



HireArt's 2025 VMS Implementation Survey Report

What Did We Learn, and What Should You Do About It?

In late 2024, HireArt conducted a survey of dozens of contingent workforce professionals, consultants, and specialists to learn as much as possible about the process of implementing a new VMS. What makes it easy or difficult? What kinds of resources are required? How long does it take to complete? These are just a few of the questions that we were seeking answers to.

We've compiled the most interesting and impactful learnings from that survey into this report, adding in our interpretations, thoughts, and advice where appropriate. We hope that this proves to be a valuable resource for those who are preparing to implement a VMS in the near future, and also to anyone interested in the contingent workforce management space and how it is evolving.

Read on for the good stuff!



[Talk to an expert](#)

Everything you need to manage your own contract workforce

Global Employer of Record, On-Demand Sourcing, Vendor Management, and Freelancer Management, in the same self-serve UI.

Our Methodology



For its 2025 VMS Implementation Survey Report, HireArt surveyed contingent workforce professionals across a range of roles, industries, program sizes, and company sizes. They were reached via professional networks and also solicited via social media channels, chiefly LinkedIn.



Respondents tended to be fairly experienced with VMS implementations, with over 80% rating their experience with them as 3 or above (out of a range from 0 to 5).



Respondents came from the MSP side and the client side, from smaller companies to the Fortune 500, representing a range of contingent workforce spend levels. They all completed a survey of 19 questions, and we received 31 responses in total. **Now, on to the insights!**



62% of VMS implementations require collaboration with 5 or more different internal teams.

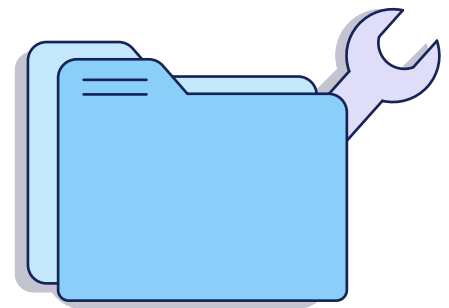
How good are you at herding cats? How easy is it to get another team to prioritize a contract workforce or HR project? Is the organization at large bought into your contingent workforce strategy?

Success in the implementation of a new VMS requires more than simply building a strong business case; you will need to bring on board every team that will be involved by speaking to their needs and priorities. In some companies with a tight-knit culture, this can be a relatively easy step in the project. In others, cross functional buy-in can be the biggest hurdle to a smooth implementation.

Only 19% of respondents implemented their VMS on their own, without help from an MSP or other external resources.

A VMS vendor is typically just providing a software tool, without a service layer; actually getting that tool implemented and working is up to the client. To actually get the VMS operational and integrated into a company's tech stack requires work from multiple internal teams, often coordinated by an MSP or consultant. Larger organizations can afford MSPs since, compared to their overall program spend, they represent a relatively small investment. However, for small and midsize programs, MSPs represent a significant incremental cost that they cannot afford. This means they are usually on their own for implementation.

A new segment in the market has emerged in the last few years to fix this experience to make it more client-friendly. These newer platforms bundle software that solves the same problems as a VMS with an efficient service component that takes implementation work off of clients' plates. Companies see real value in the quick implementation and built-in service, resulting in significant growth in this newer market segment.



81% of VMS implementations were for contingent workforces of 500 or more workers.

If you have fewer than 500 contingent workers or are just beginning to build your contingent workforce, a VMS could be overkill and a large expense that is hard to justify. Similar to MSPs, they simply aren't built or priced for smaller workforces; larger programs achieve economies of scale that reduce the incremental expense. Does that mean you are relegated to cobbling your own system together from spreadsheets and Google docs? More scalable solutions exist outside of the legacy VMS space that can handle smaller workforces and adjust their services as the company grows and changes.



80% of VMS implementations took 3 or more months to complete, with over 39% needing more than 6 months to complete.

These figures suggest that if your business needs help managing its contingent workforce, and you need that help quickly, implementing a VMS may not be the best road to take. It is also important to keep in mind that the majority of people HireArt surveyed implemented their VMS in a larger organization (as mentioned in the above section), in an environment with an MSP and often a dedicated Contingent Workforce Program Manager. Even with all of these resources, it is rare for VMS implementations to take less than 3 months, and 6+ month timelines are not unusual.

Since small and midsize programs will not have such resources, it is reasonable to assume timelines could be longer on average if your program falls into this category. It's also safe to assume that if you need to make any adjustments to your stack in the future as your company grows (new international markets, new talent needs, etc.), that the VMS that was slow to implement will also be slow to pivot.

The most common ingredient that helps an implementation go smoothly is “identifying the right stakeholders” (84%), with “having the right team” as a close second (81%).

While these two factors topped this category, they did not run away with the trophy as every option had at least a 65% incidence of contributing to a smooth project. An aligning of elements within your control (“Fully scoped project plan”) and out of your control (“having the right team,” “getting buy-in from the organization”) appears to be required to make an implementation successful. This data serves as a good reminder of the value that a long runway of preparation and communication can bring to your implementation. It is your job to evangelize the value of the contingent workforce and your ability to efficiently manage it as much as it is to actually manage that workforce.

What helped your implementation go smoothly?



The complexity of existing systems in the organization is the most common factor (61%) that negatively impacted the timeline of VMS implementations.

Speaking of elements that are outside of your control, you will inevitably have your company’s existing tech stack to contend with when bringing on a new software solution. You can start by simplifying the tools your team is currently using wherever possible. While there may not be a lot you can do to change that tech stack outside of your department, you can go into your vendor evaluation or RFP with this priority in mind. You will want to look closely at vendors’ integration capabilities and their overall flexibility with varied configurations. Case studies can be a very useful resource here, where you can suss out the integrations that are established and working for existing clients. It can also be worthwhile to take a hard look at the integrations that you (or other departments) are saying are required, and determine if they are truly necessary for a successful implementation.



Delayed ROI - 77% of VMS implementations took more than 2 months to fully realize the benefits of their new VMS, and 30% took more than 6 months to see those benefits.

Not every business can afford to bring on a vendor that takes months to demonstrate value post-implementation. In 2025, businesses should reasonably expect fast onboarding timelines and immediate ROI. If you doubt the claims that a VMS vendor is making regarding these timelines, ask them if they can share their client Net Promoter Score (NPS) with you.

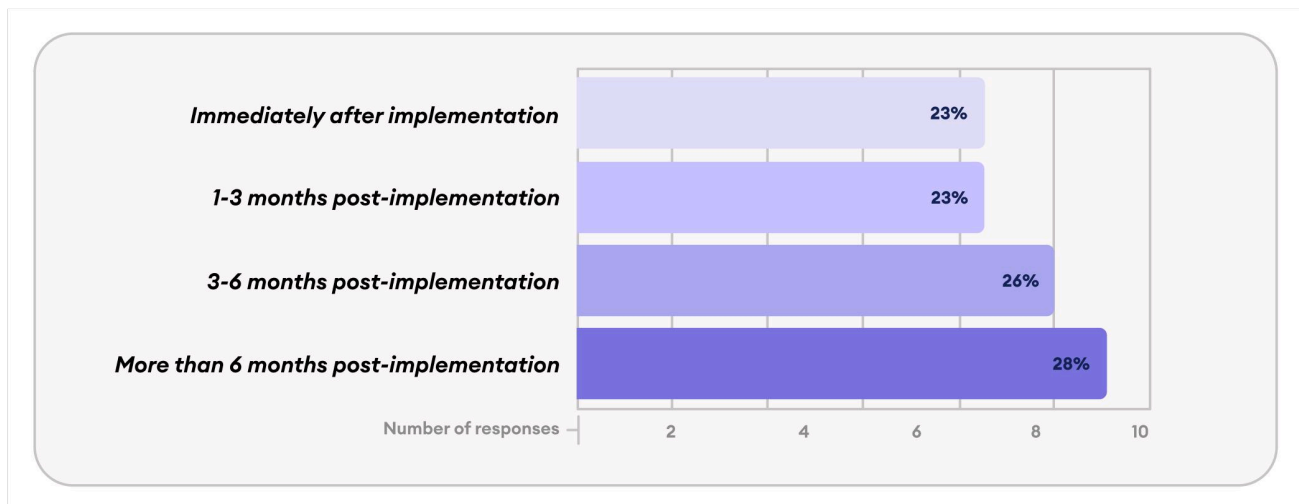
This is a quick way to understand how satisfied their clients are, on average. It's worth noting that the VMS industry as a whole has a negative NPS score (-35 to be exact, according to the latest Workforce Solutions Buyer Survey by SIA [link]). If you can find a vendor with a positive NPS score that solves your contingent workforce needs, you should definitely give them a closer look!

Conclusion

HireArt's 2025 VMS Implementation Survey revealed some interesting insights into the current state of implementing a Vendor Management System today, including many challenges. While these tools can and do offer value for managing large contingent workforces, the complexity, cost, and time investment required for successful implementation cannot be overlooked. For small and mid-sized programs, traditional VMS solutions may not be the optimal choice, especially when weighed against alternatives that provide faster implementation and scalability.

The survey results reflect that stakeholder alignment, cross-functional collaboration, and a clear project scope are critical success factors, while complex existing systems and lengthy timelines for ROI can sometimes bog the process down. As the contingent workforce landscape evolves, businesses must realistically assess their needs, explore all available solutions, and prioritize vendors with proven track records and positive client satisfaction metrics.

How long did it take for the organization to fully realize the benefits of the implementation?



Ultimately, the decision to implement a VMS should align with a company's size, growth trajectory, and available resources. By leveraging the learnings from this report, businesses can make more informed choices and set themselves up for long-term success in building and managing their contingent workforce.