



Do I Really Have to Use Industry-Specific Software to Run My Club?

Frequently club managers ask, “Why is our industry so committed to a relative handful of small, club-specific software vendors? What about the big players like Quickbooks, Sage, Oracle/NetSuite or Microsoft Dynamics? Why can’t we use one of them?”

Well, if private clubs operated just like the average small business, the answer would be simple: “Yes, you can!” But alas, clubs aren’t just like average small businesses. So, the answer is “No, you can’t, because clubs require a very specialized type of software offering special features unique to the private club industry.”

That shouldn’t be a surprise. Numerous industries require specialized software to operate. Here are a few to consider:

- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Banking
- Health care
- Legal
- Real estate
- Architecture
- And many others...

But surely clubs can’t be as specialized as a bank or hospital, right? How many “special features” are we talking about? And how important are they anyway?

Here’s a partial list of software features required by most private clubs.

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP AND ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE FEATURES

1. Maintain unlimited mailing addresses; direct different mailings to different addresses, each with an effective date range.
2. Maintain member, spouse and dependent demographic information.

3. Maintain member and dependent photos, preferences, allergies and other information, which display at POS.

4. Provide member online access to their billing account to view/print: billing statements with POS check detail, minimum spend balances, credit book balances.

5. Maintain information on member lockers including type, size, location, lock combination, and produce billing from this data.

6. Assign members to membership categories, report on upcoming category changes, automatically move members to a new category based upon various factors, and track all changes over time.

7. Assign members to committees, and track all current and past assignments; print committee lists and send broadcast emails to committees.

8. Handle initiation fee and assessment installment billing, with interest calculations and amortization tracking.

9. Handle food and beverage minimum spending billing and tracking, with the ability to exclude certain sales categories, and handle multiple billing cycles, carry-overs, roll-ups, etc.

10. Handle rapid entry of identical charges with multiple revenue codes (tournaments, club events).

11. Handle multiple recurring charges (dues, assessments, locker fees, bag storage fees, handicap fees, etc.).

12. Provide member spending analysis by dollars and occurrences, by individual member or family member, member category, charge type, club location/activity, or other factors, for a date/time range.

SPECIAL RESTAURANT POS FEATURES

1. Full integration with the membership and accounts receivable application.

2. Search for member by account number or last name.

3. Display member and dependent demographics information (preferences, ages, allergies, charge status, etc.).

4. Display member and dependent photos.

5. Maintain favorite menu items assigned to individual members or automatically assigned through purchase patterns, to include kitchen prep instructions.

6. Warn/prohibit charging by suspended members.

7. Print member name and allergies on kitchen requisition.

8. Print real-time minimum spend balance on member check.

SPECIAL PRO SHOP POS AND INVENTORY FEATURES

1. Full integration with the membership and accounts receivable application.

2. Search for member by account number or last name.

3. Display member and dependent demographics information (preferences, ages, sizes, etc.).

4. Display member and dependent photos.

5. Warn/prohibit charging by suspended members.

6. Provide check-in module to track non-charge activity (fitness/pool visits).

7. Maintain member credit book (aka sweeps or winnings); apply credit as tender type; maintain ledger of transactions.

8. Track loaner clubs and racquets.

9. Maintain multiple inventory item price levels, and automatically assign at POS based upon member category or other criteria (buying club).

10. Track special member orders and notify member and staff when these items are received.

That's 30 special features in just three modules (bet you can't find more than a handful of features your staff doesn't need). And we haven't even considered other modules such as banquets and catering, reservations (dining, club events, tee times, courts, lessons), the club's website, general ledger, accounts payable, lodging, marina and more.

These are special features that are not available with "generic" business software, and probably never will be.

The private club industry, like other "vertical" markets, is too specialized for the generic players to focus on. They're dedicated to the millions of small businesses that simply send invoices to customers, track payments and produce financial reporting.

And they're savvy enough to leave the "verticals" to specialized providers who tailor their software to the special needs of the industries they serve. **BR**

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Connect Your Communications

Communication comes in many forms. Email, websites, social media, and digital signage all together form a web of communication efforts to maximize the likelihood of reaching your members. Each of these approaches has its strengths and weaknesses. When managed independently they can be time-consuming and frustrating. Double entry and lack of connectivity is costly and ineffective. Often some avenues of communication are ignored because of the inability to start and manage them.

Signera's innovative approach of connecting these tools allows you to reach your members through various technologies effortlessly. Digital signage and web content displayed on exercise equipment and tablets can facilitate dynamic in-club communication. Email newsletters can include a link to see the latest flyers for upcoming events without logging into a website. Website calendars can be linked to show events on digital signage throughout the club. Club communications can be broadcast through cable to your club community. All of this can be automated or done with single entry, reducing your costs and frustrations while increasing affect. Though digital signage is the core and catalyst of the Signera system, innovation has expanded it to integrate multiple communication efforts. Additionally, new Signera apps allow easy implementation of many types of information including menus, directories, leader boards, and more. **BR**

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