

Waste management software – Buyer's checklist

Buying the right waste management software can contribute to a successful and well organised business, giving it an edge over competitors. It's critical to do some homework before purchasing, so here are the key questions you need to ask.

1. Does the software make day-to-day tasks easier?

Create a list of common scenarios/tasks in your business. Ask the waste management software vendor to demonstrate how the software can simplify these tasks. For instance, can the software save you time and money by matching a driver in the right area with an empty skip that needs collecting? All everyday scenarios should be available on screen within a couple of clicks.

2. Who is responsible for maintaining the software, are there additional costs?

Will the software vendor ensure that your data is safe and secure? Will you require additional IT support and hardware to keep everything running smoothly, your software up to date and your data backed up?

3. Who pays for changes resulting from government decisions?

Will the software provider make the necessary changes to the software in order to comply with new regulations? Will updates such as the recent changes about the waste producer's SIC code and the waste hierarchy statement cost extra?

4. Is the software subject to compulsory upgrades?

Compulsory upgrades can be costly, so ask how often these are made and how long the existing software will be supported.

5. How easy is the software to use?

Ask the vendor to show you how the software can help to accomplish some of your everyday scenarios – if you can't follow the screens yourself be wary of claims that it is easy to use. Newer software is often based on a web interface, so anyone using the internet will already be familiar with it.

6. What's included in the standard package, and is the software scalable?

Does the standard package include everything you'll need to cover the core areas of your business? Are new features added regularly to suit your business and can additional users be added easily?

7. How easy is reporting?

Ensure that report creation is a simple process and can be done on an ad-hoc basis, not just at the end of the month. There should be no need to manually collate information to create any reports, so ask the vendor which reports are included and whether they will create the reports you need free of charge if they're not part of the software package already.

8. Is the vendor 100% in touch with the latest trends in the industry?

Good waste management software will evolve to take on board new requirements in the industry and from your customers such as the growing need for SWMP's (Site Waste Management Plans). Talk to the vendor about what features they've added recently and what's in their development pipeline.

9. Does the software integrate easily with other software and systems?

The last thing you want is to have to re-key data from your new waste management software into your existing IT systems. Look for waste management software that transmits the entered data to other systems that your company is using, such as Sage and CRM packages.

10. How much does it cost (now and in the future)?

Last but not least, consider all costs including set up, hardware, IT staff/support, maintenance and updates. Your goal is to find the most cost effective software that provides a good return on your investment, so it is important to have all costs included for comparison.

In all instances, speaking to the vendor's existing clients and asking about their experiences with the software is recommended.



Expert Column

Why is My Yard software different to other waste management software on the market?

We have developed online software by listening closely to our customers. We know that the industry is changing and software needs to keep up-to-date with both customer and regulatory requirements.

With this in mind, we add new features and updates regularly which are pushed out to all of our customers automatically, at no additional cost. We make managing a waste management business simple, and you don't need an in-house IT person or even need to be IT literate to use our software.

We provide demos to show the in-depth reports that can be generated by the click of one button with our software.

My Yard software is operational within days, rather than weeks and our flexible pricing options including a monthly subscription, offering low cost set up, rather than the high initial costs associated with traditional software.

Geeta Chandra

Director, My Yard Software

Find out more about My Yard, the fully flexible online waste management software with pay-as-you go pricing, full reports accessible anytime, anywhere, simple-to-use interface, central backups and automatic software updates.

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