

# The Difference Is ...

## BSW Consulting Group

### Software Selection Services

Application software attempts to integrate all departments and functions into a single system that can satisfy the needs of the entire company. Implementing an "enterprise" system that can handle order processing, warehouse management, customer relation management, e-commerce, financial reporting and more is a complex task. If it works well the software will streamline operations, improve margins and customer service levels, support future growth and facilitate better management decisions with analytics.

Choosing enterprise software can be hard. Matching your business processes and approach to doing business to the functionality of various software packages is time-consuming but is critical to a successful project. Industry specific requirements must be included in this process and your research must reveal which vendors have that expertise. A poorly executed selection process can result in the failure to implement the software successfully, user resistance, unexpected customizations and cost and time overruns.

In addition to the functionality of the software, vendor fit and viability, technology factors and the cost of not just the software but the services needed to implement the software must be taken into consideration.

Since most companies conduct a selection project every 8 to 12 years it's almost impossible to keep up with developments in all of the possible software packages and vendors that you'll want to assess. That's why you'll want to consider seeking assistance from an outsider who has experience conducting selection engagements, expertise in the functionality of the software, and is objective and financially independent from all solutions.

#### **Our goal: to make a measurable difference**

BSW Software Selection service is specially designed to help businesses navigate through this complex decision using an approach that has been successfully used at your peer companies. In particular,

- *BSW consultants will leverage their extensive knowledge of software companies and applications developed over almost 20 years of publishing the Distribution Software Guide which is distributed to over 12,000 members of 50 trade associations, buying groups and education programs.*
- *We will utilize our library of standard industry practices to help you define a set of functional requirements that satisfy your business and information technology goals.*
- *We will work with your team to assemble a list of software solutions to be considered using our proprietary knowledgebase of vendor vertical markets, and installed user base.*
- *Your project team will represent different constituencies within your organization and they will actively participate in the requirements development, software demonstrations planning and analysis., We will assist your team in reaching a consensus on the best solution for your company/*
- *We will tailor our approach to meet your needs and budget — from serving as a project advisor to performing a complete selection analysis*
- *There is more to software selection than selecting software. We can help you build a stakeholder value analysis that provides the financial justification for the purchase and the detailed operational case that becomes part of your implementation plan.*
- *We don't sell software, hardware or implementation services. We don't refer business to any group of vendors. Our independence and objectivity ensures that we will lead your to reach an unbiased decision.*

At the end of a BSW Software Selection project, you'll be confident that your team has considered the right solutions, has conducted an in-depth analysis of the solutions that best fit your business, that the solution you have selected will

satisfy your critical requirements and that your project team is invested in the successful implementation of the software. What's more, the business process analysis conducted during the package selection effort will jump start the implementation planning for a more efficient implementation effort.

### **Five-step methodology**

The methodology has five main steps, which can vary in total duration from 16 – 30 weeks depending on your requirements and the assessments you've already done. The five steps are:

- *Review of your business, technology and process objectives*
- *Using our business process templates assess your current processes and develop prioritized requirements*
- *Develop a vendor long list and use vendor responses and short demos to identify the short list vendors*
- *Conduct in-depth evaluation of the short-list to reach a project team consensus on the finalists*
- *Facilitate the finalist due diligence including the negotiation of contract terms and conditions*

For the small and medium-size businesses considering an enterprise application, software selection is a business-critical initiative and can result in business growth and competitiveness.

### **For more information**

To learn more about this offering or the Brown Smith Wallace Consulting Group, please visit:

[www.software4distributors.com](http://www.software4distributors.com) or [www.bswc.com](http://www.bswc.com) or call 314-983-1208.

### **Highlights:**

- Extensive knowledge of the ERP marketplace developed over almost 20 years from publishing our software guides, articles and industry research
- We conduct our own research and develop our own business process inventory and feature questionnaires.
- A proven methodology tested and updated through use on client engagements
- Personal relationships with executives at the software vendors
- Independence and objectivity - we do not sell software or hardware, we do not offer implementation services, we create a "level playing field" for all vendors
- Flexible approach to the engagement
- Clear project reporting to ensure that the project stays on plan – for both timeline and budget

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