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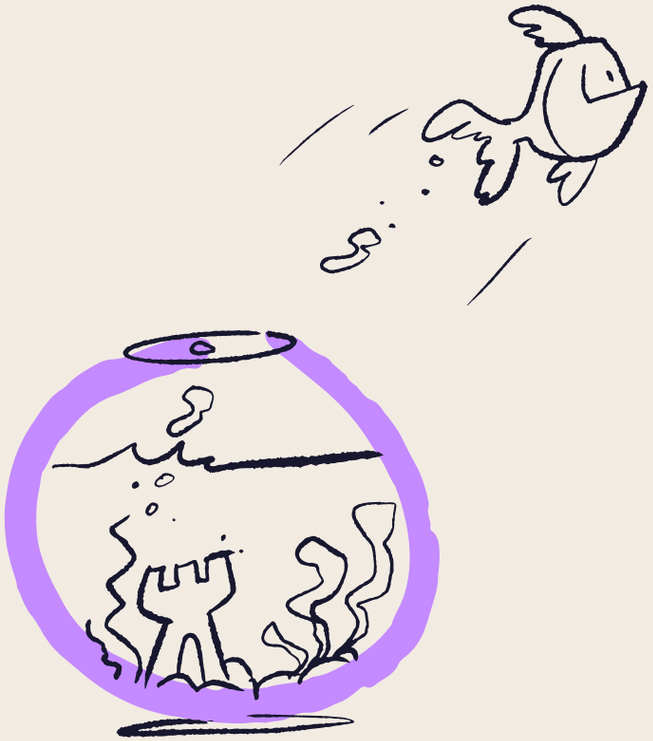
From HR everywhere to HR software

Ready to ditch the chaos? See what it takes to go from scattered HR tools to all-in-one HR



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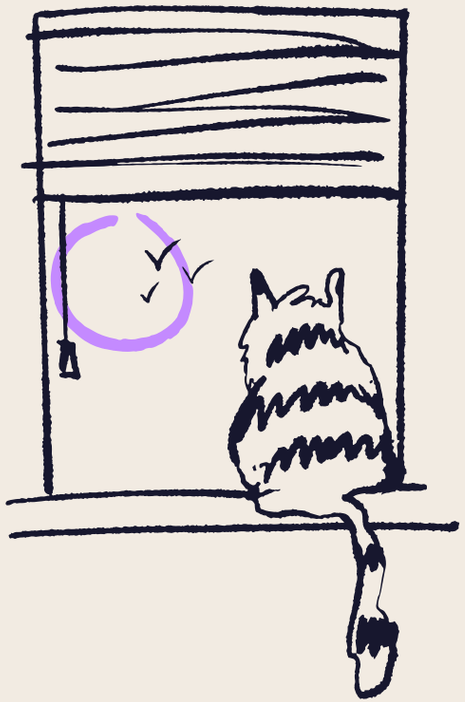

1.

Do you need HR software?

Bring all your tools together



Whether you have 2 or 50 team members, getting HR on the right track – and bringing all your tools together – will help your business overcome challenges, big or small.

Right now, you might be juggling multiple responsibilities and second-guessing if you're doing things by the book, but you also know it's time for a change.

At Charlie, we know small businesses don't do HR the same as everyone else:

- People in the business with the least time to spare are in charge.
- Busy schedules means HR is at the bottom of the to-do list.
- Messy HR stacks and lack of time start causing issues.

That's when turning to HR software to bring all your tools together can help:

- You'll save time.
- You'll avoid mistakes.
- You'll be compliant.
- You'll get to delegate.

So if you're wondering whether now is the right time to invest in HR software, try reframing the question: how much time, energy and people could you lose if you don't?

> "It was difficult to keep track of everything when I dealt with HR at my previous company. I wanted to do right by the team, but sometimes I also just wanted everything to be in the same place."
>
> **Ben Gateley**



In this guide, we'll help you understand why HR software is the right choice for your business, now and later.

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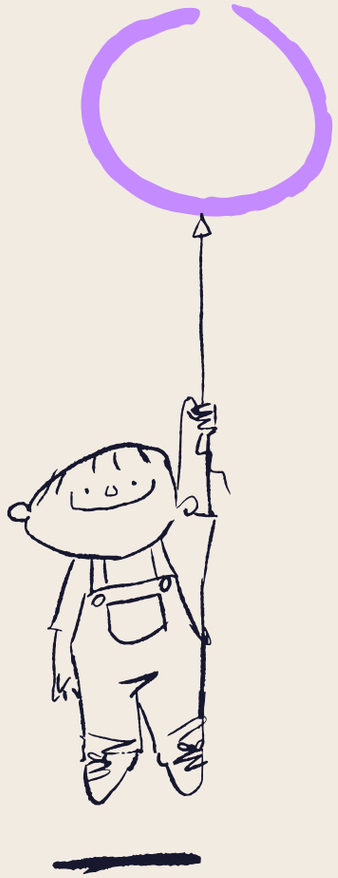

2.

Saving time & money

Stop paying for multiple subscriptions

LONDON NOOTROPICS

"Charlie is a great platform that makes HR playful, communicative and not at all redundant – everything is done seamlessly, and that's really what you need in your day-to-day small business life."

Sophie Hanman
Customer Happiness Manager @ London Nootropics

Read case study

Maybe you're thinking you don't really need HR software: you've managed so far with a mix of spreadsheets and tools, but aren't these systems draining your time and money?

Think about it: you're paying for multiple subscriptions, copying and pasting information, jumping between platforms – and by the end of the day, it feels like you've barely achieved anything.

Here's an example of what HR software could change for you and your team:

- **Time off** for holiday & sick leave → replaces **Timetastic, WhosOff** 💰
- **Team Calendar** for planning → replaces (or works with) **Google Calendar, Outlook, iCal** 💰
- **Company Hub** for docs & files → replaces **Notion**, **Sharepoint**, **Confluence** etc 💰
- **Perks** for rewarding your team → replaces **Perkbox** 💰

Putting that into perspective, you might as well start looking at how much money you could save for a team of 25 people, let's say.

CharlieHR £100/month	Other tools +£340/month
HR essentials: onboarding, employee data, time off, reviews, engagement.	Time off (Timetastic), onboarding (Coassemble), reviews (Notion) ≈ £290/month
Perks – + 3,000 discounts	Benefits platform = from £50/month
Charlie Marketplace – tried-and-tested key business services with up to 20% discounts	Legal help from £100 to £500 per hour, coaching from £300 per session, insurance from £500

Want to find out more? You can check our pricing page and maybe start a free trial.

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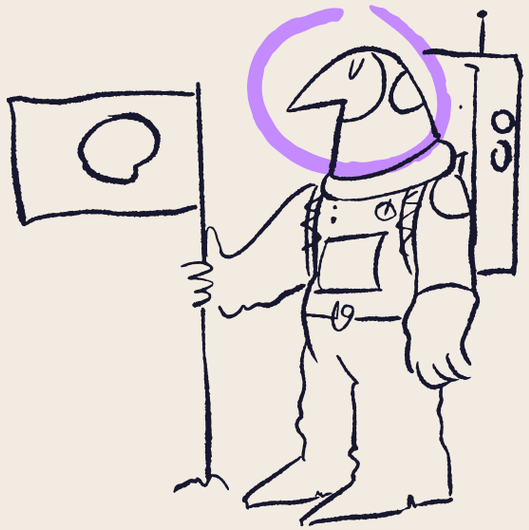


3.

All-in-one HR software, no HR team

HR hire or HR software

RED5 PEOPLE

"Life is pretty scary without Charlie. It's so simple and reassuring, and it had a massive impact on our business on top of being budget-friendly. The HR advisors we work with just make us feel like they're part of the team, always in our corner for support. We finally feel like a proper company with Charlie by our side."

James Chessum
Founder @ Red 5 People

Read case study

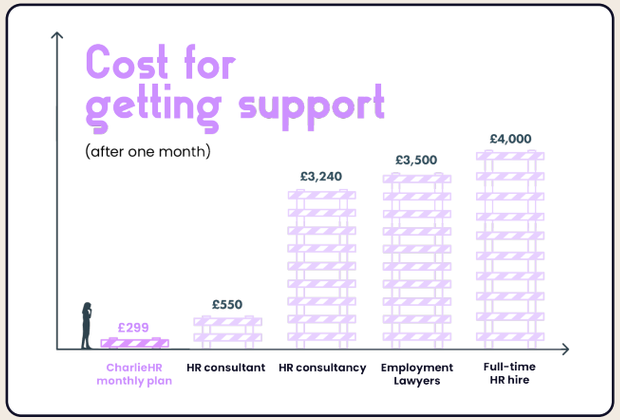
Having an HR person sounds appealing, but it's not always ideal. Let's first look at the difference between an HR hire and HR software.

Tasks	HR hire	HR software
Time off requests and holidays	✅	✅
Onboarding new hires	✅	✅
Hiring pipeline management	✅	✅
Employee handbook and HR policies	✅	❌
Performance reviews setup	✅	✅
Disciplinary meetings and grievances	✅	❌
HR metrics and reports	✅	✅
Social events and team building activities	✅	❌

So, should you get HR software?

Yes – HR software is more flexible and less expensive than an HR hire. It makes sense to focus on saving money and getting a straight-out-of-the box solution that can support your growth.

(As a side note, a new HR hire will ask you for a budget for HR software, so you'll need it at some point!)



And when should you hire an HR person?

It really depends on your company strategy, but small businesses don't necessarily need an HR person – you can use HR software, but you can also think about hiring services such as Charlie Advice: for a fraction of the cost of a full-time hire, you'll get a dedicated HR advisor by your side.

Charlie advisors can support you through challenging situations such as grievances and redundancies, as well as answer your most basic HR questions.

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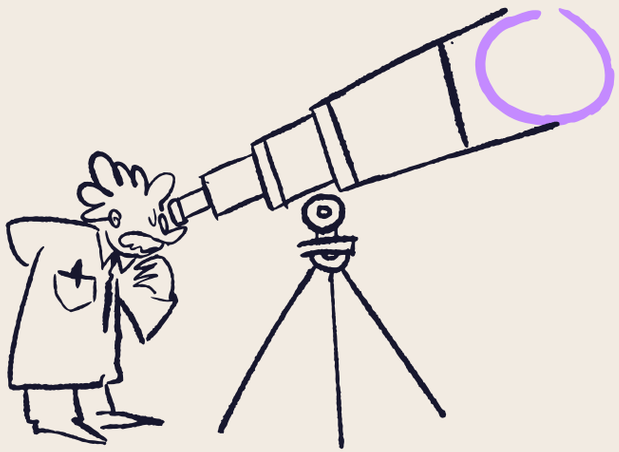
4.

Doing HR by the book

Invest early in an HR solution



If “not doing things right” is a feeling you can’t shake, don’t ignore it — it could have serious consequences for your business and its future. Investing early in an HR solution can help guarantee compliance by:

- **Easily collecting all the required documents** — including Right to Work checks, visas, and more.
- **Keeping your data in check** — all necessary information is captured in the onboarding flow, so nothing gets missed.
- **Eliminating spreadsheets and manual calculations** — let the software do the maths.
- **Ditching sticky notes** — checklists and automatic reminders handle visa expiries and other deadlines.
- **Protecting you against data leaks** — securely store all documents and employee details in one safe place.
- **Making your HR handbook visible** — store it where everyone on the team can access it easily.

Top tip: Did you know that bringing all your HR tools together significantly reduces the risk of compliance issues? With all your data in one place, there’s less room for error — and less chance of data leaks.

Koru Kids

“In all honesty, we don’t even have to think about it. It’s doing its thing in the background and it’s great.”

Rachel Carrell
Founder & CEO@ Koru Kids

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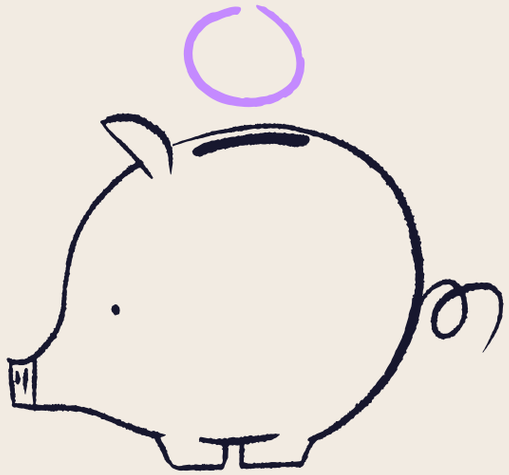

5.

Small budget ≠ no perks

Build an effective performance review system



People have expectations when it comes to work: they want to join small businesses, because there's more room to fast-track their career, but they also want to be rewarded for the work they do, which your business can't necessarily afford.

So how does bringing HR all in one place helps that purpose? Here's how:

Easily build an effective performance review system

If your team cares about development, you have to take it seriously. HR software like Charlie helps you put together a quick and easy review system:

- **No more patchy catchups** – stop the informal chats and put a regular date in the calendar with automatic reminders for everyone.
- **Keep records** – each time you meet, record goals and milestones on the platform, so you can keep track of progression.
- **No more guesswork** – use ready-made templates to conduct the meeting with confidence.
- **Get a better picture** – include 360 feedback from coworkers to have a holistic picture of a team member's performance and reduce bias.

No need to be an HR expert, all of it can easily be done in one place.

[Lem-*uhn*]

"It helped a lot and was a great tool for us to put together a performance review system that made sense."

Riannon Palmer
Founder & CEO @ Lem-uhn

Read case study

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Give your team the perks they deserve



What about rewards? You might not have the funds yet to get the essentials, such as medical insurance or wellbeing budget, so what can you do instead?

Unlike other HR software on the market, Charlie includes a perks platform at no extra cost in our core subscription:

- **Help your team get more out of their wages** – with discounts on groceries, entertainment, travel and more.
- **Support your team's wellbeing** – sports and mental health subscriptions discounts, as well as free classes and courses on the platform.

"We were struggling to come up with benefits that everyone in our team would truly appreciate. Charlie's Perks does exactly that and our team is really happy with it."

Lindon
Co-founder @ Talent heroes

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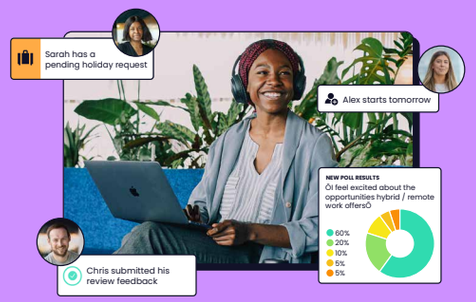
6.

So, is it time to go from HR everywhere to HR software?

Should you invest in HR software?



Make your HR effortless

Start a free trial

Let's look at two key points:

- **If you're a CEO or founder**, you're likely the highest-paid in the company — your time is valuable, don't spend it on HR tasks, but on growth opportunities instead.
- **If you're doing HR with several tools**, you might be overspending. Switching to an all-in-one HR platform could actually save you money both now and in the long ru§n.

How Charlie helped small businesses make that decision:

Regardless of why you're getting HR software or at what stage you are in your journey, it will always be worth the investment, as long as you choose a platform specifically built for small businesses, like Charlie.

- **Daye** – 50 hours saved per month. Grew from 2 to 45 team members. Have been using Charlie since 2018.
- **The SEO Works** – 5 to 10 hours saved per week. Grew from 48 to 90 team. Have been using Charlie since 2023.

What about the cost? With clear pricing brackets, we help you sustain the cost of HR software as your business scales. Check out our pricing here, and book a demo with our sales team to find out more.

Before Charlie

- **Wasting time** dealing with every time off request yourself
- **Tired** of never being able to find employee info or company docs
- **Too distracted** to focus on your own work
- **Worrying** when legal compliance is finally going to catch you out

After Charlie

- **Focusing your time** on strategy, growth and what really matters
- **In control** of your employee data
- **Clear-minded** and focused on the task at hand
- **Confident** that your company is legally water-tight

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