RAVEN INTELLIGENCE

Guide to Top UKG Implementation Partners

November 2023

Prepared by Raven Intelligence

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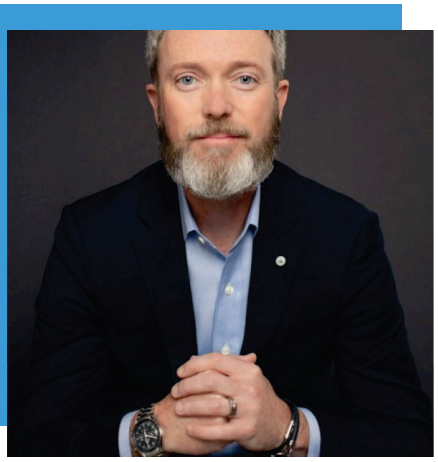
"From offering innovative solutions and services that drive transformation to providing white-glove customer service, our Services Partners truly are an extension of UKG.

Our partners are committed to helping our customers go live faster, making the most of their UKG investment, and delivering meaningful, people-first experiences, and we're thrilled to honor those who are proving it day in and day out."



Patrick Lannon
Vice President of Global Alliances

UKG

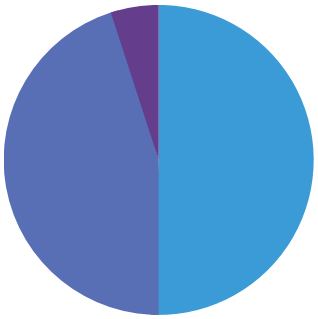
Introduction

Raven Intelligence 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. We 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. We also provide free access to the profiles and ratings of over 150 consulting firms—from the Big 5 to boutique organizations.

2,700+	100%	200+	40+
Verified Reviews	Of Reviews Verified With a 2-Step Process	Consulting Firms Represented	Countries Represented

Our Vetting Process

100% of our reviews are verified. We know the identity of every one of our reviewers (work email & LinkedIn) and their company. We 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 or for Raven to delete negative reviews or for favorable reporting.



Direct-to-Customer - 50%
Raven 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 - 45%
Consulting firms (aka Systems Integrators) have also sent customers to our website 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 Intelligence to submit a review.

Our Raven Community & Business Model

Raven Intelligence 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.

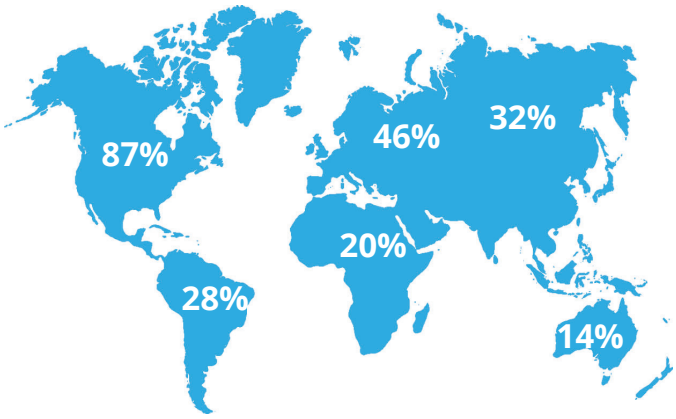
Raven Review Demographics

Raven's Review Database

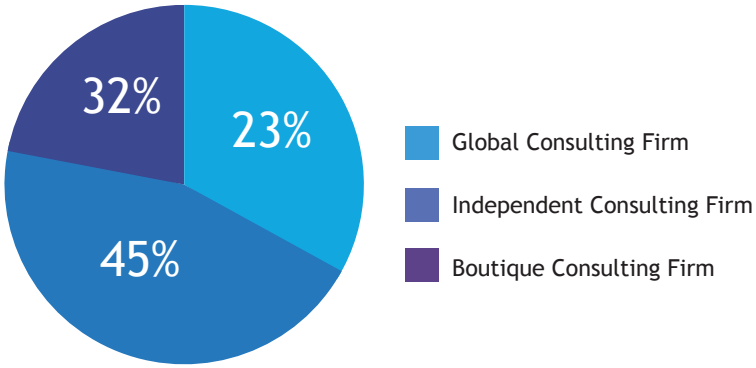
2700+
Verified Reviews

40+
Countries Represented

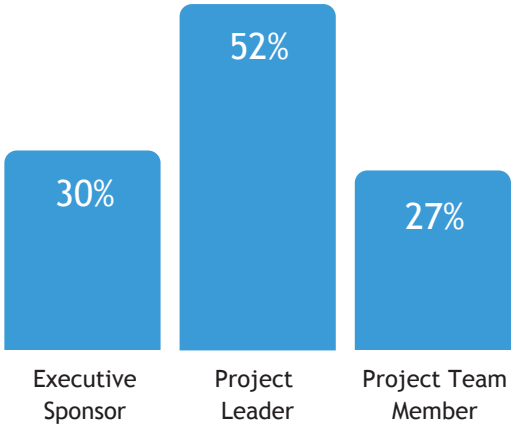
87%
Of Implementations Completed via Consulting Firm



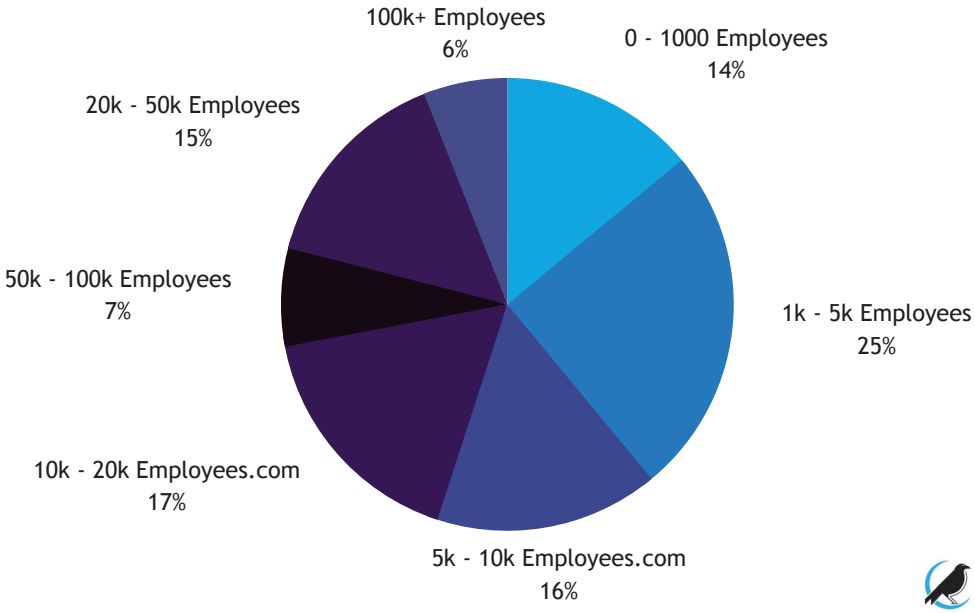
Composition of Consulting Firms Reviewed



Reviewer Roles



Customer Employee Sizes Reviewed



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Why Selecting the Right Partner is Vital

At Raven Intelligence, we research partners who implement Enterprise 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 requires knowing 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 is perhaps the most indicative marker of a consulting firm's quality and it is the easiest way for you to gain confidence that a firm can deliver on the promises made during the evaluation stage.

Expectation 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 and ahead of schedule. In addition, change happens over time. A firm that once struggled may have added new talent or introduced new 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, right? 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

If our software vendor tells you that their small, tightly-controlled ecosystem or their large number of potential partners will guarantee you will get a good partner or that there are vast partner choices available to choose from, you still need to do your own homework. In the end, you'll be the one living with your partner choice.

Reviews on Raven Intelligence

Visitors to Raven gain a bird's eye view and can look up any Enterprise software consulting firm on our website to read reviews – for free. Raven has over 2700 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, such as:

- 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.

UKG Projects & Partners Executive Summary

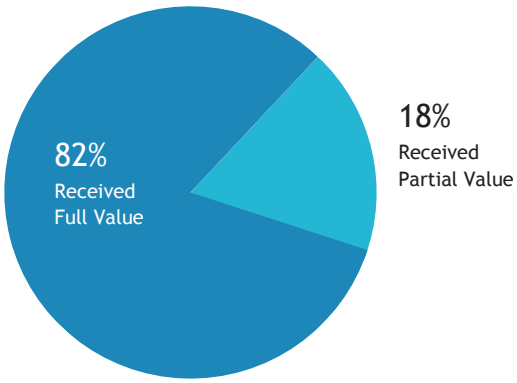
UKG has 852 customer project reviews completed by customers on Ravenintel.com in the past 24 months, and 311 completed in 2023. Through regular, independent customer survey and analysis conducted by Raven Intelligence, UKG has successfully monitored, measured and steadily improved the quality of service delivery of their partner network. In the same time period, they have doubled their partner ecosystem and services while integrating the Ultimate Software and Kronos businesses together. UKG requires their implementation partners to be reviewed publicly as a condition of partnership, and this feedback is heavily weighted in their partner awards and recommendations.

UKG Implementation / Service Partner Strengths

- UKG Project and Partner satisfaction lead industry peer averages* by a full point and a half (out of 10)
- 82% of customers said they got the full value from their project that they expected (12 point+ industry average)
- 96% said they'd be likely (or highly likely) to rehire their partner (8 points+ industry average)
- 71% of projects were on time / 79% on budget (approx. 15 points+ industry average)
- Only 8% of projects said they encountered change orders which were based upon missed requirements by the partner or UKG sales
- Project Team turnover is roughly 35% (5 points+ industry average)
- Responsiveness, Quality of Consultants, Implementation Process, Flexibility and Systems Expertise averages 4.75 / 5, which exceeds industry averages
- UKG's partner ecosystem maturity surpasses mid-sized peers (Ceridian, ADP) with more than 60% of projects completed with the assistance of a partner
- UKG Partners tend to have more specialized HR consultant resources with previous experience as both a customer and an HR practitioner

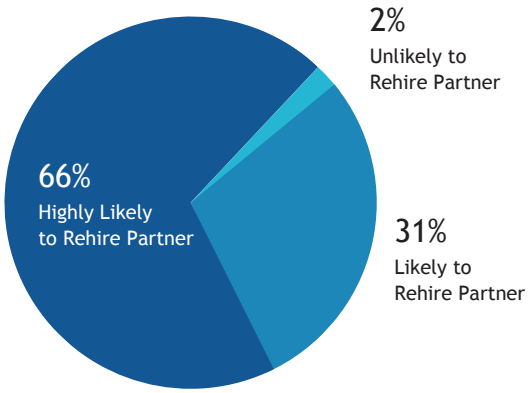
Value Realized from Project

82% of UKG customers say they received the full value anticipated for their software project investment.
(Versus the industry average of approximately 60%)



Likelihood to Rehire Partner

98% of customers say they would be likely or highly likely rehire their UKG implementation partner for additional projects.



Traits of Top UKG Partners

It's easy to spot top UKG partners, as they are open to the idea of project transparency and being reviewed publicly. In 2023, the top 10 partners procured over 191 reviews from customers that have been fully vetted and are available for view on Ravenintel.com. Common traits include:

- Strong scoping capabilities during the sales process and fewer change orders
- >4.5/5 ratings for Systems Expertise, Responsiveness & Flexibility
- Strong team consistency throughout the full duration of the project (no change in team)

**Peer averages based upon 2700+ project reviews from Workday, Ceridian, Oracle, SAP SuccessFactors, ADP*

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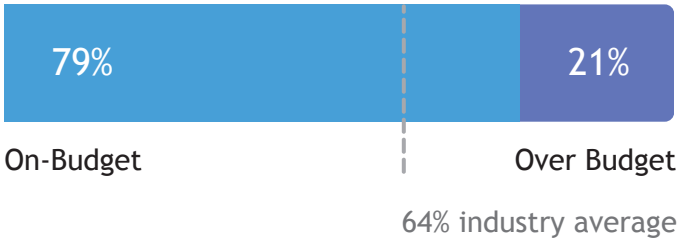
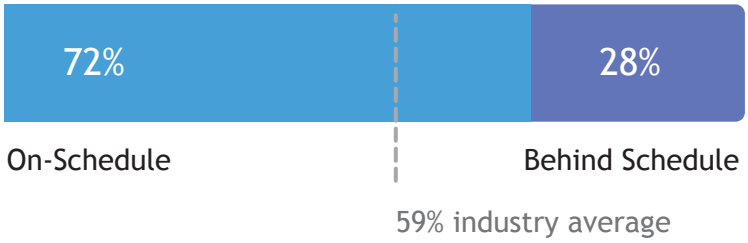
UKG Project Review Highlights

UKG is outperforming its closest industry peer averages for Overall Software Vendor and Implementation Satisfaction by a full point and a half.

Service Delivery Metrics

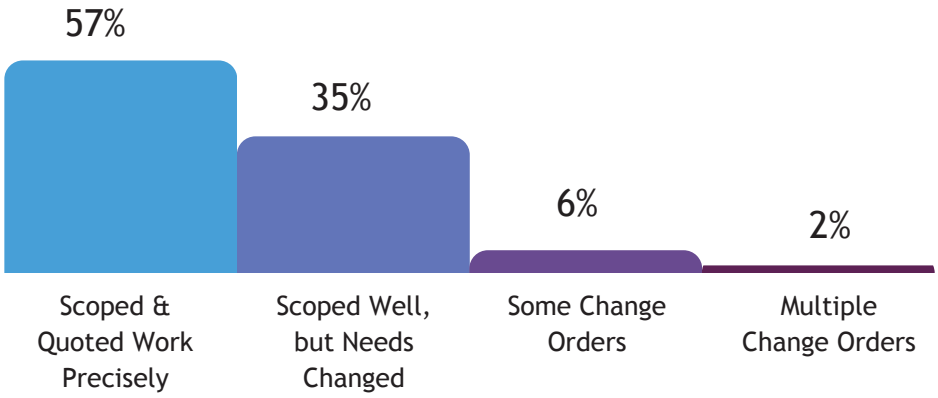
UKG is outperforming industry averages for delivery. UKG's projects are delivered on-time 13% more than industry peers, and 15% more on-budget.

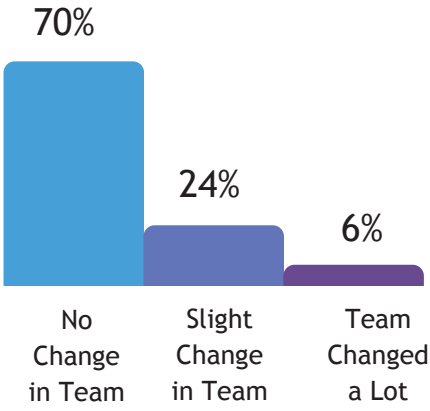




Scoping Quality & Team Consistency Averages

UKG is outperforming industry scoping accuracy by 15% and team consistency averages by 5%





Average Sentiment Scores

Top UKG Partners to Consider

HRchitect

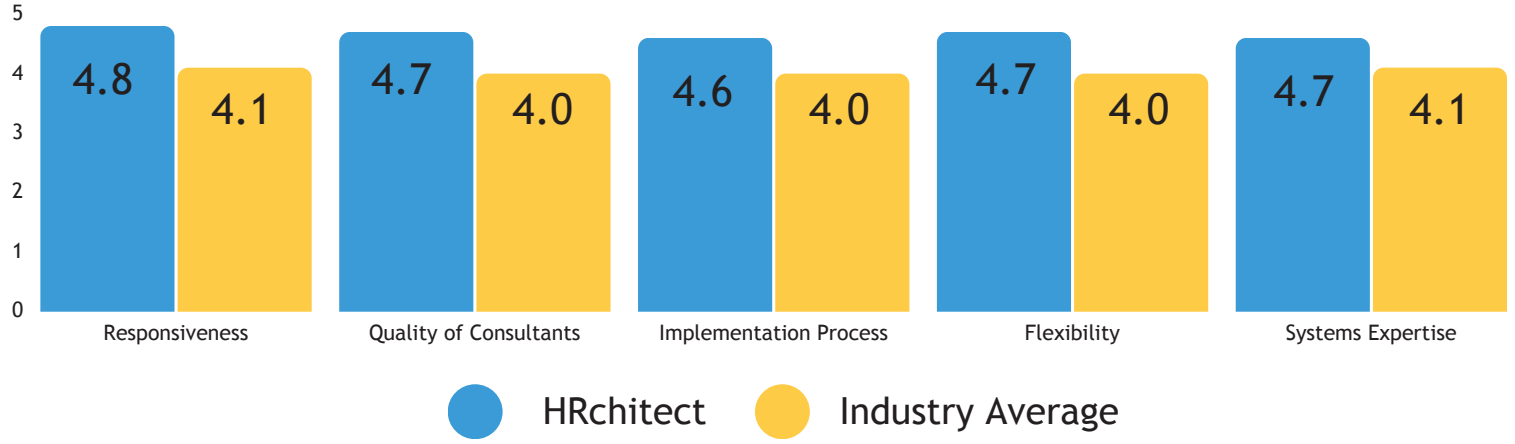
2023 MOST REVIEWS

Read More Reviews

115 Reviews

4.9 / 5

HRchitect Compared to Industry Averages



HRchitect, UKG's 2023 Partner of the Year, and the only 5-time winner of this award, is a top-ranked consulting firm for organizations implementing UKG Pro, UKG Pro WFM (formerly Dimensions), or UKG Ready. Our full-time dedicated UKG consulting team consists of over 100 of the top UKG consultants across the United States and Canada. Our consultants average 15+ years of experience and are former HR practitioners and UKG system administrators.

In addition to implementation, HRchitect helps clients with migrations and upgrades from other UKG platforms, client-side consulting, project management, change management, integrations, system assessment & optimization, reporting and concierge-managed support. More than 4,000 organizations worldwide have trusted HRchitect.

9.4 / 10

Average Partner Satisfaction Score

97%

of Customers Highly Likely to Rehire

Customer Quote

"HRchitect was an excellent partner. Our consultant jumped in to help however she could and went the extra mile."

Project Leader, Business Services Industry

Customer Quote

"HRchitect has been a dream to work with. They are unbelievably responsive and knowledgeable about the product, UKG."

Project Team Member, Healthcare Industry

HRchitect is a paid sponsor of this report. At no time is customer data altered to enhance a software vendor or consulting firm's rating favorably.

10 Questions to Ask a Partner

Raven Intelligence has spoken with over 2,700 companies about their recent implementation of Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, UKG, 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 two or fewer proposals and spent far less time on partner selection than they did on 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, 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 Intelligence Project Reviews

Below are 10 hard questions you should be asking (but might not know to ask) when you interview potential consulting partners. These are based upon the "Lessons Learned" that we hear in our project reviews at Raven Intelligence, as well as wisdom from industry experts.

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 customers we surveyed recognized individual consultant project leads by name as the most important reason for their satisfaction/project success.

10 Questions to Ask a Partner

9. Team - *Continued*

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 from who you get during implementation since consulting firms assign resources based upon capacity. Industry expert, Brian Sommer says, "the wanting and the gettin' are two 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 customers we surveyed recognized individual consultant project managers by name as the most important reason for their satisfaction and 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 Intelligence 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.

10 Questions to Ask a Partner

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)
- What previous work / functional 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 Intelligence has found when projects go over budget 25%+, satisfaction drops 2 points (out of 10.) 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 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 a Transformation or Systems Implementation? Which is it?

If your project is a full-scale "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 Transformation or a Systems Implementation? Or a software project?

Red Flags:

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

10 Questions to Ask a Partner

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 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:

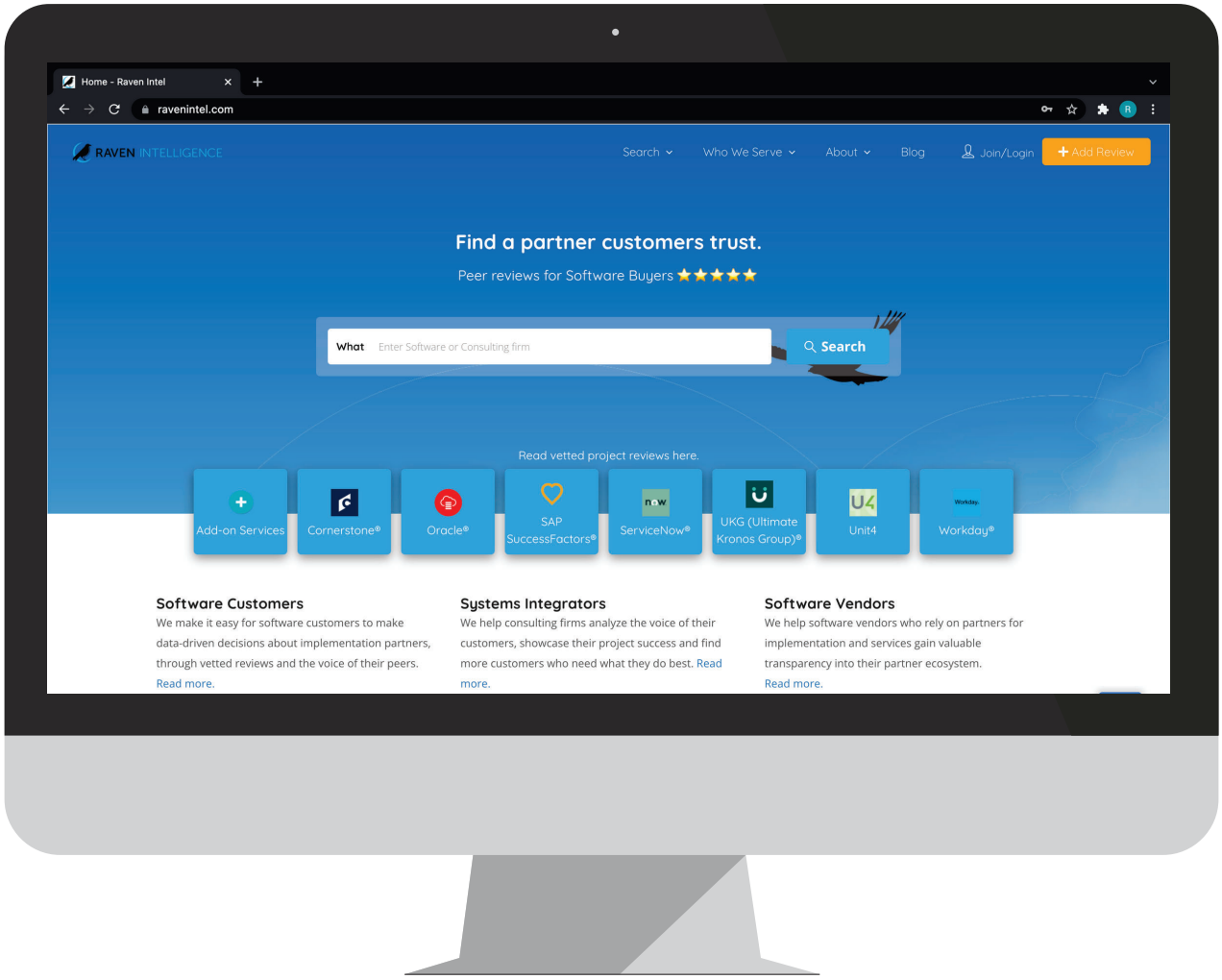
- How many internal resources are needed from a functional as well as IT perspective?
- What is the % time commitment from each party given the timeline established?

Red Flags:

- Consulting firm says that since it's cloud software "fewer IT resources are needed."

RAVEN INTELLIGENCE

For more information about Raven Intelligence, please visit our website or contact us at info@ravenintel.com.



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