



JONATHAN DYER Accountant, Payroll Specialist, Owner - CheckRight NW

Launched in 2009 as a side bookkeeping job while Jonathan Dyer completed his bachelor's degree in accounting, at Owosso, MI's Baker College, CheckRight NW today is a thriving bookkeeping, payroll, human capital management and time tracking services firm providing services to companies nationwide and around the globe.

CheckRight NW has come a long way from its beginnings as a Baker College student's summer break side job to a national provider of payroll, HCM, bookkeeping and time tracking services. Early on, founder Jonathan Dyer recognized a considerable dearth of fundamental accounting knowledge in the bookkeeping field and developed a combination of high-level, expert customer service and SMB-friendly affordable pricing to best his competitors and lock in customer loyalty. But it was opportunity to acquire other businesses that proved to be a major growth driver.

Founded in 2009, the Vancouver, WA-based company kept a roster of about 20 payroll clients until 2014. That's when owner Jon Dyer took on a bookkeeping client who had been friends with his father and whose company owned a small payroll service that piqued Dyer's interest.

"I sent him a message and asked, 'Hey, when are you going to sell me your payroll company?'" Dyer recalled. "We had lunch and a month later, CheckRight had made its first acquisition. That purchase alone grew our business to 150 client company payrolls."

All went smoothly over the next few years until the payroll software provider that CheckRight had been using was bought by a much larger firm. Promises of multi-million-dollar investment in feature upgrades never materialized and Dyer's staff began hearing grumbings from clients. It became clear that a better solution was needed.

"Apex HCM had been on our radar," Dyer said. "Their platform seemed a better fit for a payroll service bureau of our size, which was about 190 payroll clients at the time. So, we made the switch mid-2019 and by the year's end, every client had been migrated to the new platform."

We were seeking a payroll software and services company that was investing in growth and keeping up with the ever-changing needs of modern employers and their employees. We found what we were looking for in Apex HCM.

Dyer credits Apex HCM's feature-rich payroll and HCM platform along with its customer-centric approach with providing his payroll service bureau's employer clients with top-notch resources. But the real growth driver came by way of Apex HCM connecting CheckRight with potential acquisition opportunities. As a result, CheckRight recently purchased a competitor that added another 150 clients, bringing the company to more than 400 employer customers with payrolls serving upward of 4,000 employees.

If your payroll service bureau is considering wading into the acquisition waters, Dyer offers three top recommendations:

- Consistently look for opportunities that may already exist in your network. "We work with a lot of CPAs that do payroll and I always remind them, 'Hey, we're willing to buy your database when you're ready to unload.'"
- Consider the culture. "The numbers have to work, obviously," Dyer says. "But the company's culture is critical. Start by watching and talking with employees of a company you're considering. If the employees are unhappy, you can bet that clients are unhappy as well and you don't want to risk a mass exodus of either in a database you just bought. Make sure it's a good fit between the foundation the company brings and the plans you have for its growth and profitability."
- Let your Apex HCM rep know you're looking. "When you land an acquisition through Apex, that company is already in the same database. You skip having to educate your new client base or train your employees because they're already accustomed to your platform."

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 info@apexhcm.com  877.750.2739