

Human Cloud Releases 2026 Market Map, The Standard For Navigating The Flexible Workforce

Market Map maps 3,000+ flexible talent solutions into a visual framework companies can use to find, vet, and engage the right talent solutions at scale.

NEWBURYPORT, MA, UNITED STATES, September 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Human

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Human Cloud sees AI accelerating three trends: more scaling through EORs, more specialized sourcing through specialized platforms, more integration in scaling and sourcing solutions.”

Human Cloud

Cloud released [Market Map](#), an annual framework for visualizing the 3,000+ solutions explicitly serving the flexible workforce.

The flexible workforce is one of the fastest-growing segments of the global workforce, with an 18.6% compound annual growth rate¹ and 72.9 million Americans² already working independently.

Human Cloud CEO Matthew Mottola coined the term “Human Cloud” to describe the technology powering today’s flexible workforce as early as 2020 in his

HarperCollins book *The Human Cloud*. Dan Pink, New York Times bestselling author of *Drive*, *When*, and *Free Agent Nation*, endorsed it by saying, “With the power of the Human Cloud you can create, innovate, and invent whole new products and markets for your ideas.”

What Pink left out was how hard scaling a flexible workforce would be.

Which is where Tony Buffum, Human Cloud’s Chief Strategy Officer, comes in. While Mottola was building what’s now the Human Cloud Platform, Buffum was spearheading Stanley Black & Decker and FLIR’s flexible talent programs as a senior executive and CHRO.

In *Market Map*, they’ve visualized the top 5% in each segment, giving leaders a starting point to find, vet, and engage with the relevant [flexible talent solutions](#).

Market Map helps simplify 3,000+ unique solutions into the right starting point

The flexible talent industry can be broken into two layers - sourcing and scaling. Sourcing

solutions manage everything required to find the right person, while scaling solutions help companies safely scale hundreds to thousands of individuals under flexible talent models.

According to Mottola, “At the end of the day, companies want to get work done, and talent wants to deliver impactful work. These newer platform-led solutions find the exact right people in under 5 days, manage vetted benches of individuals the customers like, and act as strategic partners rather than recruiters filling one-time reqs.”

Buffum continues, “The biggest impact from my vantage point as a former CHRO is helping leadership modernize their strategy with a talent access vs. a traditional talent acquisition (ownership) mindset. This unlocks a new wave of speed, agility, and efficiency for all types of organizations.”

Market Map highlights the rise of specialized sourcing and EORs

This year’s Market Map shows a rise in talent platforms and Employer of Record (EOR) solutions.

Talent platforms are specialized sourcing solutions that manage everything from scoping the work, to sourcing the talent, to managing talent pools companies can reuse. EORs manage classification, payroll, and increasingly the entire onboarding experience.

On the EOR front, Mellow grew into the gaming industry, working with companies like MY.GAMES and cutting Sumsu’s contractor payouts from three weeks to one day. AllWork, an EOR with a strong foothold in retail, welcomed Dolce & Gabbana, then grew into life sciences, healthcare, and professional services. Specialized EORs like Foxhire maintained their foothold across the healthcare industry.

On the talent platform front, design-focused Uncompany welcomed Brother, Alteryx, and Shutterstock this year, while scaling Lenovo’s UX and design benches across the US, LATAM, Europe, and now Asia. Scotland-based Gigged.AI’s on-demand business grew 284% with an enterprise account surpassing \$1M in statement of work spend. Brazil-based beecrowd grew their HC Score to 123.

Human Cloud expects this growth to continue over the next year.

Next year Human Cloud expects more EOR volume, more specialized sourcing, and new structures

Human Cloud is seeing AI accelerate three trends.

1. More scaling through EORs. As Mottola described, “EORs are the ‘have your cake and eat it too’ solution. They have the speed and cost savings without the risk.”

2. More specialized sourcing through specialized platforms. AI rewards specialists, and specialists are found through specialized platforms that combine vetting and community.

3. More integration in scaling and sourcing solutions, with EORs and talent platforms partnering and integrating to simplify the experience while scaling the results.

Read the full analysis at <https://humancloud.com/insights/blog/human-cloud-releases-2026-market-map>.

How To Find And Use Market Map

Market Map is available today at <https://humancloud.com/market-map>. Companies can also request an [Executive Briefing](https://humancloud.com/executive-briefing) from the Human Cloud team at <https://humancloud.com/executive-briefing>.

About Human Cloud

Human Cloud is where companies come to scale their flexible workforce. Instead of one-off reqs or bloated agencies, buyers come to Human Cloud to find the solutions they build their flexible workforce with.

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