Unit 4 New Business FAQ Document

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**What is software as a service?**

Software as a service is a growing trend in the software industry. A few years ago, it used to be that software would be purchased at a flat rate with one payment. Popular applications like Microsoft Word and Photoshop would use this method, and then make new iterations of the software each year to incentivize an upgrade from the user. These days software is subscription-based. Each financial interval from one month to one year the user will pay for the ability to use the software in question for the paid interval. This means that instead of having access to the software for as long as they use it, they will only be able to use it for however long they paid for it. This is much more expensive to the user in the long run, but also means they will be able to enjoy the full suite of improvements as the development team implements them, instead of the user having to pay for an upgrade. The extra expense to the user also provides a benefit to the developers, as they will be making much more money on the software as they would from the previous single-payment method. It is estimated that in 2020 alone, Software as a service will have made $105 billion (Kidd, 2020).

**What is productivity software?**

Productivity software is a series of incredibly popular applications geared to help individuals and businesses be more organized and productive. One common form of this is different Word Processing applications. Word Processing applications help the user write up any document they need as well as help them edit, save, and print it. The most common application in this category would be Microsoft Word, though there are many other applications out there such as Google Docs and Apple Pages. Spreadsheets are also essential for a productivity suite. Applications like Excel help users process data into tables and provide dynamic solutions to edit that data on the fly. PowerPoint and Google Slides are popular productivity tools for presentations. They help users put together and animate slides to provide a quality presentation. Databases have quite a few options to follow through with depending on what kind of data users need to store. If you need tables, they could store all that with Microsoft Excel. If they are looking to just store characters, Microsoft WordPad or even Microsoft Office could help them immensely. Pairing them with cloud solutions like OneDrive or Google Drive could increase portability and accessibility. Finally, for notetaking, solutions are plenty. Particularly on Mobile devices, you could use OneNote to quickly take notes on pictures or blank documents. Squid is another app designed around Stylus capabilities to give users a pencil-on-paper experience. With all the productivity software available today, there are plenty of options to fit any user’s preference.

**What is personal information management?**

Personal Information Management systems are an essential tool for the new world of data collection. In the modern technological e-commerce era, consumers are less valuable than the data they create. This data could be anything from web search history, to even just location statistics from their GPS. This can be an extremely valuable industry to deal in and according to WIRED, “American companies alone are estimated to have spent over $19 billion in 2018” (Matsakis, 2019). That is where Personal Information Management systems come in. PIM’s can help users control what data is on the market and even block third parties from collecting that data in the first place, transferring the power back into the consumers' hands.

**What types of software are helpful for small businesses?**

This can be a little difficult of a question to solve. Many small businesses have many different needs from one another. Overall, though, many essential types of software could be useful for a wide variety of companies. Firstly, communication software is key to helping employees work well together. Due to the smaller scale of these businesses, it could be helpful for face-to-face applications like Zoom or Skype. For larger businesses, they may need to look into solutions like Microsoft Teams for text-based communication. Both small and large businesses could look into Cloud storage options like Google Drive or OneDrive to keep their information accessible and secure. Both could as well use popular email applications like Outlook or Gmail.

**What do I need to know about software licenses?**

There are thousands of pages of literature available on licenses, so it would be nearly impossible to provide an in-depth summary of what exactly there is about every license out there. Importantly, you need to pay attention to the agreements you sign when installing and using different applications. Failure to use the software correctly doesn’t just mean an inability to use the software in question; you could be facing monetary penalties as well. Be sure to adhere to what you agree to in the EULA.

**How do I determine which versions of software will work on the computers in our business?**

Finding the answers to this question could be much less complicated than expected. The software website would likely have information available as to what machines it will work with. When choosing installers, make sure it matches your operating systems and bitrates. If you know that you have a windows 10 system, make sure you know if it’s x86, or x32 depending on your processor. If you don’t know this information, you could always use one of the computers in your business as a benchmark for the rest of your systems. Make sure to test this device thoroughly.

# **References**

Kidd, C. (2020, August 31). *SaaS in 2021: Growth Trends & Statistics*. Retrieved from bmc blogs: https://www.bmc.com/blogs/saas-growth-trends/#:~:text=Wildly%20popular%20SaaS%20solutions%20aren,a%20year%20ago%2C%20in%202019.

Matsakis, L. (2019, February 15). *The WIRED Guide to Your Personal Data (and Who Is Using It)*. Retrieved from WIRED: https://www.wired.com/story/wired-guide-personal-data-collection/