

Competing software

	https://www.scheduleit.com
Software functionalities	Scheduleit is a software that is available on web platforms as a mobile application which services to big businesses such as IBM, BBS News, Microsoft, NHS and many more. The software allows you to facilitate scheduling trainers, rooms and external contractors or tutors; it allows for integration for commonly used software such as Gmail, Google Calendar, Microsoft Office etc... which allows trainers to easily link up their schedules. Since this is a service used by massive companies most of its defects have been phased out and only what works remain as companies such as IBM and Microsoft would have stopped using this software if it had any major flaw or defect.
Advantages	<p>Given that over 5,000 companies already use this software, we can assume the effectiveness of this software, we can take features and functions that they've incorporated and add them onto our own software when designing it for scheduling trainers and notifying them when a course is booked for them.</p> <p>The software already has a feature which automatically invites the attendees of a given schedule, it allows for extension into alerting the trainers when they are scheduled for a course as per the requirement.</p> <p>Unlimited event history and an audit trail is provided so changes to a scheduled booking for a course can be tracked if necessary, i.e. if the room is changed, if the booking itself has been moved to a different time and if another trainer has been set to a particular course. All of these things can be tracked in case of any employees claiming they weren't informed of any such changed.</p>
Disadvantages	Unlike most other services Scheduleit doesn't provide additional features or functions according to the amount a business pays, only the number of users that can be involved in a schedule so it is favourable towards smaller businesses due to a flat cost for all available features. However, in the scenario of us having to develop a software for a global IT consultancy provider the scalable cost wouldn't benefit a bigger business as the same number of features and functions are provided to all customers of this service regardless of how much money the business needs to pay.

	https://bookinghound.com
Software functionalities	bookinghound is a software which allows you to manage bookings and events through the use of an "entry"; an entry contains one or more events and general information about the events i.e. dates & times, tickets & cost and a booking form. The booking form allows you to customize the number of occurrences, duration, repetition and length of a given event.
Advantages	The software sends out confirmation and reminder notifications, the notifications include relevant information which is customisable by the user. The business can make a waiting list available for any of the training courses to ensure all customers that want a training course can at least book one for the future ensuring you don't lose a potential customer due to lack of availability.

	<p>The way the software is setup you can easily make entries for training courses that have multiple sessions required before a trainee is considered qualified. As we are facilitating a global IT consultancy company it would be extremely inefficient to set separate training courses for the same topic this software would give you an alternative way of managing this problem. For example:</p> <table><tr><th colspan="4">February, 2019</th></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>Mon</td><td>6pm - 7pm</td><td>Object Oriented programming for beginners</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th colspan="4">March</th></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Mon</td><td>6pm - 7pm</td><td>Object Oriented programming for beginners</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>Mon</td><td>6pm - 7pm</td><td>Object Oriented programming for beginners</td></tr><tr><td>18</td><td>Mon</td><td>6pm - 7pm</td><td>Object Oriented programming for beginners</td></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>Mon</td><td>6pm - 7pm</td><td>Object Oriented programming for beginners</td></tr></table> <p>As shown above you can simply create training courses for a topic and pick the number of times it has to be available.</p>	February, 2019				25	Mon	6pm - 7pm	Object Oriented programming for beginners	March				4	Mon	6pm - 7pm	Object Oriented programming for beginners	11	Mon	6pm - 7pm	Object Oriented programming for beginners	18	Mon	6pm - 7pm	Object Oriented programming for beginners	25	Mon	6pm - 7pm	Object Oriented programming for beginners
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Disadvantages	<p>This website has a subscription model which offers up more features for additional costs for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the waiting list feature is not available for the first two tiers of subscriptionyou cannot get class passes for certain coursesusers also have to be to a certain tier of subscriber or they cannot change their booking date or pay an outstanding balance.The business cannot track analytics and graphs of the scheduling reports unless they are the highest tier of subscriber <table><tr><th>Select Plan</th><th>Free Credit/Debit Card bookings only</th><th>From £250 *variable monthly transaction charge</th><th>From £3500 *variable monthly transaction charge</th></tr><tr><td>Customer portal option to allow your customers to change their booking date or pay an outstanding balance</td><td>✗</td><td>✗</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Memberships Feature Allowing Your Customers to Take Advantage of Member Only Discounts or Events (Click For Video)</td><td>✗</td><td>✗</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Manage your Resources</td><td>✗</td><td>✗</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Extended business, pricing & sales restriction Rules</td><td>✗</td><td>✗</td><td>✓</td></tr></table> <p>The UI itself on the website feels outdated which could be a problem for older trainees or trainees who are unfamiliar with unintuitive technology. On its website it advertises its “mobile & table friendly” features but when you load up www.bookinghound.com on your mobile device the UI is not simple to use. For example the navigation button on entry to the website is on the top left hand side of the webpage but as you are scrolling down it moves to the top right and when you get to the bottom of the page it disappears completely. A better UI with a stable position for one of the most important things in a website, the navigation, would make the software much better and usable for all users.</p>	Select Plan	Free Credit/Debit Card bookings only	From £250 *variable monthly transaction charge	From £3500 *variable monthly transaction charge	Customer portal option to allow your customers to change their booking date or pay an outstanding balance	✗	✗	✓	Memberships Feature Allowing Your Customers to Take Advantage of Member Only Discounts or Events (Click For Video)	✗	✗	✓	Manage your Resources	✗	✗	✓	Extended business, pricing & sales restriction Rules	✗	✗	✓								
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In conclusion, practice features such as keeping the audit trail and event history of each happening keeps everyone involved in the processes accountable, trainers and users can use it to claim missed training sessions if they are in the right which would encourage user and employee empowerment as they have a system in place to provide evidence if required. The approach used by Scheduleit is more effective as it allows access to any and all features at a base price rather than providing more and more features depending on the money spent on the software, this will drive up potential customers. Additionally ease of use should be implemented in terms of creating multiple bookings for the same course or making weekly training courses as shown with bookinghound.com as users in a global IT consultancy company should have time efficient ways to complete multiple bookings for the same course or trainer.

Sources:

<https://bookwhen.com/>

<https://www.scheduleit.com/trainingscheduling.htm>

https://docs.oracle.com/cd/B28359_01/server.111/b28310/schedover001.htm#ADMIN12355