Myth vs. Reality:

Breaking Down the Differences Between

A Dedicated ATS vs. an HRIS ATS

A 5-page guide that debunks three commonmyths and explains why an ATS built for healthcare is far superior for successful hiring, quality care and the financial health of your business.

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Introduction

Implementing an all-in-one human resources information system (HRIS) is a growing trend among IT teams at health systems, hospitals, senior care and other provider organizations. Cost savings, fewer vendor contracts and "one system of record" are typically the main arguments for system consolidation.

It's easy to see why such a solution is appealing to executives like the CID, CTO and CFO—but there are major gaps in the argument that investing in an HRIS is cheaper and easier to manage.

An HRIS ATS is not as effective as a dedicated healthcare ATS. In some cases, it isn't even in the same ballpark, resulting in longer time-to-fill for critical roles, higher premium labor costs, risks to quality of care and turnover.

Healthcare providers' highest priority today is providing quality care to the patients and residents they serve. To recruit and retain top talent to provide this care, they must field high-performing recruiters and equip them with the most effective tools.

As candidates' needs and recruiting software evolves, healthcare organizations need to go beyond an HRIS ATS and consider the benefits of a full-featured talent acquisition suite. Armed with the right solution, HR teams can dramatically improve their ability to recruit top talent, improve staffing levels and reduce turnover - all while saving time and money.

Read on to understand why a dedicated healthcare ATS is the right choice.

Myth #1:
The HRIS-provided ATS is "free," so it's cheaper to standardize on one HRIS and ATS vendor.

Reality:
The amount of money you'll waste on hidden costs will far surpass the "savings" from your HRIS-provided ATS.

Decision Making Insight

At the end of the day, CTOs and CFOs who neither own the talent function nor understand the critical differences in functionality between various solutions aren't in the best position to be making talent decisions on behalf of the company. HR leaders must demand a seat at the table when technology decisions are being made, as these decisions will directly affect recruiting talent, patient care and bottom line financials. CHROs should have the final say about the tools that impact their teams' performance and how they do their jobs.

Implementation for a "free" HRIS ATS typically costs hundreds of thousands of dollars, far exceeding the implementation cost of any stand-alone ATS - let alone one specifically tailored for the healthcare space. What's worse is this costly implementation leads to poor recruiting outcomes.

HRIS ATS solutions lack many of the core capabilities found in a purpose-built healthcare ATS: texting, video interviewing, self-scheduled interviews, recruitment marketing, advanced career sites, pre-hire assessments, job distribution, onboarding and reference assessments. Collectively, these features dramatically reduce time-to-fill and increase retention, resulting in higher staffing levels and a lower spend on overtime and agency.

A "free" ATS that saves $200K in technology spend but increases premium labor spend by $1M and costs $150K to implement isn't really free. As an industry, we need to stop pretending like it is because it ultimately impacts the quality care patients and residents receive.

Myth #2:
There is better integration when using the ATS that is bundled with an HRIS .

Reality:
Integrating a dedicated healthcare ATS with other HR systems is just as easy and can be automated.

Decision Making Insight

To be clear, integration is an important part of the decision when choosing an ATS - but don't settle or ignore red flags about how an HRIS integrates with other systems. If an HRIS system doesn't have a modern data transfer process for outside solutions, it will likely lack other flexibility and functionality that will negatively impact the recruiting process. Further, it's worth noting that all the internal integrations within a single integrated HRIS solution will mean nothing if, as a result, applicant flow drops by 25% and premium labor increases by 10%.

To integrate a dedicated ATS to an HRIS, it's usually enough to run a simple batch process to move data from one system to the other. This can be scheduled as an overnight data transfer to avoid disruption during the workday.

Integration doesn't need to happen in real-time and certainly shouldn't interrupt any existing workflows; pushing and pulling data between systems post-implementation should be a seamless process.

It should be bidirectional, meaning the HR team won't waste time by entering the same data in multiple places manually. Such integrations have been the core method of HR integrations for more than three decades and are a tried and true method of systems integration.

Myth #3:
Having one HRIS vendor means only managing one contract .

Reality:
HRIS ATS capabilities are bare bones 101 functionality which could result in HR needing to do *more* external integrations than they would need to do with an ATS solution provider.

Decision Making Insight

Bottom line: With only an HRIS, HR will still work with other vendors - with additional contracts - to fulfill all their talent acquisition needs. While it is a second contract, choosing an ATS that includes tools across the entire talent acquisition function will eliminate needing to manage several other contracts in the long-term.

It's impossible to have a high-performing recruiting function using only one vendor. Period. So, if it seems too good to be true that your one HRIS system can address all a recruiter's hiring needs, it's because it is.

A modern hiring process requires various kinds of recruitment marketing functionality such as sourcing, candidate relationship management, job distribution and sophisticated career sites, as well as reference assessment capabilities, pre-hire behavioral assessments, video interviewing, text-to-apply features, background check integrations, offer management and onboarding.

A typical HRIS ATS will have one or two of these natively, which will result in a minimum of four to five additional integrations and third-party vendor relationships. A modern, purpose-built ATS will have all the above in one integrated solution, requiring only one integration and one vendor relationship into the HRIS vs. the four or five that an HRIS ATS would require.

Further, a strong healthcare ATS will also offer additional features beneficial for candidates. For example, think about integration with Indeed Easy Apply. Improving the candidate experience with a streamlined application process will increase candidate volume and thus improve quality of hire.
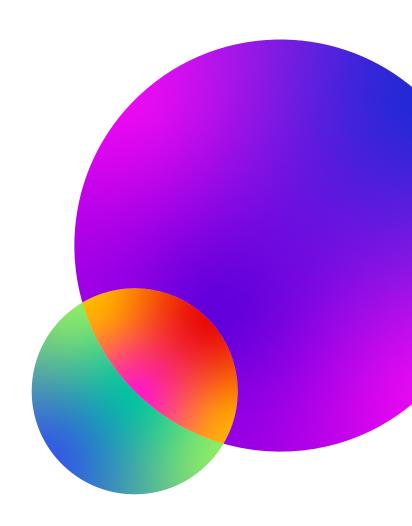
Conclusion

A one-size-fits-all HRIS system will not allow health systems, hospitals, senior care and other provider organizations to keep up in today's competitive healthcare hiring market.

Yes, it may appear cheaper and easier to manage on paper - but when looking at the bottom line, it simply is not. All aspects of the business and the hidden costs or expenses that come along with talent acquisition must be considered to see the full financial picture.

Business outcomes matter, and a dedicated healthcare ATS gives recruiters and hiring managers the full suite of tools they need to recruit and retain top talent.

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