



The 3-Date Rule and More Secrets for Finding Your Perfect Software Match

You looked into their eyes and knew they were the one. You crossed oceans of time to find them. You knew you'd be together forever. Well, at least until the contract ran out. Wait, we're talking about picking a software vendor. What did you think we were talking about?

Selecting the right software partner is a lot like picking your perfect spouse. It's a decision that can make or break your company. Choose wisely and, as Tom Cruise puts it, they will 'complete you'. Choose poorly, as they say in Indiana Jones, and your company can self destruct.

So how do you choose wisely? We created a guide to walk you through the process from finding someone you want to date through to your "happily ever after." Let's start dating.

1. You had me at 'Hello'.

For all you romantics out there, this is not the time to fall in love at first sight. And just like dating, this isn't the time for Susan from accounting to insist you hire her nephew who does software development. Meet with him? Sure, it can't hurt. But don't get into bed together on the first date; stick to the three date rule and get to know each other first. Have a discovery call, an online or in person demo, then a more technical demo with key people in your company.

3. Make a list of "must-have" traits

Some people like Betty and some people like Veronica. Similarly, there's no point in picking a vendor with experience in the government space if you happen to work in HVAC. You need to narrow in on the "traits" that are most important to you. This could include ease of use, industry specific functionality, or customer support.

2. Play the field, you handsome devil.

Have any friends who married the first person they went out with? How did that work out? While it's successful sometimes, chances are we had to meet a variety of people to figure out what we were looking for. Be sure to compare several options and ask lots of questions. The company's past project experience is like their dating history. Find out what types of projects have they worked on in the past and who their clients are.

4. "I'm just not that into you."

Even if you're not the vendor's only customer (and, quite frankly, you better hope you're not), you want to feel like you are. Do you have to fight for their attention? Do you feel less important than their other clients? Then they're not the vendor for you. Nobody puts Baby in a corner.

5. Do they come from a good family?

First, look up the software equivalent of a dating profile –their website. Make sure the vendor offers references, and check them out. Software companies have a network of existing relationships with customers, and third parties so you should talk to other companies who have invested in the same software solution to get their feedback.

7. In it for the long haul.

You're not looking for sexy features that are appealing today but will fade over time. You are looking for a long-term commitment that offers you room to grow together. Think about where your company will be in five years. Will this vendor be able to support your company's growth? Can they handle any changes you throw their way? Remember, divorces aren't cheap, switching costs are high: both the financial costs and the time investment in migrating your data and integrating with a new platform.

9. Happily ever after.

A happy wife (or company) equals a happy life! Having an automated end-to-end software solution creates happy, engaged, loyal employees that have all the tools they need to focus on providing superior service. With the proper system that grows with you – you'll live happily ever after.

6. Avoid 'heartbreak'.

Ask about their past—and their goals for the future. The odds of 'heartbreak' will be considerably reduced if you ensure that your objectives align. For your partner to develop what your business really needs, they must understand your business, its challenges and the industry as a whole. They should know what features you need and, more importantly, why you need them.

8. Communication to a relationship is like oxygen to life.

Just like how the level of communication can make or break a relationship, it can also make or break a project's success. It's also important to manage your expectations, since sometimes your idea of what you want out of a relationship, and the reality of what your partner can provide, can be two totally different things.

If you have been searching for a new service software solution, it is likely because you have disconnected business units, disorganized data, and little insight into your business performance. Your team may be spending a large portion of their time performing necessary yet redundant tasks that can be handled much more efficiently by an integrated service software system. So now you need to find 'the one'... a solution that is a good fit, that offers you stability and room to grow together. For more information visit www.fieldboss.com.



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