SOFTWARE SELECTION / ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

Which software would work on our busiest day?

The management decision

Ask the people who dispatch orders and issue invoices to nominate a task the new system must complete. Use that task to screen the shortlist before debating optional features.

A product demonstration can look impressive without showing how the software handles a split delivery, an exception or a late correction. Those gaps can lead to manual work on every order. This service helps operations, procurement and IT compare candidates on the same tasks and make a purchase recommendation they can explain.

Worked example

A buyer tests 12 tasks, including three the product must perform. A candidate passes ten tasks. If one of its two failures prevents the team dispatching or invoicing, the headline score hides a material barrier to purchase.

Example figure	What it represents
12	Tasks tested
3	Essential tasks
10/12	Tasks passed

What changes the answer

If all three essential tasks pass and two optional ones need a workaround, ask staff to demonstrate it. Multiply the extra time by expected order volume and include it in the comparison.

Software selection

What to commission

Compare shortlisted products against one purchase or fulfilment journey, including a mandatory exception such as a split return.

We agree which tasks are essential and which leave room for compromise. We record what each vendor demonstrates, where a workaround would be needed and which claims the vendor still needs to prove. This gives stakeholders common grounds for comparing price and operating effort.

How to judge the result

Each supplier has a recorded result for every mandatory task and a costed or timed workaround for any material gap.

Compare licence and change costs with the annual effort of each workaround. A cheap licence can become the more expensive choice if staff must intervene on every order.

Decision worksheet

Project detail	Starting point for your team
Decision owner	Procurement lead and operations sponsor. Name the person who will approve the next step.
Records to gather	Your shortlist, essential user tasks and any spending or system constraints.
Agreed output	A scored comparison, a recommendation and questions for vendor demonstrations.
Decision date	Record the deadline, any unresolved assumption and who will confirm it.

Discuss this case

Tell us which system or process you are replacing, how soon you need a shortlist or decision, and one task the new software must handle. If demos are already booked, mention the dates so we can discuss what evidence to request.

Email info@oxetc.co.uk and mention IT-02. All figures in the worked example are illustrative.