

A Guide to Changing your Property Management System



**Is your
PMS
slowing
you down?**

Is your property management system slowing your business down?

Changing your property management system is a big decision, a bit like considering open heart surgery for most operators in the leisure industry. Abbreviated into PMS, it is recognized at the heart of any accommodation business' technology stack. From front office to back office, it's the center of command for all daily operations. With the right software partnership, you can run your hospitality business more efficiently and focus on delighting your guests or tenants. Unfortunately and luckily, not all PMS are the same. If your property management system is slowing you down, it becomes a strategic decision to change!



Introduction - Why this Guide?

Transplanting your current system to a completely new environment takes courage. Comparable to the open-heart surgery metaphor for your hospitality business. South African surgeon Dr. Christiaan Barnard performed the first human first heart transplant operation in 1967 and said: “Technically it is not difficult to replace a heart, my contribution was the courage to do it. For the patient, it was a simple choice: his life span was over.”

Unfortunately, this often applies to property management systems that need to be replaced. The question is not whether it should be replaced, but rather whether the organization dares to take the right decision to start the transplantation process. This guide aims to be a valuable tool in this decision.

The question is not whether property management systems should be replaced, but rather whether the organization dares to take the right decision to start the transplantation process.

Courage is key to change your PMS

I. Complex and time-consuming execution

It is complex to oversee all the consequences of this choice to change your PMS, takes a lot of time and it is a continuous process that is never finished. Therefore, we made this guide so you can focus on your business strategy and not your technology strategy.

II. Once in a life-time experience

Purchasing a new PMS is mostly (and hopefully) a 'once in a life-time experience' for most managers. When you have a lot of experience, we might assume those experiences were mainly negative. Therefore, you can assume you will make a commitment for at least 5 to 10 years with your supplier: Commitment based on trust.

III. Trust as a fundament for your decision making

Honestly, you barely know your new technology partner, so how are you going to judge about that trust? Trust in a long-term partnership is essential in

changing your PMS and builds up over time. Assessing the vendors solely based on the content, features and capabilities of the PMS is a difficult process. The more extensive your RFP is, the more difficult it will be to assess. On the other hand, if you ask too little it also gives an unsatisfactory feeling. In the end, everything falls back to the final rule, is there enough confidence?

IV. Strategic business decision

Ultimately, a property management system supports the strategic ambitions of an organization. That is why choosing a (new) system is a strategic decision and not an IT technical decision. The decision, therefore, falls at the C-level, so the highest level of an organization.

STEP 1

Assemble a team to make the PMS partner selection

Who is going to make the final decision? Who has a say in the procedure?

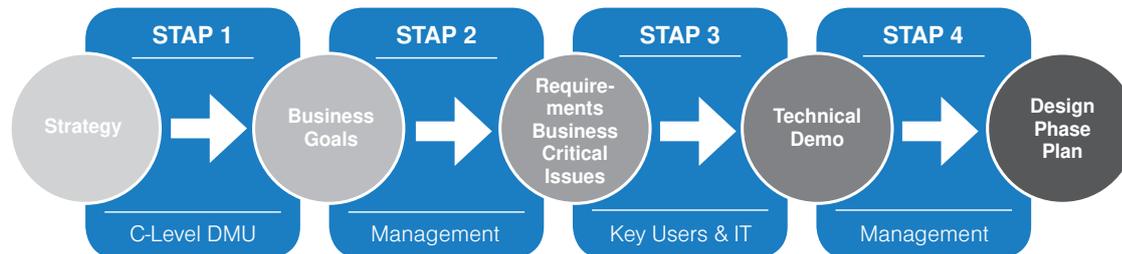
It is strongly advised to involve the business, meaning not only C-level and IT. In addition to IT architecture and technical specifications, the goals that in the end the business will benefit from the PMS. Due to the dynamics

of the daily operations, this is where the most beautiful and inventive things can arise. The business drives good Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions.

Organise an inspirational demo based on best practices

After assembling the team, organize an inspirational demo, where a case is demonstrated by the PMS supplier. This allows you to get a first impression of the software and you are able to see a workable environment that illustrates your needs.

Visualization of the participants per step in the PMS selection process



STEP 2

Define your business goals

I. What are the main reasons that you need a PMS?

Use your business-critical processes as a starting point. Get insights and alignment in the selection team about the limitations that are encountered today. Take the courage to throw up the question: What is stopping us to grow faster or to be more efficient?

It is also important to assess what can be potential bottlenecks to grow in the future compared to right now. These business-critical processes can be decisive to limit the growth of the company. Determine what your business goals are and how the software will contribute to this.

II. Define clear business goals linked to your strategy

Clearly define which bottlenecks are expected to be tackled with the software and determine which capabilities should be present in the software. Also, clearly define what should be solved with the new software in any case. Finally, determine by what date you expect the software to go live and you will be working on reaching your desired result.

You can use the following questions to define the business goals with the selection team:

- i. Which processes need to be supported with the software?
- ii. What are the key success factors you want to achieve? What is your desired result?
- iii. When do you achieve this desired key success?

STEP 3

Create your requirements document based on your business goals

Requirements are the things that connect your reasons for needing software to your end business goals. Clearly define your business processes to show your 'need to have'. These are decisive for the right choice of the software.

Note: be aware that the 'nice to have' factors will not contribute to your business goals and will cost you extra time and money.

Since you have to rely on your ERP / PMS software for at least 5 to 10 years to support your business goals. That is why it is essential to properly map out future expectations. What is the strategy like? What strategic goals have been set for the future? What expectations are there with regard to future IT implementation?

Shortlisting vendors

Your future partner should understand your specific business and be able to uncover requirements you have not listed yourself. Therefore it is critical that your SaaS solutions focusses on your business model.

Which one?

Choose a PMS that transforms your hospitality data and operational excellence into value

- **Trusted technology partner** that has a proven track record by serving the leaders of your industry to support your strategic goals.
- **Modern day property management system** continuously developed with hospitality sector expertise and knowledge of the accommodation rental sector businesses.
- **Open and connected software** that enables easy cloud-based API integrations.
- **A single source of the truth** in the centre of your IT landscape.
- **Stability and scalability in data processing** with an efficient IT infrastructure.

STEP 4

Organize technical demo's based on the business-critical processes

Subsequently, based on your specific business-critical processes you are able to organize the next more in-depth and technical demo(s) to be shown by the suppliers. During the demonstrations keep the following question in mind:

How does the software support in possible solutions for these business-critical processes?

Next demo's should be based on your situation with your processes, have key users involved and let them point out the workflow adaptability. Most importantly, the focus on the software's resolving power. To what extent will the software support your business strategy now and in the future?

Create a clear Design Phase plan based on your business critical processes

In the design phase, the emphasis is on existing business processes by mapping the working method of your company. This will lead to a clear picture of your must-haves and nice-to-have items in the software. Make sure that the nice-to-haves don't predominate and prevent that the wrong accents are set. The emphasis should always be on the critical business processes. The software is leading in this and can therefore imply an adjustment of the working method or even the business process of your company.

A good setup and well executed design phase shortens the implementation time. It also prevents unpleasant surprises during implementation.

Annotation during these four steps

References

Based on your business critical processes and business goals, you can ask for a list of references who are using similar solutions of the vendor. It is also important to assess the extent to which business goals will be achieved. The principle of enriched SaaS solutions is the experience in best practices of the leisure industry. Extensive reference research can give you the confidence and the confirmation you are looking for.

Pricing

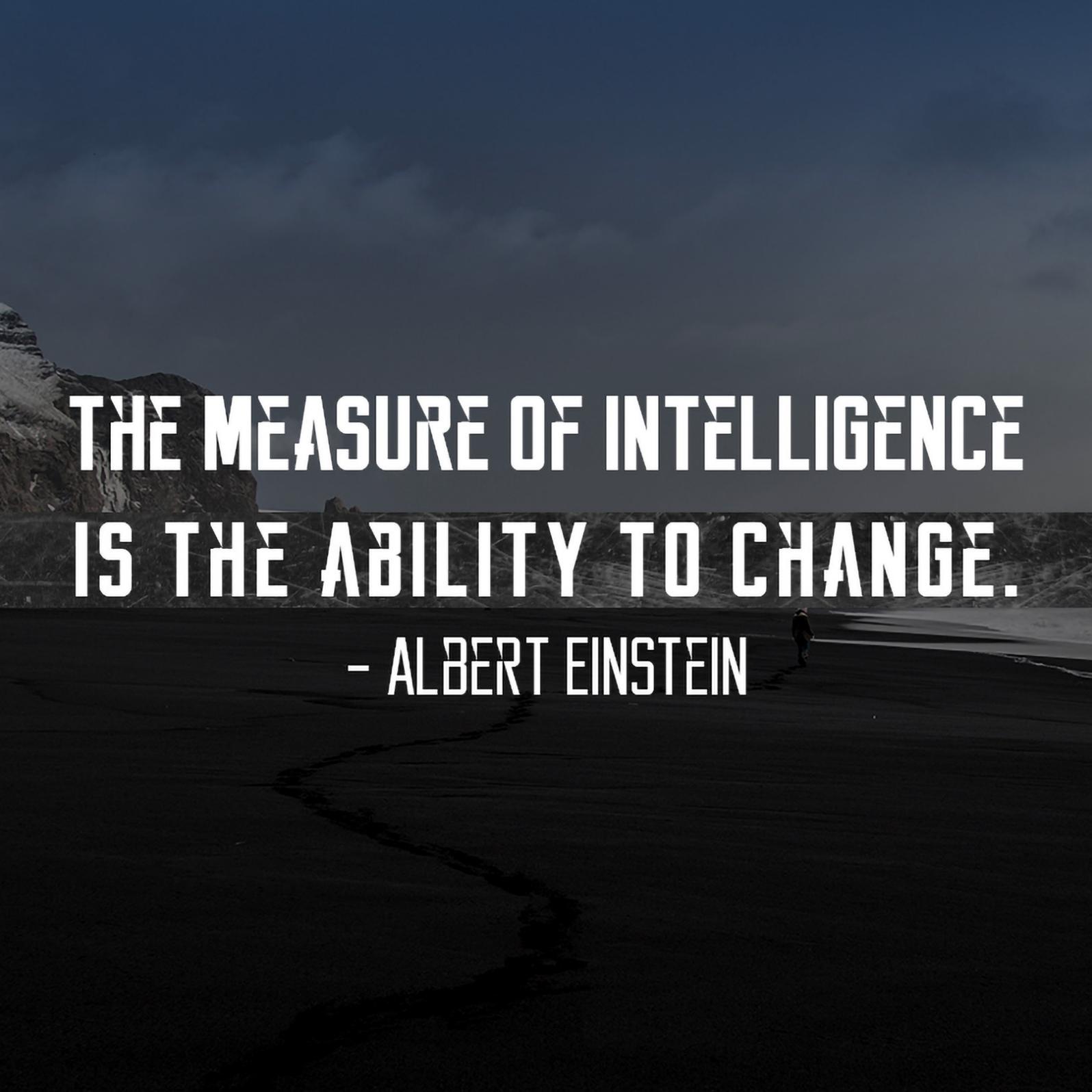
Although pricing is of course an important factor, the business goals are the decisive factor, not the price of the PMS. Pricing is subjective, when changing your PMS. At an early stage ask for an indicative price range, during the 4 steps you can ask yourself the the following questions:

- 1) What is the value of your business goals and to what extent is your PMS critical to achieve this?
- 2) What is the total-cost-of-ownership is, not just the SaaS fee of your PMS?
- 3) Do you have any idea on the future cost of your IT landscape (5-10 years)?

Change Management

Change is required to move forward but some people in the organization will be reluctant to change. Therefore the success of changing PMS largely depends on good change management. This starts with a sense of urgency; Why do we need to change our PMS? Subsequently, a strong coalition with C-level included, has to formulate a vision towards the change; Where do we want to end up? How does this relate to the strategic decision to change your PMS?

When your vision is clear and publicly backed by the strong coalition, you are more than ready to start a design phase. On a change management level this means communicating your vision till most of the people in the organization believe in that vision.

A dark, moody landscape featuring a person walking on a beach. The scene is dimly lit, with a dark sky and a dark sea. The person is a small figure in the distance, walking away from the viewer. The overall tone is somber and contemplative.

**THE MEASURE OF INTELLIGENCE
IS THE ABILITY TO CHANGE.**

- ALBERT EINSTEIN

Time to change

Invest in a valuable long-term relationship

The 20+ years of experience we have with our customers has strengthened us in the belief that a valuable long-term relationship with our customers is the only way to mutual success. Therefore, we will not make any concessions out of respect for our customers and certainly also out of respect for ourselves. Maxxton will support your strategic business goals and ensure that your IT system will never be the inhibiting factor.

Maxxton Software

Maxxton Software is the premier cloud property management system for the broader hospitality and accommodation rental sector. Since its formation in 1998, Maxxton has grown into a multinational organization with clients spread across the globe in the vacation rental, serviced apartment and holiday park & campsite businesses. Maxxton's software-as-a-service solutions are built to simplify the reservation processes for large vacation & short-term rental managers.



For more information:

Kousteensedijk 5
4331 JE Middelburg

-  +31 118 67 10 10
-  +33 9 70 01 97 01
-  www.maxxton.com
-  info@maxxton.com