \$500 per month minimum. No set-up fee. Hosted: Not Available
●	●	●	I	I	I	I	I	I			I	●		●		ADP, Ceridian, Lawson, MAS 90, MAS 200, MAS 500, Microsoft Dynamics, Paychex, Peachtree, PeopleSoft, QuickBooks	60-90+ days License: \$1,800-\$2,400 per user Hosted: \$190-\$225 per user per month
●			I		I	I	I		S	I			●			QuickBooks, TALX	1-2 weeks License: \$3,000 per server plus \$400 each 2 users plus optional tools
●			I	I	I	I	I				I		●	●		Microsoft Dynamics, Peachtree, QuickBooks	3 days License: \$5k+, priced by concurrent user
●			S	I	S	I	I	I	I	I	S		●	●		All Microsoft products, AXIOM	Not Available
●		●	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	S	●		●		PayLily, Vertex	Time varies License: \$29,500+ per site Hosted: \$95 per user per month, minimum 3 users
●	●	●	I		I	S	I	I			I	●	●	●		ADP, Ceridian, Lawson, Microsoft Dynamics, etc.	Not Available
●	●	●	I	I	I		I					●		●		Microsoft Dynamics, QuickBooks	30+ days License: \$900-\$2,000 per user Hosted License: License + 10% hosting fee Hosted: \$99-\$150 per user per month \$5k+ set-up fee



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- Online Temp & Client Access
- Contract and Rates Management
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- Operational Reporting
- Financial Reporting
- Accounting Integration
- Electronic Document Sharing
- Customized User Preferences
- Existing Data Import
- Order Import and Export
- Rate Sheets
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- Nationwide Payroll
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**Staffing Back Office Vendors** *continued*

Company Name	Product Name (Year of Last Release)	Target Market	Staffing Sectors	Staffing Customers	Geographic Reach			
					U.S.	Canada	Other	Multi-Currency
<b>Lawson</b> <i>www.lawson.com</i> Founded in 1975 4200 employees	Lawson Talent Management Lawson Resource Management	Large-Very Large	All	Not Available	●	●	●	●
<b>Micro J Systems, Inc.</b> <i>www.microj.com</i> Founded in 1983 20 employees	Tempus Fugit 9.0 (2007)	Small-Large	All	Not Available	●	●	●	●
<b>Networkers Funding</b> <i>www.networkersfunding.com</i> Founded in 2000 12 employees	Networkerspro.com (2000)	Small-Medium	All	Not Available	●			
<b>Oracle</b> <i>www.oracle.com</i> Founded in 1977 65,000 employees	PeopleSoft Enterprise Staffing (2006)	Medium-Very Large	All	Cross Country Staffing, Hudson Highland, Kelly Services, Kforce, Minutemen Staffing, Randstad NA, Staffmark, TAC Worldwide	●	●	●	●
<b>Professional Advantage</b> <i>www.mbsstaffing.com</i> Founded in 1989 220 employees Microsoft Dynamics™ GP Reseller	Personnel Agency Management (PAM) Module 10.0 (2007) Microsoft Dynamics™ GP 10.0 (2007)	Medium-Large	All	Not Available	●	●	●	●
<b>Questek Systems Inc.</b> <i>www.questekinc.com</i> Founded 1983 14 employees	Humanis (2007)	Small-Large	All	Not Available	●	●	●	
<b>SAP</b> <i>www.sap.com</i> Founded in 1972 43,800 employees	SAP for Professional Services (2005)	Medium-Large	Professional Services Firms	Personnel Decisions Inc., RHI, Randstad, Yoh	●	●	●	●
<b>Safe Computing</b> <i>www.safecomputing.co.uk</i> Founded in 1974 85 employees	Tempest 7.6	Medium-Very Large	All	Adecco, Carlisle, Hays, Michael Page, MPS, RHI, Spring			●	●
<b>Sarach Technologies, LLC</b> <i>www.coatssql.com</i> Founded in 1994 10 employees	COATS Standard 8.2.2 (2007) COATSSql 2.7.0 (2007)	Small-Medium	Accounting, Clerical, Hospitality, Industrial, Legal, Medical	Not Available	●			
<b>SkilMatch Staffing Systems</b> <i>www.skilmatch.com</i> Founded in 1976 20 employees	SkilMatch 9.7 (2007)	Small-Large	Accounting, Clerical, Industrial, IT, Legal, Medical	Helpmates Staffing Services, Jaci Carroll Staffing Services, Kimco Staffing Services	●			
<b>Staffing Technologies Inc.</b> <i>www.staffingtech.com</i> Founded in 1994 5 employees	Conductor 7.2 (2007)	Small-Large	Clerical, Daily Pay, Light Industrial, Technical	Not Available	●			
<b>TempWorks Software</b> <i>www.tempworks.com</i> Founded in 1994 55 employees	TempWorks Enterprise (2007)	Small-Large	Clerical, Healthcare, Light Industrial, Professional	Chase Staffing Services, Link Staffing Services, Lofton Corporation, Penmac Personnel Services	●	●		
<b>VCG, LLC</b> <i>www.vcgsoftware.com</i> Founded in 1976 70 employees	StaffSuite (2007)	Small-Large	Accounting, Clerical, Direct Hire, Finance, Legal, Light Industrial, Technical	Elwood Staffing, Employment Group, Global Employment Solutions, Nelson Family of Companies, Roth Staffing Companies, Staff Forces, The QTI Group, Trillium Staffing	●			
<b>xpdient, Inc.</b> <i>www.xpdoffice.com</i> Founded in 2001 Number of employees Not Available	xpdoffice 9.1 (2007)	Small-Medium	Accounting, Government Services, Healthcare, Legal	CLR, CST, ISM	●	●		●
<b>ZStaff Software</b> <i>www.zstaff.com</i> Founded in 1999 6 employees	ZStaff 5.76 (2007) ZStaff.net 1.01 (2007)	Small-Medium	Niche recruiting and staffing agencies	Not Available	●	●	●	

**Key:**

- Target market: Small = less than \$10m in annual revenues; Medium = \$10m to \$100m; Large = \$100m to \$500m (large); Very Large = Greater than \$500m
- Functionality: In our chart, an "I" denotes when functionality is included in the back office package (i.e., not sold separately) and "S" identifies functionality, which is offered as a separate, stand-alone application (i.e., sold separately).

Delivery Model			Functionality									Platform				Common Integrations	Typical Implementation Time & Price
On-Site License	Hosted License	Hosted	Front Office	Web Portal	Time & Expense	Payroll	Billing	A/R	A/P	G/L	BI	Web-based	Client/Server	SQL Database	Oracle		
●	●	●	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	●		●	●	Not Available	Not Available
●	●	●	I		I	I	I	S	S		I		●	●		Microsoft Dynamics, QuickBooks	Not Available
	●	●	I	I	I	I	I	I	S	S	I	●		●		MAS 90	7-14 days Access and implementation free with payroll funding service
●	●	●	S	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	●		●	●	Resume Mirror, etc.	Not Available
●		●		I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	●	●	●		Bond Adapt, Bond eEmpACT, Bullhorn, VCG WebPas, Vurv, etc.	3+ months Price varies
●	●	●	I	S	I	I	I	I	I	I	I		●	●		Microsoft Dynamics, QuickBooks, Simply	Not Available
●	●	●	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	●		●	●	Not Available	Not Available
●	●	●	S	S	S	I	I	I				●	●	●		Bond Adapt, CODA, Microsoft Dynamics, PeopleSoft, Sage, SAP	Not Available
●	●	●	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	●	●	●		Microsoft Outlook, StaffMetric	Time varies License: \$2,200 per user for integrated front and back office Hosted: \$400 per user per month + \$200 per user per year maintenance
●	●	●	I	S	S	I	I	I	I	I	S	●	●	●		AccPac, JD Edwards, Microsoft Dynamics, etc.	90+ days License: Server license + \$695-\$1,690 per user Hosted: \$39-\$99 per user per month
●	●	●	I		I	I	I	I		S	I		●			AccPac+, Business Manager, Business Works, Cignify, Frick, GAAP, Kronos, Net Profit, SRC, etc.	1-5 days License: \$995 per user plus \$500 single PC or \$1,000 server license or \$100 per user per month Hosted: Varies
●	●	●	I	S	S	I	I	I	I	I	I	●	●	●		MAS 500, Microsoft Dynamics, QuickBooks	Not Available
●	●	●	I	S	S	I	I	I			S		●		●	Citrix, Kronos, MAS500, Microsoft (Dynamics, Outlook, SharePoint), Net Profit, PeopleSoft, Quickbooks, TALX, TimeCentre, Vertex	Not Available
●	●	●	I	I	I	S	I	I	I	I	I	●		●		Microsoft Dynamics, QuickBooks	30+ days License: \$695-\$1,690 per user Hosted License: License + 15% hosting fee Hosted: \$27-\$54 per user per month \$5k+ set-up fee
●	●	●	I	I	I	S	I	S	S	S	S	●	●	●	●	ADP, Microsoft Dynamics, Millennium M-3, QuickBooks	5+ days License: \$995 per user Hosted: \$79-\$99 per user per month

# TIGHTEN UP YOUR BACK OFFICE

**Web portals.** Portal capabilities allow candidates and clients access to back office functionality directly from the Web. Candidates may be able to enter time, review pay history and print their W-2. Clients may have access to a rich set of functionality including time approval, electronic billing, electronic payment, and access to canned and ad hoc reporting.

**Other functionality.** Back office solutions often include time and expense capture, time approval and validation, payroll processing, check cutting, pay distribution, billing, cash applications and receivables management. Many back office solutions also provide accounts payable and general ledger capabilities. Business intelligence capabilities are in high demand and vendors are increasing the sophistication of their offering in this area.

**Platform.** The method by which users access the software can be a critical decision-making point since more and more companies have strict platform and database requirements. Our chart describes whether a Web-based or client/server interface is available. If Citrix connections are required, the client/server box has been checked. The chart also

describes whether Microsoft SQL Server or Oracle databases are supported. Some vendors may support additional databases such as DB2 or Sybase.

**Common Integrations.** Back office applications must exchange data with various other systems. Types of software integrated with include: front office applications, email, time and expense capture and processing systems, time clocks, tax services and general ledger packages. Vendors have identified software packages with which they have frequently integrated.

**Pricing and Implementation.** The pricing shown in our vendor list is typical pricing before volume discounts have been applied. Pricing is often calculated on a “per user” or “per location” basis and depends on the delivery model used and functionality included. Expect to pay additional fees for user and technical support, and annual maintenance.

The implementation costs and time frames shown express the average time frame required to get a staffing company up and running on the software. Generally, implementation costs and duration include setup, configuration, data conversion and user training. A range of time and cost is frequently given since implementations vary in complexity and depend on the delivery model deployed. Implementation time frames quoted by vendors focus on their ability to deploy software, and

does not include the time to redesign and roll out new business processes.

## Conclusion

Improving your back office business process or technology means changing two mission critical staffing company functions – paying candidates and billing clients. Any misstep in implementation is likely to impact your bottom line, not to mention your professional reputation and brand image.


When successfully streamlined, the back office enables staffing companies to efficiently and accurately pay candidates and bill clients, reduce operational costs and enable growth.

Three common methods for achieving back office improvements are streamlining back office workflows, replacing paper forms with electronic data capture mechanisms and upgrading back office technology. **SI**

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All information on the chart beginning on page 34 has been supplied by vendors in response to our questionnaire and interviews from August 2007 – April 2008. SIA and The Code Works suggest you use this chart as a starting point. Information in the guide does not constitute any recommendation or warranty on the part of *SI Review* or Staffing Industry Analysts, Inc. or The Code Works Inc. Readers are advised to contact consultants, other staffing software users and vendors directly for more detailed information before purchasing. In addition, despite diligent research we may have missed some suppliers in this ever-changing space. If so, please notify us at jreeder@staffingindustry.com.





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