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Mary Girsch-Bock • Oct. 10, 2011

As with most organizations, nonprofits vary in size and scope, and their software needs vary, as well. As an accounting professional, you know that the software needs of the local animal shelter will vary widely than the needs of the United Way. While this may be a drastic comparison, it really highlights the wide range of organizations

served by nonprofit software vendors. Entry-level, off-the-shelf systems are intended

- Does the organization have one primary location or are there numerous locations that require access to the system?

Having answers to these questions will go a long way toward finding the correct nonprofit software for your client. For instance, if an organization is not primarily funded by grants, a grants management module will be irrelevant, but a fundraising module may be a necessity.

This review breaks down some of the most important aspects of nonprofit software systems:

Basic System Functions covers installation, system navigation, available product modules, add-ons and scalability. This is particularly important to growing organizations.

Core Nonprofit/Fund Accounting Capabilities includes standard nonprofit-specific functions such as account structure, multiple budget options, grant and donor management, fund-balancing, and e-features such as remote access, EFT payment and email invoicing.

Management Features highlights areas such as the availability of dashboards, budget options and "what if" scenarios that allow users to look at several different options when preparing or revising budgets. Spending control functions, collections and fundraising capability are also noted.

Financial Statements & Reporting looks at report customization options, the ability to create new reports and process nonprofit-specific reports such as FASB/GASB. This section also covers grant and endowment reporting capability and report exporting options.

Integration & Import/Export examines how well the product integrates with other

Nonprofit

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