



| Silverbear Membership

Why Your Membership Software Must Integrate With Your Other Business Systems

Introduction

Membership organisations that rely on the acquisition and retention of members are now turning to technology to help manage their members and provide a higher quality service. Membership software can provide huge cost and time savings, but it is vital that it can be integrated into back end systems such as the finance system, CRM and the corporate website. This article looks at the benefits of membership software and the specific benefits provided when it is integrated into key back end office applications.

The Shape of a Membership Solution

Many membership organisations are taking advantage of the benefits of technology by employing the use of membership software. Membership software enables member managers to organise, oversee and control their membership base with improved levels of efficiency and visibility. It can help to boost member enrolments and help reduce the number of members that fail to renew their subscription. More often than not it pays for itself through the increase in membership acquisition and retention.

Membership software comes in all shapes and sizes, but for organisations that rely on their membership base, it's important that they have a solution that caters for all their needs. Businesses such as associations, charities, schools and universities, trade unions, institutions and societies all rely on the attainment and renewal of their members, and so must provide value to their membership base. This can be achieved through the use of membership software.

A well rounded membership solution should include:

Membership Management: Manage membership subscriptions and renewals, whilst adding and processing new members with ease. Capture member data including activities undertaken, training course attendance and accreditations, event attendance etc.

Membership Communication: Create close and personalised relationships with members by communicating with them via a variety of integrated platforms – email, social media, website etc.

Membership Events: Create and manage successful events with an integrated event management module. Send targeted e-invites, allow members to register on the corporate website, handle invoicing and payments automatically, and organise all event resources from one central solution.

Flexible Invoicing and Finance Management: Integrate with the back end finance solution enabling the organisation to fully automate subscriptions, the sending of renewal invoices, and deactivation of subscriptions following non-payment. Membership software should also support multi-currency and integration with major financial systems.

Membership Analysis and Reporting: A comprehensive and extendable suite of management and business intelligence reports providing all the information required to review past performance and plan for the future.

So we can see that membership software has the ability to manage a wide range of member activities. Giving membership managers access to these tools gives them an increased level of control and visibility and can also free their time up to spend on more strategic tasks. Providing a more efficient service to members also helps to increase membership satisfaction.

The key benefits can be summed up into main points:

1. Increase membership acquisition and retention
2. Increase financial control over membership subscriptions and activities
3. Engage with members in a more appropriate way
4. Communicate in a more efficient way
5. Manage events more efficiently
6. Provide more value to members
7. Improve membership loyalty
8. Cut costs
9. Increase control and visibility
10. Gather membership intelligence

Many of these benefits are reliant on the ability to integrate the membership software with back end office systems and the corporate website.

Key Business System Integration

Linking the corporate website with the membership software improves the level of service to both the organisation and to members. It means that members can interact with the member organisation without knowing they're being processed via an external solution – this reduces confusion and increases the level of trust the member has. All corporate branding and messaging will remain the same without any intervention from the IT department.

Membership software should also be able to integrate seamlessly with finance solutions. One of the key benefits is the ability to take payments online via the integration with the website. This might be for new member subscriptions, membership renewals or the payment for events or member merchandise. Taking the member manager out of this equation can save the organisation huge amounts of time and money. Linking the membership solution to the finance solution means that any member transactions are recorded in the finance system automatically. This can trigger pre-set workflows, such as the creation and delivery of invoices, receipts or other financial documents or communication. The finance system can also be updated to show payments have been made – meaning that a full, up to date view of the member record can be made at any time. This sophisticated level of integration not only

saves time and money, but is a much more efficient way of handling financial transactions and reduces the likelihood of errors – giving the member an improved level of service.

Membership solutions can also be integrated in the same way to the corporate CRM (customer relationship management) solution. This means that new members will have records created automatically and any member activities or changes will be logged automatically. This is a huge time saver for the member manager, and means that anyone in the business can access a member record at any time, knowing that it is 100% up to date. Membership software solutions often give members their own member profile; so they can actively manage their own record, ensuring all contact details, membership level and preferences are correct at all times.

Background

Silverbear [Membership Management software](#) is part of the portfolio of solutions from Silverbear Ltd. Employed within societies and membership organisations throughout the UK, it helps organisations to build, define, examine, inform and communicate with existing and potential members.

Silverbear is helping membership organisations on a daily basis. For more information on Silverbear Membership Management solution and the benefits of membership management software, visit their website: <http://www.silverbearmembership.co.uk>, email membership@silverbear.co.uk or call 01483 301 333.