

Five Ways Using Old Software Can Create New Challenges

Is Your Outdated Technology Putting Your Architecture & Engineering (A&E) Firm at Risk?

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Secure, reliable software has become a necessity for running a successful Architecture & Engineering (A&E) firm. Your business relies on software for everything – from managing communication and creating drawings to tracking time and managing financials. Allowing even one of these tools to get rusty can put the health of your firm at risk.

Five Warning Signs That Your Software is Becoming a Liability:

1. You are losing revenue because billable staff are underutilized
2. Your firm is struggling to improve cash flow
3. Your information is in more than one place or stored in multiple databases
4. You are losing trust in the accuracy of data or notice information may be disappearing
5. Your team members are complaining more and more about software and administrative burden

These warning signs are your first indication that something needs to change and often times, outdated software is at the core of these struggles. Inefficient processes and solutions are putting your firm at risk and could be costly to your company's bottom line. Many firms are

reluctant to change their software because users have become comfortable with what they're using, they fear adjusting to something new, or don't want to commit the time and resources necessary to make a change. However, when it comes to the health and long-term success of your firm, comfortable doesn't cut it. Sometimes you need to push people out of their comfort zone to take your firm to the next level.

Five Risks of Outdated Technology

Identifying the right time to evaluate and implement a new software solution can be challenging, especially if your current system seems to be good enough. However, the following situations are likely indicators that it's time to review your firm's software:

1. **If your server crashes, will your provider be able to help you restore your data?**

Every piece of hardware has a shelf life and if your hardware crashes, it could lead to data corruption. To minimize damage and impact on running your business, you need a solution and a provider that is committed to protecting your data through redundant

Your business relies on software for everything from managing communication and creating drawings to tracking time and managing financials. Are your current solutions putting your firm at risk?

Hardware updates can inadvertently cause your system to stop working, leaving you dead in your tracks.

software backups or eliminate the server entirely with a cloud-based solution.

Don't wait for your data to disappear to identify you have a problem. Help alleviate the risk of data corruption by having a plan and proactively managing your critical business information with technology that is designed to meet your business challenges today and well into the future.

2. What happens when one of your top employees leaves the company?

It's never good news when talented people choose to go elsewhere, but the right software solutions can make it easy for the rest of the team to pick up where they left off.

Outdated business tools can make it difficult to transition client relationships, project responsibilities and project financials to someone else in the firm. There may also be a disconnect in project communications and drawings if project information is not stored in a central location, leading to huge challenges delivering successful projects. Silos of client and project data can lead to project overruns, schedule delays and unhappy clients.

As a leader of a professional services firm, you need to empower your teams with the tools and resources to collaborate, communicate and coordinate critical client and project details. This will streamline transitions between employees and allow teams to deliver successful projects that meet client expectations.

3. When you are leveraging software to run your business and hit a road block, is someone available to help you find a solution?

Relying on software without product support is like driving a car without insurance.

Everything seems fine until there's a problem and you find yourself in trouble for not having it. If your software is no longer supported by the provider, you won't get the answers you need to run your business. When you can no longer count on the software provider to distribute bug fixes, security improvements, or product enhancements that mitigate risk and give your firm a competitive advantage, it's time to make a change.

4. If you have to update your hardware, will your outdated software still work in the new hardware environment?

Hardware updates can inadvertently cause your system to stop working, leaving you dead in your tracks. While your teams may be power users of your solution, it's difficult to keep old hardware environments available to keep outdated software running.

Eventually, the old software will need to keep up with modern hardware and software configurations, but if a solution is no longer supported, it is nearly impossible to make it work. You don't want to find out on the last day of the month that your new laptop won't launch your financials or the new server isn't compatible with your document management solution.

5. If your software isn't meeting your business needs today, how can it keep up with the rate of change in the industry?

An old software solution may meet all of your firm's needs today, but business requirements are constantly changing as you take on new projects, new clients or new business initiatives. If an old software solution is no longer receiving updates and enhancements, it can't keep up with the changing needs of your firm and could result in your firm losing a big project you can't support. It definitely pays to be proactive.

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The Bottom Line

Leading a successful A&E firm requires the foresight to plan today for the needs and challenges your business will face tomorrow. A lack of planning can put both your business and reputation at risk. With all of this in mind, consider whether your business is being held back by its outdated software solutions.

The Deltek Difference

With the proper software solutions in place, your firm can be well-positioned to overcome industry challenges and create a competitive advantage. Deltek empowers your firm to deliver the speed of design and the breadth of services that your clients demand.

Deltek's project-based ERP solutions are tailored to the needs of the A&E industry to manage the complete project lifecycle including business development, project management, talent management, document management and financial management. Whether you're a growing firm, or a sophisticated organization, Deltek has the right solution for you.



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