IRON MOUNTAIN®

Under pressure:
How a digital experience platform (DXP) helps HR thrive

Summary

Right now, HR teams are having a difficult time and facing increased pressure from three main sources:

> The need to hire more workers and retain the ones they have, when there are more job openings than available workers.

> Dissatisfaction with the status quo and distrust of employers from job seekers and employees.

> Mandatory compliance with a large and growing number of regulations and internal policies.

A digital experience platform (DXP) can help streamline and automate common HR processes such as recruiting, onboarding, annual reviews, compliance, training, and offboarding. That can improve employee satisfaction, which in turn, has a positive impact on recruiting and retention. In addition, DXPs can help ensure compliance and protect the organization.

Contents

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The HR balancing act

Under the best of circumstances, HR professionals face a lot of tough challenges. But right now, HR teams are under tremendous pressure from all sides.

On the one hand, business leaders want more workers – and they are having trouble finding them. In the US, the unemployment rate remains very low, and employers say they can't fill available positions. Stephanie Ferguson with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce writes, "We have a lot of jobs, but not enough workers to fill them. If every unemployed person in the country found a job, we would still have nearly 2.4 million open jobs."

On the other hand, people who want to find a job say that it's really tough out there. According to a 2023 survey conducted by Insight Global, job seekers apply to an average of 30 positions but hear back from only 4 of them. People find this so disheartening that 55% of recently unemployed adults say they "have been searching for a new job for so long that they are completely burnt out."

The problem affects more than just job seekers: People who are currently employed are facing the same disconnect between what they want and what their employers want. This is particularly apparent in regards to on-site versus remote work. A report from payroll firm ADP found that "Two thirds (64%) of the workforce would consider looking for a new job if they were

required to return to the office full time." But at the same time, CNBC reports that "A whopping 90% of companies plan to implement return-to-office policies by the end of 2024."

Workers have a lot of other concerns as well. They are nervous about how generative artificial intelligence (genAI) will affect their jobs. They are uneasy about the trend toward more contract and temporary work. They worry about the increasing number of layoff announcements. And they often don't feel like employers are listening to their requests for more transparency, four-day workweeks, pay increases that keep up with the rate of inflation, or better mental health support.

As a result, Gartner reports, "Only about 50% of employees trust their organization." It adds that "77% of HR leaders say their employees are feeling fatigued." And, in a similar vein, industry analyst Josh Bursin finds that the number of employees who say they feel at risk of burnout has climbed from 63% in 2019 to 81% in 2023.

In addition to managing those demands from business leaders and workers, HR must also comply with a large body of regulations. The regulations relate to areas such as discrimination, labor standards, benefits, work hours, immigration, safety, and privacy, all of which are highly complex. The laws differ from one jurisdiction to the next, and they are evolving all the time, making it difficult to stay up to date.

64%

Two thirds (64%) of the workforce would consider looking for a new job if they were required to return to the office full time. ADP

50%

Only about 50% of employees trust their organization. Gartner

81%

The number of employees who say they feel at risk of burnout has climbed from 63% in 2019 to 81% in 2023. Josh Bursin

So, what can HR teams do to balance all of these competing pressures?

Many are adopting a tool that companies have used to streamline customer interactions and improve customer satisfaction: the DXP.

What is a DXP?

As companies progress through their digital transformation journey, they naturally look for ways to improve the experiences of customers and other stakeholders. DXPs were developed as tools for providing a consistently positive experience across many communication channels – but, as with most new technologies, the definition of a DXP was somewhat vague at first. Vendors put the DXP label on many kinds of products, leading to confusion in the marketplace.

The analyst firms attempted to clear up that confusion by offering a variety of definitions. For example, Gartner defines a DXP as "an integrated set of technologies designed to enable the composition, management, delivery, and optimization of contextualized digital experiences across multiexperience customer journeys." And Forrester says a DXP is "a platform that provides the architectural foundation and modular services for developers and practitioners to create, orchestrate, and optimize digital journeys at scale – driving loyalty and new commerce outcomes across owned and third-party channels."

Although those definitions are helpful, they can still leave some confusion about what a DXP actually does and how it works. For that, it may be helpful to consider a particular platform.

For example, Iron Mountain InSight® Digital Experience Platform (DXP) helps improve employee and customer experience by automating manual processes, enabling audit-ready compliance, and making information accessible. It includes comprehensive physical and digital content management, intelligent document processing, workflow automation, and information governance capabilities on a low-code modular platform whose ability to design, build, and publish solutions in real time makes customization fast and easy.

Organizations are realizing that using a platform like InSight DXP not only helps improve customer satisfaction, but it can also improve employee satisfaction.
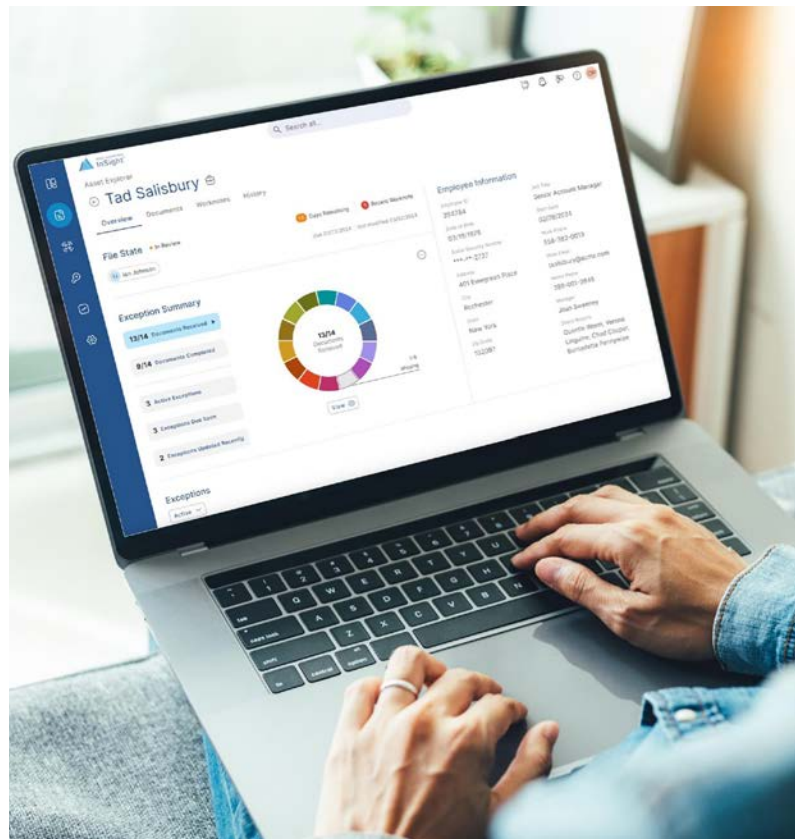
Iron Mountain Digital HR on InSight DXP

For HR leaders who need faster access to your information while maintaining compliance, Iron Mountain Digital HR, built on InSight DXP, makes your HR systems work better for you. Simplify your HR ecosystem with secure, centralized physical and digital employee file management integrated with your HR systems, like Workday, so you can easily search and access your information in a unified platform. Automate manual processes through pre-built, customizable HR workflows, including assessing employee file completeness and compliance, and proactively notifying employees of issues to reduce time, effort, cost, and errors. Securely protect your documents so you can maintain compliance with your company and industry security standards. To learn more, visit ironmountain.com/DigitalHR.

How can HR benefit from a DXP?

DXPs put the emphasis squarely on delighting users. In an HR setting, that means providing ways to keep employees, job candidates, and HR team members happy.

When workers are happy, they are more likely to stay at their place of employment – and attract new workers. That, in turn, makes business management happy. And DXPs can also improve productivity and regulatory compliance, helping HR teams meet some of their other pressing goals.

That all sounds good, but how exactly can HR benefit from a DXP on a daily basis? Here are six areas where a DXP can prove invaluable for human resources teams.

1. Recruiting

Job seekers have a lot of complaints about the job search and recruitment process. In fact, in a recent survey, Black Enterprise reported that 75% of people looking for jobs described the ordeal as stressful and time-consuming. One of the biggest problems, cited by 77% of respondents, was a lack of transparency on the part of employers, particularly around pay.

Potential employees also complain about convoluted processes that require them to repeatedly enter the same information in multiple systems. They feel like they get weeded out by keyword search bots that don't analyze their qualifications fairly. And they complain about recruiters who can take weeks or months to get back to them – if they ever reply at all.

A DXP can alleviate these pain points in several ways. First, by creating a central repository for data, they make it easier for HR teams to make relevant information available to potential candidates. Using natural language processing capabilities, a DXP can extract relevant information directly from an applicant's resume,

eliminating the need to repeatedly type the same information. And automated workflows make sure that each job seeker gets a timely response and understands the process.

Some DXPs also incorporate advanced features, like the latest AI capabilities, which can more accurately assess the quality of a resume, even for applicants who don't include a particular set of keywords. And, ideally, a DXP will be able to ingest data in the same way whether the applicant is applying from a computer, mobile phone, kiosk, or even with a paper form in person.

2. Onboarding

When a worker starts a new job, it sets off a deluge of paperwork. For example, Business Wire reports that a new hire needs to complete an average of 54 tasks during the onboarding process. That's a lot of things for HR teams to coordinate. And it's even harder when incoming workers are remote or hybrid.

It's critical for HR to handle onboarding well. One Brandon Hall Group study commissioned by Glassdoor found that a good onboarding process improves retention by 82% and improves productivity by more than 70%.

Sadly, few companies are meeting this standard. According to Gallup, "Only 12% of U.S. employees say their company does a good job of onboarding." In addition, "one in five employees either report that their most recent onboarding was poor – or that they received no onboarding at all."

A DXP can automate these early workflows, providing consistency and speeding up the process for both on-site and remote employees. DXPs let new hires complete and sign forms digitally from a phone, tablet or computer whenever possible. And if some forms get completed on paper, a DXP can also digitize that information and save it to the employee's file.

77%

One of the biggest problems, cited by 77% of respondents, was a lack of transparency on the part of employers, particularly around pay.
Black Enterprise

82%

A good onboarding process improves retention by 82% and improves productivity by more than 70%. Brandon Hall Group

12%

Only 12% of U.S. employees say their company does a good job of onboarding. Gallup

76%

Three quarters (76%) would consider looking for a new job if they discovered their company had an unfair gender pay gap or no diversity and inclusion policy. ADP

83%

The number one thing that people want in a job, cited by 83% of survey respondents, is career advancement.
Josh Bursin

40-60%

HR professionals spend 40% to 60% of their time on compliance and administrative activities. Mckinsey

DXPs provide built-in checks to ensure that HR representatives are complying with company policy and relevant regulations. And they centralize the data and secure it while still allowing authorized personnel to find any information they need with a simple search.

3. Evaluations and comp reviews

Annual reviews can be nerve-wracking for employees, supervisors and HR personnel alike. In the current economic climate, employees are particularly concerned with their pay. If annual increases don't keep up with inflation, workers can feel like they are actually going backward.

They are also sensitive to imbalances that they perceive to be related to discrimination, with ADP finding that "Three quarters (76%) would consider looking for a new job if they discovered their company had an unfair gender pay gap or no diversity and inclusion policy." But some companies are actually scaling back their diversity and inclusion efforts, and HR teams may find it more difficult to reassure workers that processes and policies are fair.

In addition, the review process not only helps set compensation levels, but it also helps determine who is eligible for promotion. That's important, because the number one thing that people want in a job, cited by 83% of survey respondents, is career advancement, reports Josh Bersin.

Given the high impact of annual reviews on employee satisfaction, employers can't afford for their performance management to be haphazard. DXPs can help ensure that each employee goes through exactly the same evaluation process and that policies are applied consistently throughout the organization. It centralizes the storage of the related data and provides secure search capabilities. And if an employer chooses to, it

can also use the platform to make some anonymized evaluation and compensation data available to employees, providing greater transparency.

No tool can ever make reviews completely painless, but a good DXP minimizes the friction, speeds up the process, and ensures a consistent, fair experience for everyone.

4. Compliance

HR teams spend a huge amount of time every week doing the paperwork to demonstrate that they are following both external regulations and internal policies. In fact, a Mckinsey study estimates that HR professionals spend 40% to 60% of their time on compliance and administrative activities.

If you think about the common types of employment-related laws, it's easy to see how the time requirements for processing paperwork add up. For example, many regions have rules against discrimination, and those rules may require informing employees and job candidates about their rights and company policies. Quite a few places also compel employers to keep certain information on file – copies of identifying documents, certifications, academic records, benefits, medical records, union membership, tax information, and the like. Privacy laws add to that burden by requiring that employers keep personally identifiable information secure and dispose of it when it is no longer necessary. Jurisdictions might also have safety standards, pay and pension requirements, and leave requirements.

On the internal side, companies might want employees to sign job descriptions, offer letters, performance evaluations, antiharassment policies, vacation policies, codes of conduct, and confidentiality agreements. There might also be nondisclosure agreements, dress codes, social media standards, cybersecurity policies, and at-will employment notifications. This list can go on and on.

The difficulties complying with those laws and policies are compounded for organizations that have employees around the world, because they have to track all variations and ensure compliance in them. And they have to make sure that they are updating all of those records on a regular basis.

All that compliance work generates paperwork – and headaches – for employees and HR staff alike. But a DXP can address those pain points by making it easy to route documents and obtain signatures. It saves data digitally, making it easier to store, secure, and delete when necessary. It also makes searching and finding data easier, should proving compliance to legal authorities ever be necessary.

DXPs can automatically enforce policies, ensuring that employee files are complete and up to date. And some DXPs also have advanced AI capabilities that enable them to extract data from different kinds of documents so that no one has to retype information to get it from one form or application to another. And it can make data available for advanced analytics that can help an employer better understand its workforce.

In short, the DXP makes it easier for employees and HR staff to complete necessary paperwork, from the day they start at the company until the day they leave.

5. Training

While HR teams typically offer (or require) training on an ongoing basis, right now, HR professionals are reporting that staff have an unusually high interest in training. Much of that demand is being driven by recent advances in artificial intelligence, particularly in generative AI.

A recent report from Ernst & Young examines this trend, finding that 71% of employees are concerned about AI. More specifically, many have concerns about their roles.

"A staggering 75% of employees are concerned AI will make certain jobs obsolete – and more alarmingly, about two-thirds (65%) say they are anxious about AI replacing *their* job."

However, that's not the only concern. People are also worried that they don't have any experience with AI and might get left behind. The report notes, "80% say more training/upskilling would make them more comfortable using AI at work."

Digital experience platforms can also centralize and standardize employee training, including AI training. They can provide self-service capabilities for employees, whether they are looking to improve their skills or are required to take certain classes for safety, regulatory, or policy reasons. When training is required, a DXP also provides a way to check that employees have completed all necessary steps. And whether the training is voluntary or required, making it as smooth and hassle-free as possible can boost employee satisfaction and engagement.

6. Offboarding

Human resources professionals also have the unenviable job of overseeing the process when employees leave the company. In a few cases, losing an employee is a happy event, such as with a retirement, but a lot of the time, offboarding takes place in an environment of high emotions and strained relationships.

An exit interview happens too late to engage in employee retention efforts, so it might be tempting to disregard the employee experience at this point.

That would be a mistake.

Making the exit process as smooth and consistent as possible can help shield an organization from lawsuits.

71%

71% of employees are concerned about AI.
Ernst & Young

75%

A staggering 75% of employees are concerned AI will make certain jobs obsolete.
Ernst & Young

80%

80% say more training/ upskilling would make them more comfortable using AI at work. Ernst & Young

It can also protect the organization's reputation by potentially minimizing the likelihood of the departing employee badmouthing the company.

No exit process should ever be completely automated, but using a DXP can help ensure that the people involved go through a consistent process and complete all required documentation. It helps the organization treat people humanely, even during layoffs and terminations. And that has benefits for HR staff and the other workers who remain at the company, as well as for those who leave.

Beyond human resources: Building engaged employees

Beyond the six common tasks covered in this paper, DXPs can also help optimize other HR tasks, such as policy creation, career planning, goal setting, and incentive program management.

A DXP can also be valuable for building employee engagement for processes that take place outside of the HR department. For example, some organizations use DXPs to manage internal workflows such as those involving contracts or invoices. Having a streamlined, largely automated process that integrates with the organization's various systems can reduce the sense of drudgery and improve employee satisfaction. It can also make each employee more productive and efficient.

HR challenges: By the numbers

90%

"90% of organizations are concerned about employee retention."
LinkedIn Learning

73%

73% of HR leaders say their work is more administrative than strategic, and this is due to a lack of technology
Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

2/3

Only 2/3 of organizations have retention rules for the most sensitive types of employee information
HR.com and Iron Mountain

$14M

Companies are exposed to fines due to lack of compliance, with the cost of noncompliance averaging over $14 million
Association of Intelligent Information Management (AIIM)

$1.7M

HR audits take up to three months, and fines can be costly. For example, noncompliance due to HIPAA violations can cost more than $1.7 million
The HIPAA Journal

11.9%

"The global digital experience platform market size was valued at US $11.17 billion in 2022 and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.9% from 2023 to 2030."
Grand View Research

About Iron Mountain

For over 70 years, Iron Mountain Incorporated (NYSE: IRM) has been your strategic partner to care for your information and assets. A global leader in storage and information management services and trusted by more than 225,000 organizations around the world, including 95% of the Fortune 1000, we protect, unlock, and extend the value of your work—whatever it is, wherever it is, however it's stored.

We create the framework necessary to bridge the gaps between paper, digital, media, and physical data and extract value along its lifecycle, helping to build your organizational resilience. And all this with a commitment to sustainability at our core.

Our relationship is a true partnership where you trust us not only to preserve institutional knowledge and enhance efficiency, security, and access but to make your work mean more. Because in that work is the power to not only accelerate your business but elevate it.

Trusted by more than 225,000 organizations around the world, and with a real estate network of more than 85 million square feet across more than 1,400 facilities in over 60 countries, Iron Mountain stores and protects billions of valued assets, including critical business information, highly sensitive data, and cultural and historical artifacts. Providing solutions that include information management, digital transformation, secure storage, secure destruction, as well as data centers, cloud services, and art storage and logistics, we help customers lower cost and risk, comply with regulations, recover from disaster, and enable a more digital way of working—and all this with a commitment to sustainability.

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