

5 trends shaping payroll and HR management

 By [Bruce van Wyk](#)

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The world of business is changing quickly, and with trends like the gig economy, global employment and cross-border collaboration on the rise, you can imagine the scale of regulatory and legislative changes taking place. It should be obvious, then, how important having an agile, cloud-based payroll and HR management tool is.



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That being the case, in 2018, five trends were highlighted that I believed would feature prominently in transforming payroll solutions, and these are still on point. This has less to do with prophetic knowledge on my part and more to do with the obvious direction in which the industry is heading.

In 2019, I expect that these trends will continue to dominate the space.

The security of your data is now more important than ever

Picking data security as a technological trend to watch is low hanging fruit at this point – it's obvious. That doesn't make it any less important, however. Cybercrime is getting more sophisticated by the day.

That said, research conducted in 2018 showed that cybersecurity measures are equally advanced. According to Accenture, financial institutions were able to block 81% of the cyberattacks attempted in 2017 – up from 66% in 2016, despite the number of attacks having doubled in the latter year.

Additionally, with legislation like PoPI and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in full effect, cloud-centric solutions are making it easy for global businesses to comply in a timely manner. Once hosted in the cloud, new legislative and security changes can be implemented throughout a platform's ecosystem — to every client and every device — simultaneously and without much difficulty.

Payroll outsourcing is growing in popularity

By reducing the labour required to maintain operational systems while simultaneously reducing costs, it's no surprise that service outsourcing grew in 2018 as many of us suspected it would. It seems to be the natural progression for business in this connected, collaborative industrial revolution. Payroll and HR services are no different.

While outsourcing payroll cannot replace an in-house department, it does add significantly to the existing structure, bringing expert knowledge and benchmark payroll practices to the table at a fraction of the usual cost. Furthermore, outsource providers also generally carry the responsibility of developing and maintaining software, which is also advantageous in terms of regulatory and legislative changes and compliance.

As economies continue to shift beyond the limitations of traditional business structures, payroll providers offering services on an as-needed basis will more than likely grow in number in 2019.

The job of a payroll manager continues to evolve

Technological advances in payroll solutions provide greater insights, enabling businesses to identify and remedy problems, resulting in the death of silo operations as payroll administration takes an increasingly strategic focus.

Quick moving businesses adopting this collaborative and value-centric approach are reaping the benefits in the form of faster, simpler expansion and global connectedness, and we can expect to see more of this in 2019.

User experience continues to be a focus

In 2018, emphasis was made to the importance of user experience, something legacy payroll systems have lacked for going on a decade now. End users have been spoilt by slick, responsive web design and connected, customisable ecosystems; that's not going to change in 2019.

By making payroll and HR information more presentable, important payroll and HR information becomes that much more communicable across branches, business units and even across borders – a huge time saver for larger organisations.

For our part, we've done our best to create an almost social media-like experience, allowing colleagues to communicate and query payroll and HR discrepancies in real-time.

Holistic services are still the goal, but we're not there yet

In 2018, truly holistic business services was the goal; in 2019, it's still the goal. Most solution providers are some way off from providing all of their services via an API key, but it hasn't stopped business from trying to provide some ability to integrate their services with other 'similar' services.

While a stock standard integration platform that covers all the individual bases a business might have does not yet exist, I'm thrilled to see that payroll and HR platforms have come as far as they have in the space of the year. If anything, it's revealed just how much untapped value integrated, intelligent and cloud-based payroll and HR systems still have to offer

businesses. Let's see if that continues to be the case in 2019.

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