



# Maximising The Benefits Of Automated HR Systems



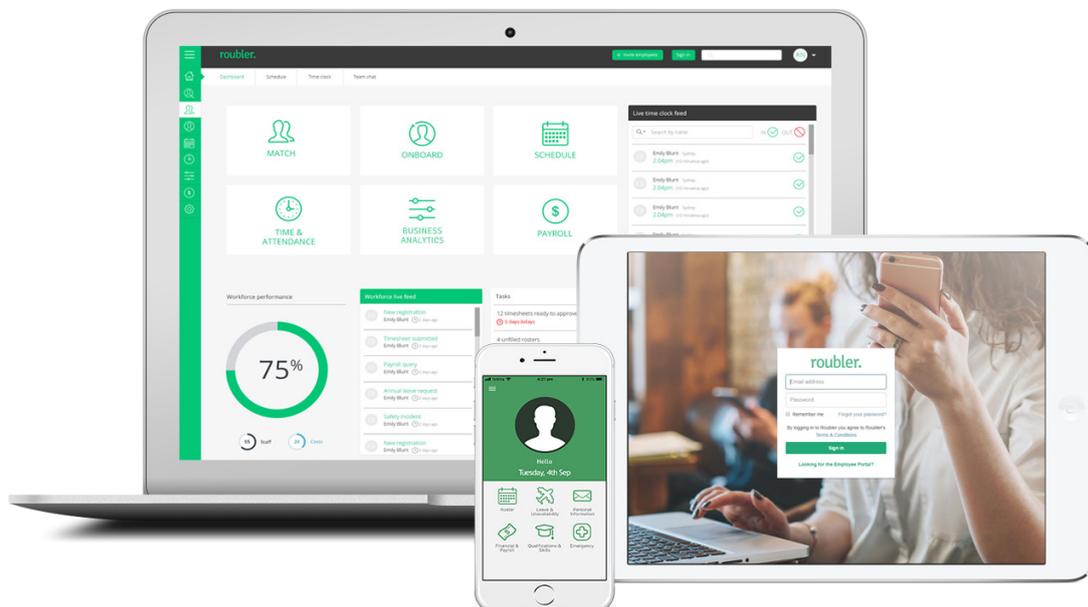
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# Introduction

In today's modern age, many functions of our everyday lives are automated. From self-service checkouts at the supermarket to online banking and ordering a taxi, everyday menial tasks are being increasingly taken care of by automated systems.

Our working lives are increasingly becoming automated, too. And for good reason – with amazing advances in artificial intelligence and automation technology we can leave manual, administrative tasks to machines and dedicate our time to using our unique human skills to build our businesses. Research conducted by the McKinsey Global Institute in 2015 suggests that as much as 45% of activities individuals are paid to undertake can be automated by using current technology.

Nowhere is automation having more of an impact now than in HR, a traditionally paperwork-heavy function in which many manager's time is being held hostage by data entry and inefficient processes.

Data from a 2010 study conducted by the Centre for Effective Organisations at the University of Southern California revealed that on average, HR spend 56.5% of their time on non-strategic tasks such as maintaining records, auditing and controlling, and administration of HR practices.

## Use of Senior HR Time



These figures have only slightly changed over the last 20 years so it's clear there is great room for automation to swing time in favour of strategic HR activities.

This e-book explores the benefits that automated systems bring to HR and offers ways that you can get the most out of these benefits to improve the efficiency of your HR functions, increase workforce performance and influence the success of your business.

It's not only a helpful resource to guide your decision making about purchasing and implementing an automated HR system, it will also help others in your organisation understand the importance of automation and how it will positively affect their working lives.

# Reduced data entry

## Time savings

Manual data entry is tedious and fraught with human error. Most crucially, waiting for data to be entered can cause unwanted delays for many other processes that rely on that same data.

An automated HR system that eliminates painful data entry points for HR staff such as manually keying in timesheets, pay calculations and employee details will save hundreds of hours of work each year. This allows HR staff and business owners to focus on strategic activities that will lead to real revenue outcomes.

## Reduce data inaccuracies

**Less data entry and data transfers = fewer inaccuracies = more accurate pay runs and employee records**

It's a simple equation, but it's easy to understand how manually entering data multiple times and transferring it across to multiple systems can cause inaccuracies. These inaccuracies can be costly – in money and time – to correct and can even result in legal action should they cause breaches of employment law or payroll legislation.

By removing manual data entry and the inevitable room for human error, your organisation will operate more compliantly and efficiently.

## Better data security

The less need there is for data to be handled the less room there is for it to be intentionally or unintentionally modified. A paperless, HR system is smart way to protect the confidentiality and integrity of your employee's data.

### *How to get the most from this benefit*

- Firstly, look at all points where data is entered and consider how these points can be reduced or eliminated. For example, could you use an online time clock that only requires staff to click 'clock in' and 'clock out' and the data automatically fills out their timesheet?
- Secondly, choose a system such as Roubler that operates all HR functions from one single database so that data flows between functions without the need for re-keying or data transfers.
- Thirdly, keep tight controls over who can access, enter and modify information to keep your data secure and accurate. Roubler's system allows you to set permission controls for this very purpose.



# Greater employee satisfaction & engagement

## Better onboarding = higher staff retention

*“No matter what the terminology, the bottom line is that the faster new hires feel welcome and prepared for their jobs, the faster they will be able to successfully contribute to the firm’s mission.”*

– Tayla N. Bauer, Ph.D, Onboarding New Employees: Maximising Success (SHRM Foundation’s Effective Practice Guideline Series)

## Better onboarding = higher staff retention

Onboarding and training a new employee necessitates a substantial time and resource investment. Forms need to be completed, policies read, and training undertaken. But despite the level of work required, the employee or manager may decide they’re not suited for the job during their probationary period. In fact, **employees decide in the first 90 days whether they will stay at their new job** – and onboarding has a sizeable impact on that decision. **Half of all hourly workers leave new jobs within the first 120 days.** It’s therefore worthwhile implementing a structured, automated onboarding system.

Automated HR systems can streamline the onboarding process, allowing forms, waivers confidentiality agreements, and more to be sent directly to the employee for completion, then forwarded to the correct person or department. This automated process can also facilitate online training courses. Advice of the completed course and results can be stored on the employee’s

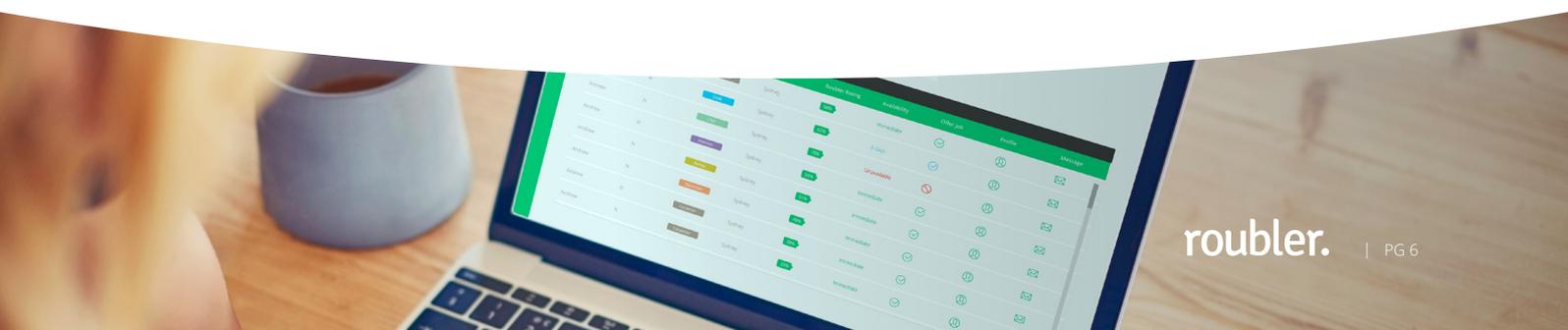
profile and notifications of completion or non-completion sent to their manager.

Automated onboarding can also help you communicate with new employees before they start, welcoming them to the business and providing them with information that will help them settle into their new role.

By making onboarding faster and more user-centred, not only does it make it easier to induct multiple staff at one time, it presents an important opportunity to engage staff from the beginning of their employment journey with you.

### How to get the most from this benefit

**Do your research!** Before you begin creating an automated onboarding process, ask your current employees how they would rate their onboarding experience, what they liked, and what they’d improve. This way you will avoid spending time on onboarding activities that don’t add value to your staff or organisation, allowing you to create a process that covers the most important elements and is reflective of your company culture.



## Streamlined offboarding

During offboarding, it is difficult to keep track of all the systems and information an employee needs to be removed from, as well as the payment amount they should receive upon leaving.

In a world where so many things are digitised, it can be difficult to tell if an employee can still access restricted files after leaving their place of work or if they have returned keys, identification cards and computers. Claire Schooley, Senior Analyst at Forrester Research Inc., as well as Rebecca Wettemann, Research Vice President at Nucleus Research both agree that an automated HR system can help ensure the offboarding process is airtight, as well as decreasing work hours required to offboard an employee.

### How to get the most from this benefit

In your onboarding process, set up sections in the employee's profile to record what technology they have been allocated and their ID tag number (and when it was issued). Also, if your system allows, set up a checklist of offboarding activities that is stored on the employee's profile or in a document library. That way, when you are offboarding an employee you have everything you need in one place to ensure all actions are taken before they leave.

## Staff empowerment with Employee Self Service

The global aggregate data from Gallup's State of the Workplace Reports from 2014, 2015 and 2016 indicated that just 15% of employees worldwide are engaged in their job. Two-thirds were not engaged, and 18% were actively disengaged. But there is much workplaces can do to change this.

Global motivation speaker Daniel Pink set off a phenomenon when he outlined the three key

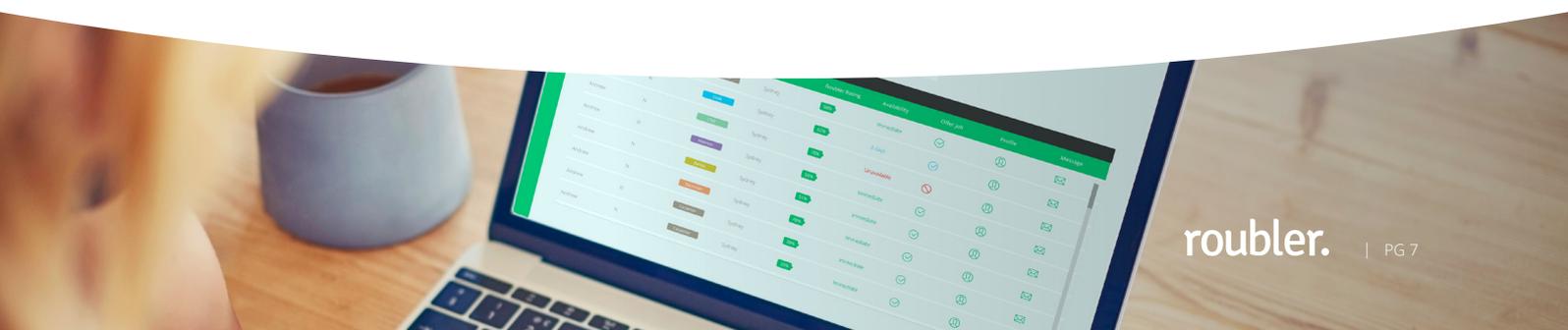
elements of intrinsic motivation – autonomy, mastery and purpose. Without this intrinsic motivation, employees are unlikely to be engaged and are therefore unlikely to be productive. So, it makes sense that we pay attention to what causes it and do what we can to positively influence it.

A great place to start is autonomy – the desire to control your environment and be self-directed – which can be simply fulfilled by an employee self-service system. This clever component of an automated HR system empowers employees to manage their own personal details and payroll information, search for and undertake training to upgrade their skills, manage their leave and unavailability, view rosters and find answers and information independently. This is particularly important for the latest generation of employees entering the workforce, who expect to be able to serve their own needs online and receive information instantly.

Simple tasks such as accessing payslips, submitting leave requests or applying for training can be conducted without the need for lengthy communication chains or approval processes, putting the power back in the employee's hands and bypassing unnecessary interactions with HR.

### How to get the most from this benefit

- Choose an automated HR system that incorporates an Employee Self Service system to get the full benefits of reduced administration.
- Ensure the Employee Self Service system you choose gives you the greatest scope for handing tasks over to employees – the more they can do, the better.
- Mobile is a must! Make sure the employee self service system is available as a mobile app for iOS and Android so your employees can access their profile, roster and details whenever and wherever they want.



# More efficient recruitment

*“Cost-per-hire depends on company size and number of hires. Larger companies making a lot of hires can keep the cost lower than smaller companies. But, generally, aiming for an average cost-per-hire between \$3,000 and \$5,000 is good practice”*

– Lacey Brandt, CFO, Workable

Hiring is an expensive and difficult process fraught with challenges: collecting resumes and cover letters, interviewing and reinterviewing and then losing a great candidate because the process took too long. While you may not be able to influence the costs associated with recruitment, automation allows you to influence the quality of hires and the time it takes to hire giving you greater return on investment.

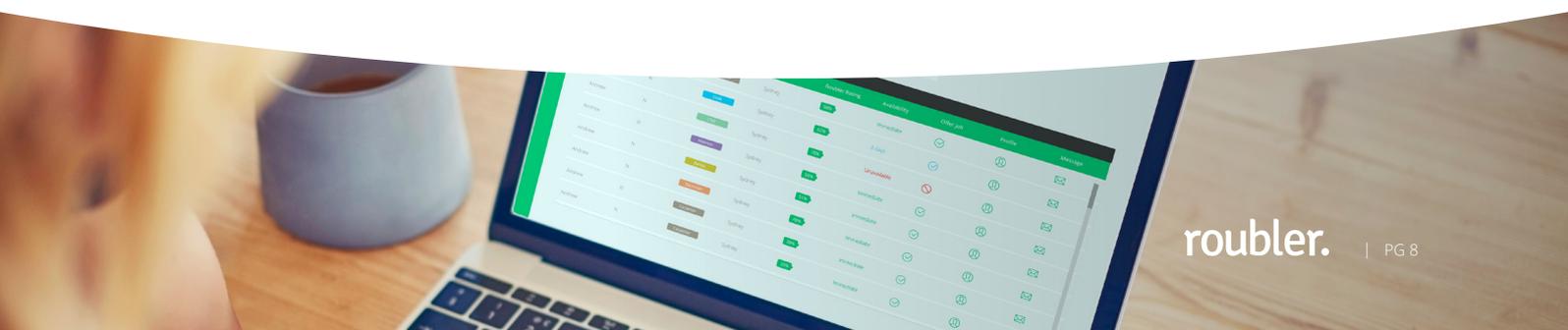
Automating this process with an applicant tracking system (ATS) reduces the crucial time to hire statistic by collecting information in a central place, instantly assessing applications against a set of ‘must have’ criteria to filter out unsuitable applicants before you even read their CV, and facilitating interview scheduling. A system such as this can consolidate resumes in one place, along with interview notes and contact details. This allows for easier comparison and access for all departments involved in the hiring decision.

Additionally, using a candidate management database allows for the storage of potential candidates’ information for quick filling of empty positions – particularly important for companies who use high volume recruitment for seasonal shift-work positions.

Furthermore, by automating the job ad posting and application process you can track how successful each advertising channel is and budget your resources accordingly.

## **How to get the most from this benefit**

Choose an HR software system with an onboarding feature that includes (or at a minimum integrates seamlessly with) an ATS and talent pool tool. This will save you hours of data entry for new hires and will allow you to instigate onboarding as soon as they are offered the role.



# Improved communication

A barrier to regular communication between HR staff, and between HR and employees, is the time and effort required to create communications and remember to send them.

Automated systems can send notifications as and when changes are made to the system, send customised reports at pre-defined times and facilitate fast responses to queries.

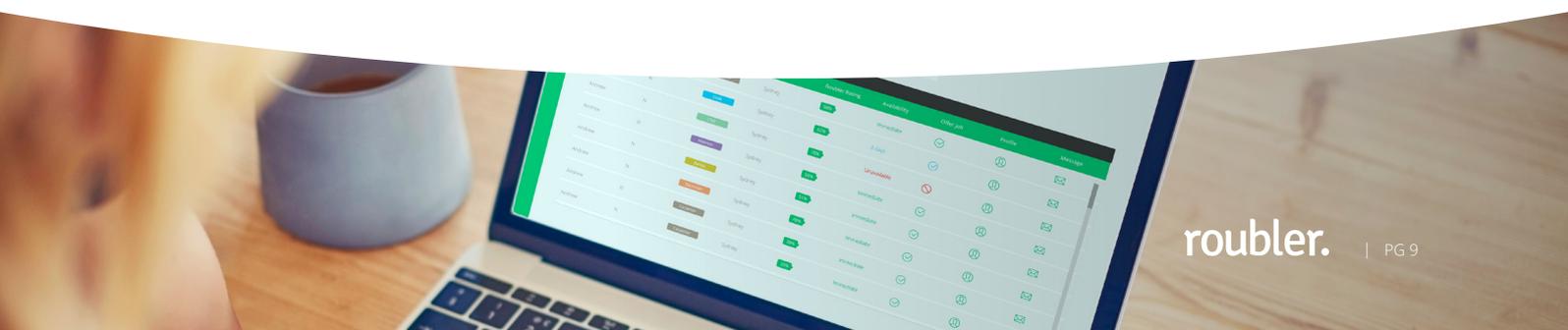
Automated HR systems can publish important documents directly to each employee's account and notify the employee by SMS, email and push notification so the information they need – such as changes to policies, updates to rosters, and company-wide announcements – is available when they need it. SMS and push notifications are particularly valuable in an age where people are rarely more than arms reach from their smartphone (and can't resist the lure notification or text beeps!).

Email communication technology hosted within HR systems can greatly improve the onboarding experience by sending welcome emails and information packages automatically once contracts are signed.

Finally, automated systems remove confusion and headaches caused when paperwork or messages are lost between employees and their managers. For example, an automated leave management system allows employees to submit requests online. Notifications of receipt are then sent to the manager and employee, and approval notifications are instantly sent to the employee with a click of a button.

## ***How to get the most from this benefit***

Separate your communications to employees into two categories: critical (shift updates, urgent actions, compliance matters or confidential matters) and non-critical (non-urgent company announcements, internal updates). Use your automated HR system to send all critical messages – they can be set up easily, you can be sure they are received, and you have an audit trail of sent messages. Then use your company email, intranet and kitchen pinboards to distribute non-urgent messages about company events etc.



# Enhanced workforce efficiency

## Better data = better decisions

Automated HR systems offer businesses an incredible opportunity to easily access and analyse workforce performance and payroll statistics in a way that simply isn't possible with paper-based processes. With this data on hand at a moment's notice, quick and informed decisions can be made.

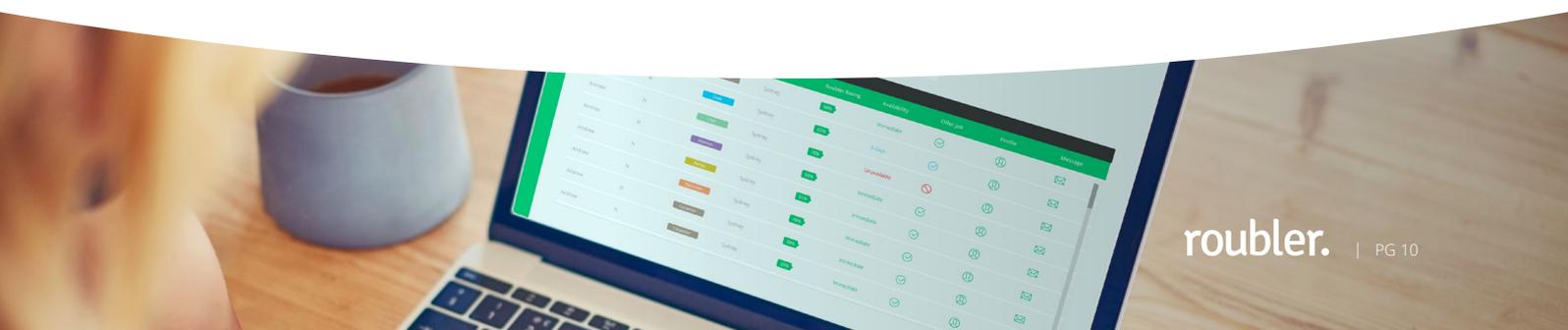
Information about workforce demographics (i.e. diversity, qualifications) employee absence, on-time clock-ins, employee turnover, labour efficiency and labour costs, or payroll costs can be readily accessed on an automated HR dashboard.

With employees able to edit their own information via employee self service systems, and the use of online time-clocks and smart rostering tools, data is updated in real-time, so you always have the most recent information to hand.

## How to get the most from this benefit

Don't get caught by information overload! It's easy to get excited when you see how many reports you can extract from a system, but while the data is available, it may not actually be useful to you and may just lead to information overwhelm.

Think about the types of decisions you make daily, and what information you need to make strategic decisions on a quarterly, half-yearly and yearly basis. Then only set up the reports and dashboards you need.



# Quick, compliant payroll & staff payments

The number of steps, and therefore people, required to perform a non-automated pay run often means that it can take significant resources and man hours just to complete payroll each month. And it's not always accurate, either.

A survey of 1500 small businesses found one in three small businesses who outsource payroll services spend more than \$500 per month. One in four who organise payroll themselves spend more than six hours a month on the process. This can cost approximately \$6000 a year for outsourcing, or almost \$2600 in-house. This time and money could be better allocated in other areas of the business.

Discrepancies between information recorded on paper timesheets, data entered and pay levels can cause significant and costly issues including delays for pay runs, incorrect payments and back-pay processes.

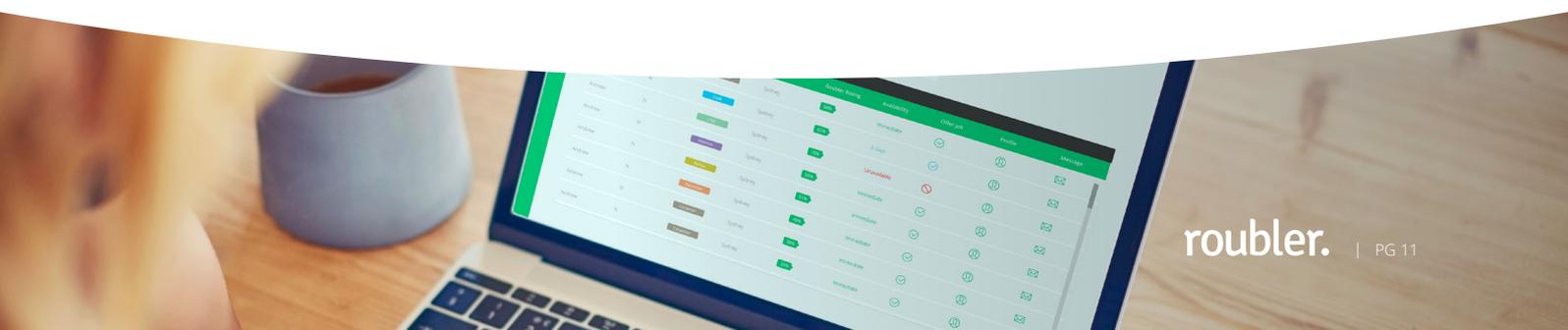
To make things more difficult, payroll legislation is becoming increasingly complex with more rules and exceptions being released each year.

Without an automated interpretation tool within your payroll engine, you risk calculating pay packets incorrectly, breaching laws and wasting precious time.

Automated HR systems that incorporate payroll software solve all these issues. Electronic timesheets generated from online time-clocks can be automatically approved and sent to payroll where they are processed using pre-set rules to ensure pay rates, penalties and benefits are paid correctly. And the best part: your new completely compliant, automated payroll system will save your staff hundreds of hours each year.

## ***How to get the most from this benefit***

If you do outsource your payroll, be sure that the software they use integrates with your new automated HR system. Better yet if they use the same software as you do! It will save hours in transferring data to them.



# Reduced environmental impact

Increasingly companies are seeking to lessen their environmental impact. Moving away from paper resumes, pay slips, handbooks and forms reduces the impact on the environment, and saves money in paper. Furthermore, companies who go green are often viewed more favourably by prospective employees and investors.

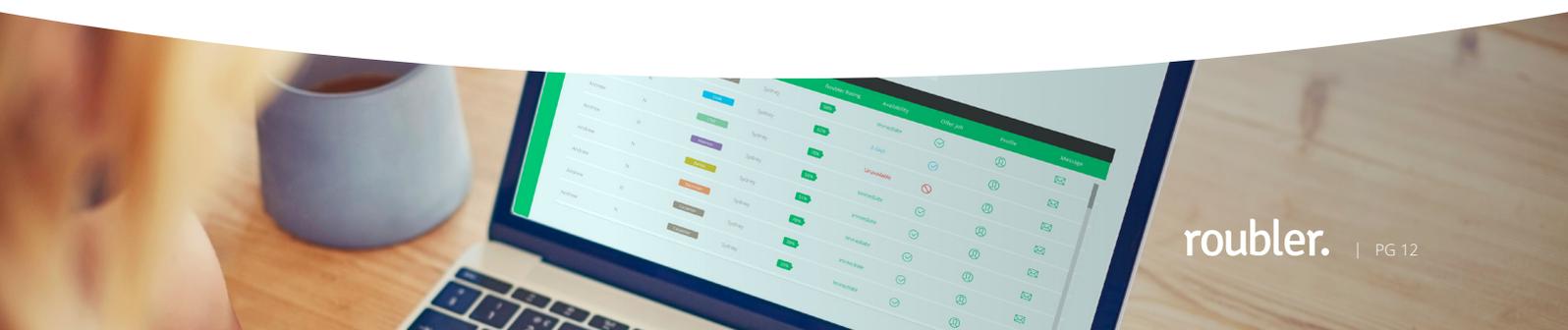
## ***How to get the most from this benefit***

Enable electronic signing functionality on your PDF forms so that there is no reason that employees need to print forms to complete and sign them. Advise them to download or 'print' a PDF version for their own records.

# Final word

In a survey of HR professionals, 27% saw price as their biggest barrier to using fully integrated automated HR. However, when investigated further, automated HR can potentially save companies millions of dollars in time and resources.

While in the short-term automated HR may seem expensive, businesses who make the switch benefit from increased productivity, more engaged employees and larger profit margins. More importantly, they'll be setting their business up for a prosperous future.



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