

# Buy software offering accounting solutions, not headaches.

When considering [new accounting software](#), take the long view—because you're likely going to be with the system for awhile.

Long-term performance and short-term pain relief—both in the pocketbook and the process—are primary objectives of your accounting software solutions search. An overarching consideration when shopping for accounting software is: Will it meet your projected needs years from now? Obviously, the answer needs to be “yes,” even if you're positioning your company for a sale—because ability of accounting software to function adequately will likely be a major criterion in evaluating future company success.

With a timeframe established, review your anticipated major [accounting software requirements](#) over the next few years. To begin qualifying (and eliminating) candidates, do some online research around the issues bulleted below. Look for various citations and commentaries from at least 5-10 accounting solutions sources, then cull out “lowest common denominator” references—those that appear consistently throughout your research. This will establish some degree of objectivity, and provide a more realistic picture of the true accounting software track record. Cast out anything that looks too good or too bad (unless it's a consistent finding) because reports at either end of the spectrum may be nothing more than self-aggrandizement or, conversely, a knock on the competition.

As part of this process, look for accounting software companies and [products](#) meeting the test of longevity, performance improvement and [laudatory track record](#). Companies and products that have survived highs and lows generally will continue to do so. Reference to “performance improvement” indicates measurement of how the company supports and improves its products continuously. A stellar product five years ago that hasn't been improved is not likely to be your best candidate. Conversely, a lesser-performing product five years ago that is now performing admirably shows that the company paid attention to its customers, spent time and money improving it, and is motivated to keep going down this track. A laudatory track record consists largely of empirical (research/fact-based reports) and anecdotal (endorsements, testimonials) evidence. Look for both to round out the picture.

And, stay current. Obviously, you may not want to consider a long-lived and venerable accounting system software company that has just laid off 60 percent of its workforce.

Address these key areas:

- Industry Focus—Vet accounting software that [plays well](#) in your industry. Some accounting solutions are industry-specific. Other applications are global enough to spread over many industries. Regardless of the solution's narrow or wide industry net, just make sure it has a positive track record in your arena;
- Company Expansion—Look for accounting solutions that can easily accommodate maximum anticipated expansion—both in terms of employees and locations;
- Inter-application Integration—Examine ability of the accounting software to interact seamlessly and reliably with other applications, such as CRM and ERP applications—to establish a smooth supply chain flow and ready accessibility to many types of reports and data;
- User Familiarity—For example, employees accustomed to using Microsoft Office will adapt most easily to accounting solutions offering that familiar look and feel—as well as a natural interaction between the two;
- Functions Compendium—Buy based on functionality, not just reputation. Popularity doesn't mean suitability for you. Establish your must-have criteria list before searching for options, and make sure that they will scale up as you grow. Important criteria may include robust account number structure, good drilldown and drill-around capabilities, forward-looking reporting capabilities, reliable system performance, a well-tested Web portal, support for handheld devices, comprehensive customization capabilities, the ability to easily compare data in financial reports, supply chain suitability, and XML enablement.

Call 800.939.4119 x1 or go to [www.wizardx4.com](http://www.wizardx4.com).