OASIS
SOLUTIONS

CHOOSING
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
SOFTWARE

Get Started Now

Table of Contents

It can happen before you realize it... a spreadsheet here, a vendor there... before you know it your staff is spending hours working on reports and projects being done outside of your accounting system.

Now your accounting system is holding you back and it is time to embrace a new software: an exciting, but daunting challenge. Business Management Software is more than just an accounting solution – it is a tool or set of tools that creates efficiencies across your entire organization. For this reason, there are several factors that come into play when choosing new business management software. At Oasis, we understand that choosing and implementing a new business management software can be a challenging decision to make. That's why we've decided to help walk you through the process.

Business Management Software Options

There are a variety of solutions in the market place today, ranging from small business to enterprise solutions. Below are some of the most common. Just keep in mind, not only should the software be appropriate for the size of your business, but it should also meet your deployment needs and preferences.

SMALL BUSINESSES

intuit QuickBooks

sage 50
(formerly Peachtree)

GoldMine

act!

MID-SIZE BUSINESSES

sage 100cloud
(formerly MAS 90/200)

ACCPAC

Microsoft Dynamics NAV

ORACLE | NETSUITE

SUGARCRM

EPICOR

ENTERPRISE BUSINESSES

ORACLE

SAP

workday
Built for the future.

salesforce

DEPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Traditional deployment is considered on-premise. On-premise software is typically purchased upfront and installed on in-house servers. Businesses can also choose to have this software hosted, an option that uses someone else's offsite hardware that is accessed from the office. On-premise software can also live in a co-location – an offsite location with company-owned servers running the software. Co-locations typically provide added backup and security options as well.

On the opposite end of the software spectrum lives **SAAS**, or **Software as a Service.** SAAS is entirely internet-based (no servers or installation required) and is typically subscription based, a popular option for those looking for a more cost-effective option.

## ON-PREMISE VS. SAAS: PROS AND CONS

There are advantages and disadvantages to both on-premise and cloud solutions – it simply comes down to preference.

There are a variety of benefits of cloud-based solutions including flexibility, anytime/anywhere access, and automatic software updates. Reduced cost is also a major advantage since SAAS solutions do not require servers/server space or software-specific IT resources to aid with updates and maintenance. However, if IT access is interrupted or unavailable, a cloud solution might not be the answer.

The Software Selection Process
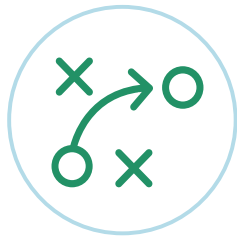
Taking the time to include members of your organization in the selection process is key – especially those who will be directly impacted by the decision. The new solution should create efficiencies across the organization and allow for more streamlined processes overall. It is worth the time to document employee feedback (needs, wants, likes and dislikes) and take note of current system benefits and frustrations. Those who feel they have been involved in the selection process are more likely to adopt it post-implementation.

Once team members are on board, it is important to research and interview a variety of vendors before making a final decision. Provide each vendor with a list of preferences and system requirements and then request a personalized demo. These demos should highlight the features and the benefits of the software based on your written requirements, and should be attended by anyone who will be using or impacted by the system. Reconvene with your team after each demo and be sure to discuss and document the pros and cons of each.

The Software Selection Process

(continued)

Also don't be afraid to ask for references or request documentation once a demo is complete. Scope of work documents and work plans will provide you with insights into a vendor's project management style and/or project goals – which may or may not be a match. Ask vendors to walk through a typical implementation and provide examples of successful and unsuccessful projects. What do these look like? The more you know upfront, the easier your final decision will be.
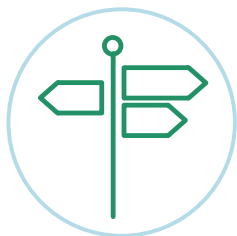
It is also important to understand the post-implementation process and what you can expect in terms of support and guidance. Will a designated project manager be assigned? Can implementation references be provided for him/her? Do they have experience with similar projects and requirements? The post implementation process is often forgotten, but is just as important.

The Software Selection Process

(continued)

Finally, request a quote for the product, service, and all ongoing expenses. If you have additional questions or simply need to see more, request another demo or ask for additional information. Choosing a software partner is just as important as choosing a software solution – so do what's necessary to make the best decision possible.
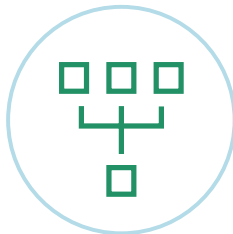
Once you've chosen your preferred system, begin by setting up a project kickoff meeting with both PMs (internal and external) to discuss the installation and configuration process, the data migration strategy, the training schedule, and your expected go-live date!

The Right Time for New Software

Is it time for your organization to reevaluate its business management software solution?
If any of these sounds familiar, you may need to reconsider your software solution.

Too many spreadsheets.

If your accounting, HR and sales teams are using spreadsheets to track financials, document employee information, or monitor sales numbers and goals – it is time for new software! Important information should not be contained in disparate spreadsheets, but rather housed in a secure, central location that is easily accessible to those who manage it.

Unacceptable performance.

Slow, unreliable software is not only frustrating to employees, but it decreases productivity.

Support options become limited.

If your partner no longer supports your software solution, it may be time to make a switch. It is important to have a resource available when issues arise.

Decrease in employee morale.

Constant system "work-arounds" or missed deadlines due to an inadequate system and/or lack of resources can be extremely frustrating. It may even push an employee to see employment elsewhere.

Putting It All Together

Remember, choosing the right software and partner can revolutionize the way you do business. Get your team involved in the process. Watch a variety of demos. Ask questions. Request information. Ask more questions. Choose the right partner. Encourage adoption. And most importantly – don't be afraid of change. There's no wrong time to make a positive change!

TOP 10 CRITERIA

FOR SELECTING NEW SOFTWARE

As part of a study by Deloitte & Touche, businesses looking for an accounting system were asked to name the top ten criteria they used for their selection. Those who were buying their first accounting systems were tallied separately from businesses buying their second. Responses were ranked in order of importance.

TOP TEN

OBSERVATIONS

One would think second-time buyers would be "smarter", if for no other reason than they have the experience first-time buyers lack. It stands to reason their rankings would be a better guide to what really matters when researching accounting system options. Here are the key points that surface:

1

FIRST-TIME BUYERS:

Price of Software

Ease of Implementation

Ease of Use

Ability to fit to business

Functionality

Ability to work with existing hardware

Growth potential

Level of support provided by reseller

Quality of documentation

Developer's track record of performance

2

SECOND-TIME BUYERS:

Level of support provided by reseller

Developer's track record of performance

Ability to fit to business

Growth potential

Price of software

Quality of documentation

Functionality

Ease of use

Ease of implementation

Ability to work with existing hardware

A quality consultant is a critical factor – anyone can sell the product, but can just anyone support your needs?

The developer's track record is much more apparent to firms in their second implementation. On the surface, many accounting packages look alike, but the years of development invested into a product is critical to the long-term success and growth of a product.

Price, though important, is not the best measure of a system's value. Are you willing to place your company's future in the hands of the lowest bidder?

Since 1991, Oasis Solutions has been serving businesses throughout the United States with software consulting, programming, training and support.

With more than 300 years of combined experience, our consultants offer software expertise in accounting, human resource management, salesforce automation and custom software development. The software solutions provided improve operational efficiency, smarter internal management, a rapid return on investment and a stable platform for businesses to grow.

Contact Annette Manias at annette@oasisky.com or call us 502.429.6902.