

technology discussed. Any vendor can claim to provide solutions with virtually unlimited functionality—either because the vendor doesn't understand the RFP or because it wants the business so badly that it will agree to anything. For this reason, the first two items to be assessed in the proposal should be the vendor and developer. Consider the information on the products and services promised only if the vendors and developers fulfill established criteria.

As illustrated in Exhibit 6.4, assessment of developers and vendors involves consideration of unique features and many common elements. For example, in assessing a developer, a key issue is provision for future products. Some developers have a single product that hasn't been upgraded in years, except for slight modifications to make it compatible with operating system upgrades. Other developers have a vision for future feature sets, integration with other systems, and increased functionality. These forward-looking developers are generally more likely to be around in three to five years than developers content to milk current offerings.

EXHIBIT 6.4

