How to choose accounts receivable automation platform you can trust

Plenty of tools will send template reminders, but few can be trusted with your customer relationships. This guide covers what to look for, and the questions to ask before you sign.

Request demo

$1.5B+ In receivables managed on Monk

90% Of collections resolved without human intervention

40%+ Average drop in DSO across our book

The distance between revenue and cash

Revenue is what you have earned: the signed contract, the sent invoice, the number on the board. Cash is the money in the bank you can spend. The distance between the two is accounts receivable, and for most companies it is wider and more expensive than anyone has stopped to count.

Capital

Money is expensive again

Slow collections used to be fine because you could raise or borrow to cover the gap. Credit tightened through 2025, and that is no longer true.

Software

AR never got great tools

Sales got Salesforce, payroll got Rippling, AP got Ramp and Bill. AR stayed in a spreadsheet with reminders sent one by one.

Relationships

Getting paid is a relationship

Customers pay late over a missing W9, a portal login, a PO mismatch, or an approver on vacation. A sterner reminder does not fix any of these.

Why most tools cannot close collections

Almost everything in AR was built around the ledger or the bill: to record what happened and send what is owed. That is software for compliance. Getting a payment closed depends on why it stalled, and the ledger does not track the why.

W-9 Request

"Before we can release payment, we'll need your current W-9 on file."

→ Monk detects the hold, pulls your W-9, and sends it in the same thread. The invoice moves forward without your team touching it.

Bounced email

"Delivery failed: the address ap@acmecorp.com does not exist or is no longer active."

→ Monk detects the bounce, finds the correct contact, and reroutes outreach. The collection continues without missing a beat.

Line item question

"Can you confirm the service period covered by this invoice before we approve payment?"

→ Julia reads the invoice, replies with the service period, and resends. Question answered, payment unblocked.

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W-9 & tax forms · Bounced email · Out of office · Redirected contact · Invoice not received · Bulk / lump sum payment · Partial payment · Early pay discount · ACH / wire info request · And more

How AR software has evolved

Every tool was built for one of these three eras. Most vendors are still selling the second.

Manual and the ERP

QuickBooks, NetSuite, spreadsheets. AR is data entry and a reminder sent by hand.

First-gen automation

Legacy suites built on the ledger before modern AI, so the intelligence is bolted on and rollouts drag. Newer billing-led tools center on the contract, so collections comes second.

Relationship-first

Agents understand each account, work both sides of every invoice, and adapt to the relationship. A dead contact gets a lookup. A portal mismatch gets resubmitted. A real question goes to a person.

How to evaluate a platform

The transformer architecture arrived in 2017 and ChatGPT in 2022. Every platform on the left was already in market by then, so its intelligence layer sits on top of a data model designed for a different job. A system built that way can send a template on day 30, 45, and 60, and cannot reason about why the invoice is unpaid. Monk was built after modern language models existed, around the relationship instead of the ledger.

See how Monk compares to each of these →

How to evaluate a platform

Four capabilities separate a tool that reminds from one that closes a collection, and all four rest on a fifth: trust and control.

01

Delivery and exceptions

Portals, missing W9s, and PO mismatches make up about 39% of the slowdown. The tool should handle them, not hand them back.

02

Collections intelligence

It should understand why an invoice is late and follow how you run collections, rather than fire a fixed cadence.

03

Coverage, both sides

Receiving payment means reading and acting on inbound replies, across every channel, including the phone.

04

Cash application

Match blank memos, partial payments, and multi-invoice remittances. Monk matches 80% of payments to the correct invoice.

The software touches your customer relationships and your books. You should see every move it makes and be able to steer it. Monk does both: a full record of every action it takes, and a review step before anything reaches a customer.

Put every vendor through the same evaluation

Two questions cut through most pitches. Here is how each generation answers them.

Criteria	Manual	First-gen	monk	Ask your vendor
Your industry median DSO Pulled live from the same dataset the calculator uses.	A person emails and waits for a reply	Templates on day 30, 45, and 60, with no read on why	Resolves the dispute or exception, escalates only what needs a person	Do you handle portal submission and W9 or PO exceptions, or do they land back in our inbox? Does the system act on inbound replies and link a reply in a separate thread to the right invoice?
How fast do you see cash? A tool that takes a quarter to show impact is one you are financing.	DSO moves only as fast as the team can chase	Marginal lift, capped by reminder fatigue and long rollouts	40%+ lower DSO, live in 1 to 3 days	What is the median time to first DSO improvement? Can you auto-match partial and multi-invoice payments, and how fast does the ledger update?
Does it read what comes back? Getting paid is a two-way conversation. Half of it arrives in your inbox.	Replies land in one person's inbox, so a PO in one thread and a dispute in another are two separate problems and nobody connects either to the invoice.	Outbound only. The system sends, your team handles every reply, and the system never learns the invoice was queried at all.	Reads and acts on every inbound reply, links a PO, a credit memo, a payment confirmation, or a dispute raised in any thread back to the right invoice, and pauses outreach when a customer responds.	Do you read and act on inbound replies, and can you link a reply in a separate thread back to the right invoice? How many channels do you work?
Who owns the context when someone leaves? The person who knows your payer base is a single point of failure until the system knows it too.	Context leaves with the person. Which customers pay late, who to call, and what was promised in March lived in one head and a spreadsheet.	The cadence you configured survives. A new hire inherits that cadence and none of the judgment behind it.	Context belongs to the business and compounds, because payer behaviour, exceptions, playbook tuning, and every conversation accumulate in the system, so your AR function survives turnover and improves month over month.	If our AR lead resigns tomorrow, what does the system still know? Does it improve over time, or only stay configured?

Reminding is easy and every tool does it. Collecting well is rare

Collecting well means behaving like a person who knows the nuances of your business, and that only works if you set the rules. With Monk, agents handle your collections and you design the playbooks they follow.

Set the tone by segment

A fixed template would treat a 30-day staffing invoice and a 90-day manufacturing deduction the same way. Your playbooks do not.

Control the triggers and timing

You decide when outreach starts, how it escalates as an invoice ages, and when it stops.

Name the escalation point

You set the value, age, or condition where a person takes over, and who that person is.

Choose the channel

Outbound playbooks send from your inbox or place a call. Inbound playbooks act on every reply.

Monk agents carry the judgment your best collector would use and are calibrated to the relationship, which is what separates a tool that automates outreach from one that runs collections.

How Monk does it

Monk was built around the relationship from the data model up, after modern language models existed. It sits on top of QuickBooks, NetSuite, and Stripe rather than replacing them, and deliberately does not touch contracts, which is why most customers are live in 1 to 3 days and see results in one week.

Monk is an engineering-led team building on a live AR foundation, so your environment keeps improving instead of staying frozen in the past.

If your security team needs your data inside your walls, we can do that

Deployment is a pass/fail question most evaluations ask before booking a call, so here are all three options.

Cloud

Runs on AWS or GCP provisioned by Monk. You connect your ERP and we handle everything else, which is why most customers are live in 1 to 3 days with no IT involvement.

On-Prem

Deploys inside your own data center, so your data never leaves your building. For the strictest compliance requirements, with your IT team involved in setup.

Bring Your Own Cloud

Monk deploys into your AWS, Azure, or GCP account, so data stays in infrastructure you already own and the audit logs are yours.

Security, control and compliance detail →

siro

"We evaluated a range of vendors as part of a thorough deep dive, and Monk stood out above the rest with its collections tech, flexibility, and ease of use. That decision has continuously been re-affirmed."

Daniel Levy GTM Strategy & Operations

PUMP

"The product is extremely customizable and has already helped us collect over 10 million dollars in just the last couple of months. What really sets Monk apart is the team."

Lucas Czajka Operations

The numbers

$1.5B+	In receivables managed on Monk
90%	Of collections resolved without human intervention
24%	More responses than standard dunning
40%+	Average drop in DSO
26 hrs	Given back to the team each month
600+	AP portals covered

What good looks like depends on your industry

Staffing runs net-45 at high volume, manufacturing invoices get deductions, food and beverage reprices daily, and medical device waits on certificates of insurance. Our benchmark report covers nine industries with the standard DSO for each, a modelled best-in-class figure, and the exceptions that account for the gap between them.

Select your industry

Dropdown, nine industries from the benchmark dataset.

Your industry median DSO

Pulled live from the same dataset the calculator uses.

Best-in-class DSO

Modelled from the same dataset.

Security, control and compliance detail →

Your estimated percentile for Food and Beverage: 79

The modeled best-in-class DSO for Food and Beverage is 26 days. You are already there. Monk helps you hold that performance as you scale.

24	26	0
days your DSO	days best in class	days the gap

Most finance leaders can recite revenue, but far fewer can say how long it takes that revenue to become cash

Annual revenue: 20000 USD

Your current DSO: 24 Days

Industry: Food and Beverage

Email address for sending DSO report: Your work email

Send a report

Best-in-class benchmarks, percentiles and distributions are modeled estimates while we finalize industry-specific figures from the D&B Accounts Receivable report.

Build vs buy

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When you should look into buying an AR solution:

- You want DSO down in weeks rather than quarters
- Finance is losing more than 10 hours a week to manual AR
- You are scaling past a few hundred customers
- You already run Stripe, NetSuite, or QuickBooks
- You want modern AI without maintaining it yourself

How to evaluate a platform

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Explore Monk with AI

Claude · ChatGPT · Gemini · Grok · perplexity

Frequently asked questions

What should I look for when evaluating an accounts receivable platform? —

Four capabilities separate a tool that reminds from one that closes a collection: delivery and exception handling (portals, W9s, POs, dead contacts), collections intelligence (understanding why an invoice is late, not just that it is), coverage across both outbound and inbound communication on every channel, and cash application (auto-matching partial and multi-invoice payments). All four should sit on a foundation of trust and control — full auditability and a deterministic check before anything reaches a customer.

What's the difference between accounts receivable automation and a billing or contract-management tool? +

How long does it take to implement an AR automation platform? +

Should I build AR automation in-house or buy a platform? +

What is a good DSO benchmark for my industry? +

Choosing an AR platform is a cash flow decision

Bring your aging report to a demo and watch how Julia, Playbooks, and multi-threading works with your customers to close out collections.

Book a demo

Download this guide →

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