



# CHOOSING A CMMS VENDOR FOR

**SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS**



# WELCOME

For small business owners, managing maintenance operations efficiently can make or break operational success. A Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) streamlines asset tracking, work order management, and preventive maintenance scheduling, saving time and reducing costs. However, choosing the right CMMS vendor can feel overwhelming with the myriad of options available. This article outlines key considerations to help small business owners select a CMMS vendor that aligns with their needs, budget, and growth goals.

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01

## UNDERSTAND YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS

Before exploring vendors, assess your business's specific maintenance requirements. Consider the following:



### Asset Types

Do you manage machinery, vehicles, or facilities?  
Ensure the **CMMS** supports your asset categories.



### Team Size

A **small team** needs a system that's intuitive and doesn't require extensive training.



### Maintenance Goals

Are you focused on preventive maintenance, downtime reduction, or **inventory management**?



### Budget Constraints

Small businesses often operate on tight budgets, so prioritize **cost-effective** solutions.

Create a checklist of must-have features, such as work order tracking, mobile access, or reporting tools, to guide your vendor evaluation.

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## PRIORITIZE EASE OF USE

For small businesses with limited staff, a user-friendly CMMS is critical. Look for:



### Intuitive Interface

- The system should be easy to navigate for non-technical users.



### Quick Setup

- Avoid complex implementations that require dedicated IT resources.



### Mobile Accessibility

- A mobile app or responsive web interface allows technicians to update tasks on the go.

**Request a free trial or demo to test the system's usability. Ensure it minimizes the learning curve for your team.**

**03****EVALUATE SCALABILITY**

As your business grows, your CMMS should adapt. Consider:

**Flexible Pricing Plans**

Look for vendors offering tiered plans that scale with your needs.

**Feature Expandability**

Can the system add modules (e.g., inventory management) as your operations expand?

**User Limits**

Ensure the vendor supports adding users without significant cost increases.

**A scalable CMMS prevents the need for costly system migrations in the future.**

**04****CHECK INTEGRATION CAPABILITIES**

Your CMMS should integrate with existing tools, such as accounting software (e.g., QuickBooks) or ERP systems. Integration reduces manual data entry and improves efficiency. Ask vendors:

- **WHAT INTEGRATIONS ARE SUPPORTED?**
- **IS THERE AN API FOR CUSTOM INTEGRATIONS?**
- **ARE THERE ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR INTEGRATION?**

For small businesses, seamless integration with tools like Xero or Google Workspace can streamline workflows.



The image displays three iPhone screens illustrating the SmartSpanner mobile application:

- Top Screen (Work Orders):** Shows a list of work orders. One item is highlighted: "Room Inspection" due to "NO DATE, PATRICK CHESTER". Below it, another "PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE" task is listed.
- Middle Left Screen (Procedures):** Displays a detailed procedure titled "Monthly Forklift Inspection". It includes a list of 15 tasks such as "Check for general signs of damage and impact" and "Check lights", along with a "DESCRIPTION" section and a "CLOSE" button.
- Middle Right Screen (Checklist):** Shows a checklist for "change light fitting" due to "NO DATE, TECHNICIAN DEMO". It lists steps like "switch off power", "change lamp", and "switch on power", each with "Yes", "No", and "N/A" buttons. There are also "Add Note" and "Add Media" options.

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## ASSESS CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Reliable customer support is vital, especially for small businesses without in-house IT teams. Evaluate:



### Support Channels

- Look for vendors offering email, phone, or live chat support.



### Response Time

- Check reviews or ask for service-level agreements (SLAs) to ensure timely assistance.



### Training Resources

- Does the vendor provide tutorials, webinars, or documentation?

**Prioritize vendors with strong reputations for responsive, small-business-friendly support.**

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## COMPARE PRICING AND VALUE

CMMS pricing varies widely, from subscription-based models to one-time licenses. For small businesses:



### Look for Transparent Pricing

- Avoid vendors with hidden fees for setup, training, or updates.



### Consider Cloud-Based Solutions

- These typically have lower upfront costs and include automatic updates.



### Evaluate ROI

- A slightly more expensive system with robust features may save money by reducing downtime or improving efficiency.

**Request quotes from multiple vendors and compare features against costs. For example, vendors like UpKeep or Maintenance Care offer plans starting at \$20–\$50 per user per month, tailored for small businesses.**

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## RESEARCH VENDOR REPUTATION

Investigate the vendor's track record to ensure reliability. Steps to take:



### Read Reviews

- Check platforms like Capterra or G2 for user feedback, focusing on small business reviews.



### Ask for References

- Contact current users to learn about their experiences.



### Check Vendor Stability

- Ensure the vendor has a solid financial and operational history to avoid disruptions.

**A vendor with a strong reputation among small businesses is more likely to deliver consistent service.**

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## CONSIDER DATA SECURITY

Data security is critical, even for small businesses. Ensure the CMMS vendor:



### Uses Encryption

- Data should be encrypted both in transit and at rest.



### Offers Backups

- Regular data backups protect against loss.



### Complies with Regulations

- Verify compliance with standards like GDPR or HIPAA if applicable.

**Cloud-based CMMS solutions often have robust security measures, but confirm specifics with the vendor.**



Two smartphones are shown from a slightly elevated angle, displaying the SmartSpanner mobile application. The phone on the left shows the 'WORK ORDERS' screen, listing several tasks categorized under 'PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE' and 'FAULT'. The tasks include 'Room Inspection' (due: NO DATE, Patrick Chester), 'change light fitting' (due: NO DATE, Technician Demo), 'Service' (due: NO DATE, Patrick Chester), and 'fit a new lamp' (due: NO DATE, No Assignee). The phone on the right shows a detailed 'CHECKLIST' for a task titled 'change a lamp' assigned to Room 302 by Patrick Chester on 03/01/2024 at 22:06. The checklist includes items like 'switch off power' (Yes/No/N/A), 'change lamp' (Yes/No/N/A), 'switch on power' (Pass/Fail/N/A), and 'take a photo' (Add Note/Add Media). A large green circular icon with a white thumbs-up symbol is positioned above the phones, indicating a positive outcome or approval.

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## TEST VENDOR RESPONSIVENESS

Engage with vendors early to gauge their commitment. Ask questions about features, pricing, or implementation timelines and note:



### Response Speed

- Quick replies indicate reliable communication.



### Knowledgeability

- Sales reps should understand small business challenges.



### Flexibility

- Are they willing to customize plans or offer discounts for small businesses?

**A responsive vendor is more likely to provide ongoing support post-purchase.**

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## START SMALL WITH A TRIAL

Most CMMS vendors offer free trials or money-back guarantees. Use this period to:



### Test Core Features

- Focus on work orders, asset tracking, and reporting.



### Involve Your Team

- Get feedback from employees who will use the system daily.



### Assess Performance

- Ensure the system runs smoothly without glitches.

**A trial helps confirm the CMMS meets your needs before committing financially.**



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ONLINE MAINTENANCE TOOL

## CONCLUSION

Choosing the right CMMS vendor for your small business requires balancing functionality, ease of use, and cost. By understanding your needs, prioritizing usability, and evaluating scalability, integration, and support, you can select a system that boosts efficiency and supports growth. Take advantage of trials and demos to make an informed decision, ensuring your CMMS becomes a valuable partner in your business's success.