

Introduction to

Applicant Tracking System

- A Complete Guide

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Are you looking for the top applicant tracking systems? Or eager to know about the applicant tracking system inside out? Check out this pdf to get a throughout knowledge of ATS.

What does ATS Stand for ?



ATS stands for Applicant Tracking System, a software application commonly for the recruiters and hiring managers.

The Applicant Tracking Software makes recruiters work easier and quicker with a high accuracy rate due to automation and artificial intelligence-based systems.

Consequently, approximately 94 percent of professional recruiters and hiring managers stated that recruiting software or Applicant tracking software positively impact their business and hiring process.

Applicant Tracking System Definition

ATS i.e, an Application Tracking System, is the system that helps recruiters and hiring managers to manage the end to end process of candidate applications without adding any confusion.

The utilization of recruitment tracking software is escalating too fast due to its paramount features and attributes that ease the activities of the recruiter and hiring manager. Globally, approximately 75 percent of recruiters and hiring managers use Applicant Tracking Software for their daily activities.

Generally, all arriving applications go through the recruitment workflow which contains many stages as given below.



Step 1: "SCREENING" where preliminary research has been done, including phone screening, pre-screening questions.

Step 2: "SUBMISSION" where the recruiter sends the applications to the hiring manager for further review.

Step 3: "INTERVIEW" where the hiring manager conducts various phases for an interview of the applicant.

Step 4: "OFFER" where the hiring manager offers the employment opportunity to the applicant.

Step 5: "HIRING & JOINING" where candidates accept the opportunity and show a willingness to join the organization.

Step6: "ONBOARDING" where initial joining formalities will take place...

Why do you need an Applicant Tracking System?



The level of competition for the right talent is amplifying, and it's become increasingly complex and difficult for recruiters to find the best match talent for the organization. Moreover, a recruiter has to go through various types of challenges just to hire the right one.

As a good recruiter, if you wish to crack this evil situation, ATS can be one of the best options. By adopting ATS, you can streamline your recruitment processes well enough, also minimize the time of hiring and cost compared to your competitors.

While a heap of recruiters stated that the applicant tracking software boosts up their businesses and amplifies their business growth.

What are the Benefits of Applicant Tracking System?

One of the popular proverbs is - Old ways won't open new doors. Exactly alike,
you need to upgrade your business process to be in the race and lead the
market.

There are a bunch of benefits you get when you adopt ATS for your business
instead of daily manual recruiting, it boosts the business productivity.

The following are the benefits of the ATS.

- Streamline your recruitment process
- Provides various sources for applications
- Attract and hire a quality workforce
- Automate your day to day work
- Keep updated your talent pool frequently
- Strengthening the employer brand
- Minimize the hiring cost and time
- Refine candidate experience
- Centralized Database
- Communication and collaborative become effective and easy
- Increase recruiter's work efficiency
- Enhance your reporting and compliance
- Bring transparency inwork
- One side & live video interviewing
- Update your portal consistently
- Facilitate faster decision making from anywhere
- Expand candidate reach with mobile recruiting

What are the Significant Aspects of Online Application Tracking System?

While starting with an ATS, you need to check certain critical aspects that can enhance your regular recruitment process and make you interact with another delighted scenario of your recruiting.

Whether you are a small business or startup, you should choose your Recruiting Software or Applicant Tracking software based on the following aspects.

- Features
- Pricing model
- Compliance
- List of ATS vendors
- Support
- Data migration

What are the most commonly used Applicant Tracking System features?

Recruiters should choose a technology option over a manual process, that automates the entire process with no human mistakes. It also increases the deliverability of a particular recruiter.

Here are the most commonly used applicant tracking system features.

- Job board posting
- Career page integration
- Application tracking
- Recruitment workflow
- Appointment
- Task management
- Email sending

What are the most advanced used features of ATS?

There are considerable types of recruitment workflow that companies would follow. We have gone through some common features that any ATS could offer, but here we mentioned some best and advanced level features that can really help you to give a better recruitment experience.

- Onboarding
- Two-way email synchronization
- Vendor management
- End to end interview management
- Video screening
- Offer letter management
- Automated resume parsing
- Candidate self-service portal
- Recruitment marketing
- Automated pre-screening
- Profile matching using artificial intelligence
- eSignature
- Two way SMS & VOIP calling

- A browser extension for candidate sourcing
- Import resume from Gmail, Outlook, etc.
- Chatbot integration
- Recruitment analytics
- Visual pipeline
- Employee referral
- Chatbot
- AI-based profile matching

What are the best Applicant Tracking Systems in the market?

ATS systems are the most effective way to make your recruitment with productive output. So all its features are compatible with your business, moreover economically preferable for you.

According to the research, 60 percent of the medium-sized companies prefer the Applicant tracking system for recruitment.

Small-Medium Business with a limited budget

iSmartRecruit	Workable	JaazHR	Tailor Team
Zoho Recruit	Recruitee	RecruitsoSimple	Hire Hive

Prices range between $49 to $100 per job/user.

Big Business with no limit budget

IBM Talent Management	Zip Recruiter	Bullhorn	iCIMS Recruit
	Job Diva	Taleo	JobeVite

Prices range between $70 to $500 per job/user.

What are the key questions to be asked to Applicant Tracking Systems vendors?

If your organization is already in the market for the search for the first ATS or thinking to replace the existing applicant tracking system, the following are the key questions that you need to ask your ATS end or who is supposed to offer the ATS service.

It's the right of the customer to be aware of every point of the product. Hence, ask until you feel satisfied with answers.

Vendor Profile

- How does the support work?
- How many clients are using your system?
- Are most of your customers large or small?
- How do you differentiate from competitors?
- How often do you build new functionality or features?
- Has your ATS won any awards or recognition?
- Who is the owner of my data?
- What security measures do you take?
- Where do you store all the data?
- Do you offer an on-premise or cloud-based option?
- Do you offer a data migration service?
- Do you provide data backup in case we terminate the service?
- Do you provide additional customization services?
- What is the process of cancellation of service?

Pricing

- How does the pricing work?
- Are there setupfees?
- Is there any limit on the number of users?
- What is the cost of a new user?
- Do you charge based on active jobs or users?
- Do you offer any startup discounts?
- Do you have any hidden charges?
- How do you charge for data migration?
- What is the charge of a new feature I want?
- Are there any training fees?
- Do you have any hidden charges apart from the subscription price?

User Experience

- Can I login by using any browser and computer?
- Do you have a mobile application for Android and iOS?
- Does your system automatically capture user activity?
- Do you offer AI-enabled features? If yes, what are those features?
- Can I send SMS from my system?
- Can I synchronize email in my system?
- Do you offer a live demonstration?
- Can I do VOIP calls from the system?
- Does your system automatically track email communication?
- Can I import a resume from my Gmail or Outlook mailbox?
- Do you haveAPIs?
- Do you offer any out of the box integration with any other partners?
- Do you offer a background check service?
- Do you offer candidates on-boarding?

- Is it possible to customize fields and workflows?
- Is your system GDPR compliant?
- Do you offer an employee referral program?
- Which are the job boards your system provides? If I want any other job board then?

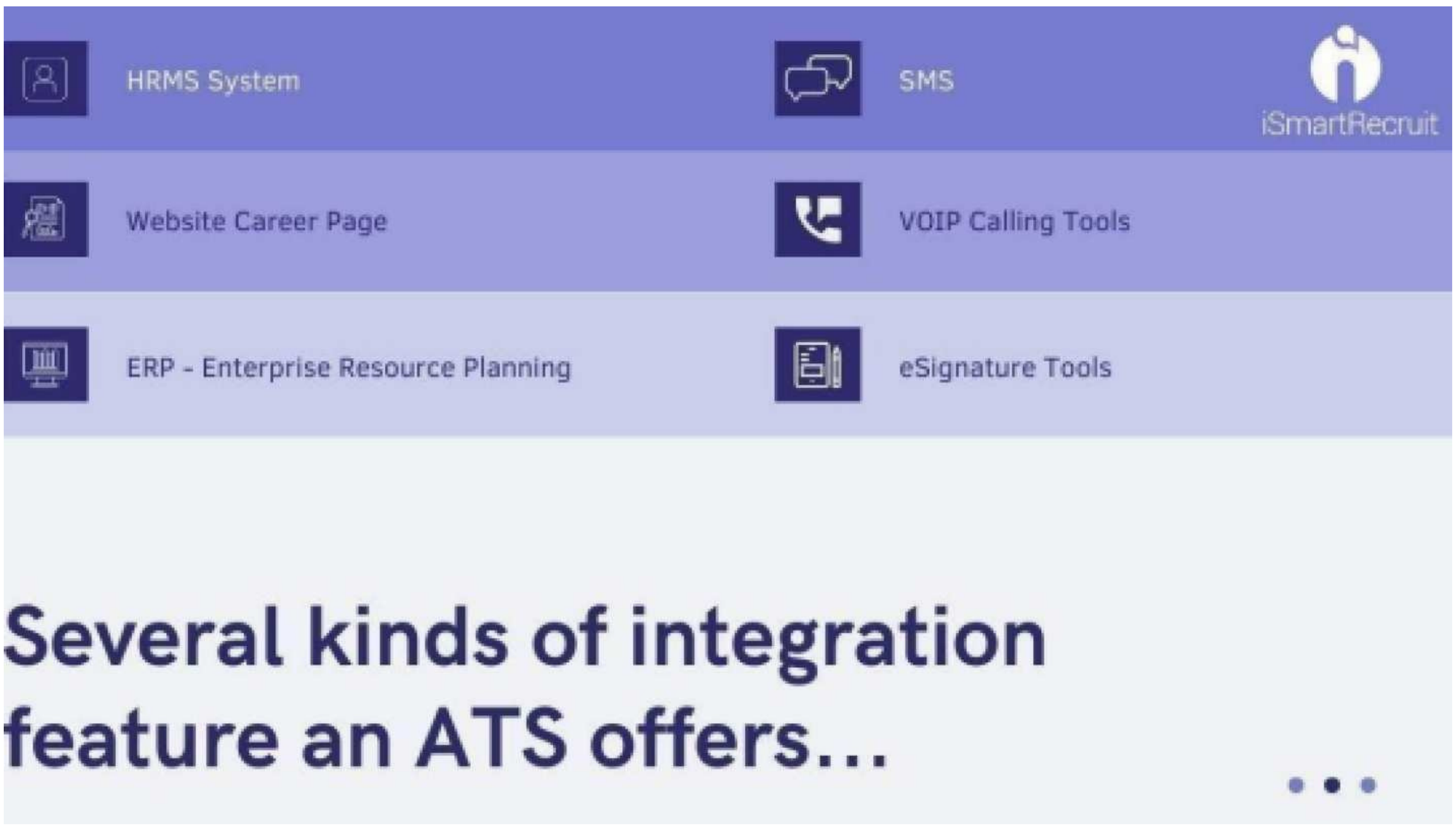
User Onboarding

- Can I customize the system based on my preference?
- What is your onboard time?
- Do you offer training when you onboard the user?
- Do you offer any free tutorials and videos for self-learning?
- Is there any help center to understand the system?

What kind of integration feature does an Applicant Tracking System offer?

Especially for a large organization, the integration features have great significance. Because they need to integrate multiple systems with the applicant tracking system to run the business successfully. Hence, large businesses always prefer a system that has a great feature of integration.

the following are the different types of systems you may think to integrate with your ATS.



- HRMS
- ERP
- Career Page /Website
- Background Check Service
- Online Test/Exam Platform
- eSignature Platform
- Candidate Onboarding Platform
- LinkedIn Recruiter
- Email Campaign
- Mass Emailing
- SMS Service
- VOIP Service
- Web Analytics

What about the pricing model of ATS?

Pricing is an unavoidable element when you start with any Applicant tracking system. Because many firms choose ATS according to the price. Majorly there are two types of pricing options are available.

Cloud-based

Cloud is a more trending and easy-to-go option. Again in the cloud, you have two options.

- Pay per user

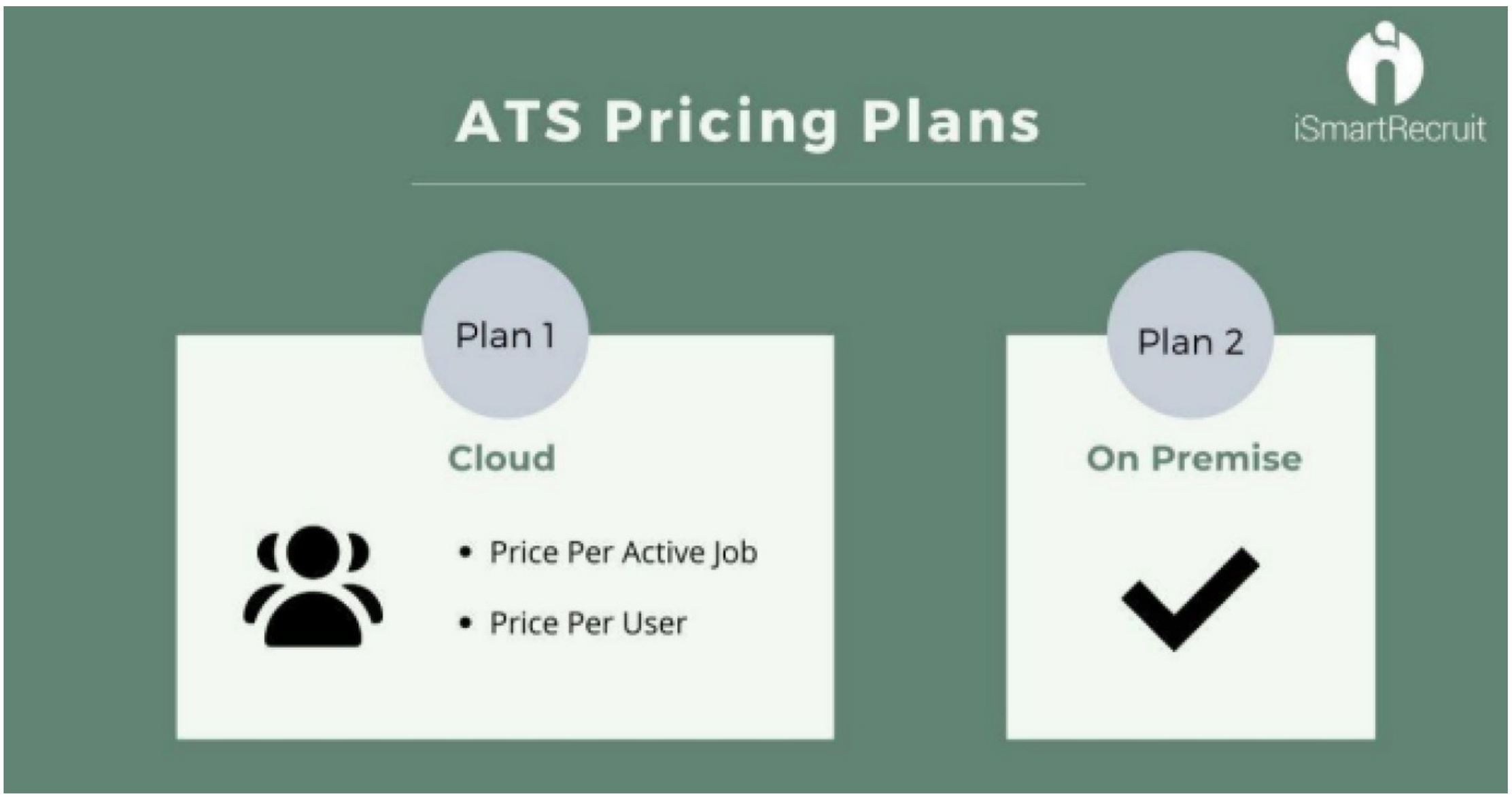
  In this plan, you have to pay based on the number of users and you have the freedom to open unlimited jobs. This is the best option if you have a small team and working in multiple positions. Generally the right fit for recruiting agencies and staffing companies who work on multiple positions for different clients.

- Pay per active jobs

  In this plan, you have to pay based on the active jobs and you have the freedom to add unlimited users. This is the best option if you have a few jobs and more recruiters and hiring managers involved in the recruitment process. Generally, startups or small corporations can go with this option.

On-premise

On-premise is a traditional model where the system is hosted on your infrastructure and usually, you have to pay upfront the full price of the software. And you can install the system and use it on your own. Usually, big corporates or government firms choose this kind of ATS System.



Who can choose an ATS?

Any person or company who is looking for the resource to decrease the workload and increase the efficiency of the work of their team should try the applicant tracking system.

Overall following types of businesses may go for ATS.

- Corporate HR/hiring managers
- Staffing companies
- Recruiting companies
- Headhunting companies
- Executive search companies
- HR consulting companies
- Freelance recruiters
- Startup companies

What are the best steps to implement your ATS?

Implementing an applicant tracking system is a major decision and it will be successful if the right methods or steps followed while implementing it.

The following could be the right steps to implement. Identify your current and potential future business requirements. The following are the key information you have to be ready with

- Must have features like email integration, customizable workflow, etc.
- Good to have features like VOIP calling, SMS integration, etc.
- List of vendor-related criteria like support hours, office location, etc.
- Set your budget.
- A number of users or number of jobs for a month.
- Tentative start date.
- Create a list and then shortlist vendors using the following options.
- Perform a search on Google with relevant keywords.
- Visit review platforms like Capterra, G2 Crowd, GetApp, etc.
- Take reference from your network who has been using a similar system.
- Post an advertisement on social media saying you are looking for an Applicant tracking system.

- Take demos or trail based on your preference.
- A trial is best if you wish to explore the system on your own and you have enough time to explore the system.
- A demo is best if you want to see the overall system and discuss your questions. It is also the perfect choice if you have limited time for software evaluation.
- If your vendor list is big, you can take demos and go for the trail on the base of shortlisted ATS.
- A final discussion with the finalized vendor.
- Addresses your questions or concerns.
- Price negotiation in the case of price is not in the budget.
- Confirm order, sign contract, and get access to the system.
- User onboarding and team training.

What are the best steps to switch your Applicant Tracking System?

It is a part of the critical decisions to upgrade your existing Applicant tracking system and here are the steps to be followed to do it without any hassle.Create a list of required features and functionality you need in a new system. Think about both your must-haves and nice-to-haves in this process.

Step 1 : Identify which ATS suits you the best.
Step 2 : Schedule demos or take a trial of different systems.
Step 3 : Narrow down your list and create the final list of vendors.
Step 4 : Look at the reviews and if possible take a reference check.
Step 5 : Price negotiation.
Step 6 : Sign the contract and finalize the launch date.
Step 7 : Data migration by the vendor.
Step 8 : Test the new system with migrated data.
Step 9 : Train your team.

What are the potential problems you come across when you start with Applicant Tracking System (ATS)?

In this advanced world, where everything becomes digital the same as the manual process of recruiting also eliminates and compels the recruiters to choose the digitized option. But it is not easy for recruiters to give up on the traditional approach and adopt the technology option. They may face or go through many difficulties.

Recruiters may face the following problems while going for an ATS for the first time.

- The system is not user-friendly.
- The system is unavailable or down.
- Certain features or functionality may not work as explained during the demonstration.
- The vendor may ask for some hidden charges.
- Vendors raise the price.
- Support doesn't respond on time or unavailable.

- The training was brief and not personalized with your business requirements.
- Slow down your business and make the recruiter's life more challenging.
- Adversely affect the motivation of the team.
- Poor candidate experience.
- Loss of applications.
- Conflict of schedule and dispute.

What are the myths about ATS?

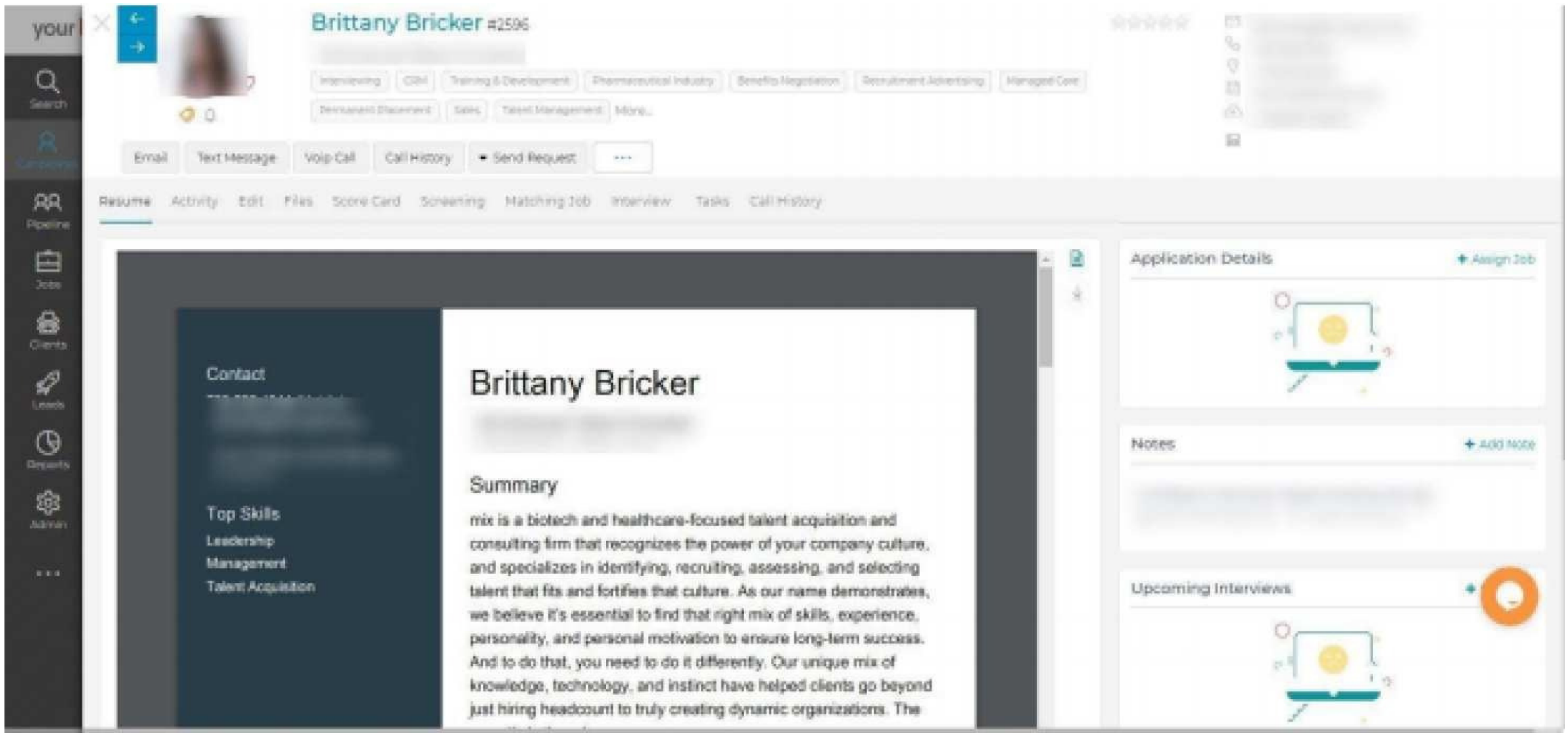
Going with ATS is always a wise decision but still, many recruiters are against this fact. Being a reason they might be heard about some myths about ATS.

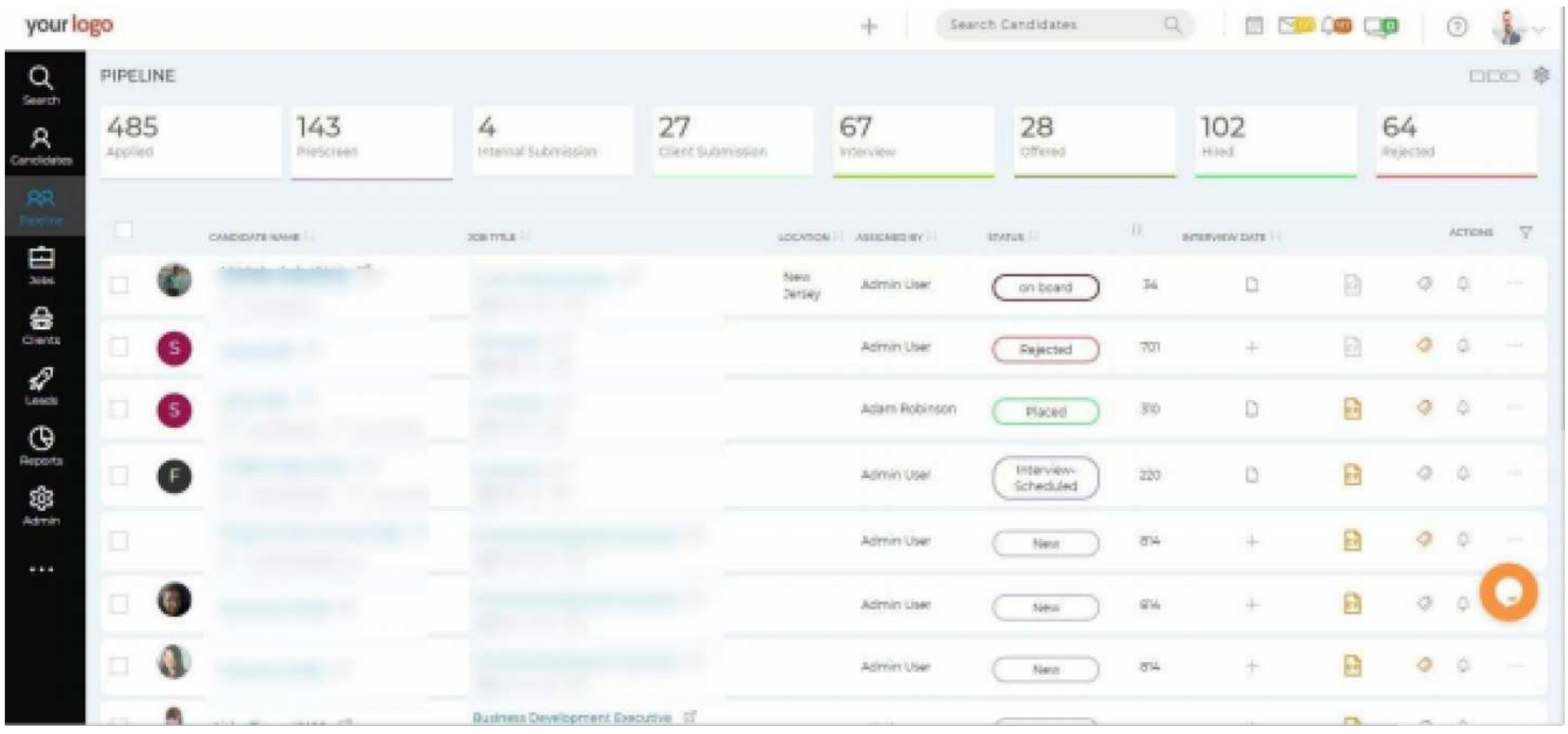
Here are some myths about ATS that cause recruiters to separate themself from ATS.

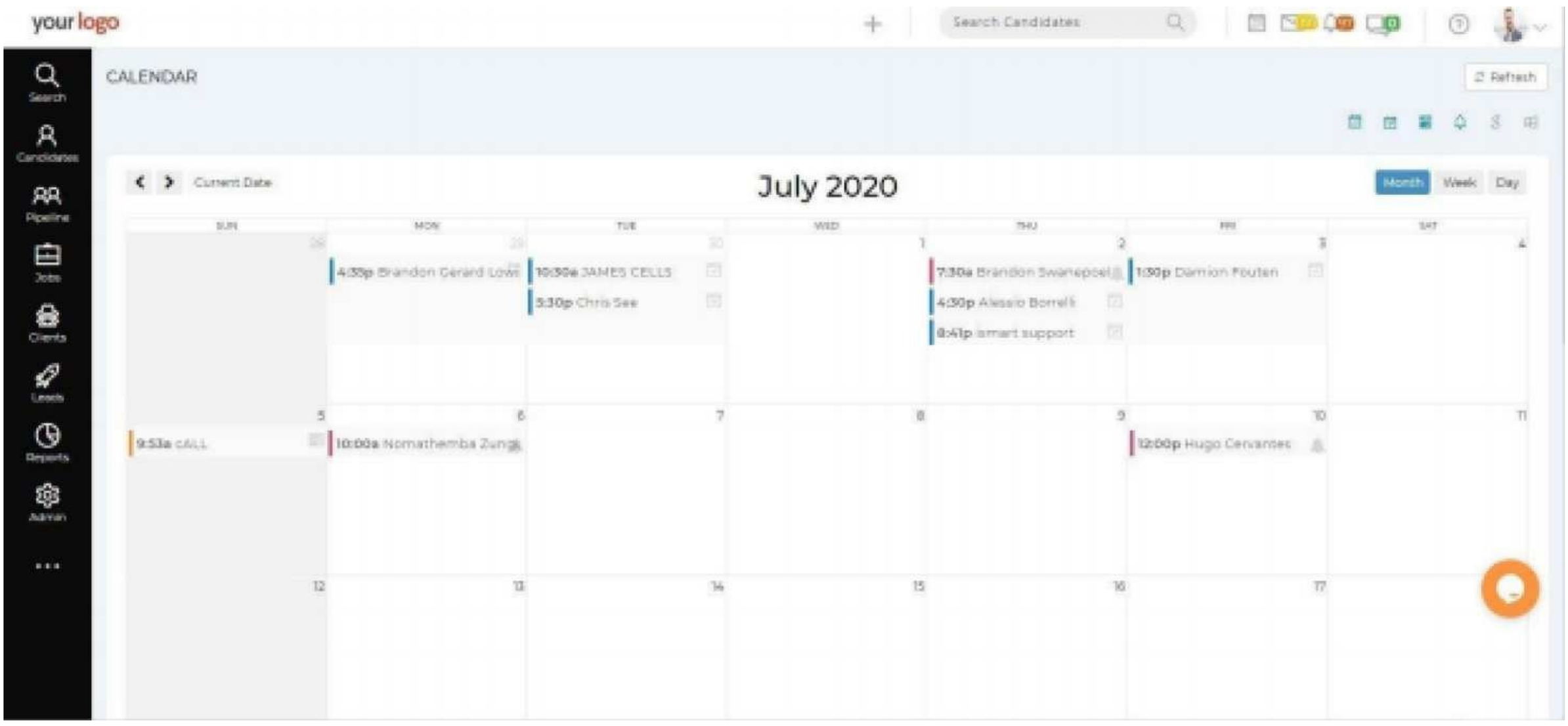
- It is meant for big companies only.
- Implementing an ATS increases the cost instead of minimizing.
- Unclear differencing between ATS and Job board.
- ATS start requires significant time.
- Publishing jobs on the website and getting a CV in an email is thecomplete online solution.
- If we start with ATS, information may not be accessible all the time.
- Difficult to train the team.

What Does the ATS Look?

The following are some of the screen layouts of ATS.







What are the alternatives to an ATS?

If you still don't prefer an ATS for your organization and want to continue manual work for a while, then you can use the earlier way to manage the information. You can even use Excel and Google forms to manage candidates and job information. You can build the required type of forms. If you have a small company and only want to manage the candidate and client relationship, you can use CRM Software too.

Where can I get the most accurate Applicant Tracking System reviews?

The following are some of the most widely used review platforms where you can check reviews of different ATS systems.



What is the on-premise and cloud option of ATS?

When selecting your ATS, the most crucial question is whether you should go with a cloud option or an on-premise option.

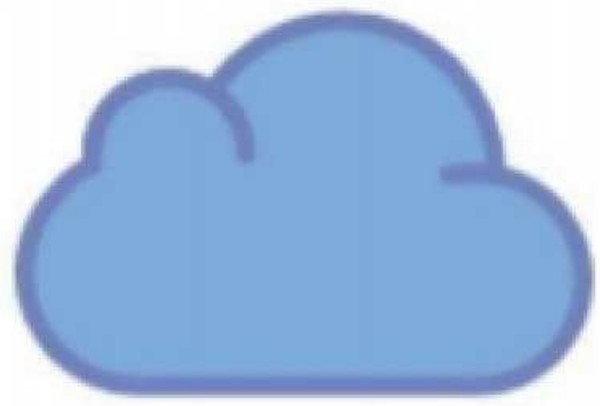
In the case of the cloud option, your software will be hosted on the vendor's cloud infrastructure. While in the case of the on-premise option, your software will be hosted on your local server or machine.

Presently, the cloud option is a more trending and preferable option compared to the on-premise option. But still, there are undeniable reasons that make companies select the traditional on-premise option instead of the cloud option. Before coming to any conclusion it is required that recruiters have enough knowledge about both the options and are aware of the advantages and disadvantages of it. This information helps them to make the right decision for the business. Here are the pros & cons of these options



Cloud Environment





On Premise Environment

iSmartRecruit

Cloud Option - Pros

- No hardware investment
- No setup
- Easy to start
- Predictable subscription cost
- Quick updates
- Greater stability

Cloud Option - Cons

- May end up spending more money in the long run.
- Limited customization options
- Sudden pricehike

On-premise Option -Pros

- Less expensive in the long run
- Increase data security
- Provide more flexibility in customization
- Full control over the application

On-premise Option -Cons

- High upfrontinvestment
- Hardware and administrativeexpense
- High risk to meet future needs

What is the role of AI in the Applicant Tracking System?

Implementing Artificial Intelligence in the ATS makes the recruiter's job easier, faster, and increases the work efficiency with 100 percent accuracy. Due to AI most of the work has been automated.

As per the research, it has been proven that normally it takes 17 minutes to apply manually, but with the AI it takes only 3 minutes. While approximately 92 percent of candidates are feeling stratified with automated recruiting.

The following are the areas where AI plays a pivotal role in theApplicant tracking system..

Matching Profiles

The hardest and time-consuming portion of recruitment is to screen thousands of CVs effectively and identify the best matching candidates. AI can be used to pre-screen all arrived CVs and identify the relevant profiles, this makes things easier and accurate.

Matching Jobs

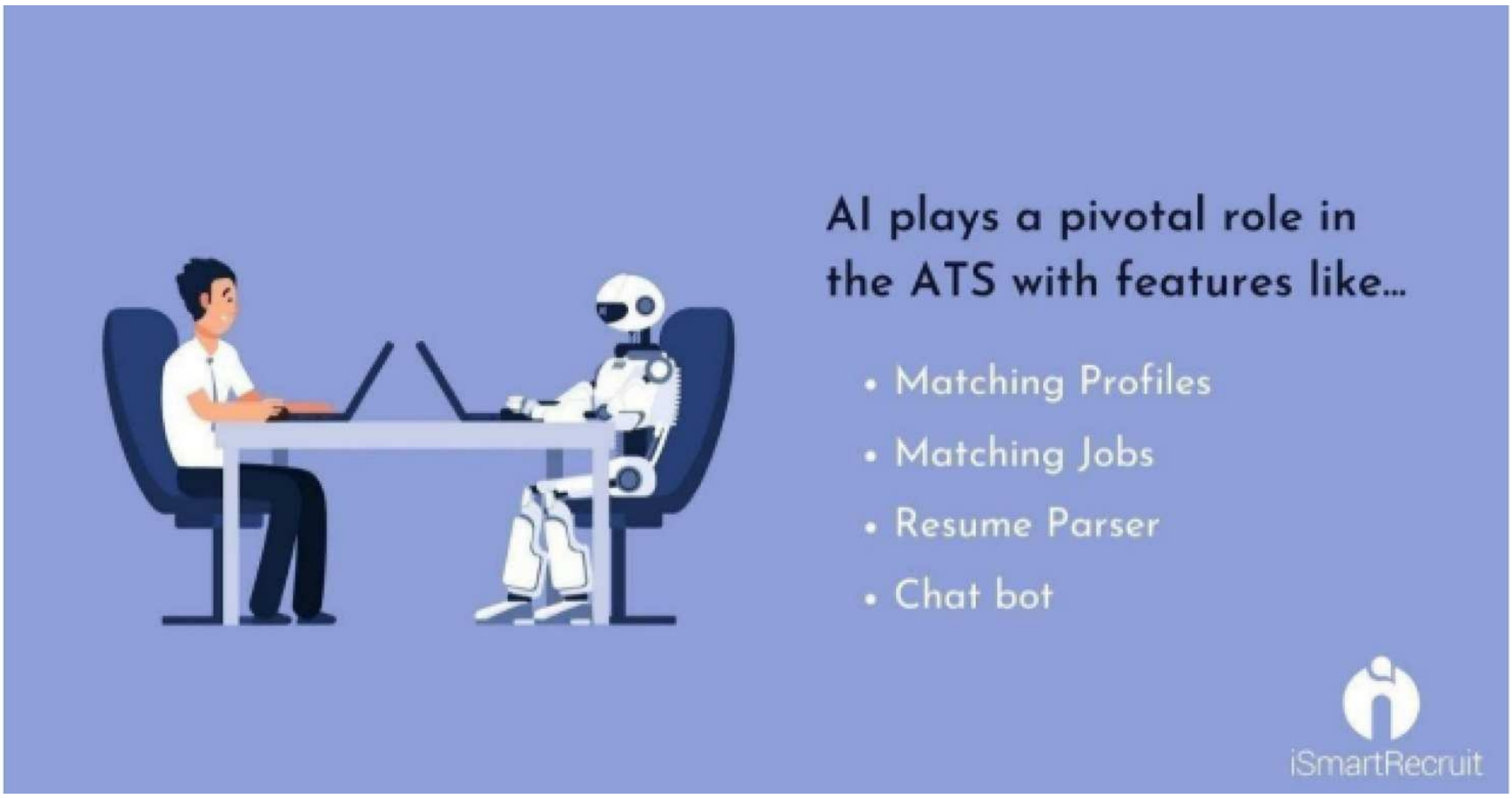
Similar to a matching profile, AI can also help you to identify the best matching job for the candidates.

Resume Parser

To identify all the key information from the CV is a tedious job and can be addressed well with a resume parser. By using AI algorithms and techniques, you can enhance your parser to a great extent.

Chat bot

It is a great technology to deliver the great experience to the candidates by providing virtual assistance 24x7.



What is the importance of GDPR in the Applicant Tracking System(ATS)?

GDPR is a reform in Europe which enforces how the private data of EU citizens is used and stored online, anywhere in the world. As recruitment tracking software stores valuable information about the candidates, jobs, and clients, hence, your ATS must be well compliant as per the GDPR norms.

Here are a few key functions of applicant tracking systems that should have to meet the GDPR compliance.

- Send consent request to candidates
- Consent history management
- Allow the candidate to download their information
- Allow the candidate to send the request for erasing
- Consent expiry tracking
- Show and agree to terms and conditions before application submission



We tried to cover the most important aspects of ATS but if you still want to gain i depth knowledge or information about our system then please write to us at sales@ismartrecruit.com.

Thank you