

What we were looking for in a Software Solution:

1. Agile
2. Control of the implementation
3. Intuitive vs. Complex
4. Prioritize public users over government

1. Agile.

Agile software allows you to get your system off the ground while prioritizing the most important parts of your day-to-day work. Maybe your major workflows get organized right now, while the parts you rarely use can wait until you have a little more time. You can experiment before you set up the entire system. Agile software gives you control of your implementation process, which will mean less disruption for you and for the people you serve.

2. You control the implementation.

You've gone through all the trouble of selecting and approving the new software, now you want to get things up and running as quickly as possible. When you rely on an outside contractor, you are tied to their deadlines.

Doing something yourself saves money.

You design the way you want. No one knows your workflow better than you do. Setting up software yourself helps maximize what the product can do for you, because you build it to your specific needs. Just as importantly, you get to *learn how to use the program as you design it*. This way, the software is not a static product for you to use by the book, but an evolving tool that will adapt to your organization's changing wants and needs.

3. Intuitive vs. Complex

Setting up software that's hard to use is kind of like putting together one of those complicated pieces of IKEA furniture without any instructions. A successful implementation process *includes learning how to use the product*, and intuitive software makes this process so much faster. Also, a complicated system means a long learning curve for department employees and applicants. When software is intuitive you understand it better, giving you more freedom to use it in the way that works best for you. It presents opportunities to use the software in ways you might have never imagined or needed when you first bought it. You don't have to invest in training your citizens. Successfully implementing a SaaS product means both government employees and the public must understand how to use it. With the advanced state of consumer software, most people expect websites and digital tools to be user-friendly. Government software that matches the intuitive design of consumer software will smooth transitions and governments will avoid the hassle of confused or upset citizens. Intuitive software will likely give public users a more positive experience with government services and improved perception of their government.

4. Prioritize public users over government

The purpose of the website is to help users find information and use government services. The design, content, organization, and accessibility should focus on the needs of public users.

- Organize by topic rather than department or any other internal structure.
- Be critical of current content. If it's not user-centric, let it go.
- Maintain a cohesive design across all pages. Individual departments should have consistent design.