

Guide to Implementation Partners Ultimate Kronos Group (UKG)



Prepared by Raven Intel
October 2020



Introduction 3

Why Selecting the Best Partner is Vital 4

Ultimate Software Projects & Partners Executive Summary 6

Ultimate Software Review Highlights 7

Top Partners to Consider 8

Other Partners 14

10 Questions to Ask a Potential Consulting Partner 15

Raven Intel is an independent peer review site that helps Enterprise Software customers find, hire and review the best consulting partner for their implementation. We provide business leaders with valuable transparency into the software implementation process and raise the visibility of consulting partners who are doing the most to help their customers achieve the maximum benefit from their software purchase. Our site, ravenintel.com, provides free access to hundreds of vetted customer reviews about Enterprise Cloud Software projects, as well as to the profiles and ratings of over 100 consulting firms—from the Big 5 to boutique organizations.

900+

Verified
reviews

100%

Of our reviews are verified
with 2-step verification

150+

Consulting firms
represented

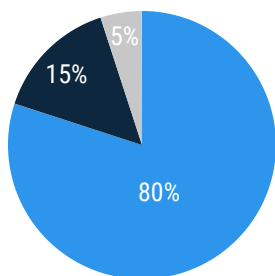
40+

Countries
represented

OUR VETTING PROCESS

100% of our reviews are verified. We know the identity of every one of our reviewers (work email & LinkedIn), their company and have validated their company uses the software they have reviewed. We disqualify approximately 20% of the reviews submitted when we are unable to verify full credentials. At no time can a partner, software company or other party pay for favorable data, for Raven Intel to delete negative reviews or for favorable reporting.

SOURCE OF REVIEWS



Direct-to-Customer - 80%

Raven Intel continually runs independent campaigns (email, LinkedIn, social media) targeted to Human Resources decision makers who have implemented a cloud-based Human Capital Management system within the past 18 months and requested that they review their project on our site.

Consulting Firm Initiated - 15%

Consulting firms (aka Systems Integrators) have also sent customers to Raven Intel.com to complete a review, or provided us with contact lists so that we could go directly to customers.

RavenIntel.com - 5%.

Approximately 5% of customers came directly to Raven Intel to submit a review.

ABOUT RAVEN INTEL'S COMMUNITY & BUSINESS MODEL

Raven Intel is free to software customers, as well as for consulting firms to be listed & reviewed on our site. For consulting firms, we offer a paid subscription service that allows them to purchase advertising space (similar to Glassdoor or Yelp!) for brand recognition, as well as provide them with in-depth analytics about their service delivery metrics and peer comparison scores.

We work with software vendors to provide independent, aggregate reporting of their customer sentiment data to inform them about how their partners and projects are performing, and how they compare to their peers in the industry. At no time is customer review data altered to enhance a software vendor or consulting firm's rating favorably.

RAVEN INTEL'S REVIEW DATABASE

900+

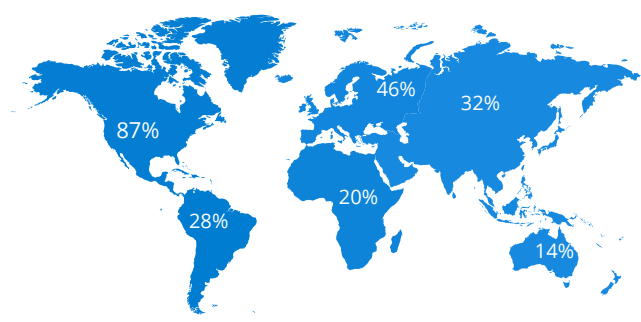
Vetted customer reviews

40+

Countries represented

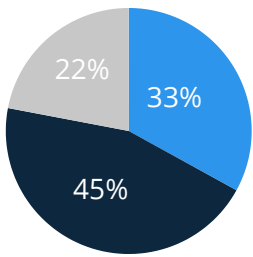
87%

Implementations completed via consulting firm

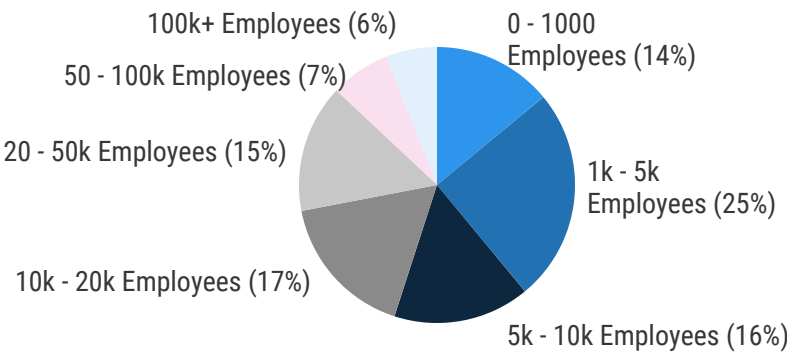


COMPOSITION OF CONSULTING FIRMS REVIEWED

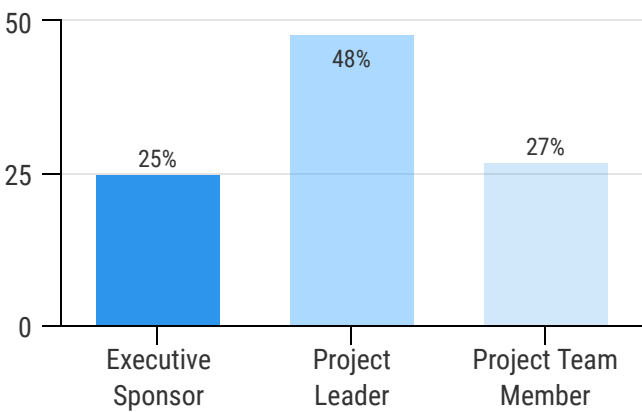
- Global consulting firms
- Independent consulting firms
- Boutique consulting firms



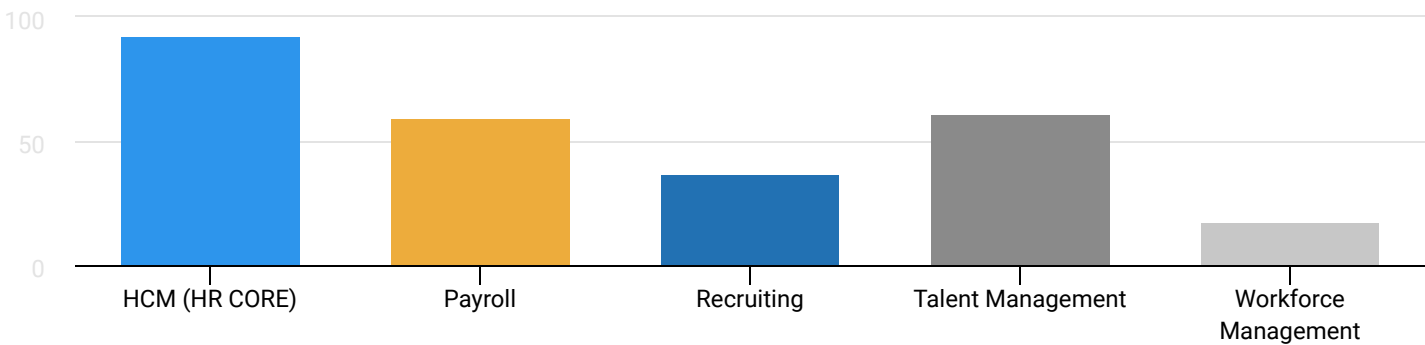
CUSTOMER EMPLOYEE SIZES REVIEWED



REVIEWER ROLES



IMPLEMENTATION TYPES REVIEWED (HCM)



At Raven Intel, we research partners who implement Enterprise cloud software to understand the composition of their company—the geography they serve, the type of projects they work on and the profile of consultants on their team. Firmographic data is important, but to really know a firm is to know their customers. The marketing adage, ‘your company’s brand is what customers are saying about you behind your back’ rings true. If you are a business making a decision to entrust a partner to lead you on an Enterprise Software project—knowing this ‘brand’ before you’re knee-deep in a project is critical. Hearing real-life customer experiences are perhaps the most indicative marker of a consulting firm’s quality and are the easiest way for you to gain confidence that a firm can deliver on the promises made during the evaluation stage.

Expectations vs. Reality

We’ve seen a full range of quality when it comes to consulting projects and firms. There are firms that look impressive on the surface and say all the right things—but when you talk to their customers, a different picture of reality emerges. There are others that lack the million-dollar marketing budgets and polish of a larger firm, yet are delivering projects with high satisfaction, ahead of schedule. In addition, change happens over time—a firm who has once struggled may have added new talent or processes to improve the customer experience. Conversely, a firm once known for good quality might have gotten too overloaded with projects and thus now struggles to effectively satisfy customers. Being able to look under the hood and quickly get a sense for the current, authentic customer experience can end up saving your organization a lot of time and money in the long run.

“I’ll just ask my software vendor for recommendations.” Think again.

In 65% of the projects we’ve reviewed, customers chose their implementation partner “because of the recommendation of their software vendor.” It would seem logical that your software vendor knows best when it comes to a partner. Not so. In those projects where the customer felt the decision for the partner was ‘made for them’, project satisfaction averages around 6 out of 10. While it is true that software vendors certify partners to implement their software and get used to working with certain firms, there is inherent bias in the process. Many times the same partners who implement are helping to sell the software engagement or are paying hefty fees for the ability to be walked in the door. In addition, the knowledge that software sales teams have about actual project delivery quality is many times incomplete and won’t provide your organization with options best-aligned with the scope of your project.

The upshot:

Whether your software vendor tells you their small, tightly-controlled ecosystem will guarantee you get a good partner or the vast choices available will give you many partners to choose from—you still need to do your own homework. In the end, you’ll live with your partner choice.

Reviews on Raven Intel

Visitors to Raven gain a bird’s eye view—and can look up any Enterprise software consulting firm on our website and read reviews—for free. Raven has over 900 vetted reviews about Enterprise Software projects and the partners that help lead them. We ask customers a series of quantitative and qualitative questions about their project, and that information is then verified for authenticity and published.

- Did the project succeed?
- What was the team like? Did the team stay consistent throughout the project?
- Was the project delivered on-time? On-budget?
- Was it scoped properly?

The answers to these questions are signals for other customers to learn from. In addition, we verify every review that it was written by a real customer who has gone through a Enterprise software cloud project within the past 24 months. This trust is critical for us as we have thousands of customers who use our information to guide their decision process.

Highlights

Ultimate Software (UKG) is rapidly growing its partner ecosystem to implement and provide ongoing services and software extensions to its customers. Similar to the model that other Enterprise HCM Software vendors (SAP SuccessFactors, Workday, Oracle) employ, UKG is leaning on partners for a larger percentage of their system implementations and services work. Building out a healthy partner ecosystem allows Enterprise software vendors the ability to focus their core competencies in developing and selling software, increase their distribution channel and allow customers to benefit from a partner firm's HR transformational capabilities that are difficult to procure and maintain internally.

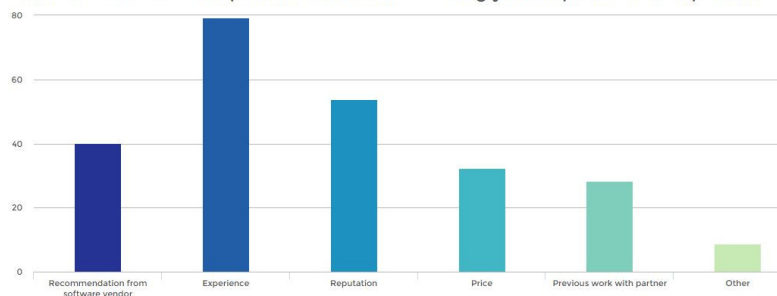
UKG's services partner ecosystem of ~50 partners is primarily comprised of independent consulting firms versus Global Service Providers (e.g. "Big 5".) Their average partner has a bench of <25 full-time consultants and has been a partner for 5+ years. For the purposes of this report, Raven Intel has focused on Ultimate Software's partners, and will include the Kronos partner ecosystem in future publications.

How Customers Choose UKG Partners

The majority of UKG customers chose their partner because of UKG's recommendation (62%), but customers who did their own research (21%) or used a partner for other projects (21%) were more likely to rate their project a 9 or 10.

The average customer considered (3) proposals before making a partner choice. Top (3) reasons for partner choice: Experience, Reputation, Price. ***Raven Intel can help you vet these areas as well.***

What were the most important criteria for choosing your implementation partner?



UKG Implementation / Service Partner Strengths

- Implementations are typically less expensive and take less time than Enterprise Cloud HCM vendor peers (Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, Oracle HCM)
- Projects are more likely to be delivered on-time / on-budget
- More highly-specialized HR consultant resources who have worked with the Ultimate Software product for several years and/or have previous experience as a customer and HR practitioner
- Fewer partner firms and a smaller partner ecosystem allow for greater oversight and control over certifications and partner training, although with the growth of the partner ecosystem, this will be more difficult to maintain

Implementation / Service Partner Challenges

- Implementations and partners are primarily located and experienced with North America-based installs and customers. UKG and its partners have far fewer complex, global implementations than their Enterprise Cloud HCM peers.
- Implementations and partners are focused / narrowly skilled with Ultimate Software implementations (HR suite), and not as experienced with broader digital transformational work or different Enterprise Software platforms.
- Few Global Systems Integrator (GSI) partnerships, which limits scale beyond HR / domestic footprint
- Internal / UKG Professional Services-led implementations are rated lower than partner-led implementations

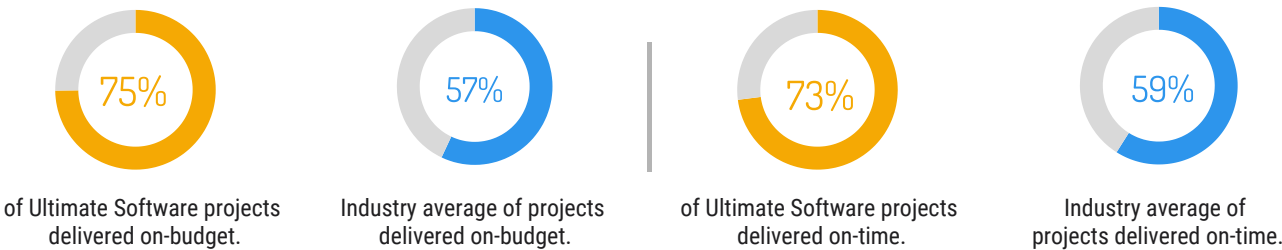
Traits of Top Partners

It is easy to spot top UKG partners, as they are open to the idea of project transparency and being reviewed publicly. Within this 3rd quarter, the Top 10 partners procured over 155 reviews from customers that have been fully vetted and are available for view on Raven Intel.com. Common traits:

- Scope projects well during the sales process and have fewer change orders
- Rated well for Systems Expertise, Responsiveness & Flexibility
- Do not change out project resources mid-project

ON-TIME & ON-BUDGET DELIVERY

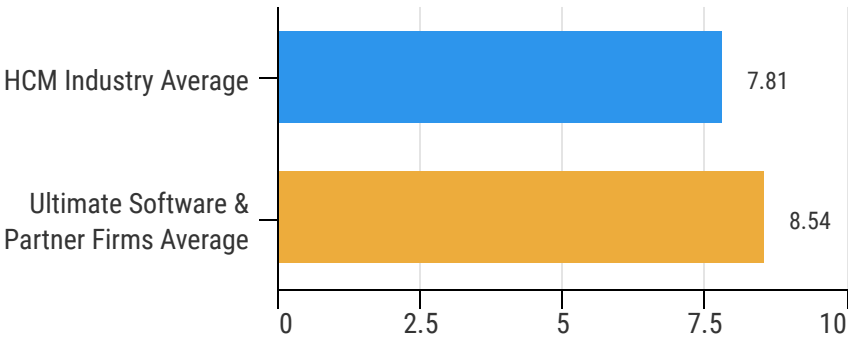
We ask customers if their project was delivered on-schedule and on-budget. If delivered late or over-budget, we ask to what degree. As compared to the HCM industry averages, Ultimate Software and its partner consulting firms are **exceeding the average on-budget delivery by 18% and on-time delivery by 14%.**



OVERALL PROJECT SATISFACTION

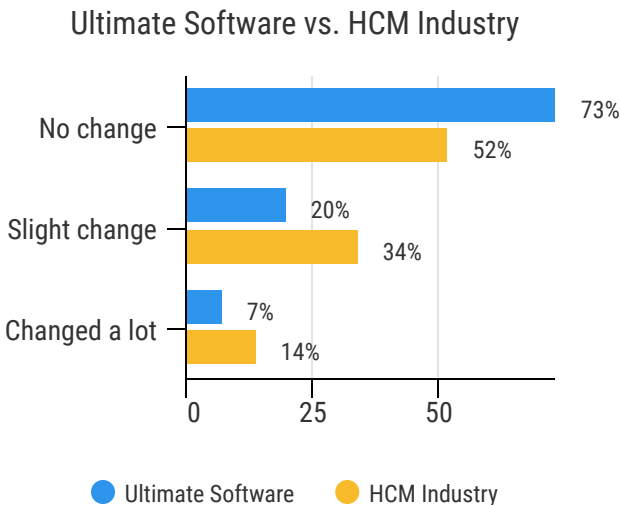
A summary of all Ultimate Software and partner consulting firms show that their **average project satisfaction rate is 8.54**, on a scale of 1-10 (with 10 being the highest).

Compared to the overall **HCM software industry average of 7.89**, Ultimate Software and its partner consulting firms are exceeding other consulting partners in project satisfaction.



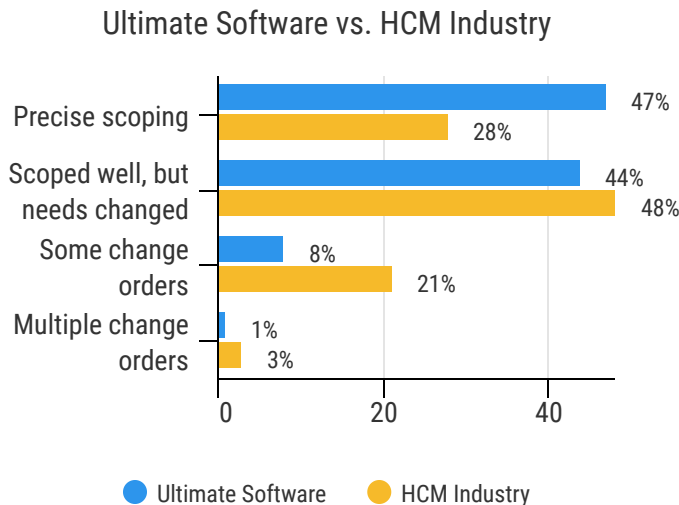
TEAM CONSISTENCY

We ask customers if their partner project team was consistent throughout or if there were changes. According to Raven Intel data, Ultimate Software and its partner consulting firms are **21% more likely to retain the same team throughout the entire implementation.**



SCOPING ACCURACY

We ask customers how accurately their project was scoped, and if they had change orders. Raven Intel's data indicates that Ultimate Software and its partner consulting firms are **19% more likely to scope project precisely** and 13% less likely to have "some" change orders compared to the HCM industry average.

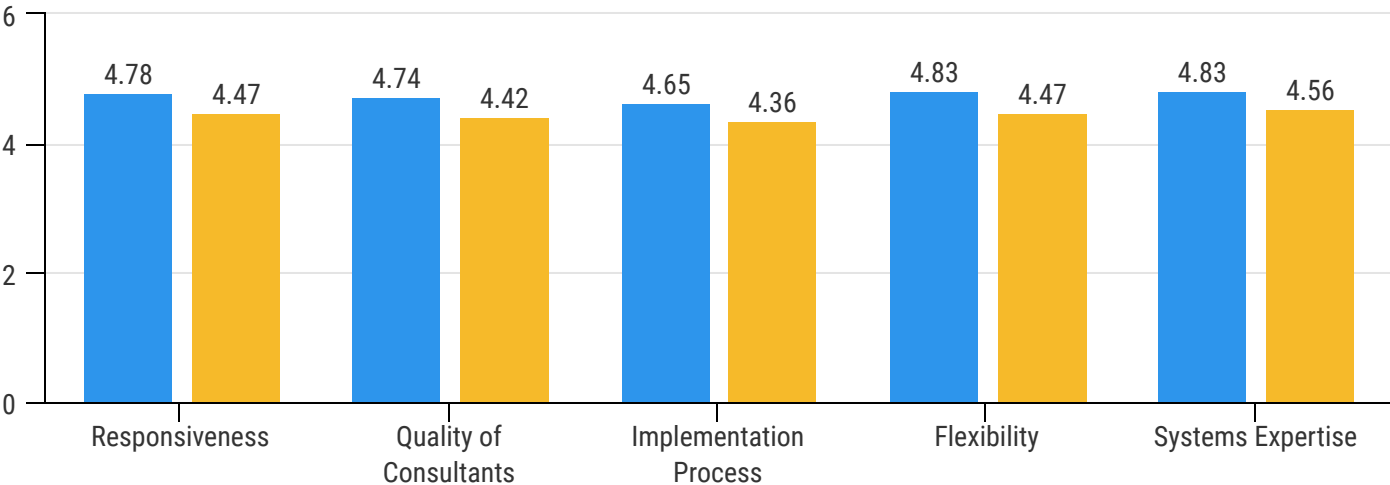




★★★★★ 4.9/5

23 Reviews

Wise Consulting Compared to UKG Averages



23%

More likely to deliver on time

● Wise Consulting ● Industry Average

2x

More likely to have a project with no change orders

“

Wise Consulting was a great addition to our project team. They were a thorough partner to explain what the vendor was recommending. They explained things in better detail so we could make the right decision at the right time!

Project Lead
HCM (HR Core), Talent Management, Recruiting / Onboarding, Payroll
Healthcare/Medical Industry

“

Wise was the exact type of partner we needed to help us through multiple unexpected time-sensitive and challenging projects. Wise stepped in on short notice and helped us through a very difficult time. They had a great ability to understand our unique business set-up and proactively suggest best practices and solutions. I highly recommend Wise for any organization, especially those that are fast paced and looking to innovate and transform from a systems perspective. We are extremely pleased with Wise and also very lucky to have discovered them!

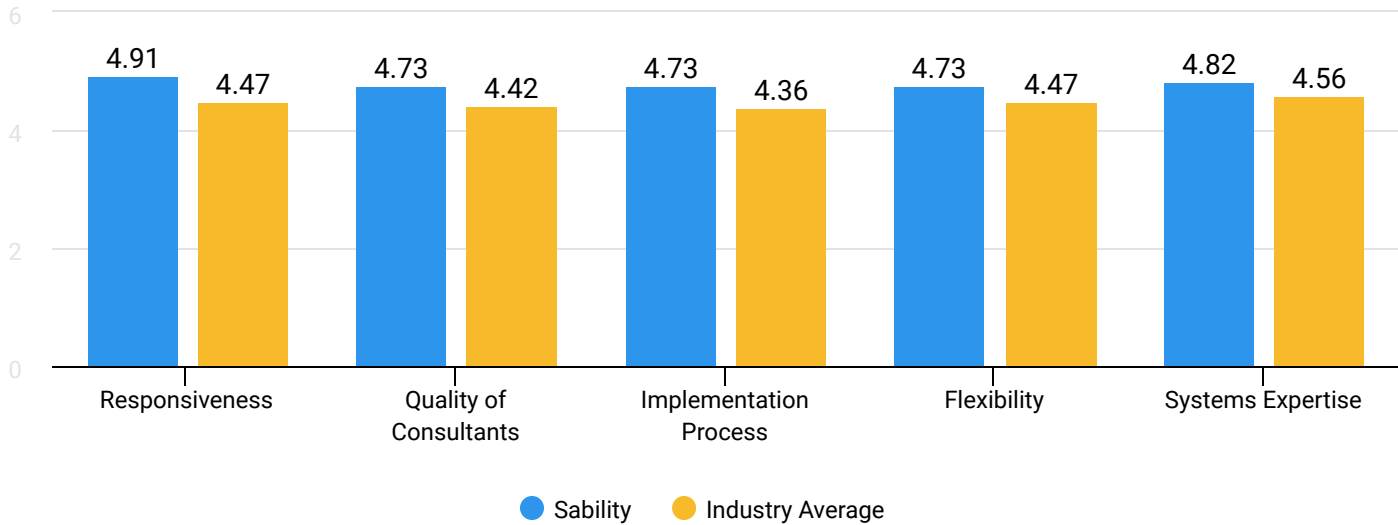
Decision Maker
HCM (HR Core), Talent Management, Recruiting / Onboarding, Payroll
Non-Profit Industry

[Read More Reviews](#)



11 Reviews **5/5**

Sability Compared to UKG Averages



“

"Sability has been a great fit as a partner for our organization. They have done a great job in understanding the current state of our HCM, our pain points, and how we want to align our HCM to fit our current and future business needs. Communication is timely and thorough. Our partners are willing to make time at any point to address any questions we may have during the project. They are 100% committed to developing a great customer relationship. I highly recommend them for any companies needing assistance with Ultimate Software product implementation."

Project Leader
Talent Management, Financials
Agriculture / Forestry / Fishing Industry

“

"The people at Sability make all the difference. They are knowledgeable, friendly and responsive – which is something you don't always get. Sability has assisted us with UltiPro Time Management programming/pay policy/shift premium programming and BI. They understand the products well and have done a fabulous job helping my company get the outcome we need."

Project Leader
HCM (HR Core), Recruiting / Onboarding, UTM
Medical / Healthcare Industry

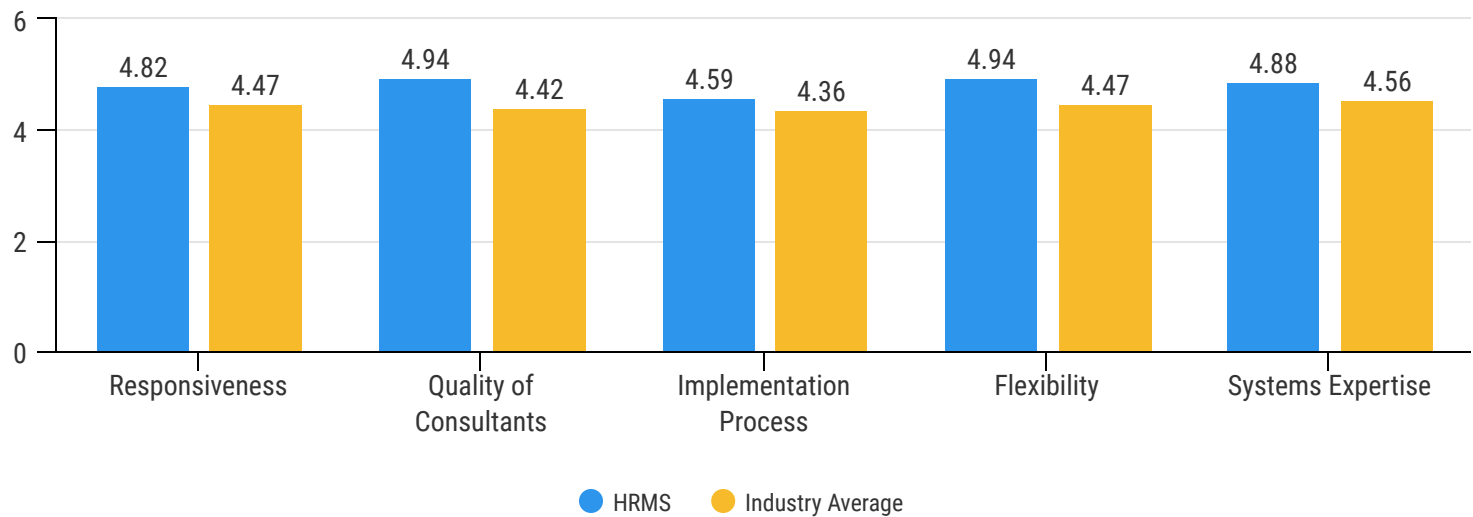
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.9/5

17 Reviews

HRMS Compared to UKG Averages



“

Our experience with HRMS has been stellar. They are very knowledgeable, responsive, professional and so easy to deal with. They are flexible, honest, dedicated and pleasant to work with. I could not be more pleased with the entire team.

Project Lead
HCM (HR Core), Talent Management, Recruiting / Onboarding, Payroll
Finance / Insurance / Banking Industry

“

Spend the resources to work with HRMS. They truly make frustrating situations go away and make the ease of new enhancements enjoyable.

Project Lead
HCM (HR Core)
Food Services Industry

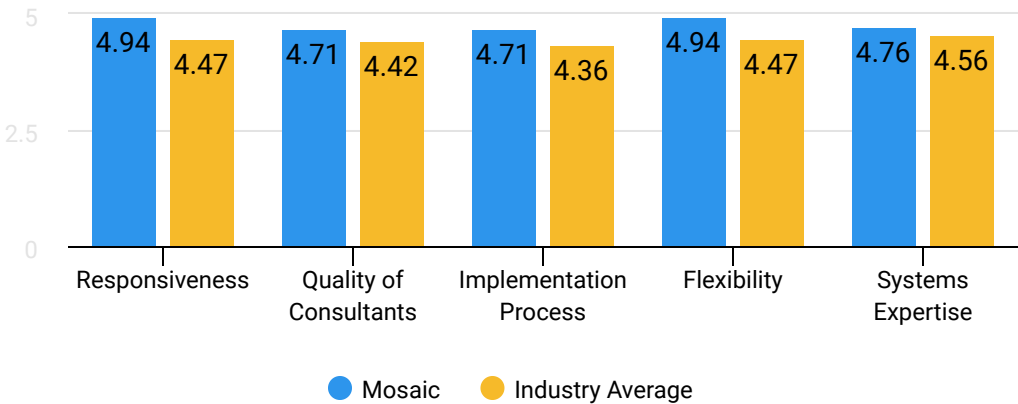
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.9/5

17 Reviews

Mosaic Consulting Compared to UKG Averages



“

It has been fabulous partnering with the Mosaic team who not only helped guide the configuration – but really shined as our partner on training and education. They did everything from design and record videos for us, created job aids, conducted all of the training, developed FAQ’s – even sent me all of the meeting invites ready to just send out to the employees. We would never have been able to do everything on our own – and I would never do an implementation without them. They are fabulous!! If you have the least bit of concern about your implementation or how you are going to get everyone trained – you need to call Mosaic immediately, then take a deep breath knowing they have your back!

Decision Maker
HCM (HR Core), Talent Management, Recruiting / Onboarding, Payroll, Benefits Prime, Compensation
Healthcare / Medical Company

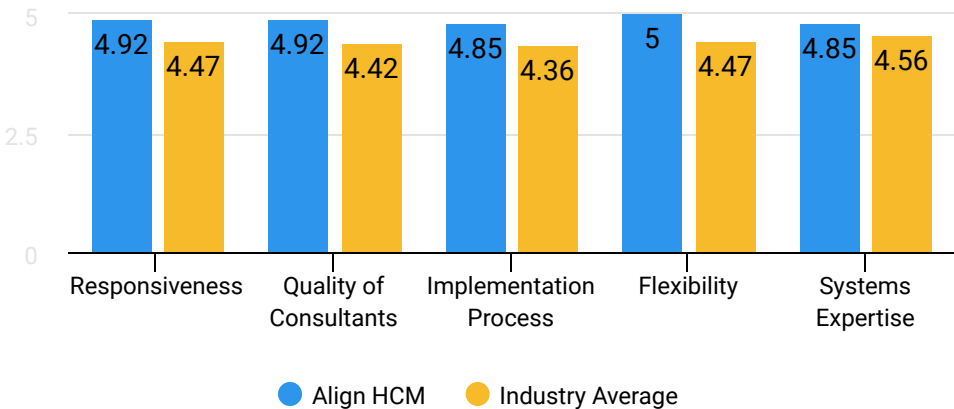
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.9/5

13 Reviews

Align HCM Compared to UKG Averages



“

"Overall we had a very positive experience with AlignHCM. The team came on board with a wealth of knowledge and subject matter expertise. They partnered with us to not only implement the project but also provide best practice recommendations from a system and operations perspective. They went above and beyond to accommodate our changing requirements and implement everything on time as well as accurately. In addition, everything that was implemented was also documented in detail."

Project Leader
Talent Management, Payroll, Talent Acquisition
Education Industry

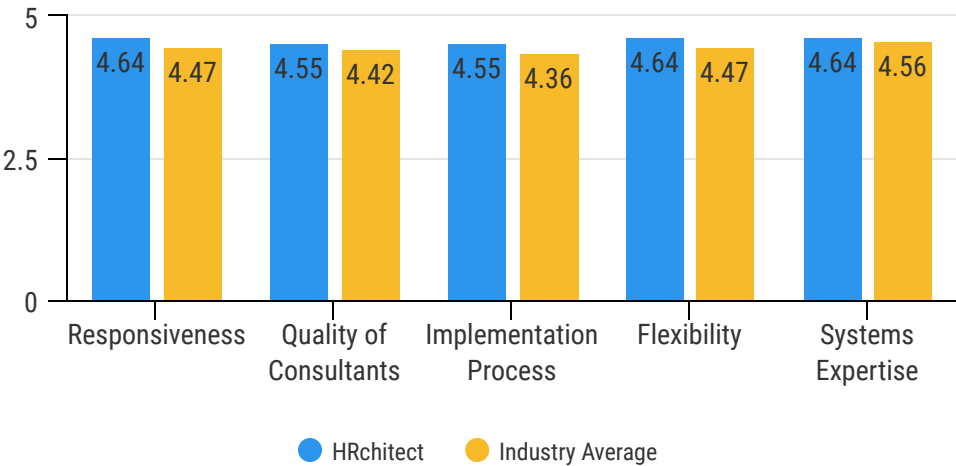
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.7/5

11 Reviews

HRchitect Compared to UKG Averages



“

HRchitect provided excellent support. Some people were new users of the system. HRchitect provided support around optimization that we were not familiar with and it has given us ours back in our time by making processes more efficient. Their knowledge of the system has been extremely helpful.

Project Leader
HCM (HR Core), Talent Management, Recruiting / Onboarding, Payroll
Biotechnology Company

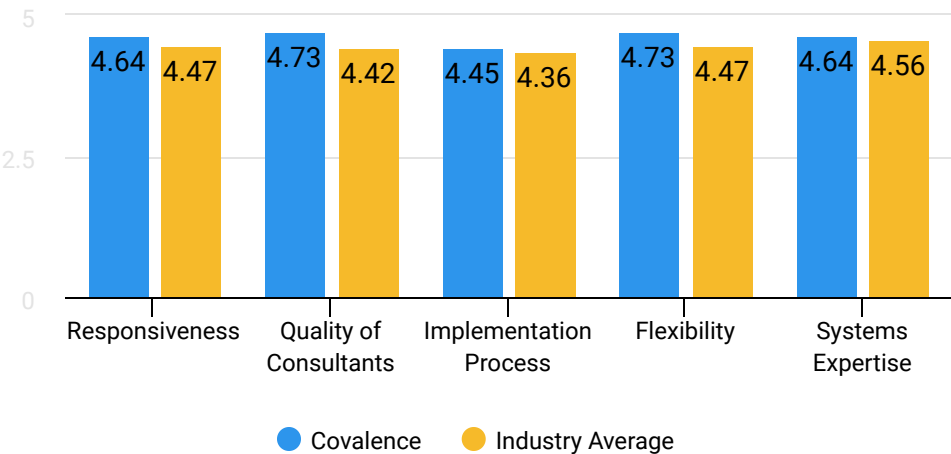
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.8/5

11 Reviews

Covalence Compared to UKG Averages



“

Covalence Consulting Inc. was an incredible resource to help us correct issues we had with our Time & Attendance module. If I had to do it again I would have used them right from the start

Project Leader
HCM (HR Core), Payroll, Time & Attendance
Legal company

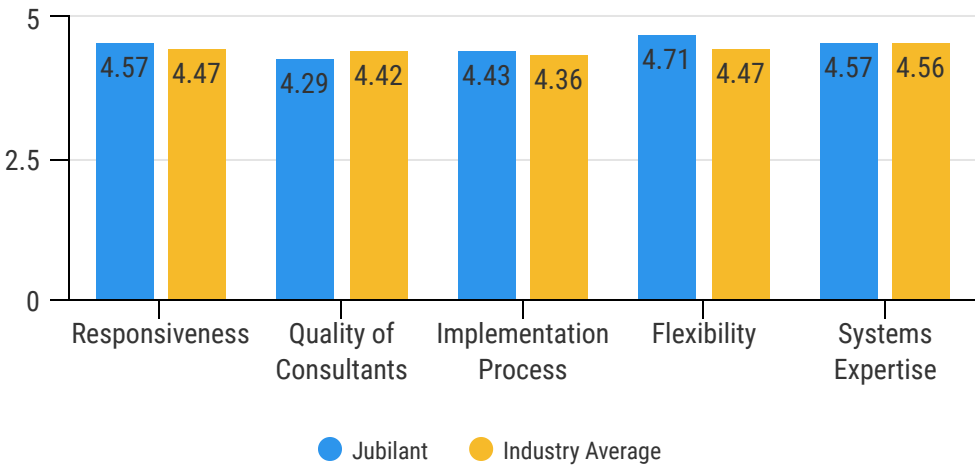
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.7/5

7 Reviews

Jubilant Compared to UKG Averages



“

Jubilant was instrumental in setting us up for success pre-implementation as we assessed workflow and how that mapped in the system and recognizing the change management initiatives that would be critical to project success.

Decision Maker
HCM (HR Core), Talent Management, Recruiting / Onboarding, Payroll
Manufacturing Company

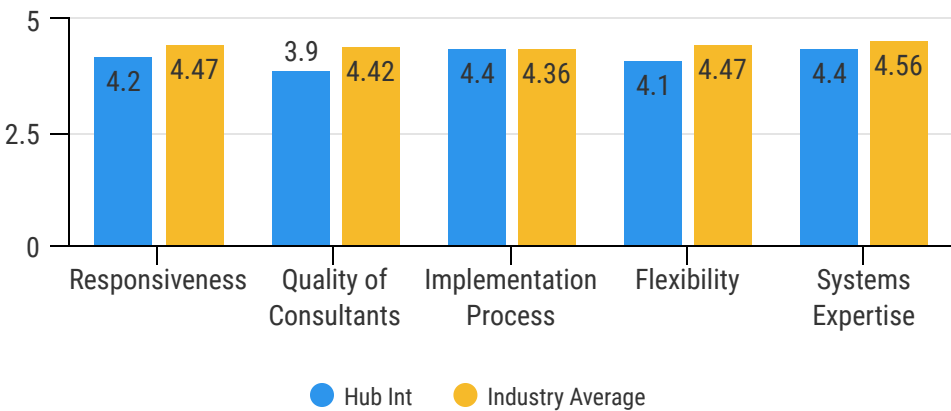
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.6/5

5 Reviews

Hub International Compared to UKG Averages



“

Work done by ihouse was exactly what was agreed upon and needed. Overall Learning implementation hit roadblocks, but this was due to the UltiPro platform and course partner (Schoox).

Project Leader
Talent Management
North American company

[Read Our Reviews](#)

OTHER PARTNERS



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Raven Intel recently spoke with over 900 companies' HR teams about their recent implementation of Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, Ultimate Software, ServiceNow, Cornerstone or Oracle HCM. We found these organizations went through a thorough review process to ensure every feature and function met their needs, but in most cases the consulting partner they chose to get the system up-and-running was an afterthought.

In 95% of these projects, consulting partners were chosen based upon 2 factors:

- The recommendation of the chosen software firm's salesperson / customer relationship manager, or
- The chosen consulting firm had done a previous project with the company (typically non-HR related).

The majority of customers we spoke with received 2 or fewer proposals, and spent far less time on partner selection than they did selecting their software. We even spoke with one large organization who said, "We had a choice in partner?"

Just because you recognize a consulting partner's name because they advertise at the airport or because your software salesperson brought them to your door doesn't necessarily mean they are your best options. Conversely, a boutique vendor might not have the capabilities or capacity to handle your project depending on its scale. A thorough and independent partner evaluation with multiple options is important—at the very least to make sure you're confident in your choice and getting a competitive deal.

The vetting process for a consulting partner up until now has not been easy (see "[What I Learned as a Ghost Shopper for HR Services](#)"), but finding the right match is absolutely critical to project success. The capital investment made to implement these systems is just as large as the software purchase, and the team you end up with can make or break your project's success.

Lessons Learned : Raven Intel Project Reviews

Below are 10 hard questions you should be asking (but might not know to ask) when you interview potential HR consulting partners. These are based upon the "Lessons Learned" that we hear in our project reviews at Raven Intel, as well as wisdom from industry experts. Raven Intel recently spoke with over 500 companies' HR teams about their recent implementation of Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, Ultimate Software, ServiceNow, Cornerstone or Oracle HCM. We found these organizations went through a thorough review process to ensure every feature and function met their needs, but in most cases the consulting partner they chose to get the system up-and-running was an afterthought.

10. Have you done this type of project before?

Previous experience that matches your software, scope and geography are critical.

Your potential partner should be able to point to specific projects (software, modules and geographic scope) that look similar to your project. Similar industry expertise is important, but so is expertise with the functional areas of the product you'll be installing.

We heard from one customer who said the consulting firm they chose did great in North America, but the "wheels came off the bus" during the European roll-out.

Other Questions to Ask:



- How many projects have you completed with the same software / modules / geography as ours?
- How long have you been implementing this specific cloud software?

Red Flags:



- General statements about implementing HCM v. your chosen cloud software.
- Few specific project references (or consultant certifications) for the modules that are important to you.
- If your project is global—lack of actual in-country project experience or consultants.
- Lack of proof points around the quality of implementations of similar scope.

9. Who is my team going to be? Where is my team located?

It's all about the people.

No matter how strong a consulting organization is, the quality of your project is going to be based on the team that you are assigned. Many HR customers we surveyed recognized individual consultant project leads by name as the most important reason for their satisfaction / project success.

There is much talk about the concept of choosing a partner for "Cultural Fit", but what exactly does that mean? It's important that your organization "likes" the persona of a consulting firm, but it's hard to truly know how that feeling will mature during the actual project. Many times the team that you "like" during the sales process is totally different than who you get during implementation as consulting firms assign resources based upon capacity. Industry expert, Brian Sommer says, "the wanting and the gettin' are 2 different things."

Depending on a firm's workload and staffing and when you sign an agreement with them, you may not get the resources you thought you would. No matter how strong a consulting organization is, the quality of your project is going to be based on the team that you are assigned. Many HR customers we surveyed recognized individual consultant project leads by name as the most important reason for their satisfaction / project success.

Other Questions to Ask:



- Is the team you present during the evaluation process going to be who I get during my actual project?
- Where is my team located? How often will they be on-site?
- How many other projects will they be working on at the same time?
- What type of background do they have? Are they recent college grads or HR functional experts?

Red Flags:



- The consulting sales team (v. actual consultants) is doing most of the talking
- The consulting firm makes no guarantees about who is going to be assigned to the project
- The consulting firm has no in-country resources in or near the countries you have a big footprint in.

8. What are customers and employees saying (independently) about this consulting partner? *No shocker—the consulting partner is only going to give you happy references.*

Real-life customer experiences are perhaps the most indicative marker of a consulting firm's quality. Without these proof points, all the number of certifications, projects completed and awards in the world don't matter. Most of the time customers 'spoke with a reference' that was provided by the consulting firm, but this isn't an objective approach—consulting firms wouldn't provide a negative reference. Independent peer reviews and references are the easiest way to gain confidence that a partner can deliver on their promises and hear the real-life stories of customers like you. (Raven Intel is and will be a huge source of information here.)

Other Questions to Ask:



- What independent project reviews are available about your firm?
- At Raven, we can spot good firms from a mile away with how receptive they are to providing customers for us to survey.
- What are independent references saying about your team?
- What are your employees / former employees saying about your firm?

Red Flags:



- Consulting partner talks a big game but has no publicly available reviews or references to be found
- Consulting partner is guarded about providing references (and uses the phrase "NDA" often.)

7. Certifications. *Bigger numbers don't always mean better. In some cases, one consultant can have 8 certifications.*

Certifications are indication of the breadth and expertise of a consulting firm and shows they've invested in bench strength to handle many projects. Larger firms will lead with these numbers, and while they are important, they still need qualification. What's most important is the team assigned to you has the right certifications to get the job done right.

7. Certifications - *Continued*

Each software vendor runs their certification and partner ecosystem differently. Some are tightly monitored and closed, others are more loosely controlled and open. In our research, we've found that no software company is immune to implementation hiccups or partners that may be aggressive in stating certification statistics.

Other Questions to Ask:



- How many certified consultants do you have? (in the type of software modules we bought)
- Are they located in the same geography as my project? (very important that they are)
- Are they Professional v. Associate designations (+1 for Professional designations)
- What previous work / functional HR experience do your consultants have? (Recent college grads without any real-life work experience can earn certifications)
- Is your firm a Recognized Expert by the Software Company?

Red Flags:



- Resources are not certified or have low certification #s in the geography you're in.
- The consulting firm is boasting about big numbers of certifications, but light on the actual project references or unable to tell you where or what those certifications are in (see #8).

6. How much is this going to cost? *Raven Intel has found when projects go over budget 25%+, NPS drops 2 points. That's significant.*

Chances are if a consulting firm can afford to advertise at the airport, they're not going to be the least expensive option. Conversely, if a consulting firm is coming in at rock-bottom prices, they might not be able to offer the breadth and depth of experience you need and that is a big risk as well. Finding the right balance between your confidence in the the firm's quality, capabilities and price is key.

Other Questions to Ask:



- Is this quote fixed-bid or time-and-materials?
- In previous projects like mine, what % did you deliver on-budget?

Red Flags:



- Rock-bottom pricing / "free" services up-front (that result in expensive change orders mid-implementation.)

5. Is this an HR Transformation or an HR Systems Implementation? *Which is it?*

If your project is a full-scale "HR Transformation" where you are re-defining company culture or significantly augmenting your processes, you probably need something more than a systems implementer. You also need to budget accordingly. Conversely, if you are just looking for a software implementation or project work, you very well could do well time / cost-wise to find a more niche player.

Other Questions to Ask:



- Is my project a true HR Transformation or a Systems Implementation? Or an HR software project?

Red Flags:



- Consulting partner is selling you an HR Transformation when all you need is a systems install
- Consulting partner is selling you a Systems Install when you need an HR Transformation

4. Integrations

This is one of the biggest sources of frustration for customers—integration scope-creep—that almost always results in project time and budget over-run. Make sure to define all of these up-front, and ask what the process is if ‘something new comes up.’

Other Questions to Ask:



- What integrations are included with the project?
- Do you have pre-built connectors to my systems?
- How difficult are these integrations (e.g. Global Payroll integrations are very difficult)

Red Flags:



- Consulting firm says ‘integrations are included’ without any specifics. It’s never that easy.

3. How much time is this going to take?

One HR Customer who just completed a Phase 1, full HCM global install said, “plan on 1.5x the amount of time you think it is going to take you to implement your system, then double that.” We hear this regularly on project reviews. In general, if you have a specific date you need your project live, plan on a nice cushion beyond the estimate.

Other Questions to Ask:



- What is the time required to do this project?
- How often does your firm deliver on-time?

Red Flags:



- Consulting firm says they can implement “as fast as you need us to”

2. What other services / products do you offer?

Many consulting partners offer pre-packaged services and software they’ve built beyond just consulting. Their firm might also have expertise beyond just the software you’re implementing. That can be a value-add and provide additional, out-of-the-box options.

Other Questions to Ask:



- What ongoing, post-implementation services do you offer?
- What other systems do you have expertise with?
- Do you offer any additional out-of-the-box products you’ve developed

1. How big does my internal team need to be? Who does what?

One large global manufacturer said they assumed they’d need less IT resources than they did for their on-premise system because they were moving to the Cloud. Not so. This caused friction during the implementation process they wish they’d avoided.

Other Questions to Ask:



- How many internal resources are needed from a functional as well as IT perspective?
- What is the % time commitment from each party given the timeline established?

Red Flags:



- Consulting firm says that since it’s cloud software “fewer IT resources are needed.”