

Top Tips for Choosing Accounting Software



Accounting software can be a business owner's best technological friend. After all, you set up your business to do what you love, not to crunch the numbers. When used correctly, accounting software can make your life easier. It can take the stress out of manually managing your accounts.

Getting the right accounting software for your business is so important. The features must match your business and the software should be a good fit for your industry.

Here are some tips to consider when choosing accounting software

1. Understand your needs

The first thing to do is really understand what your financial needs are. This will help determine whether you need a basic accounting package or one with bells and whistles. Write up a specific list of your requirements e.g. single/multiple user system, multi-currency, stock, order processing etc.

2. Think about add-on functionality

Some software packages offer a basic application and then offer additional or customised add-ons. These may be relevant to you, e.g., if you have a professional services business, then you may need a time billing module. If you run customised reports, then you may need a comprehensive reporting add-on.

Many business owners use Sage Software as it offers a very affordable basic accounts system package that is usually sufficient. However, as your business develops, you can take advantage of the 'add-ons' in the Sage 50 suite.

3. Understand the integration ability

Some of the businesses that we work with have a number of different packages such as stock control systems, point of sale systems and ecommerce. When choosing your

accounting software package, it is essential to know how it integrates with other packages or systems. It's also essential to know how your data is securely backed up.

4. Do your research

Talk to other businesses in the same industry about what software they use. Ask what's good and not so good about it. Understanding the weaknesses of the package from their perspective will give you clues as to why it might not be suited to you.

Always check to see if the software is well-known, has timely customer support, how long it's been established and does your accountant use it.

5. Ask your accountant

Most accountants recommend software that they are comfortable with as they've educated themselves on the pros and cons of each. I recommend Sage 50 which is a leading software accounts package. Your accountant knows your business so can help guide you in getting a package that is just right for you. And don't worry about offending your accountant; we're delighted to see you take control. We will then support you on the next level with management accounts and understanding KPIs, which are required in knowing your financial position, cashflow and developing your business further.

6. Keep to your budget

Set a budget and stick to it. You have choice when it comes to accounting software. That's why it's important to know exactly what you need. You don't want to pay for modules or add-ons that you don't need. On the flip side, if you need something specific to your industry or it's more specialised, be prepared to pay a bit more.

Accounting software is one of the best business investments you'll make. It's like everything, time spent researching is time well spent in the long-run. If you would like further information on any of the above, we would be delighted to speak with you.

AG Associates is an accounting practice that specialises in affordable accounting and payroll solutions for the SME business owner. For further information please contact Angela at:

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