

Upgrade or Change?

What next when support is withdrawn for your finance system?

There are many reasons why you may suddenly find yourself with an accounting platform that is no longer supported. For example, your supplier may have developed a new replacement system or a merger has resulted in a product being dropped. Whatever the cause though, companies are left with the predicament of what to do next.

However, it's not necessarily all doom and gloom; there are many upsides to being put into this position. Here's a guide to the opportunities and challenges it could present.

Opportunities:

Choose the most efficient software

Let's face it, no one really likes change, so many companies continue with the same system and method of working without really evaluating whether it's the most efficient option. In many cases, being forced into a corner can have its rewards as you can review alternatives and potentially find a solution that is superior to the one you're using.

Better service

By swapping suppliers, not only can you see what other functionality is available on the market, you can also benefit from better service or account management. If you've been disappointed by lack of responsiveness or poor support in the past, then now's the chance to get the attention you deserve.

Review objectives

If you stay with your existing supplier but choose to upgrade then you should question how you are using



your software. What objectives do you want to meet as an organisation and how can you negotiate better terms, service or functionality?

Challenges:

Compare systems thoroughly

If you plan to go to tender, you need to ensure you are comparing like with like. Many organisations fail to recognise what functionality they already have in their incumbent system, often because they don't receive the help they need to get the best out of the software. Fully explore what you like about your existing software, what features it provides and what additional benefits you'd like it to offer in the future. Also try and think about the commercial implications of the software and how it will help your business rather than just about technical features.



✓ Don't delay

Postponing the need to replace non-supported software will make things worse the longer you leave it. Regardless of how much IT expertise you have in-house, there is little they can do to fix bugs which can occur as the volume of transactions or data is added over time. It's better to prevent this situation occurring rather than run the risk of being horrendously exposed to some serious downtime or corruption of irreplaceable data.

✓ Be aware of future plans

If a merger or takeover is behind the removal of support then be very cautious. You don't want to invest in an expensive upgrade if you're unsure whether further consolidation will happen. What's more, there's no guarantee that the same team will be around to support you in the future.

Overall, the advice is not to panic or despair. If you carefully weigh up the opportunities against the efforts of changing, you will often find that the situation gives you the chance to take stock and explore a new and better way of managing your finances.

If you need any further help on tackling the issue of de-supported software, contact bluQube on **08456 44 77 88** or visit www.bluqube.co.uk.

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