



5 Questions You Should Ask Every Software Vendor

Presented by | STEVE ANTILL

Presenter: Steve Antill



- Vice President of Business Development
- 20 years of experience in the construction industry
- Over 1,200 system selections & implementations
- Involvement in ASA, ABC, CFMA, NECA, AICPA, IEC, CONEXPO, World of Concrete...
- Focus on New Entry Points to take to Market

Who is Foundation Software?

- 33+ years developing software solutions for contractors
- 4,800+ software clients
- 1,500+ payroll clients
- 70% of clients are specialty subcontractors and 30% are general contractors
- Author and developer of Foundation
 - Single family ownership
 - All products are developed and supported in-house



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1. Who are you, who am I?
2. Will you show us what we want to see?
3. How do you deploy your product?
4. How are you going to help us succeed?
5. What is your roadmap for the future?



“Okay, maybe don’t follow my advice on a first date, but you’re not looking to date your software vendor!”

1. Who Are You, Who Am I?

- Who are you?
- Accounting, ERP, Estimating, Mobile, PM, CRM....
- Typical Client Demographics
- Are the products they sell now the future?
- Understand their ownership history
 - *How many hands has this product been passed through?*
 - *This is a good indicator of the product's health!*
- Do you sell & train direct or via 3rd party dealers?



“To get to know you better I’ve prepared a list of questions:

Where are you from? Do you have siblings? What are their names? What is your mother’s maiden name? Where do you work? Where have you lived? Do you like pets? What are your political views?”

“...”

1. Who Are You, Who Am I?

- Who am I?
- Not all Electrical Contractors are the same
- Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Government
- Questions your vendor better be asking you!
 - Tell me what does your company look like?
 - Why are we even talking?
 - Is there anything else we should know you haven't told us!

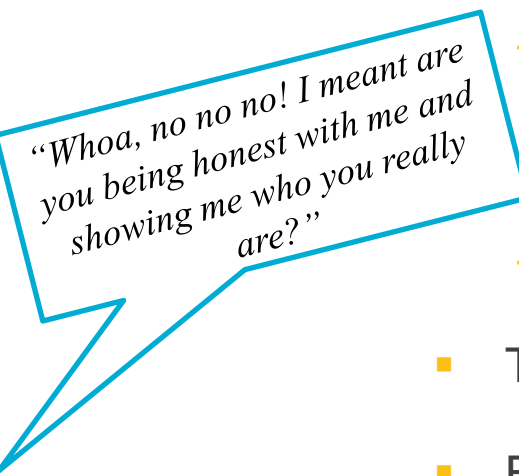


“She is asking me questions I don't like answering”

How self aware are you, are you in touch with yourself and your business?

2. Will you show us what we want to see?

- Try to Define your company's needs before meeting with vendors
 - *Expectations of software*
 - *Who should be involved from your side*
 - *How committed are you do making a change*
- The demo process (make it fit your style)
- Be fair to the software vendor- you are buying & building a relationship
- Software Trials, Money Back Guarantee's, References



“Whoa, no no no! I meant are you being honest with me and showing me who you really are?”

3. How do you deploy your product?

- Cloud, SaaS, On Premise?
- Do you the customer own the software, the data, can you get a back up
- Where is data hosted, off site backup, fail over, redundancy
- Why is this vendor obsessed with Cloud?



“So what’s your usual implementation plan for advancing a relationship...?”

Cost Comparison of OP vs SaaS

- Cost comparison over 5 years:
 - On-Premise \$14,500 + \$10,440 maintenance = \$24,940
 - SaaS is \$660 per month + \$4,000 set up = \$43,600
 - Breakeven points tend to be 24 months or less!



IT Strategy & App Awareness?

- How many contractor's out there can define their **IT strategy**?
- Do your core business software programs run in different environments
- Realistically, can this vendor host other solutions for you if you go cloud
- Apps, Apps and more Apps
- Native vs. Web Apps- please be aware.

“...no, I don't think that was a forward question for a first date!”



Questions you should ask



- If the vendor will be holding data ask
 - What type of SLA's do you have?
 - 99%=88 hrs. down, 99.5%=40hrs, 99.9%= 9hrs
 - Please be up during our work hours
 - When and who performs updates and maintenance?
 - What type of compliance standards do you meet?
 - Don't forget the soft underbelly!

4. How are you going to help us succeed?

- Understand the training process from the day you sign to the day you go live
 - *This is where hidden costs can be – talk to existing clients and find out how they were trained and how long it really takes*
- After you go live, what does on-going support look like?
 - *Hours of operation, response time, in-house support or outsourced support?*
- Do they offer on-going education opportunities?
 - Webinars, user conferences, online videos, user guides, consulting services, etc.

“So if I decide to pursue this relationship with you, how will this benefit me? Why do you look so mad?”

5. What is your company's roadmap for the future?

- Where do you see your company in **5-10-20** years?
- Is your growth organic or through investors?
- Are you expanding your product line? If so, are you looking to acquire new products or develop your products internally?
 - *Make sure the product lines they pursue have a close relationship to their current offering(s). If it veers too much, this can signal that company does not have a strong, solid vision.*
- What is your development team currently working on?
 - *Always know what is slated to come out in the next year. Gauge their developmental aggressiveness.*
 - *YOU ARE BUYING A REALTIONSHIP AS MUCH AS YOU ARE BUYING SOFTWRE*

“It’s important to determine if we want the same things from life... see some of these are normal!”

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