ACROSS THE TABLE

BUSINESS CONSULTING

APP COMPARISON 03 · JUNTOSHR

JuntosHR vs Gusto, BambooHR and Homebase

What a $24.99 HR app does, what it does not do, and the payroll distinction that decides this for most owners.

Knowledge Article C03

AI Stack Series · acrossthetable.biz

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BEFORE YOU READ THIS

This guide compares JuntosHR against three other products that do a similar job. JuntosHR is my own. I build it, and I make money if you buy it.

That is exactly why this guide names the places where one of the other three is the better buy, and says so plainly. A comparison that found my own product best at everything would not be worth your time, and you would be right not to believe it.

WHAT JUNTOSHR DOES

Hiring, onboarding, scheduling, and payroll prep for teams without an HR department.

JuntosHR covers the HR work that small business owners end up doing at the kitchen table: posting a job and tracking who applied, getting a new hire set up properly, building the schedule, tracking time, and preparing what payroll needs.

Read that last item carefully, because it is the single most important thing in this comparison. JuntosHR prepares payroll. It does not run payroll and it does not file your payroll taxes.

What is in it:

- Hiring and applicant tracking
- Onboarding checklists
- Scheduling and time tracking
- Payroll preparation

Price: $24.99 per month · $239.99 per year · $1,249.95 one time. There is a 14-day free trial.

THE THREE IT IS UP AGAINST

There is one distinction that matters more than every feature list below, so it goes first.

Gusto is a payroll company. It calculates the pay, moves the money, files your federal and state payroll taxes and produces the year-end forms. If you get payroll tax filing wrong, the penalties are serious and they arrive automatically.

JuntosHR prepares payroll — it organises the hours, the rates and the records so that the run is correct. You still need something or someone to actually run it. That is not a flaw in the product; it is what it is for. But it means that for most owners this is not an either/or.

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Product	What it is	How it charges	Who it suits
JuntosHR (mine)	Hiring, onboarding, scheduling and payroll preparation for a business with no HR person	Flat monthly, yearly, or one payment for life. Not per employee	A small team owner who wants the HR paperwork organised without per-head pricing
Gusto	Full payroll with tax filing, plus HR features around it	Monthly base fee plus a fee per employee	Any business that has to run payroll and file payroll taxes
BambooHR	A proper HR system of record — employee data, performance, time off, reporting	Flat monthly below a headcount threshold, then per employee per month	A growing company that needs real HR infrastructure
Homebase	Scheduling and time tracking for hourly teams, with a genuinely useful free tier	Free for one location up to a headcount limit; paid tiers per location per month	Shift-based businesses — restaurants, retail, cleaning, salons

Prices move. Every figure for the other three comes from the source listed at the end of this guide, with the date it was published, so you can see how fresh it is and check it yourself. The figures for JuntosHR are its own published prices.

WHAT EACH ONE IS ACTUALLY GOOD AT

Gusto

Gusto runs payroll properly: it files your payroll taxes in every state you operate in, handles the year-end forms, and takes responsibility for getting the filing right. For most small employers that is the whole reason to buy it.

Published pricing in 2026 starts at a monthly base plus a per-employee charge, which means your cost rises with every person you hire. A contractor-only option is cheaper.

Its HR features — onboarding, time tracking, basic hiring tools — are good but are not the reason people choose it. The reason is that payroll tax filing stops being your problem.

Pick this one if: you have employees on a payroll. This is not really optional; the question is only whether you use Gusto or another payroll company.

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BambooHR

BambooHR is where you go when HR has become a real function rather than a task. It holds the employee record properly, handles performance reviews, time off approvals and reporting, and is built to satisfy an HR professional.

Its 2026 published pricing is a flat monthly rate for smaller headcounts and a per-employee rate above that, with payroll sold as an add-on.

For a business with a handful of employees it is a lot of system, and priced accordingly. It becomes the obvious answer somewhere around the point you hire someone whose job is HR.

Pick this one if: you have enough employees that HR records, reviews and reporting are a real job, and you want a system an HR professional would respect.

Homebase

Homebase is built around the hourly shift. Scheduling, clock-in, timesheets and team messaging, with a free plan covering a single location up to a stated employee count as of its 2026 pricing.

The per-location pricing model is the important part for this kind of business: your cost does not rise every time you hire another part-timer, which is exactly the wrong way to charge a restaurant.

If your problem is the schedule and the timesheet rather than HR records, this is the most direct answer, and the free tier means you can find out without spending anything.

Pick this one if: your team is hourly and shift-based and your real problem is the schedule. Start on the free plan.

WHERE JUNTOSHR IS THE WRONG CHOICE

If any of these describes you, buy one of the others instead. You will be happier and I would rather tell you now than take your money.

- You need payroll run and payroll taxes filed. JuntosHR does not do that. Buy Gusto or another payroll company — and you can do that regardless of what else you use.
- You run a single-location shift business and mainly need scheduling. Homebase has a free tier that covers it.
- You have enough staff that you need performance reviews, formal time-off approvals and HR reporting. That is BambooHR.
- You are in several states with different employment rules. You want a payroll provider carrying that compliance burden, not a preparation tool.

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WHAT ACTUALLY MAKES JUNTOSHR DIFFERENT

The first real difference is how it charges. Gusto and BambooHR both charge per employee, so your HR bill grows every time you hire. JuntosHR is a flat price regardless of headcount. For a business going from four people to fourteen, that difference compounds quickly, and it is the strongest argument for it.

The second is scope at the price. JuntosHR covers hiring, onboarding, scheduling and payroll prep in one flat subscription — a combination that would otherwise mean two or three products.

The third is who it assumes you are. BambooHR is designed for an HR professional. JuntosHR is designed for an owner who has never done HR and does not want to learn a system built for someone who has.

The honest limit

JuntosHR is new and has only recently been deployed. It does not yet have the years of users, integrations and edge cases behind it that Gusto, BambooHR and Homebase have. If you want a product that thousands of businesses have already stress-tested, that is a legitimate reason to choose one of them, and I would not argue with you.

And to repeat the point this guide opened with, because it is the one that costs people money: preparing payroll is not running payroll. Plan for a payroll provider as well.

HOW TO DECIDE

Answer these about your own business. The answers point at one of the four.

- Do you have employees on a payroll, or only contractors? Employees mean you need a payroll provider.
- How many people will you employ in two years? Per-employee pricing is what that number multiplies.
- Is your real problem the schedule, the records, or the paperwork around hiring?
- Do you operate in more than one state?
- Does anyone in your business know employment law? If not, that is an argument for a provider that carries compliance.

YOUR QUICK REVIEW

- ☐ I know the difference between preparing and running payroll.
- ☐ I have a payroll provider, or I know I need one.
- ☐ I have priced the per-employee options at my expected headcount, not today’s.
- ☐ I know whether my main problem is scheduling or records.

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☐ I have checked each vendor’s current pricing page.

WHERE THESE NUMBERS CAME FROM

Everything stated about the other three products comes from the sources below, on the dates shown. Nothing here is from memory and nothing is estimated.

- FitSmallBusiness, "7 Best HR Software for Small Business in 2026" — Gusto, BambooHR and Homebase plan structures and published pricing.
- JuntosHR pricing: acrossthetable.biz/juntoshr/, read from the site’s own published pricing data.
- Payroll tax filing responsibilities are set by the IRS and by your state revenue agency, not by any of these vendors.

Pricing pages change without notice. Before you buy anything in this guide, including mine, open the vendor’s own pricing page and check.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Product	Where to find it	What it is for
Gusto	gusto.com	Any business that has to run payroll and file payroll taxes
BambooHR	bamboohr.com	A growing company that needs real HR infrastructure
Homebase	joinhomebase.com	Shift-based businesses — restaurants, retail, cleaning, salons
JuntosHR	acrossthetable.biz/juntoshr/	A small team owner who wants the HR paperwork organised without per-head pricing
Across the Table AI Assessment	acrossthetable.biz/#assessment	Fifteen minutes. Tells you which job to fix first, before you buy anything.
The Scaling Edge	acrossthetablebiz.substack.com	Weekly newsletter for owners without a business background.

CONTINUE LEARNING

The knowledge article on paying and managing people compares Gusto, Rippling and JuntosHR on the payroll question specifically.

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The Across the Table AI Assessment will tell you whether HR is actually your most expensive problem right now.

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