

**BILL BOOTHE**

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Software for Your Club's Community Association

For clubs that are located within a residential community, the quandary continues. Do I use separate software solutions to manage the club and the community, or do I try to use just one comprehensive solution for both?

This question has been bandied about for decades, and today, there is still no definitive answer. Let's review the factors that are involved, starting with the types of software available.

Club management software focuses on the club's membership, with the member account serving as the pivot point for the database construction. Everything points to the member: demographics, billing, POS, reservations, sales history, communications, etc.

The primary goals of this software are to manage the club's relationship with the membership, manage the club amenities that serve the members, and handle the financial duties of the club.

Association management software focuses on the association's real estate inventory (homes, condos, apartments, rentals), with the real estate unit serving as the pivot point for the database construction. Everything points to the unit: demographics, billing, services history, ownership history, etc.

The primary goals of this software are to manage the association's responsibilities to the unit owners, manage the services provided to the owners, and handle the financial duties of the association.

Association management software is loaded with complex features to address association-specific factors, such as the detailed tracking and management of each unit's resale history, tracking of each owner's rules violations, management of owner and vendor architectural change requests, scheduling and tracking of inspections, management and scheduling of maintenance duties and much more.

The "holy grail" solution that club/community managers dream of would handle both environments, eliminating the duplication of effort necessitated by the use of two separate software products.

Club management solutions can possibly answer that call if the association management requirements are minimal, primarily focused on billing for association dues and producing financial reporting.

Association management solutions, on the other hand, do not offer the functionality needed to operate a private club and show no inclination to add such functionality.

With each year that passes, we see club management software providers adding functionality that inches them closer to that provided by association management packages. However, the gap that remains is still quite significant.

If you are managing a club that includes one or more community associations (separate from the club) requiring "full bore" association functionality, your current path forward is most likely with two separate solutions.

However, if your association requirements are modest, you may now, or in the near future, be able to deploy a club management solution to manage both entities. **BR**



The feature sets for these two types of software have little in common.

Club management software is loaded with sophisticated functionality to address club-specific factors, such as member-centric POS, a myriad of reservations features (club events and dining, golf tee times, tennis courts, golf/tennis/fitness lessons, spa appointments, lodging), food and beverage minimums, complex dues and services billing arrangements. The list is extensive.