



How to Successfully Choose the Right Venue and Event Management Solution for Your Business





As more organizations are increasingly driven by technology to transform operations and business processes, many leaders are investigating the benefits modern platforms can bring to venue and event management. If you're considering streamlining your manual processes via a digital transformation, preparation is key. The process of just getting started can seem intimidating for such a critical business decision, but there are things you can do to ease the pain and set your organization up for success.

This buyer's enablement guide is aimed at helping you simplify the process of analyzing, evaluating and selecting the right venue and event management software for your business. Taking the time to perform focused research and planning will enable you to clearly define your goals and make an informed decision that will deliver a strong return on investment.

To get you started on your journey, learn what you need to do in each stage of the decision-making process:

Stage 1.

Analysis

Determine whether you need a software solution, what your budget and timeline are, who to involve in the project and how to develop a functionality requirement list.

Stage 2.

Evaluation

Evaluate numerous software providers for present and future alignment with your company's values and strategic needs.

Stage 3.

Selection

Decide which software provider offers the best ROI and value for your business. Ensure they provide the right service agreement, ongoing support, future product development and contract terms for your organization.

Stage 1. Analysis

Conduct a needs analysis before buying any new software for your organization. During this process you'll identify current challenges and what your organization needs to overcome them.

Below are some tips to help you identify your challenges and how a new venue and event management software solution can help solve them.

Form a Project Working Group

To truly define the challenges that your organization is facing with its existing systems and procedures — and to understand how a new solution can help — gather a group of staff from each department that will be affected by these changes. By casting a wide net, you will be able to identify pain points that you were not aware of, assess how a new solution will impact multiple teams and get buy-in from all employees. Welcoming fresh ideas can also shed light on processes that can be improved and more collaborative workstreams for your business.

Evaluate the Current State

Create a simple online survey for your working group to determine the current challenges and opportunities for improvement. This survey could include questions similar to:

- What systems do you utilize **daily**?
- What does your current **system architecture** look like today and why?
- How would your current **tech stack** be affected by a new solution?
- What does **success mean** to you in your current systems or workflows?
- What are the top **three areas of frustration** in your current systems or workflows?
- Looking at the desired state, **what are you missing** today that would benefit you and your team?
- Have you used **any other systems** you thought were more effective than your current system?

Digging into this information will assist you in defining what you need from a new system and additionally gain buy-in from your staff, valuing their opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process.



Define Your Goals

Once you have established your organization's key challenges and user needs, it is important to translate this information into clear goals for implementing a new software solution. These goals should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound) to help you measure the return on investment. Some example SMART goals include:

- Target date for system implementation and complete users training by *[INSERT DATE]*
- Configure online inquiry/booking portals to improve sales conversion by *[NOTED PERCENTAGE]*
- Centralize venue availability so staff can view all vacant spaces and provide up-to-date availability in real-time to increase venue occupancy by *[NOTED PERCENTAGE]*
- Eliminate printed reports by configuring user-specific dashboards to reduce paper wastage by *[NOTED PERCENTAGE]*
- Decrease manual processes for each user by *[NOTED PERCENTAGE]*
- Establish one, three and five-year goals for software adoption and incorporation of company forecasts.

Determine Your Budget

While everyone wishes they had a pile of cash for software, the reality is that most organizations will need to budget for this type of investment during their fiscal planning. If you've been communicating a strategy of switching from manual processes to digital automation and highlighting the operational savings, your budget should reflect those savings and use them as justification for increased project expenses elsewhere. Following solid communication and sharing of your strategy, you will be able to shift the budgetary process and get approval for your software investment.

Functionality Checklist

Now that you know what your organization needs and wants to achieve, it is important to create a specific functionality requirements checklist (much like a shopping list) to ensure you are searching for the right type of software solutions to evaluate. This list should include a wide range of features and functionality split into the following categories:

- **Mandatory:** Must-have features that you need from your chosen solution.
- **Desirable:** Other items that are not necessarily deal-breakers, but would be nice to have.

Stage 2. Evaluation

After you have completed the analysis stage, it is now time to start shopping and evaluate your options. If you're not a tech expert, the process of engaging software providers and reviewing different solutions can be daunting — loaded with lots of technical terminologies. Here are some tips to help you outsmart the experts and ensure you confirm exactly what you are buying before you sign on the dotted line.

Off-the-Shelf vs. Customizable Solutions

When purchasing new software, it is important to consider whether you need an off-the-shelf system or a customizable solution. The following table explains the differences and outlines the benefits of each option:

Off-the-Shelf Solution	Customizable Solution
WHAT IS IT?	
Off-the-shelf solutions are ready-made platforms. They are designed to be easy to implement and include prescribed workflows based on best practice principles.	Customizable solutions are designed to allow businesses the flexibility to define their own workflows to support their unique business requirements.
KEY BENEFITS	
Often more cost-effective. Easy to implement — purchase the software and begin using it immediately. Simple to onboard and train new staff. Benefit from a global user community who all use the same system.	Configure the system to suit your specific processes and unique business requirements. Modify system configuration as often as required in accordance with changes to your business, your industry and technological advancements. Customizable solutions often offer APIs to allow your technical staff to develop integrations to sync information between the other systems that you use across your business.
WHAT TYPE OF BUSINESS SHOULD CONSIDER THIS SOLUTION?	
Ideal for small to medium-sized businesses as they provide the perfect foundation to get started.	These solutions are designed to support established organizations looking to scale their business or implement a new technology stack. At the core, this solution assists in expansion to other areas of the venue for further uses.

Data Migration

If you are currently using another system, you will want to import some of your existing data into a new system, especially high-quality data. When evaluating any new system, you must determine:

- Do you want to import data?
- What data is available for migration and import?
- Is the data in your existing solution relevant and clean or distracting and unreliable?
- Are there additional costs and extended time needed for data migration?
- What support will be required from your team to achieve the import?



Integration

Integrations are a key part of our daily lives, but also in our professional lives as well. A key benefit of integrations is the ability to pull data from multiple platforms into a single view. This is particularly beneficial for large-scale organizations that want to limit the duplication of data entry across different applications, but can also provide significant time-saving benefits for smaller organizations.

While integration is often disregarded during the needs analysis process, it is often the saving grace for many companies that want to increase efficiency across their organization and who also want to minimize the number of applications that they are using. Many people start off thinking that they want to buy one system to do it all, but in fact, it is better to buy best-of-breed technologies that serve specific purposes and integrate them so that they all talk to one another.

Here are some questions you need to ask:

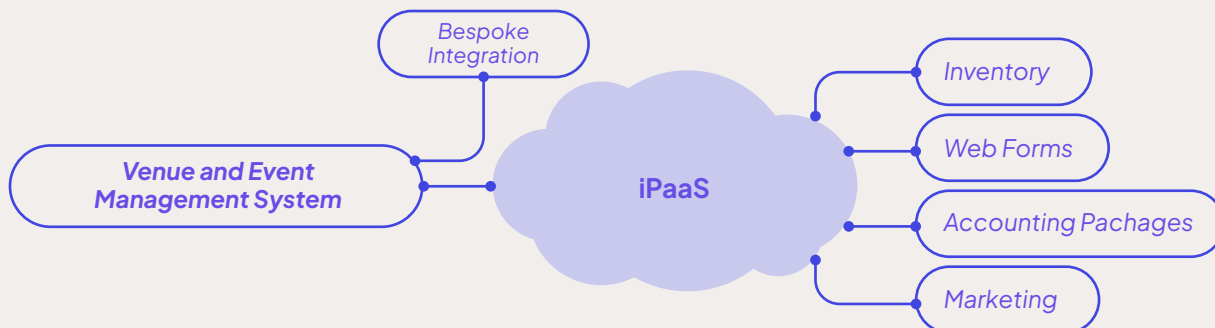
- Does the provider offer an open Application Program Interface (API)?
- Do you need an integration:
 - *Could you solve your requirements with another solution such as a scheduled report export via email?*
 - *What is the business value of integration (i.e., cost, time savings, improving data integrity, reducing manual processes for staff, etc.)?*
- Which of the systems you use across your organization need to be integrated?
- Does the provider offer to assist in configuring integrations or is this something that you will need to engage a web developer or your IT department to do for you?
- What applications does the solution provider currently integrate with?
- Have they successfully integrated with the applications that you wish to integrate with?
- If applicable, what are the costs associated with building and maintaining the required integrations?

Knowing the answers to these questions will help you to understand if integration is possible and whether they have existing experience integrating with your chosen applications.

PRO TIP

Before you start building any integration, it is essential that you obtain API documentation from your chosen venue and event management solution and whatever the relevant third-party application. This information should be readily available on the provider's Help Center or company website.

Once you have this information, you should develop data flowcharts and diagrams to determine how the information will flow between each of the systems. For example, an integration flowchart might look like:



Demonstration

Most software providers will offer a tailored demonstration to guide you through key functionality and highlight the benefits of the system. Tailored demonstrations provide a vision of the future state, obtain key user buy-in and set the tone for change management. It is important for you to be engaged during the demonstration, ask questions and take notes. Make the most of this opportunity by asking the software provider to:

- Demonstrate how they can solve the specific pain points and challenges that you found during your needs analysis.
- Explain their best practice workflow recommendation for your business model and for your key stakeholders.
- Give a desired workflow or process document to the provider ahead of time in preparation for the demonstration. Include examples or terminology unique to your venue/industry.
- Make sure to send a list of key personas so the provider can address each department's perspective and key persona requirements.
- Send examples of reports or documents you are using today so the provider can guide you on the benefits and ease of producing them from their system.
- Record the demonstration so your contributing teams can review and have buy-in on the selection process.



Stage 3. Selection

Now that you have reviewed and evaluated different software providers and sampled their systems, you are ready to move into the selection stage. Take this opportunity to gain an understanding of the companies behind the user interfaces. Review each provider's business values, experience, contract and customer reviews. Below are some tips to help you sift through the terms and conditions to ensure you are dealing with reputable companies:

Company Information

Investing in software is as much about purchasing the support of the company that provides the technology as it is investing in the technology itself. Do your research and ensure you are fully aware of whom you will be dealing with before you sign on the dotted line.

Here's some questions you should ask before making any commitment to purchase:

- Who owns the company?
- Who is on their leadership team?
- What are their core values?
- How long has the company been in business?
- Who will be your primary point of contact after the point of sale?
- Does the company have experience in providing software to other clients within your industry? If so, do they have any case studies, testimonials or references available for you to review?
- Does the company offer customer success programs and adoption programs such as a learning center or knowledge hubs?
- Do you know what their product roadmap is?
- Does the company provide data hosting centers in your region and is it compliant with local data legislation and regulation?
- Does the company allow you to scale with your business (i.e. do they re-invest into adding functionality or foster innovation in the industry)?



Contract Terms

The last step in the buying process is to review the contractual agreement before you sign it. This can be a tedious process, but here are some tips to help you go through terms and conditions with a fine-tooth comb, resting assured you are making the right decision:

Licensing

- How many user licenses are included?
- What is the renewal process?

Support and Service Level Agreement

- Are there any limitations on how many hours you will be offered a month or what times support is available? If so, will this be sufficient for your organization?
- Do they offer an online help center?
- What are their target response times?
- How do they identify and define functionality issues?
- What are their business hours?

Customer Success

- Does the company offer customer success programs?
- Do they offer adoption programs such as a learning center or knowledge hubs?

Training

- Is training included in the quotations that you have been provided? If not, how much will this training cost and what is the proposed training schedule?
- If they do offer a help center, does this include training resources?
- How are product releases and new features or software enhancements communicated?

Data Security

- Data security is paramount. Be sure to check with your provider to see if they conduct vulnerability testing, application penetration testing and confirm that:
 - *Data is encrypted in transit.*
 - *Data is encrypted at rest.*
 - *ISO 27001 and/or SOC 2 Type 2 Certified.*
 - *PCI DSS Compliant when processing payments.*
 - *In addition, you should also understand where your data is stored and located.*

Disaster Recovery

- Check to see that the provider conducts regular back-ups of your data to ensure no down time or data loss in the event of technical complications.

Subscription Terms and Conditions

- What are the contract lengths?
- What are the payment terms?
- What is the termination process?
- What are the usage limits/restrictions?

Privacy Policy

- What types of personal information do they collect?
- How do they use your personal information?
- Where is your information stored?
- Do you have the right to access and correction?

Special Requirements

- If your country has special requirements, make sure these can be met by the provider.

Conclusion

Going through a software selection and buying process is time consuming. When a company experiences issues implementing a new system across their organization, it can often come down to how the analysis, evaluation and selection stages were handled. Businesses tend to experience issues when there wasn't enough time dedicated to understanding what was needed from a new solution, key people were not involved in the decision-making process or the system and contract terms were not evaluated effectively. As a result, your teams become frustrated and unsatisfied resulting in poor adoption across the organization.

However, when you follow these three outlined stages alongside a change management plan and involve key stakeholders from across the organization, there are fewer errors and less blame. Through a sense of shared responsibility, your organization will choose the right venue and event management solution for your business. The result is a true sense of pride that the organization is utilizing modern technology to achieve efficiency and high-performance results.

Contact us directly today to explore opportunities for your venue and events management.

[Contact Us](#)

About Momentus

Momentus Technologies is a global provider of industry leading venue and event management solutions that empower organizations to create extraordinary moments. With over 60,000 users in more than 50 countries, Momentus serves the needs of convention and exhibition centers, higher education, corporate, stadiums and arenas, and arts and culture centers. Its powerful intuitive platform alongside intelligent data-driven solutions and unparalleled expertise provides customers a view of past, present and future event operations to increase end-to-end visibility, optimize efficiency and achieve business goals. Founded in 1985, Momentus is headquartered in the United States. The company's employees work across the globe in Momentus offices and remotely.

To learn more, visit gomomentus.com.

