endsight

CASE STUDY | TALENT & PERFORMANCE

AI-Assisted, Human-Led Recruiting

How Endsight uses AI to cut through applicant noise, what we learned when automation went wrong, and why people stay accountable for every hiring decision.

At a glance

Endsight's recruiting team is two people supporting a growing managed IT services company. In fall 2026, our open roles drew more than 3,400 applicants, most of them nationwide and most of them a poor fit. We paired an AI assistant with our applicant tracking system so AI does the reading and people do the deciding.

2,129
applications screened with the new AI-assisted workflow across four roles

83 hrs
of screening time saved, an 84% reduction, and growing

100%
of hiring decisions still made by a person

Along the way we learned a hard lesson: an earlier automated process sent rejections to about 90% of one role's applicant pool, including people who deserved a closer look. We caught it through human review, and we rebuilt our process so it cannot happen again.

The challenge: more applicants, less signal

Job boards make applying easy, so every opening draws large, nationwide pools. Screening them by hand means opening each resume, reading screening answers, checking location, and comparing everything to the job description.

The noise is also harder to spot. Auto-apply tools and AI-written resumes now mirror a job ad's requirement language almost word for word, so a quick keyword skim makes weak matches look strong. A careful read of every applicant takes hours a small team does not have.

What went wrong first

Before this workflow, we tried an internal process that let an automated system screen and reject applicants on its own. On our Senior Data Platform Engineer opening, it went badly:

- **1,360 people applied.** 1,240 of them (91%) were rejected at the first stage, and about 90% of the talent pool received an automated rejection email.

- **The labels did not hold up.** The automation applied rejection reasons it could not support from a resume alone.
- **Only 120 people (9%) ever reached a hiring manager.** Qualified applicants were turned away before a person looked.

How we caught it. A member of our team manually reviewed the rejected pool. The automation gave no warning; the problem surfaced only because a person went back to read who had been turned away.

What we changed. We turned off automated rejection emails, so no rejection reaches a candidate until a person has made the call. We now audit the rejected pool, not just the short list. And we redesigned how AI fits into our process: it reads and recommends, and only people decide.

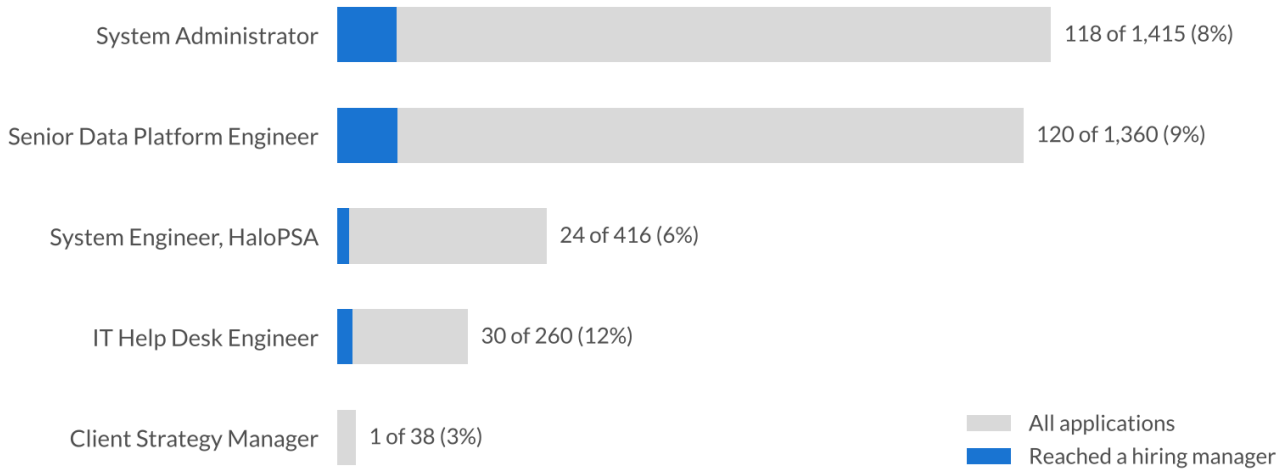
How it works now: AI reads, people decide

Our AI assistant (Claude) connects to our applicant tracking system through a secure, **read-only** connection. It can read job postings, parsed resumes, and screening answers. It cannot move, reject, tag, or message anyone.

1. **A person sets the criteria.** The recruiter defines what good looks like for the role, such as past titles, client-facing experience, or distance from the office. The AI repeats the criteria back before screening so we can correct them.
2. **AI reads the whole pool.** Every applicant, not just the first page. It reports coverage first: whose resumes it could read and who needs a human look.
3. **AI checks answers and history.** Screening answers on sponsorship, location, and pay, plus the full work history for anyone near the bar.
4. **AI returns a short list with reasons.** One line per person tied to the criteria, plus near misses and anything unusual about the job ad itself.
5. **A person verifies and decides.** The recruiter checks the reasoning against the resume, adds context the data cannot show, and makes every decision.

Results: signal from noise

Across five roles, fewer than 1 in 10 applicants reached a hiring manager. Most screening work is clearing noise, which is exactly the kind of reading AI does quickly.



Source: Endsight applicant tracking funnel reports, November 6, 2026. All applications to date per role.

Systems roles (NOC).

1,831 applications across two openings. Pay expectations far above the posted range filtered out 138 applicants on the System Administrator role alone, something AI surfaces instantly from screening answers.

IT Help Desk Engineer.

260 applications, with about 100 each outside the commute area or underqualified. The 30 who reached a hiring manager produced a candidate now at the offer stage.

Client Strategy Manager.

38 applications. The review caught issues a skim would miss: a screening question briefly referenced the wrong office, out-of-state applicants answered yes to a vague commute question, and several resumes echoed the ad's wording. It also flagged a previously rejected local candidate for a second human look. AI helps audit our decisions, too.

Senior Data Platform Engineer.

The cautionary tale above. Of the 120 applicants who reached a hiring manager, 27 moved to phone screens and 7 completed initial interviews.

Time saved: about 83 hours

For the four roles screened through the new workflow, a fully manual screen takes about 100 hours. The AI-assisted workflow, with a person verifying every short list, takes about 16. That is more than two weeks of one recruiter's time returned to candidates and hiring managers, and these results come from our first months with the tool. As our team gets more practiced, we expect the hours saved to keep growing.

Role	Applications	Manual (hrs)	AI-assisted (hrs)	Saved (hrs)
System Administrator	1,415	66.8	10.3	56.5
System Engineer, HaloPSA	416	17.9	2.5	15.4
IT Help Desk Engineer	260	13.7	3.0	10.7
Client Strategy Manager	38	1.4	0.6	0.8
Total	**2,129**	**99.8**	**16.4**	**83.4**

How we calculated it. Manual: 2 minutes per applicant plus 10 minutes per candidate reaching a hiring manager. AI-assisted: 30 minutes per role to set criteria and review output, plus 5 minutes of human verification per candidate reaching a hiring manager. The Senior Data Platform Engineer role is excluded because most of that pool was handled by the earlier automated process.

Speed matters for candidates too. Median time from application to decision ran 0 to 7 days across these roles, so applicants hear back quickly instead of waiting in a pile.

Accountability: we own every outcome

Using AI does not move responsibility for a hiring decision. If a qualified person is screened out, that is our decision, not a tool's. California's Civil Rights Council regulations, in effect since October 1, 2025, apply anti-discrimination law to automated systems that make or *facilitate* employment decisions, so a human in the loop does not remove the obligation. Our guardrails:

- **Read-only by design.** The AI cannot reject, move, or message anyone, and automated rejection emails are off.
- **Job-related criteria only.** We screen against what the role requires: experience, title history, location, work authorization, and pay range.
- **No inferences about protected characteristics.** No guessing age, origin, or health. Employment gaps are reported as dates, nothing more.
- **Unreadable is not unqualified.** Resumes the system cannot parse go to a person for review, never to the bottom of the list.
- **Mismatches are questions, not verdicts.** A timeline that does not line up is something to clarify in a conversation.
- **Reasons are visible and private data stays private.** Every recommendation comes with a checkable reason, and short lists exclude contact details.

What this means for your business

The lessons apply well beyond recruiting. Any team adopting AI can use them:

- **Let AI recommend, not act, on decisions that affect people.** Keep a person between the output and the outcome.
- **Audit what AI turns away, not just what it surfaces.** Errors hide in the rejected pile.
- **Clear inputs beat clever filters.** Precise criteria and well-written questions remove noise before any tool sees it.
- **Start read-only.** Give AI access to information before you give it the power to change anything.
- **Measure and refine.** Track real time saved and outcomes, and adjust as you learn.

Endsight helps small and mid-sized businesses adopt technology, including AI, with the right guardrails in place. To talk about responsible AI adoption for your team, reach out to your Endsight Client Strategy Manager.

Regulatory reference: California Civil Rights Council, Employment Regulations Regarding Automated-Decision Systems, effective October 1, 2025 (summary via National Law Review). This case study is not legal advice.