



FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD BE ASKING YOUR SOFTWARE VENDOR

Software has become a critical part of construction businesses, and the need to implement one to stay competitive has increased exponentially. Typically, a software solution is a 5 to 10 year investment, so it is important to invest in an excellent product and a loyal software company. You will most likely be communicating with these people on a daily basis for support, upgrades, or other software-related topics. It is in your best interest to enjoy the people you have committed your business to and maintain a long-lasting symbiotic partnership. Before making an investment like this, we recommend you ask the following questions to software providers you seek out.

- **Can their software handle complex payroll?**

Payroll is one of the more complex accounting processes within most companies, so it's important that you ask a software vendor if they have a deep understanding of payroll, costing and how to create one unified and accurate source of time records. This completely eliminates all manual processes relating to the collection, manipulation and approval of time records for payroll processing. Your software vendor of choice needs to address the business needs of multi-company, multi-national, multi-union, multi-pay periods as well as multi-device support.

- **Is their solution integrated to your primary accounting ERP system?**

If your employees are tied down by inefficient and disjointed systems, they cannot perform at their highest level. Tasks like manually transferring data from one system to another can increase errors, take away from the employee's normal work tasks, and reduce the overall productivity of your company. When companies have to deal with multiple systems and overlapping databases, they can never see a complete view of their business in real-time. This prevents them from making the kind of quick, accurate, real-time business decisions required to stay competitive in the marketplace. Integrated software applications can help you save countless hours of trying to tie inaccurate, out-of-date information together.

- **Do they have ongoing software education/training services?**

Software adoption depends heavily on this key question. If you want your employees, both field and home office, to embrace new technologies and processes you must find a software vendor that can provide ongoing education services so that your team is always up-to-date on the software's features and functionalities. You don't want your vendor of choice to leave you high and dry after implementation and deployment. You want a vendor that's going to consistently provide you with tools and training so that your company is successful in using the chosen software. Ask if they offer users conferences, online training, or if educational videos are available, as this will come in handy as your company grows in the future.

- **Can I configure the solution to meet my needs?**

Depending on the vendor, sometimes enterprise software applications can require significant implementation services or projects to meet the unique needs of particular businesses. Every company, no matter what industry, has unique needs and therefore not every software is going to be 'one-size fits all.' You want to select a software solution that you can be collaborative with, and someone that can scale to your business needs so you don't have to settle on something that



doesn't function for the way your business operates. Vendors that offer custom capabilities are geared toward partnerships, and this should be your focus in software selection. You want to be a partner, not just another sale.

- **What are the company's support services like?**

You will be utilizing your vendor's support services for not just software issues, but for functionality questions, training, and best practice suggestions frequently. This means that the support team for the software vendor will be a crucial tool in your company's success using the chosen software. Asking your desired software vendor if they outsource their support is a part of the selection process, as you will be communicating with these people on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. Other key questions should include if they offer remote or online support, ticket response times, and if they offer support over the phone or email only. Based on your preferred communication method, this could be a game-changer for your organization.

Keep in mind that you are not just investing in a software, but also in the company that engineered it. Validate that you are getting into business with companies that have your best interests in mind. Evaluate and select a software provider that offers both the relationship and the solution to meet your company's unique needs.

We've designed and built our software to answer questions just like these, and we've been help streamline companies' business processes since 1999. If you'd like more information on our mobile software, ALMobile, please feel free to reach out to sales@austinlane.com to start a conversation about how we can help you.