

8 simple ways to select the right software partner

Choosing the right software partner can be a difficult and time-consuming task. Selecting a software solution provider has a major impact on the day-to-day activities of any organization, therefore it's important you make the right choice.

You want to make sure you find a solution provider that's reliable and capable of supporting your business for the foreseeable future.

In this guide we will take you through the key criteria to keep in mind when selecting a new software supplier.

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“Your solution is only as strong as the people that use it on a day-to-day basis.”



1 Change management support

Changing the daily routine of people is not easily accepted. One of the major factors that determine the success of any IT project is the way it is implemented and used within the organization. Too often, software is purchased without being used. Find a partner that thinks along with your organization and supports change management. Make sure your staff gets convinced that the change is for the better. A software partner that helps you get your staff and colleagues enthusiastic about improved processes is a determining factor that can make or break a project.

Efficiency through user-friendliness

It all starts with a user-friendly application. An intuitive and familiar user interface allows users to work faster and will give them the confidence to navigate through the different functionalities. Buttons should be placed where users expect them to be to allow for a fluid workflow and prevent frustration.

Short learning curves

New users can be trained faster if they are familiar with the basic layout and interface of the solution. The Microsoft

1 Change management support

Office pack for instance, is used by over a billion users around the world and allows for easy navigation through an intuitive interface. Studies have shown that applications that follow a similar template to the Microsoft Office suite are perceived to be easier to learn and to use. A shorter training period also means that extra users can be added to the system, without taking up months of training. This saves a lot of time and adds flexibility to the project.

The easier and faster the solution is implemented, the more likely it is that users will pick it up quickly and even become advocates of the new software. A seamless implementation process also prevents the project from going over budget.

“ Innovate: Prevent your software solutions from being a bottleneck in your technical developments. ”



2 Focus on innovation

As a business professional you know that when you're standing still you're actually going backwards. The same holds for your software solution. In order to ensure continuity, it's always good to make sure your software provider is investing in its own solution. A reliable software solutions partner will provide updates, new features and modules at regular times. This way they are able to keep up with the ever-changing requirements in your specific sector and support your future business endeavors.

A software developer that provides new developments at regular times, is a good

indicator of a solid in-house development team, composed of people that know their product. Companies with their own dedicated development team are quicker to pick up on future trends and adapt to new technologies (like cloud solutions, etc.). An innovative software developer will get the most out of new technologies, allowing you to stay on top of your game.

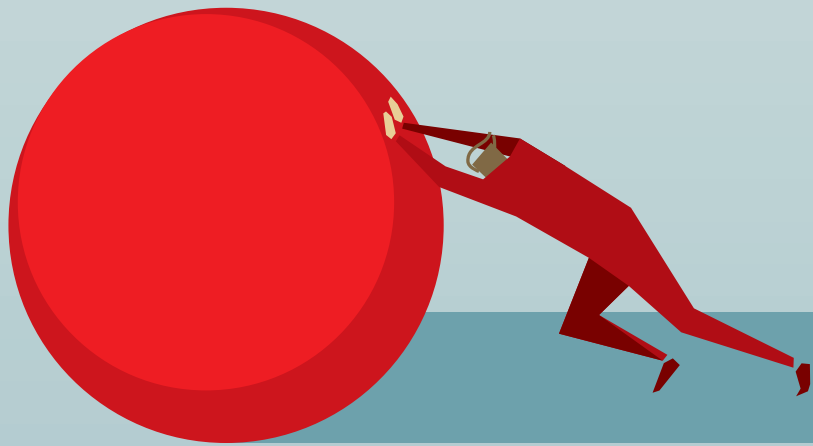
“ We see a massive improvement
in functionality and performance
with our new solution. ”



3 Demonstrable results

Upon choosing a software solutions provider, make sure you take a close look at the demonstrable results. Will the new tool provide you with a functional or financial advantage, or both? Is the functionality standard available, or is customization necessary? Can you enjoy updates that were made for companies, similar to yours? Is your software provider open for suggestions? Do they keep track of market trends, legislation etc? Do they partner with relevant organisations?

When looking into the qualities of your software provider, don't just take their word for granted. Have a look at what their customers have to say, read reference cases or try and arrange a reference visit to a company that has worked together with the software provider. A solid software developer should be able to organize a meeting with one of its customers. That is a perfect opportunity to see whether or not your expectations and their realizations match.



“ It’s a pleasure to work with a partner who knows our industry and understands our business. ”

4 Experience in your sector

The most important factor that can make or break a successful relationship with your software solutions provider is communication. A successful implementation can only be achieved if the two parties understand each other. You and your partner need to be on the same page. Find a partner that is specialized in your line of business, who knows and understands your pains and business challenges.

When talking to a sector-specialized partner, you don't have to explain your business processes. This save a lot of time. Moreover, a sector specialist

will be able to provide you with a standardized software solution that's tailored to your sectors specific needs from right at the start. After all, a good partner should be more than just a solutions provider. They should keep up with industry trends and think along with you to coach you through your future business endeavors and challenges. Find a partner that can offer an industry standard solution that is further customized to your specific needs and requirements.

“ Our partner gives us insight in how we can improve our business. ”



5 Flexibility

As mentioned in the previous chapter you should make sure your partner can offer an out-of-the-box solution that supports your industry's needs. However, you would not be running a successful organization if all your processes were identical to your competitors'. That's why it's important your software solution is flexible enough to incorporate your specific needs and requests. A software provider that is working within the framework of an industry-specific standard solution has a solid base to add customizations to the solution without compromising the entire system.

Ask about modules and extra users. Can your software grow along with your business? Your partner should be able to support your business and not become a bottleneck in your organization's growth. Find a partner with a knowledgeable development team, capable of delivering the optimal solution for your specific needs. A supplier open to functional discussions will help you increase your knowledge of the industry and open up new opportunities to improve your business.

“ It’s reassuring to know that we get a quick answer to our questions. ”



6 Single point of contact

During and after the implementation phase, you will need to contact your software supplier from time to time. Enquire about their support team. Is it reliable? Can they be contacted easily and quickly? How is their helpdesk organized? Most software companies nowadays provide a portal where you can look up basic issues in a knowledge database. Check if your software provider can be contacted via other channels as well. Some issues require direct contact via telephone and other issues are better handled via screenshots. You should expect to be able to contact

your partner's support services in a number of different ways and be kept up-to-date about the handling of your issue. For major functional or technical questions, you should be able to contact your designated project manager who keeps track of the adjustments done by the development team.

“ A certified partner provides peace of mind and reassures us we’ve made the right choice. ”



7 Certified partner

A good way to know if your software partner is reliable and will continue to deliver good quality solutions is to check their certifications.

Most major software publishers that deliver the tools necessary to create your specific software solution are handing out certifications based on a number of strict criteria. Certification requirements range from turnover and customer satisfaction to the quality of the solution provided. These certifications guarantee your software developer follows tested and industry-standard methodology.

This way you can be confident about the quality they deliver.

As a software development industry-standard seal of approval, a supplier with the correct certifications is also an extra guarantee that your purchased software will be easy to integrate with future solutions.

“ Our partner supports us and makes sure we reach our long-term goals and objectives. ”



8 Solid long-term relationship

When software implementations do not succeed, this is often caused by miscommunication and lack of dedicated resources. Find a partner that provides decent project management. A good planning and follow up on both sides is essential. Find a partner who has been on the market for a while and who has proven its reliability. As you are looking to build a long-term relationship, find a partner you can trust and who shares your willingness to finish the project, on time and according to the goals put forward at the beginning of the implementation.

Depending on your company's ambitions, it's also useful to look for a partner who can rely on a wide range of business partners around the world. Does your software supplier have experience in implementing global projects or are they a local player? If you have plans to grow your business abroad, make sure your software can expand along with you. This in terms of languages, modules, support, etc.

About Adifo

World market leader Adifo develops and services a unique range of feed industry-specific software tools for least-cost feed formulation, quality data management, ration calculation, cloud services and ERP. 600 customers in over 60 countries apply Adifo's software to optimize their resources, to achieve optimal animal performance, to service their clients, to be more efficient and to be more profitable. Continuous input from users, more than 40 years of experience and state-of-the-art technology guarantee innovative products that make a difference. Adifo is a gold certified Microsoft partner.

References

Learn what international feed industry experts have to say on WWAdifo software in this 1 minute video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecgU6nLk2cA>

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Adding value to nutrition industries



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