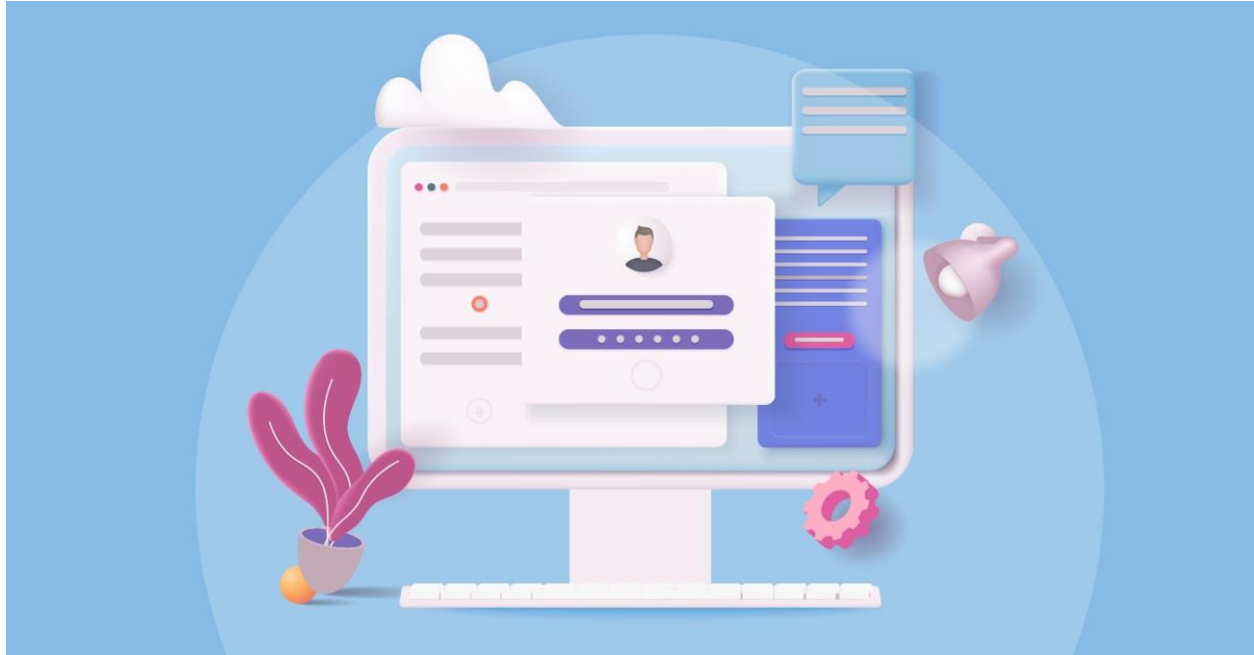


How to Make Vendor Management Software Worth It

By: [Christine Kitamura](#) on May 9 2023

4 min read



Shopping around for the perfect vendor management software can be quite an ordeal. There's a lot to consider with all the different features, configurability, and pricing that will meet your organization's needs. Plus, you can't forget about the expertise and training that will really optimize your [vendor management program](#). A software provider that has subject matter experts on staff will be vital as they assist with your daily questions and due diligence analyses.

So now that you've found the perfect software provider and have decided to invest in this valuable tool, what's next? You're probably going to want to use it to its full potential, so let's review some tips that will make your efforts worthwhile.

5 Steps to Take to Make Vendor Management Software Worth It

Simply having vendor management software in your tech stack and using it are two different concepts. If you want to make sure that your software is reaching its potential, here are five steps to take:

1. Don't let it collect dust.

It's happened to most of us at some point. There's a lot of excitement when we first buy that new software or subscription, and we have big plans for implementing it into our business

operations. But maybe we never get around to setting up the software and eventually forget about it altogether, where it begins collecting cyber dust. If you purchase vendor management software and are rarely (or never) using it, you're wasting valuable time and money. The quicker you implement the software and learn to use it, the quicker you'll reap the benefits.

2. Utilize the subject matter experts.

These days, many [vendor management software providers](#) also offer different outsourced services, such as [reviews of SOC reports](#), business continuity and disaster recovery plans, financial statements and more. Subject matter experts (SMEs) are a valuable resource that can fill in the knowledge gaps that may exist within your organization. Use these SMEs when available and seek their guidance, as they can help you improve your vendor management program.

3. Take the training when there are updates.

Ideally, your vendor management software will be regularly updated. Sometimes these software releases occur annually, semi-annually, or quarterly. The frequency of these updates isn't a huge factor, but it's important to take any training that's provided so you can stay informed on how to best use the software. This training might be a one-on-one with someone at the software provider, or even an online group training session. Make sure to track this training as an investment of time and resources.

4. Take advantage of the reporting.

Any good vendor management software should include comprehensive and robust reporting. You'll need to look around and do some research within the software to determine the [best types of reports to use](#). The data you present to senior management and the board should keep them informed of vendor risks and activities. A solid reporting process will also help satisfy examiners.

5. Utilize the workflows.

Make the software work for you as much as possible by using workflows and automating anything you can. Consider how your software can track significant dates, automatically alert you to complete certain tasks, help you create risk assessment templates, and more.



3 Questions to Assess Your Vendor Management Software

Now that you know how to make your vendor management software worthwhile, it's important to think ahead and regularly assess whether your provider is meeting your needs.

Here are some questions to consider:

- **Is the software requiring too much adaptation?** Maybe it took some time, but you've finally established a workflow that meets your needs. Unfortunately, your current software isn't flexible enough to support it. In that case, you may want to start looking for a different software solution with more flexibility.
- **Are you seeing continuous price increases for basic functions?** When first shopping around, it's not uncommon for some software providers to offer attractive pricing up front. However, you may notice substantial price increases as time goes on and you add certain functionalities that you really need. A better option would be to partner with a provider who offers transparent pricing that won't be a surprise as your organization grows.
- **Do you have any communication concerns with the provider?** When you first purchased the software, you probably had strong communication with your provider. If you've noticed that communication has diminished over time with more delays and unanswered requests, it might be a sign that this partnership isn't meant to last.

It's quite common for those in the industry to purchase vendor management software and neglect to use it to its fullest capabilities. By taking the steps outlined in this blog, you'll be well on your way to finding the benefits of your software and accomplishing your tasks more quickly. Software is ultimately built to make work easier, and all it takes is some time to learn how to use it correctly.