



How To Select Your Business Software

Irrespective of your current administration, business management, business processes, whether they are manual, spreadsheets, or fragmented software systems, you may have a similar dilemma

What is the best way to tackle your business process improvement project?

- Do you select what you want or need? (internal assessment)
- Do you select what you think you can afford? (stick to a set budget – but based on what?)
- Do you select what others say is going to benefit you most? (external advice)

Here are a few tips to help you choose

1. Assess your current (manual) system, its shortcomings, pains and associated costs
2. List what you want to achieve (save time, lower costs, better overview / integration)
3. Note the additional functionality / level of integration you require to achieve this
4. Decide who (project manager / external consultant) will compile the supplier short-list
5. Target software brands / suppliers who specialise in solutions for your industry
6. Pick software that meets with your requirements (features, flexibility, integration, security)
7. Gather figures on the cost of the software, implementation and support (TCO)
8. Compare the TCO with your current expenditure and project budget
9. Check on the available purchase options – buy / rent / lease / other finance
10. Decide on how you feel about working long-term with your chosen supplier
11. Let your team, especially the primary users, test the selected software
12. Talk to or visit one or two existing clients who use the supplier and software
13. Make a decision and place the order.

There is little point in asking "**how much is it?**" before you have established how much your current system is costing you or how much the new software is going to save your business.

Spending just £500 on a piece of software that is not going to benefit your business is a total waste of your money but spending £5,000 on software that is going to save your business £15,000 per year is a bargain, even if it is above your perhaps arbitrarily chosen budget.

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