



How Tropic practices what they preach: 66% cost savings through recruiting tech consolidation

Location

New York, NY

Website

<https://www.tropicapp.io/>

ATS

Gem

Gem Product

All-in-one recruiting platform

Pain Points

- **Rising costs from multiple recruiting tools:** Tropic was spending approximately \$65,000 annually on separate solutions for ATS, CRM, sourcing, and scheduling – a significant investment that was becoming harder to justify in a lean market.
- **Fragmented tech stack creating inefficiency:** Despite having an ATS, it had become merely a "data lake" where information was stored. The team spent all their time in Gem CRM instead. "I wasn't going into the ATS that much." Everything meaningful happened outside their primary system.
- **Application overload without intelligent filtering:** Tropic faced overwhelming application volumes with "800 people applying in two days" for roles. Their ATS's search functionality was "very poor" with no ability to stack rank or prioritize candidates effectively.
- **Legacy system blocking innovation:** Their previous ATS's inability to innovate was "holding me back from delivering results." Even basic customizations like modifying scorecard ratings were impossible – "you have to use one of these four... I can't even change the word."

Results with Gem

- **66% reduction in recruiting technology costs:** Tropic slashed their annual recruiting tech spend from \$65,000 to \$22,000 by consolidating to Gem's all-in-one platform. "There's something poetic about this – we help our customers consolidate their tech stack, and Gem lets us practice what we preach."
- **Unified platform doubles team productivity:** With everything in one system – ATS, CRM, sourcing, and analytics – the recruiting team now handles twice the workload while maintaining the same hiring velocity. "I just love that all those things that used to be disjointed are now in a single place. I'm actually sitting in the middle of the Venn diagram."
- **90% reduction in time spent screening applications:** AI-powered application review transformed what previously took 3–4 hours of manual review to just 30 minutes. "I spend maybe five, 10 minutes on that instead of three to four hours just to see if anybody we should be pulling into the pipeline."
- **Company-wide engagement in recruiting:** The improved UI/UX enabled hiring managers to meaningfully participate in the recruiting process, with managers reviewing pre-ranked applicants daily. "We've never been so united as a company behind recruiting."

About Tropic

Founded in 2019, Tropic has revolutionized how businesses buy and manage software. With over 500 active customers, including Zapier, Intercom, and Notion, Tropic manages \$13B+ in SaaS spend and has saved companies 250,000 hours on procurement processes. Tropic gives SaaS buyers leverage by arming them with unbiased market data and spend management capabilities in one platform. As the only solution that integrates both, Tropic helps buyers control and reduce spend through visibility, controls, and commercial intelligence.

James Parker, Head of People at Tropic, leads the company's recruiting efforts with a data-driven approach that mirrors Tropic's own philosophy of operational excellence. For James, the irony wasn't lost when Tropic's own recruiting tech stack became fragmented and costly – the very problem they solve for their customers.

The Challenge: A fragmented tech stack costing time and money

As Tropic scaled, James found himself managing a sprawling recruiting tech stack that cost \$65,000 annually. While they used Gem CRM for candidate relationship management alongside their traditional ATS, an interesting pattern emerged – the ATS had devolved into what James called merely a "data lake."



"I wasn't going into the ATS that much. Everything was being done in Gem already. The ATS was just where the data was held.



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



Despite having two systems, the team naturally gravitated toward Gem for their daily workflows. They managed pipelines, tracked candidates, and ran reports all within Gem CRM, while their expensive ATS sat largely unused – a classic case of fragmented tools creating inefficiency rather than value.

The fragmentation created daily friction. When job postings attracted 800 applicants in just two days, James faced an impossible choice: spend entire days manually reviewing applications or risk missing great candidates. The ATS's search functionality offered no help, with no ability to stack rank or intelligently filter candidates.



"I literally don't even know where to begin. Do we just not post jobs? Do we focus only on sourcing? I was trying to figure out how to find the best people within the applicant pool."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



Most frustrating was the previous ATS vendor's resistance to innovation. Simple requests like customizing scorecard ratings were met with "that's hard-coded, there's no way to change it." For a talent leader trying to stay competitive, the inability to adapt became a career liability.



"The inability to innovate is holding me back from delivering results. As a talent leader, if you're not utilizing AI and modern tools, you're going to have a hard time getting a top-tier job."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



From fragmented tools to products that *work better together*

When Gem announced its AI-first all-in-one platform, the timing couldn't have been better. Tropic's November renewal coincided with Gem's launch of their ATS alongside new AI Application Review and AI Sourcing agents. For James, who had already experienced Gem's innovation through their CRM, the decision was clear.



"When I heard Gem ATS was coming, I was like, if this is even a sliver as good as the rest of the platform, I know I'm gonna love it. I've always had such a great experience with the support team - I knew that even if it's 70% of the way there, it'll get to 85-90% very quickly."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



Implementation shattered expectations. Over Thanksgiving week, Gem pulled all data from Tropic's previous systems. **The migration was so seamless that James simply switched over without any formal announcements.** By Monday after the holiday, Tropic was fully operational on Gem.



"The rest of the company felt no pain. They didn't even realize we made the switch until they were completing their scorecards. I had people reaching out to me, saying 'Oh my goodness, this scorecard is so much easier to use... what is Gem? This is awesome!'"



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



The unified platform immediately transformed Tropic's recruiting process. **For the first time, everything lived in one place:** sourcing activity, candidate pipeline, interview scheduling, and analytics. Click on any job and instantly see all recruiting activity without switching tabs or logging into different systems.



"You click on a job and you can see the sourcing activity in a single pane - that's huge. You used to have to juggle between tools. Now you can show hiring managers everything that's going on in one place."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



AI agents unlock 90% time savings

The impact was most dramatic in application review. **What previously consumed 3–4 hours daily now takes just 30 minutes.** Gem's AI Application Review agents instantly surfaced the best candidates, ranking them based on relevant criteria while customizable hot keys simplified processing.



"I spend maybe five, 10 minutes on that instead of three to four hours. The AI puts all the best candidates at the top."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



This efficiency gain had a multiplier effect. **James could now empower hiring managers to participate meaningfully in recruiting.** With pre-ranked candidates and simple workflows (press X to reject, C to send a template email), managers could review their top 30 candidates in just 30 minutes.



"If I ask you [hiring managers] to look at 30 profiles and pick your best 10, that's so easy. Versus the old way, which would have been to look at 300 resumes, and they're like 'I can't do this.' Now I just ask them to spend 30 minutes a day – that's all I need."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



The AI Sourcing agents added another layer of intelligence, automatically finding relevant candidates across 650M+ profiles. Each morning, James could quickly review AI-sourced prospects alongside ranked applicants, ensuring no great candidate was missed, whether they applied or not.

The result? **Tropic's recruiting team doubled its productivity** with the same headcount, handling twice the requisition load while maintaining quality and speed.

A consolidation story that writes itself

The consolidation went beyond just cost savings. With everything in one intelligent platform, Tropic eliminated the friction of juggling multiple tools, gave hiring managers self-serve visibility into pipelines, and created a recruiting operation that could scale efficiently with the business. They achieved exactly what they promise their clients – dramatic cost savings and productivity gains through strategic consolidation.

The numbers spoke for themselves:

- **66% cost reduction:** Annual recruiting tech spend dropped from \$65,000 to \$22,000
- **2x productivity gains:** Same team now handles double the requisition volume
- **90% time savings:** Daily application review reduced from hours to minutes

100% unified data: All recruiting workflows and analytics in one platform



There's something poetic about this – we help our customers consolidate their tech stack, and Gem lets us practice what we preach. We've cut our recruiting tool costs by 66% and streamlined our operations significantly. Our team is more productive than ever. It's exactly the kind of consolidation story we tell our own customers about.



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



Perhaps most transformative was how the entire company rallied around recruiting. With AI making participation easy and enjoyable, hiring managers became true partners in the talent acquisition process for the first time.



"We've never been so united as a company behind recruiting. The company has rallied around the importance of recruiting because the hiring managers are heavily involved. It used to be something the recruiting team does - now everyone's invested."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



Looking ahead

Perhaps most transformative was how the entire company rallied around recruiting. With AI making participation easy and enjoyable, hiring managers became true partners in the talent acquisition process for the first time.



"Gem not only innovates but takes feedback so quickly to innovate. Even if something isn't perfect right now, you take feedback seriously & act quickly. I know that if something shifts in the talent tech space, Gem's going to be on top of it."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



"It's a no-brainer to use Gem. If you're trying to find a way to save money and have something that's easier to use - it will pay for itself. Your teams will love interviewing again. Gem is building for talent leaders who want to innovate."



James Parker
Head of People at Tropic



Thank you.

Gem is the only AI-first all-in-one recruiting platform. It brings together your ATS, CRM, sourcing, scheduling, and analytics — plus 650+ million profiles to source from — with AI built into every workflow. With an industry-leading 4.8/5 rating on G2, Gem is the platform recruiters actually love to use.

To learn more and see a demo, visit

www.gem.com