

The right technology can help you scale your business and help your team function more efficiently from anywhere in the world. With the abundance of software packages available in the market, it can be difficult to sift through the noise and find what you really need. So where do you start?!

While every company and every situation is different, here are six things to think through as you look at technology solutions for your global team.

### **Stay Ahead of the Curve**

The best time to think about a technology solution is before you hit a critical point with your current systems. Look across your organization for “pressure points” — as your company grows, where is the work going to increase? Maybe you have an existing system that won’t be able to keep up with your growth, or maybe there are manual processes being done where a system needs to be introduced in order for you to scale your business.

When evaluating software, keep in mind:

- Future growth — buy a system that can keep up with your growth for years to come; transitioning systems is tough and hard on your team, so invest in your future up front to avoid changing things later.
- Integration across teams — having individual systems for each department can be inefficient and costly, look for multi-purpose software that can be useful in multiple places across your organization and/or systems that can easily integrate with each other to improve efficiencies across your entire company.

### **Get to Know the Deployment Team**

Your decision is not just which software package you choose — your success will greatly depend on the implementation team from the vendor. When looking at software packages, chances are there are several options that will give you the basic functionality you need. As you speak with potential vendors, treat those conversations like you’re interviewing a potential employee – these people are going to be an extension of your team. They need to

understand your culture and be able to roll with you through the project.

On several occasions, our final decision on choosing a vendor most definitely came down to the deployment team. Who do you want to have with you in the trenches as you are feverishly working to meet a deadline? Or when things go wrong? Sometimes the big, household-name vendor is not the right answer. Picking the most competent team that fits with your company work-style will always be the right choice.

## Reach for the Cloud

Particularly with a [global team](#), having the [flexibility to work from anywhere](#) is crucial. Choosing systems that allow you to log in via the cloud from any device is almost considered the bare minimum these days, but this becomes increasingly important when growing globally. As part of an evaluation and implementing new systems, your IT team should also make sure all your offices have the proper infrastructure and bandwidth to support your choice.

## Focus on Security

With teams accessing your information from around the world, [security](#) is critical. As part of the evaluation process, be sure your IT team understands what countries you are currently working in, and where you might be expanding to in the near future to avoid surprises. They should understand the data security laws in those countries so [all systems you purchase or build are compliant](#). These regulations vary WIDELY from country to country, so take some time to do your homework and avoid any issues later.

You should also look at functionality within the system to aid your team across time zones — things like the ability for a user to reset their own password. You don't want someone in Asia to lose a day of work because your U.S.-based system administrator is asleep and not available to reset the password.

## Minimize Your Customization

There is no magic formula on what the perfect level of customization is on a given software package. It depends on the software, and on your business. You should strive for just enough customization — enough to have it make sense for your business and workflow, but the minimal amount of customization possible to achieve that goal.

The more customization you have, the more problems you can have down the line when it's time for a new release from the software vendor. You and your team — and maybe your vendor — will have to test every one of your customizations before they can release an upgrade. That can translate to a lot of time and money. Customize to get the most efficiencies for your team, but minimize as best you can and instead find creative ways to use the system's existing functionality in the software to meet your needs.

## Listen to Your Team

The people who are best positioned to help you choose and design your new system are NOT the software vendors, or your project manager, or your management team — it's the people who are doing the work. You might come up with a fantastic idea, but based on the way work actually flows for your team, it could end up making their job HARDER and could potentially interfere with your business scaling strategy. Let the people that will ultimately use the software be your guide on requirements and customizations.

You should be in touch with the people who are going to be the end users of the system throughout your development and rollout process:

- Have a “[focus group](#)” type of discussion with each of the impacted teams as you are building your initial business requirements — dream big and get everyone's wish list, while setting the expectation that not every wish-list item will make the cut
- If it's a situation where you have wireframes, bring the teams together to give input before you go too deep into development
- Break the functionality into pieces or modules and have the teams focus on doing controlled UI testing
- If you need to phase in functionality over time, ask the team what is going to be most

useful and impactful to them - and prioritize those items

- Have interactive training sessions with them before deployment - they are your best source for figuring out the detailed logistics that will make everything work on a daily basis.

For more information regarding scaling your business globally, download our eBook [How to Scale Globally Without Sinking](#) here:

[DOWNLOAD EBOOK](#)