

How to choose the right **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE** for your firm



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Choosing the right Practice Management Software (PMS) for your practice can seem overwhelming, considering the range of options available today. In addition, it takes time and research to select the right system for your firm, and this comes with significant cost. So, when you are looking for a digital tool that needs to deliver efficiencies, a few factors are worth considering to guide your investment decision.



1. Understand the current situation

You need to determine where support is required and to what degree clearly. To do this, you must first review the existing systems and identify what the current processes are. This may seem like a simple step, but if you fail to adequately research and understand the status quo, you may end up with a product that services only part of your requirements.

The easiest way to do this is to map your existing processes and identify any bottlenecks and gaps. The pain points are easy to see; however, don't neglect the issues that don't stand out at first. Opening the discussion to a broader set of roles will allow you to identify issues noted by different business functions.

2. Identify your essential deliverables

Your overview of the current *as is* situation lets you identify the complete list of issues and opportunities that your new PMS can help solve. From this, you must determine which outcomes are essential and which are advantageous but not critical.

Only some solutions on the market will deliver all of your requirements; however, if you start the process with a complete list of desired outcomes, you will eliminate any PMS solutions that do not fit your needs right from the start.



3. Evaluate the costs and ROI

The initial cost of instituting a PMS may be significant; however, there may be ongoing and ad hoc expenses to consider. If the solution is attractive, it is worth conducting a cost-benefit analysis to determine if the return on investment is worthwhile. Weigh up the cost of not implementing the solution and the cost of implementing a failed system or one that fails to meet all the identified needs. Additionally, factor in the potential increase in revenue and subsequent savings an effective PMS can deliver.

Don't forget to consider any ongoing maintenance requirements as well as ad hoc support costs. From here, you should begin to get a picture of whether the system is viable for your business.



4. Determine integration options

In today's business environment, there is seemingly a solution for every need. As a result, there is no doubt a wide variety of technology solutions used daily in your practice. Implementing a new PMS may eliminate some of those solutions, which brings the added bonus of subscription savings. However, others may not be provided by the PMS and must integrate with it. Therefore, a solution that seamlessly integrates with your existing essential systems is a must. If implementing a new system creates workarounds in other areas, it does not add efficiencies across the board.

It is also worth considering how you can use the new PMS. With the hybrid working model most businesses are using these days; many tools may need to be supported. Laptops, desktops, tablets, and mobile phones are all used in our day-to-day working activities and need to be supported by the new PMS.

Choosing the right Practice Management System will deliver efficiencies and enhance the client experience.



5. Don't forget security and compliance

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Most systems are designed with regulatory compliance in mind; however, it is worth noting how the new PMS can make compliance easier to adhere to. In addition, identifying how easy it is to adapt the PMS to regulatory and compliance requirements changes will make it easier for you should the need arise in the future. On that note, it is also worth considering the flexibility in customising the system to your firm's specific needs - both now and in the future should your firm diversify or specialise.

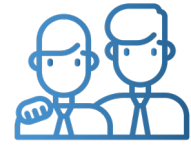


6. Is it scalable?

When choosing your PMS, it is imperative that you keep your future growth goals in mind. Selecting a solution today that suits your needs may solve the initial problems and create efficiencies; however, if there are limitations to system growth and adaptability, you are setting yourself up for another costly change further down the track.

Most systems available in today's market will solve most requirements out of the box. However, suppose your essential requirements identified in step 2 include any provisions for custom features or reports. In that case, you need to include only those solutions that deliver that option in your decision-making.





7. Will it enhance the client experience?

Last, and by no means least, is understanding whether your PMS will deliver improvements to your client's experience. It would be a poor system indeed if it did not provide at least some improvement to the client experience. At a minimum, it must not be detrimental to the customer care process.

Research any and all reviews there are on the product. If everything fits the bill but delivers a poor customer service experience, is it really the right solution for your firm? Consider talking to other businesses that have implemented the system to garner their real experiences with the product. A product's reputation within its user base is the most honest research you can get.

Ultimately, the best practice management system for your firm will meet your specific needs and fit in with your firm's policies. In addition, it should create efficiencies, improve ineffective areas, and build on the existing processes that are working. Making the right decision on your PMS investment will help position your firm for future success.

