

Seven Ways to make the right choice and save costs when choosing your Not-For-Profit Accounting/ERP System

This paper provides seven helpful tips for choosing an Enterprise Resource Planning system that will support the unique needs of your not-for-profit organization and save costs both during and after the implementation.

Running any organization is a challenge, but in the not-for-profit sector, limited budgets and tough accountability requirements add to an already difficult task. Not-for-profit organizations (NFPs) need all the help they can get, and putting the right technology systems in place can have a dramatic impact on the success of your daily operations and reporting.

Operational and reporting systems most often reside in the accounting department, but they can be thought of as a larger group of technology solutions called Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. Whether you are considering an upgrade of your existing accounting, fundraising or any other business system or a move to a full-fledged ERP solution, finding the right fit for your organization is critical. The wrong system or poor implementation can end up being costly, not just financially but also in terms of your efficiency.

Here are seven tips to help you avoid common pitfalls and ensure that you make the right choice when considering an enterprise technology solution.

1 Identify Your Priorities and Match These to a Partner and a Solution Tailored to NFPs

The best way to ensure a smooth implementation and avoid unnecessary costs is to know your solution priorities and to work with a provider who understands them as well as an NFP environment. You need someone who understands your specific solution goals, what you do, your structure, NFP accounting requirements and the overriding mandate to work within tightly controlled budgets.

A partner with knowledge of NFPs is in a better position to make helpful budgetary and process suggestions, and when combined with a system that is tailored for the NFP, the overall savings can be as much as 20-30% over a generic system. Working with a provider who understands your needs will increase benefits in the overall efficiency of the process.

When you are looking for a provider, consider how many of your organization's specific needs are covered by the basic solution. Some of the unique or tailored functions you should look for "out of the box" in a proposed solution would include:



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