

How to Tell when a Client has Outgrown their Accounting Software – a Questionnaire

TECHNOLOGY

A Tool for Trusted Advisors: Here's a handy questionnaire to help you identify clients that have outgrown their accounting software. Plus advice on what to do about it.

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An accountant's role is dynamic with a multitude of responsibilities, so keeping up to date with the latest [business management software](#) options and how they could benefit your clients can be challenging.

But you'll probably be asked. Many businesses look to their accountant as a source of advice on finance software and the implications of changing and updating platforms. Being prepared to provide informed guidance reinforces your role as a valuable business partner.

Small to medium size enterprises (SMEs) in particular, have unique requirements of their business software solutions as they continue to grow and evolve, and there are specific key

indicators that signal when an organisation is ready to upgrade. Use the handy questionnaire below to identify clients that have outgrown their accounting software.

The SME quandary

There comes a time for many businesses when it is beneficial to consider [SME accounting software](#) and business management solutions with more functionality and features, but making the leap is fraught with decisions.

Matt Paff, founder and principal of business software advisory firm, Value Adders has coined a term for the difficult situation facing small to medium businesses looking to choose between SME accounting systems and mid-market ERP platforms. It's the SMERP Dilemma, and it's problematic because these options are poles apart in terms of cost and usability, with few options filling the gap between the two extremes.

If an SME stays with existing accounting software it may require several add-ons leading to more siloed tools and apps to manage, a less streamlined system, low cost-effectiveness and inefficient use of time for both the SME and the accountant.

But a global ERP system is often too advanced with features they don't need and a price point often out of reach.

This leaves SMEs searching for a business management solution designed to fill that sweet spot, to help take the business to the next level without unnecessary overheads and expenses.

How to tell your client is ready for new business management software

This questionnaire will take you and your client through an assessment of their software capabilities across five aspects of business operations.

If a busy, growing, ambitious SME answers "no" to some of these questions and they can see the business value of being able to say "yes" to them instead, it's a good indicator that a more advanced [business management platform](#) is the right step to take.

1. Payroll management, accounting and taxation reporting

- Can you manage all payroll and accounting functions within one solution?
- Does your current solution automatically calculate changes to accrued liabilities for employees, (including those arising from pay rate changes) enabling you to easily keep track of them?
- Can you access critical business information about customers, sales, profitability, inventory and online activities using one single solution from any location - including via smartphone?

2. Inventory and stock management

- Do you have complete visibility of your entire inventory and where it is located?
- Can you quickly and easily access real-time information about stock, whether it's on supplier order, backorder, allocated, awaiting despatch, or partially fulfilled within the entire sales order process?
- Can you provide real time updates on your website and customer portal?

3. Multiple branches

- Can you easily manage sales of the same product at different price points across various stores branch locations or online?
- Do you have full transparency and auditability of every transaction across multiple branches associated with every staff member and customer?
- Can you unify sales, orders, receipts, invoices and profitability across multi-locations?

4. Leveraging sales and customer data

- Do you know how often your customers login to your website, what they look at, what they search for and what they purchase?
- Are you able to track all emails, texts and EDM activities to and from any customer and have them centrally available within your CRM system?

5. Customer focus and fostering loyalty

- Are you able to profile and segment your customers based on purchasing and other key criteria and email or text them en masse within minutes, promoting relevant new products?
- Are you able to track and report customer activity?
- Can you enable a customisable loyalty or frequent buyer's program to encourage repeat business?

Meet Xpect

When the time is right, enhancement of your client's business management software will result in vast improvements for their business. Plus, identifying the right tech partners can be good for your reputation as a trusted adviser.

Designed, developed, hosted and supported in Australia for Australian SMEs, Xpect is an end-to-end cloud-based platform that unites management, communication and reporting across finance, payroll, marketing, sales, website, human resources and operations.

Consider it a '[mini-ERP plus](#)' without the expense and complexity of a global ERP.

As more SMEs are frustrated with the limitations of their accounting tools and look to you for options to fill the SMERP gap, arming yourself with the latest intelligence on new solutions is invaluable.

Watch this 2 minute [Xpect Overview Video](#) and you'll immediately see advantages for your clients.