



5 Advantages to Using Industry specific software

A guide for software buyers

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In shopping for software there are three main types of software that most companies will consider:

- Custom solutions
- General ERP
- Industry specific solutions

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Each of these options has its pluses and minuses but the focus of this article is on the benefits of using industry specific software.

1: Benefit from the fact that your competitors are doing the same thing you are.

One of the most overwhelming reasons that companies purchase industry specific software is because they not only get a software that fits them out of the box but they also typically get functionality from the software that they didn't even recognize they could have because their competitors have already solved problems that they have not even run into yet.

2: Reduced costs of programming.

Using industry specific software is generally a fraction of the cost of creating custom software. When looking at ERP solutions a typical rule of thumb is that you are generally getting at least \$100 worth of programming for every \$1 you spend on an industry specific solution. Many companies find that when they look at it this way it makes it much easier to live with some either lack of functionality or having to wade through functions they will never use.

3: Work with a vendor that understands your needs

The advantage of working with a software vendor that is in the industry is that he will go into the relationship with an understanding of your needs and problems and an ability to offer solutions or suggestions he has seen your competitors use.

4: Ability to mold your software to fit your business instead of molding your business to fit your software.

This is as much of a disadvantage to using a general ERP as it is an advantage to using an industry specific package. Many companies will choose to purchase software from larger companies because they feel a comfort level with a big name, only to find out that they are then forced to change the way they do business because the general ERP does not accommodate their needs.

5: Shorter learning curve

It is sometimes said that the real cost of software does not lie in the licensing fee but more in the "soft cost" associated with loss in productivity and morale that comes with implementing a new system. Humans are creatures of nature, and most employees grumble at the thought of having to learn something new. You can reduce these worries (and associated costs), by working with a vendor that understands the employees needs and is talking in a language they can relate to.

Although no industry specific software is going to be a perfect fit out of the box, a good rule of thumb is to look for a solution that does 80% of what you need and either pay to build out the remainder or learn to live without less critical functionality.