


# What to look for in an incentive compensation (IC) platform: A buyer's checklist

Today's IC teams need more than just a tool. They need a platform that's intelligent, scalable and built for the complexities of life sciences. Use this checklist to ask the right questions, compare vendors objectively and make a confident, future-ready choice.



What to look for	Questions to ask vendors	Why it matters
<b>Platform readiness</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Productized platform—not a custom build	Is the platform truly productized with shared updates and a transparent roadmap?	Productized platforms avoid hidden services, accelerate innovation and lower the total cost of ownership.
<input type="checkbox"/> Full incentive compensation life cycle coverage	Does the platform support plan design, crediting, eligibility, payouts, reporting and field engagement?	A unified platform ensures continuity, reduces integration effort and simplifies issue tracking.
<input type="checkbox"/> Prebuilt pharma incentive compensation logic	Is the platform preconfigured for pharma-specific IC structures like ranks, management by objectives, contests and local rules?	Out-of-the-box pharma workflows, built on industry best practices, speed up implementation, increase accuracy, and reduce the need for custom coding.
<b>Scalability and performance</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Global-scale performance and configurability	Can the platform support multicountry execution, local rule differences and high-volume IC cycles from a single instance without performance issues?	Global IC needs centralized control with local flexibility. Platforms that can't scale lead to delays, errors and manual workarounds that slow decision-making.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unified, modular architecture	Does the platform offer native integration across its own modules such as plan management, payouts and reporting—and with enterprise tools like customer relationship management, human resources and finance systems?	Integrated platforms reduce data inconsistencies, streamline execution and eliminate manual reconciliation. This ensures a smoother user experience and fewer support needs—especially important in global operations.

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<b>Automation and intelligence</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Embedded automation and validations	Are key processes such as crediting, eligibility and payout validations automated with built-in checks?	Reduces manual effort, improves accuracy and speeds up cycle time—all critical for large teams.
<input type="checkbox"/> AI-powered insights and detection	Does the platform use AI for trend analysis, anomaly detection or issue root-cause identification?	Helps identify issues proactively and improves decision quality at every stage of IC execution.
<input type="checkbox"/> Gen AI for rep experience	Do reps have access to tools such as earnings calculators or AI assistants that explain payouts?	Improves transparency and trust with the field, reducing disputes and boosting motivation.
<b>Self-service and adoption</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Business user self-service	Can IC operations teams make rule changes, run cycles and manage disputes without IT support?	Gives control back to the business, shortens response time and reduces cost and dependency on vendors.
<input type="checkbox"/> Structured onboarding and enablement	What kind of training, certification and user support is offered post-implementation?	Ensures faster ramp-up and long-term adoption that are critical for business continuity and decentralization.

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