

Buyers



Guide



Welcome

What is PSA software?

—— PSA software is a centralized platform designed for professional services and consultancies. It is ideal for businesses with 10 to 500 employees who work billable hours on client projects. This software provides all the necessary features to automate your company and track your finances in a way that suits a services business.

—— Stop struggling with software that's not fit for service businesses. With PSA software, you can access insights such as resource utilization, project margins, the status of client invoices, and all the details required to help you save time and increase your profit margins.

—— PSA software serves as a single source of truth for project performance, ensuring data accuracy and trust. Choosing a software option with an intuitive interface, easy collaboration tools, and seamless integrations with existing systems will reduce manual tasks and enhance your team's productivity. This guide will help you do just that.

ERP systems or PSA software - which is right for my business?

— So, where should you begin your evaluation process? A great first step is to understand the difference between all-in-one software (also referred to as an ERP) versus creating your own connected ecosystem.

Here is a summary of the differences:

ERP Systems

ERP systems offer a large suite of tools on a single platform. Since everything is on one system, its primary advantage is the unified interface and centralized data.



Pros

- Unified interface and centralized data
- Comprehensive tool suite on a single platform
- ERPs work for large enterprises that need all encompassing software for each department



Cons

- Expensive and inflexible
- May include unnecessary features for some service businesses
- Can lead to information overload and staff confusion

We often see SME professional service businesses commit to an ERP because they aren't aware they can create their own software stack with only the features they need. This mistake leads to only parts of the ERP being used and a high level of staff confusion due to unnecessary information overload.

PSA Software

Creating a connected PSA ecosystem allows you to integrate your favorite software and tailor a tech stack specific to your business needs.



Pros

- Easy integration with preferred tools (accounting, CRM, task management, etc.)
- Cost-effective and adaptable to changing business needs
- Supports business growth and scalability



Cons

- Requires initial setup and configuration
- May need ongoing adjustments as business needs evolve

On average, Projectworks customers see a 20% increase in their annual revenue in their first year of use.

With all those benefits, the humble spreadsheet might need to take a backseat to your powerful new automation software.



Why does my team need PSA software?

When you and your team are working on projects, it can be hard to understand how much time is wasted on copy-pasting data into different systems and deep diving through hundreds of disconnected spreadsheets. It's one thing to have a personal task list and a few Excel spreadsheets to boot, but when it comes to working efficiently as a team and bringing in a healthy margin for your business, you need a single source of truth.

That is what we will help your business identify—the best single source of truth for your team.

As of 2025, it's well and truly time to upgrade from disconnected platforms (sometimes referred to as "point solutions") and digitize your financial and operational management.

It can be tempting to buy the first software that appears on Google, but not all professional service automation (PSA) software options are created equal.

You'll need to identify what's most important to your business before engaging with your chosen vendor. Don't let this put you off. The vendor's job is to make the migration as smooth as possible for your team, but by bringing your requirements, you can help them understand your business from the start.

The best part is that once you find an option that is easy to use and connects to all your current software, you'll have hours each week that you can put back into the work that matters most to you.

Let's be honest—you don't go to work to do mundane admin tasks, and now you can leave that to the software and focus on your purpose.



My team didn't go
to school to run
Excel spreadsheets

Emeka Nnadi
[The Nadi Group](#)



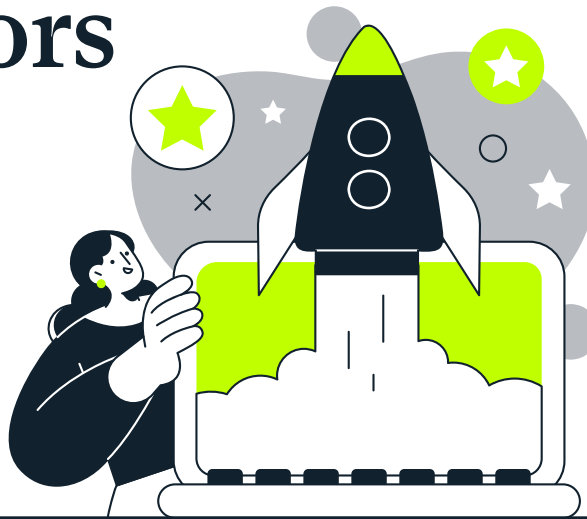
Key stakeholders for evaluating PSA software

— Everyone at your business will be using your new PSA software. Therefore, it's important that the right people are involved and that diverse voices across your business weigh in during the evaluation process. What a CEO needs from a PSA system will often differ from what your consultants need. To avoid any nasty surprises, you'll want to consider the different users at your business.



Below are four voices you'll want to involve in the evaluation process.

CEO/ Directors



CEOs want to ensure their teams have tools that are fit for purpose and easy to use, with a clear understanding of fundamental service business metrics such as utilization rates, gross margins, and overall profitability.

CEOs will want to be sure that the chosen software aligns with the business's strategic goals, supports growth, reduces non-billable time, and enhances overall business efficiency.

CFO/ Finance



CFOs and Finance Managers need real-time visibility of cash flow risk and forecasted revenue to ensure their businesses remain profitable. They also require control over sensitive financial details and aim to streamline the invoicing process, making financial metrics more transparent to the team.

It's important to involve the CFO or Finance Manager in the evaluation stage to ensure that the selected software includes tools for automating aspects of their role. These features can include real-time cash flow visibility, controlled access to financial data, streamlined invoicing, improved metric visibility, reduced errors, and proactive risk management.

Below are four voices you'll want to involve in the evaluation process

(Continued)

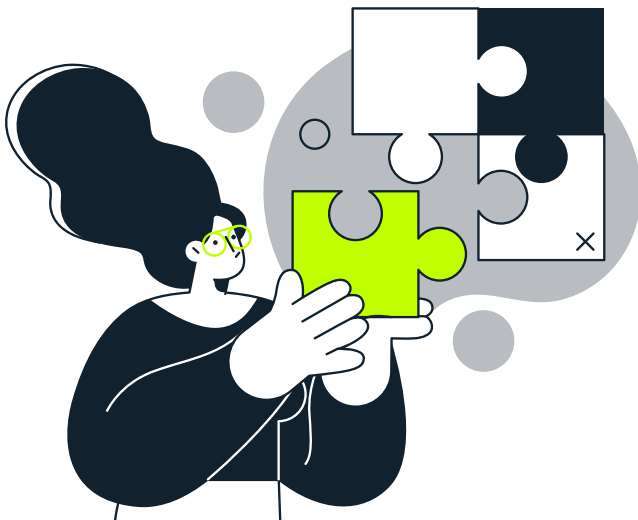
Delivery/Project Managers



Including your Delivery/Project Managers in the software evaluation process is essential as they will be on the ground ensuring projects are running smoothly.

PMs will want to evaluate whether the software improves resource management, provides real-time budget tracking, and facilitates clear communication with their team. With the right software, they can spot capacity issues early, meet client expectations, and reduce the time spent generating reports for senior leadership.

Consultants



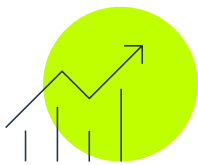
Ease of use will significantly impact your consulting team. Your consultants will use the software daily, and it should work for them, not against them! They need easy timesheets and expense management so they can focus on their work, not admin tasks.

Consultants also want clear visibility into their tasks and expectations, ensuring they know what they need to work on and what is expected of them. They may prefer to work within their primary platforms, such as Jira or DevOps. This means you'll need to pick a software option that connects well with the platforms they already know and love.

Return on your investment in PSA software

— Like most things in business, you need to make an initial investment to see positive returns. The good news is that with a PSA software ecosystem you can make a smart investment into the tools that will make the biggest impact on your bottom line.

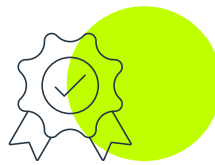
1



Boost profitability through enhanced visibility

The most powerful tool for improving your profit margin is visibility. PSA software provides insights into staff utilization, resource planning, costs, and invoicing. This connected data helps you adjust project plans in real-time, reducing unnecessary costs and increasing billable hours.

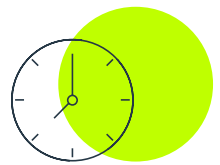
2



Increase client satisfaction and repeat business

When it comes to keeping your clients happy, having these insights from the start allows you to accurately predict project costs and timelines. If there are two things your clients won't like, it's the budget changing mid-project or late delivery. Mitigating these risks with accurate information from the start will keep your clients coming back. Repeat business and word-of-mouth referrals are the cheapest and most powerful sales tools you have.

3



Save time and increase efficiency

Although using spreadsheets or free task list software seems like a cost-effective way to manage projects, it masks wider operational problems. What you can't see can hurt your business. Underneath, you'll find the real cost of disconnected systems.

Billable hours are the lifeline of services businesses, and without the best tools, billable time is wasted. Time spent searching for data, making spreadsheets, updating multiple platforms, and missing key information leads to errors and wasted hours. Automation software eliminates these issues, protecting your profit margins.

Return on your investment in PSA software

(Continued)



Protect your data and ensure continuity

Through an easy-to-use, connected software ecosystem, you can update your resourcing in real-time, receive timesheets and expenses from employees, accurately invoice clients, and monitor your business's financial health in one place on the cloud. It should also go without saying that you must use the cloud to keep your business safe from the unknown—for example, a coffee spilled on the sole laptop that stores the project plans.

Accidents happen, but the cloud is your "data insurance."



Mitigate risks and make better business decisions

A significant problem arises when incorrect data is entered into systems and used by key decision-makers to inform strategy. Human data entry errors can lead to flawed decision-making, repeated manual data entry tasks, and considerable time wasted. This impacts the accuracy of strategic decisions and reduces utilization rates and overall efficiency. Automating data entry processes and ensuring accurate, real-time data can mitigate these issues, allowing you to make business decisions on accurate data.



Improve employee satisfaction and retention

The tools your team is using directly impact their satisfaction. They have to interact with these tools daily, and wrestling multiple spreadsheets to extract basic reporting data can wear thin quickly. Employees who are nearly ready to rip their desktop screens down in an Excel-induced rage won't feel inspired to deliver quality work!

Show your employees you value them with quality software that enables them to get back to the work they love doing. We spend a good portion of our lives at work, so the technology we use matters. You wouldn't use a [Nokia 3210](#) to make client calls, so don't make your staff use Microsoft Projects or Excel to run their projects (both tools are 15 years older than the original Nokia)!

Which features matter to key stakeholders?

—— PSA software supports your project management from beginning to end and integrates with all the other software you need to manage your complete business. Due to this, many people on your team will be working on the software and will care about different parts of the product. This is influenced by the parts of the business they interact with most and what they need to reach their own goals.

—— On the following pages, we break down each stakeholder so that you can help bring your whole team along on the evaluation journey.

Table of contents

CEO/Director P16

CFO/Finance P20

**Delivery/
Project Managers** P24

Consultants P28

CEO/ Director

— CEOs want to ensure their teams have tools that are fit for purpose and easy to use, with a clear understanding of key business metrics such as utilization rate, gross margin, and overall profitability.

When looking at software options, they are often interested in crucial business metrics like project margins and overall profitability. They will also want to be sure that the chosen software aligns with the business's strategic goals, supports growth, reduces non-billable time, and enhances overall business efficiency.

As mentioned earlier, CEOs typically have 2 goals they are trying to achieve in their role at the most basic level:

1. **Ensuring smooth operations**
2. **Making a healthy profit margin**

Although they might not be in the weeds with the project teams, they do want to know that projects are successful and that they have happy paying clients.

Implementing software with clear project overviews and strong reporting functions will give them peace of mind that the business is succeeding.

The benefits of upgrading your system to PSA software for CEO/Directors

While each consulting business has its unique needs, certain features are universally important for driving success. We've highlighted the common top priorities for CEOs.

Your task

For each priority listed, rate how important it is to your business on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 = Not important.

5 = Extremely important.

Unsure how you'd rate each element?

[Take our interactive quiz](#) to receive a personalized priority rating based on your responses.

Use this rating as a personal guide to help you make an informed choice when researching and comparing PSA software options.

CEOs are looking for software that empowers them to...	To achieve this, you'll need the following...	Score
Get the information they need in real-time, empowering decision-making and boosting staff/stakeholder confidence in their leadership.	Reports Project margins Get a high-level view of your project margins in real-time. Use this information to inform your conversations with your leadership team. <hr/> 12-month revenue forecast Review all company forecasts at once and make informed business decisions.	
See areas of commercial or operational risk early, providing peace of mind and a sense of control.	Current and future project budget health Budget burn See how your burn is tracking into the future, ensuring your projects are on track.	
Reduce non-billable time and increase employee satisfaction by automating repetitive tasks.	Time Tracking Easy timesheets Keep staff happy with a click-to-start/stop timer for easy timesheet submission. Leave Management Leave reflected in resource planning Provide your Project Managers clear visibility into team availability. Resourcing Skill mapping Enable Project Managers to allocate resources efficiently and maximize team performance.	

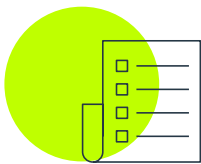
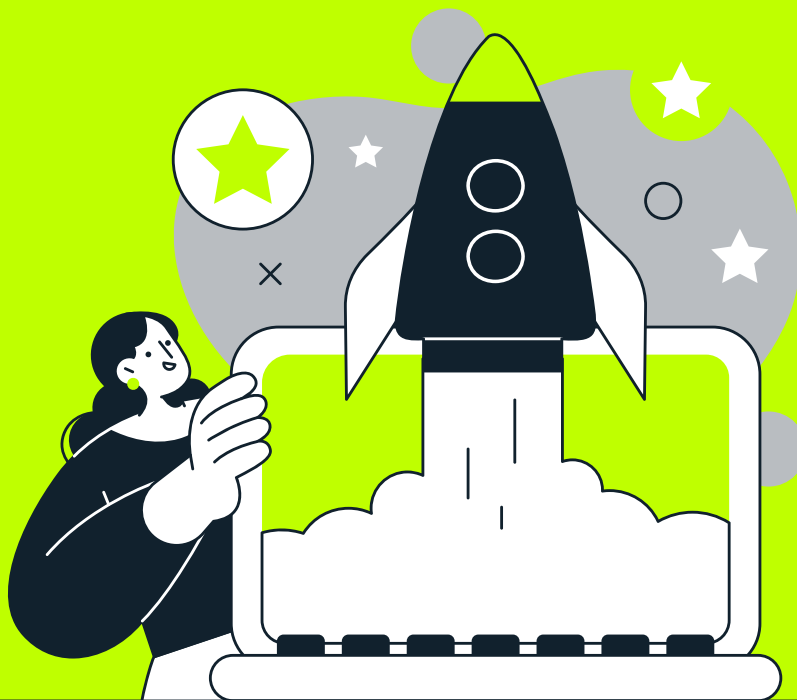
The benefits of upgrading your system to PSA software for CEO/Directors

(Continued)

CEOs are looking for software that empowers them to...	To achieve this, you'll need the following...	Score
Have all the tools to run a profitable services business, instilling confidence and a sense of accomplishment.	Expense Management Mobile-optimized expense submission Submit receipts on-the-go, integrating expenses seamlessly for consultants and Project Managers. Invoicing Pre-populated invoices Auto-populate invoices from timesheets to reduce admin work and speed up billing.	
Connect easily with existing tools, enhancing team morale and reducing frustration.	Integrations Connection to current software Integrate with accounting, task management, and CRM tools you already use (like HubSpot or Salesforce), reducing downtime and frustration.	
Choose trustworthy software to maintain the trust and confidence of staff/stakeholders.	Customer Testimonials 5-star reviews Choose software with positive feedback and a proven track record. Case studies Look for case studies from similar businesses or reach out for testimonials.	
Be seen by employees as a leader who understands their needs, strengthening trust and respect.	User-Friendly Features Employee-centric tools Mobile-friendly time tracking, easy expense submission, and intuitive resource management show you value and understand your employees' needs.	

Not sure what's a priority for your business?

Take the Quiz



When evaluating PSA software, CEOs should be cautious of a few potential pitfalls:

Integration issues

Ensure the platform offers a full and seamless integration with your existing tools. Incompatibility can lead to inefficiencies, wasted time, and additional costs.

Reliability and uptime

Confirm the software's reliability and uptime, as frequent downtime can severely impact business operations. Review the software's [G2 page](#) to see if there are any reviews mentioning downtime. If you are having issues with your software, do they offer lifelong support that's reliable?

Onboarding process

A complicated or lengthy onboarding process can disrupt your staff's workflow. Look for solutions that offer smooth [implementation](#), [data migrations](#), and [staff training](#).

Scalability and flexibility

Verify the software's flexibility to ensure it can grow and adapt alongside your business needs. If your business grows its headcount, how easy will it be to add new team members to the system?

CFO/ Finance

—— CFOs and finance managers require real-time visibility of cash flow risks and projected revenue to ensure profitability. They also need control over sensitive financial information, a straightforward invoicing process, and many like the ability to make project financials transparent to team leaders.

As mentioned earlier, CFO/Finance Managers typically have 2 primary goals:

1. **Ensuring financial stability**
2. **Optimizing financial processes**

When evaluating software options, CFO/Finance Managers care most about tools that automate their roles, including real-time cash flow visibility, revenue forecasting, expense management, invoicing, enhanced revenue-to-cost visibility, less double-handling, and integrations with their trusted accounting apps.

Timesheets are also the bane of many financial teams' lives, so having an excellent timesheet system that your consultants actually use will delight them!

The benefits of upgrading your system to PSA software for CFO/Finance

While each consulting business has its unique needs, certain features are universally important for driving success. We've highlighted the common top priorities for CFO/Finance.

Your task

For each priority listed, rate how important it is to your business on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 = Not important.

5 = Extremely important.

Unsure how you'd rate each element?

[Take our interactive quiz](#) to receive a personalized priority rating based on your responses.

Use this rating as a personal guide to help you make an informed choice when researching and comparing PSA software options.

CFOs/finance teams are looking for software that empowers them to...	To achieve this, you'll need the following...	Score
Enhance confidence in profitability with a data connection between their trusted accounting platform and PSA software.	Integrations Accounting software integrations Actively manage your finances and get accurate data from your Project Managers in the platforms you already work in.	
Trust teams to invoice clients based on T&M or fixed fees, allowing more time to work on high-value tasks.	Invoicing T&M and fixed-fee invoicing Flexibility to invoice the way you like, even on the same invoice. <hr/> Project Managers can make draft invoices Giving your delivery teams control of sending invoices.	
Provide stakeholders with clear insights, fostering trust and boosting confidence. Maintain transparency into WIP, reducing the chance of lost billable time and profit.	Reporting WIP reports See financial bottlenecks at a glance so you can follow up with the right people and not miss payment for any of your teams. <hr/> Month-end billing report Close the month in record time with the ability to see your forecasting accuracy compared to what is actually invoiced. <hr/> Budget burn screen See projected revenue for the next 12 months compared to your budget, ensuring your projects are on track. <hr/> Forecasts vs budget report Ensure you're going to hit your financial targets with your project progress against a revenue budget for a given month.	

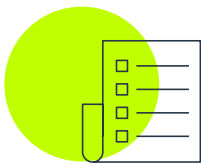
The benefits of upgrading your system to PSA software for CFO/Finance

(Continued)

CFOs/finance teams are looking for software that empowers them to...	To achieve this, you'll need the following...	Score
Identify risks early, providing peace of mind and enabling proactive management.	Project Health Early risk detection Generate detailed financial projections and identify potential risks early, allowing time for adjustments before they affect the business's profitability.	
Access to expert support, reducing stress and ensuring accuracy.	Customer support Advanced support Get the answers you need, when you need them with an expert support team that is great with complex financial questions.	
Ensure a smooth transition and data integrity, reducing the risk based on inaccurate data after migration.	Onboarding Data migrations A thoughtful onboarding process that migrates all your financial data from different sources.	
Control access to sensitive information, ensuring security and building trust with employees that their personal information is secure.	Security Access levels Have acute control of who can access and manage sensitive financial data.	
Free up time for strategic thinking, increasing productivity and job satisfaction.	Time tracking Timesheets with timecodes Accurately invoice clients based on timesheet data that identifies what stage of the project your staff is on, increasing visibility for your clients	
Automate processes to enhance accuracy and increase employee satisfaction.	Expense management Client expense control Receive expense submissions and pass them on to your clients with or without markups, and define how they impact your project's budget.	

Not sure what's a priority for your business?

Take the Quiz



When evaluating PSA software, CFOs should be cautious of a few potential pitfalls:

Integration issues

Ensure seamless integration with existing accounting software like Xero or QuickBooks to avoid data silos and additional manual work.

Inflexible invoicing options

Confirm that the software enables flexible invoicing, including T&M, fixed fees, or a combination of both. It should also allow you to identify who has control over invoice approval and submission on your delivery teams.

Limited reporting capabilities

Verify that the software provides comprehensive financial reports. Insufficient reporting can leave you at square one, developing reports on spreadsheets for stakeholders.

Poor financial risk monitoring

Ensure the software offers a clear view of future financial risks, such as budget overruns, to avoid missing early warning signs.

Delivery/ Project Managers

—— Delivery/Project Managers need software that improves resource management, provides real-time budget tracking, and facilitates clear communication with their team. They will need software they are happy to use on a daily basis to run projects smoothly and meet client expectations.

As mentioned earlier, Project Managers typically have 2 primary goals:

1. **Ensuring project success**
2. **Meeting client expectations**

When evaluating software options, Project Managers care most about tools that enhance the practical parts of their role, such as resource management, budget tracking, invoicing, team communication, and reporting. Spotting capacity issues early and having a clear overview of their team's utilization is also crucial to their performance.

The benefits of upgrading your system to PSA software for Project Managers

While each consulting business has its unique needs, certain features are universally important for driving success. We've highlighted the common top priorities for Project Managers.

Your task

For each priority listed, rate how important it is to your business on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 = Not important.

5 = Extremely important.

Unsure how you'd rate each element?

[Take our interactive quiz](#) to receive a personalized priority rating based on your responses.

Use this rating as a personal guide to help you make an informed choice when researching and comparing PSA software options.

PMs/delivery leaders are looking for software that empowers them to...	To achieve this, you'll need the following...	Score
Provide a single and automatic source of truth for project performance, enhancing accuracy and trust among internal stakeholders and clients.	Reporting Utilization reporting Easily see who on your team has met their utilization targets and view your organization's overall utilization rate in one place, ensuring you stay on track with your goals. <hr/> Hours worked by person report Know if anyone on your team is under- or over-utilized with data on all staff hours worked.	
Easily build a high-performance team tailored to a project or client, boosting team effectiveness and client satisfaction.	Resourcing Real-time capacity Have visibility into the capacity of your people across multiple projects. Resource staff onto projects without overloading them. <hr/> Filter by skill Build high-performance teams that are aligned to each project or client. <hr/> Budget burn screen See how your burn is tracking into the future ensuring your projects are on track.	

The benefits of upgrading your system to PSA software for Project Managers

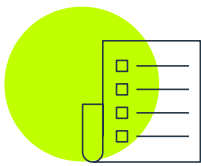
(Continued)

PMs/delivery leaders are looking for software that empowers them to...	To achieve this, you'll need the following...	Score
Ensure timesheet ease, reducing frustration and improving team compliance.	Time Tracking User-friendly timesheets Reducing frustration and improving compliance.	
Integrate all necessary tools into one piece of software, removing the need for manual data entry and eliminating inflexible spreadsheets.	Integrations Connect to your operational tools Integrate with existing business tools like Jira and Azure DevOps to centralize operations and reduce manual work.	
Identify future project risks early, allowing timely interventions to keep projects healthy and on track.	Project health Project financial reports Generate detailed financial projections and identify potential risks early, allowing time for adjustments before they affect the business's profitability.	

Not sure what's a priority for your business?



Take the Quiz



When evaluating PSA software, PMs/delivery managers should be cautious of a few potential pitfalls:

Non-intuitive user interface

Ensure the platform is user-friendly and intuitive. A complex interface can lead to low adoption and increased training time, hindering daily operations and team satisfaction. A great way to ensure the platform is intuitive is by [receiving a free trial](#).

Limited resource management capabilities

Confirm that the software offers comprehensive resource management features, such as real-time capacity monitoring and skill-based allocation. Inadequate resource management can result in poor team utilization, frustrated staff, lack of relevant expertise on a given project, and missed project deadlines.

Inadequate project overview and reporting

Ensure the software provides clear project overviews and efficient reporting tools. Without these, PMs may struggle to spot capacity issues early, understand team utilization, and generate insights for stakeholders.

Consultants

—— Consultants need software that is easy to use and efficiently supports their daily tasks. They will be using the software day-to-day, and it should work for them, not against them. Easy timesheets and expense management are crucial so they can focus on their billable work, not admin tasks.

As mentioned earlier, consultants typically have 2 goals they are trying to achieve in their role at the most basic level:

1. **Knowing what is expected of them**
2. **Ensuring they can focus on their core tasks**

When looking at software options, consultants are often interested in clear visibility into their tasks and expectations, ensuring they know what they need to work on and what is expected of them. They also prefer to work within their primary platforms, such as Jira or DevOps. This means you'll need to choose a software option that integrates well with the platforms they already know and love.

The benefits of upgrading your system to PSA software for Consultants

While each consulting business has its unique needs, certain features are universally important for driving success. We've highlighted the common top priorities for Consultants.

Your task

For each priority listed, rate how important it is to your business on a scale from 1 to 5:

1 = Not important.

5 = Extremely important.

Unsure how you'd rate each element?

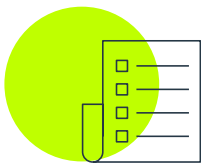
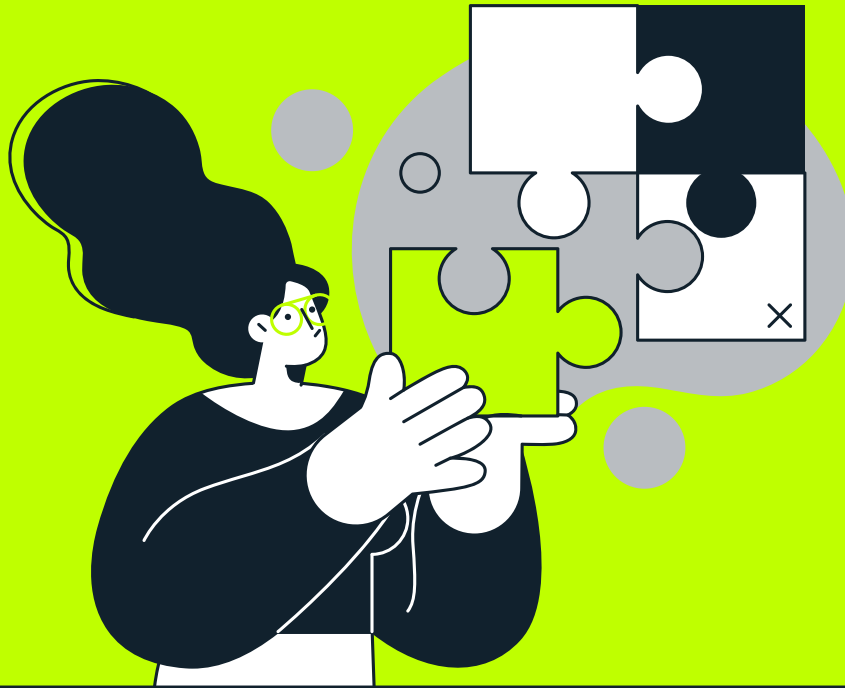
[Take our interactive quiz](#) to receive a personalized priority rating based on your responses.

Use this rating as a personal guide to help you make an informed choice when researching and comparing PSA software options.

Consultants are looking for software that empowers them to...	To achieve this, you'll need the following...	Score
Work on projects that require their skills, allowing them to excel and feel accomplished.	Resourcing Role-based and skill filtering Ensures you'll be resourced onto projects where you can use your skills and thrive.	
Communicate effectively with their team, fostering collaboration and allowing them to feel on top of their workload.	Resourcing My resourcing screen See clearly where you're resourced across multiple projects and feel confident you're working on the right things.	
Feel valued and appreciated by knowing their leaders care about the ease of their experience.	Time Tracking User-friendly timesheets Timesheets that are clear enough to fill out easily and quickly. Expense Management Mobile-optimized expense submissions Take a photo of your receipt and submit it while you're on the go. Never forget to submit a receipt again!	
Reduce manual tasks, freeing up time for more meaningful work and better productivity.	Integrations Integration with task management tools A connection to tools like Jira or DevOps to ensure clear communication of project requirements and foster team collaboration.	

Not sure what's a priority for your business?

Take the Quiz



When evaluating PSA software, Consultants should be cautious of a few potential pitfalls:

Non-intuitive user interface

Ensure the platform is user-friendly and intuitive. A complex interface can lead to low adoption and increased training time, impacting job satisfaction and motivation. Start a [free trial](#) to see instantly how the software performs.

Inconsistent real-time data

Verify that the software provides accurate real-time data. Inconsistent data can prevent effective decision-making and disrupt project resourcing, creating confusion for consultants.

Poor integration with existing tools

Confirm that the software integrates well with your current task management and financial tools. Poor integration can cause workflow disruptions and inefficiencies, reducing the time available for meaningful work.

Limited resource management capabilities

Ensure the software offers comprehensive resource management features. Inadequate resource management can result in inefficient allocation of consultants to projects, affecting their job satisfaction and project outcomes.

What next?

If you're new to PSA software, we recommend scheduling an initial demo call with our experts.

Our team can provide a detailed walkthrough and address any specific questions or concerns you may have about changing your systems. We understand that every business is at its own stage with software and has its own way of operating; we can talk you through your options and explain how to make PSA software work for you.

If your whole team isn't quite sure you are ready to implement new software, this personalized approach can help your team understand the value PSA software can bring to your organization. We can also share case studies from businesses within your industry to help everyone envision the positive change new software will bring to the business.

While you wait for your call, it's a great idea to sign up for an [instant free trial](#), allowing you and your team to experience the software's benefits firsthand. This hands-on approach can help demonstrate the PSA software's practical advantages and integration capabilities.

Thank you for reading our buyer's guide; we hope it helped you consider what will be important in your search for PSA software.

If you have any questions, please visit our [contact page](#). We would be happy to help assist you further on your hunt for quality software.



Start a free trial



Book a demo

