

2016 Private Club Software Satisfaction Survey Discussion – By Bill Boothe

Survey Background: This survey was designed and administered by The Boothe Group, LLC (TBG) under the supervision of Bill Boothe, President. TBG provides independent technology advice and consulting to private clubs throughout North America, and has no affiliations with any of the club management or website software providers serving the private club industry. The survey tool used was SurveyMonkey, an online survey instrument utilized by thousands of organizations worldwide. An online link to the survey was provided in an email invitation that was sent on June 29, 2016 by the CMAA to its members and by TBG to HFTP private club members. A reminder email was sent to both groups on July 6, 2016. Responses to the survey were accepted through midnight EDT July 15, 2016.

Survey Responses: A total of 260 valid responses were received through the SurveyMonkey portal. A number of invalid responses were received and eliminated as follows: ten (10) that contained no answers to the survey questions; seven (7) that were duplicates, that is a second response from the same club. Only one response from each club was accepted. Of the 260 total valid responses, 133 were from the CMAA source and 127 were from the HFTP source.

Survey Results: The survey results are presented below. Note that only six (6) software providers in each category (Club Management Software and Website Software) were included in the survey results. Only those providers with ten (10) or more responses were included. Those providers with less than ten (10) responses are listed below the survey results.

Survey Ratings: Each survey question allowed the responder to rate a software module or service provided by their vendor, using a rating scale as follow: 4 = Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Poor, N/A = do not have that module or cannot answer that question. The individual ratings for each module or service were then averaged (ignoring the N/A answers) to provide the average ratings you see presented. A minimum of ten (10) individual ratings per question were required for each average rating to be included in the survey report. Questions receiving less than ten (10) individual ratings are listed with an N/A designation in the Survey Report.

Discussion: As you scan through the survey results you will notice a wide range of ratings reported. For example, for the Club Management Software results, the ratings range from a high of 3.41 to a low of 1.82. However, the great majority of ratings fall between 3.00 and 2.50, with an average rating of 2.77. You might ask yourself, “What do these ratings really mean? How much of a difference between ratings is needed to make a meaningful difference?” In order to help you better understand what these ratings really mean, and how one vendor compares to another, we have provided the analytics below.

Top 10 Club Management Software Ratings Analysis - here we took the top 10 ratings and counted the number of 4 (excellent), 3 (good), 2 (fair) and 1 (poor) responses that were included for the questions associated with those ratings. The top 10 ratings were as follows: 3.41, 3.38, 3.37, 3.32, 3.32, 3.30, 3.28, 3.26, 3.24 and 3.22. (If you scan the report you will find these ratings spread amongst the vendors and questions.) The average for the top 10 ratings was 3.31. We then counted up the number of 4, 3, 2 and 1 responses for those top 10 ratings. Here’s what we found:

Total Responses for Top 10 Ratings = 365

Rating of 4 (excellent) = 158, or 43% of the total responses

Rating of 3 (good) = 165, or 45%

Rating of 2 (fair) = 36, or 10%

Rating of 1 (poor) = 6, or 2%

What this data tells us is that in order to receive a very high rating, almost all of the responses must be a 4 or a 3 (88%), with a very small number of 2 and 1 responses (12%).

Bottom 10 Club Management Software Ratings Analysis - here we took the lowest 10 ratings and counted the number of 4, 3, 2 and 1 responses that were included for the questions associated with those ratings. The bottom 10 ratings were as follows: 1.82, 2.00, 2.00, 2.14, 2.14, 2.29, 2.36, 2.47, 2.48 and 2.52. The average for the bottom 10 ratings was 2.22. We then counted up the number of 4, 3, 2 and 1 responses for those bottom 10 ratings. Here's what we found:

Total Responses for Bottom 10 Ratings = 224

Rating of 4 (excellent) = 21, or 9% of the total responses

Rating of 3 (good) = 74, or 33%

Rating of 2 (fair) = 85, or 38%

Rating of 1 (poor) = 44, or 20%

What this data tells us is that in order to receive a very low rating, more than half of the responses must be a 2 or a 1 (58%), with a very large percentage of 1 responses (20%). Remember that the average of the bottom 10 ratings was 2.22. The misconception that many readers may have with this data is to think that any rating at 2.00 or higher is "fair" or better. *But what must be remembered is that such an average includes a high percentage (20%) of very unhappy responders with 1 ratings.*

Middle 10 Club Management Software Ratings Analysis - here we took the middle 10 ratings and counted the number of 4, 3, 2 and 1 responses that were included for the questions associated with those ratings. We then counted up the number of 4, 3, 2 and 1 responses for those middle 10 ratings. Here's what we found:

Total Responses for Middle 10 Ratings = 300

Rating of 4 (excellent) = 67, or 22% of the total responses

Rating of 3 (good) = 123, or 41%

Rating of 2 (fair) = 84, or 28%

Rating of 1 (poor) = 26, or 9%

The average of the mid-level ratings was 2.77, or almost exactly half way between a "good" and "fair" rating. So we can say that a rating above 2.77 is "above the average" and a rating below 2.77 is "below the average". *But what is really important to note is that an average rating of 2.77 still leaves 37% of respondents with a rating of "fair" or "poor".*

Ratings Consistency: When evaluating the overall performance of a vendor's club management software, consistency of ratings is an important factor to consider. For example, if vendor A's ratings run from the mid-3's down to the mid-2's, and vendor B's ratings are all in the low 3's and upper 2's, which vendor offers the "best fit" for the club? In our opinion, vendor B offers the best fit, because no club department/operation is "left behind" with a low-rated solution. Of course this decision is affected by which elements are rated high, medium and low and the importance of those corresponding departments/operations to that particular club. *But in general, a well-balanced rating of the vendor's entire suite of software is a better fit than one that includes extreme highs and lows across the software suite.*

Customer Service and Website Software Ratings: The concepts discussed above also apply to these other sections of the Survey Report. We did note that, overall, clubs were generally better satisfied with their club management software than with the customer service provided by their vendors.

2016 Private Club Software Satisfaction Survey Results

Survey Ratings: 4 = Excellent, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Poor, N/A = Insufficient Responses

Club Management Software Providers	Clubessential/ ClubSoft	Clubsystems Group	IBS	Jonas Core	Jonas Encore	Northstar	Average Ratings
Number of Survey Responses	38	28	15	84	27	37	
Software Capabilities							
Food & Beverage Dining POS	3.26	2.63	2.60	3.00	2.85	3.24	2.93
Banquets & Catering	2.58	2.47	1.82	2.56	2.68	2.91	2.50
Club Events	2.82	2.58	2.00	2.59	2.68	2.81	2.58
Golf Pro Shop	2.97	2.48	2.75	3.03	2.80	3.03	2.84
Tennis Pro Shop	2.96	2.86	2.83	3.11	2.64	3.09	2.92
Spa	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.82	N/A	N/A	2.82
Fitness	2.83	N/A	N/A	2.72	N/A	2.67	2.74
Member Demographics	3.32	2.50	2.29	2.83	2.77	2.89	2.77
Member Spending Analysis	3.16	2.54	2.14	2.77	2.88	2.86	2.73
Management Reporting & BI	2.92	2.00	2.14	2.52	2.73	2.86	2.53
Member Billing & A/R	3.37	2.88	2.85	3.28	3.27	3.30	3.16
General Ledger	3.13	2.85	2.54	3.22	3.15	3.41	3.05
Accounts Payable	3.32	2.85	2.67	3.19	3.23	3.38	3.11
Software Reliability	3.00	3.00	2.36	3.14	2.96	2.73	2.87
Software Processing Speed	2.63	2.92	2.79	2.93	2.96	3.22	2.91
Customer Service Ratings							
Project Planning	2.91	3.46	2.40	2.69	2.80	2.53	2.80
Data Conversion	3.09	3.31	2.90	2.84	2.69	2.68	2.92
User Training	2.74	3.38	2.40	2.72	2.44	2.81	2.75
Custom Software Enhancements	2.81	2.50	2.40	2.54	2.67	2.29	2.54
Response Time	2.35	3.15	3.00	2.88	2.72	2.97	2.85
Resolution Time	2.27	2.92	2.50	2.93	2.72	2.61	2.66
Competency	2.57	3.15	2.79	3.14	3.00	2.89	2.92
Overall Customer Support	2.46	3.00	2.71	2.99	2.80	2.86	2.80

Note: The following vendors did not receive a sufficient response (less than 10) to be included in the survey results: Abacus 21, Buz Software, Club Software, ClubTec, Crescent Systems, Digital Dining, Expert Systems, MicroPower, Peachtree, Priority Club Systems, ResortSuite, Sage, Springer-Miller, TAI Consulting, Total e Golf.

Website Software Providers	Clubessential	Clubsystems Group	IBS/Flexscape	Jonas	MembersFirst	Northstar	Average Ratings
Number of Survey Responses	76	10	10	51	20	20	
Software Capabilities Ratings							
Overall Capabilities	3.21	2.60	2.90	2.80	3.05	2.80	2.89
Customer Service Ratings							
Site Design	3.01	2.78	2.63	2.80	3.22	2.95	2.90
User Training	2.85	2.89	2.00	2.77	3.00	2.63	2.69
Response Time	2.95	3.00	2.40	2.86	3.15	2.85	2.87
Resolution Time	2.84	2.90	2.40	2.84	3.10	2.79	2.81
Competency	3.12	3.10	2.80	3.00	3.25	2.95	3.04
Overall Customer Support	2.99	3.10	2.40	2.84	3.10	2.79	2.87

Note: The following vendors did not receive a sufficient response (less than 10) to be included in the survey results: Abacus 21, Buz Software, Club Software, ClubSoft Links, ClubTec (FlexWeb - Flexscape), Crescent Systems, Cynergy, Expert Systems, ForeTees, Priority Club Systems, ResortSuite, TAI Consulting (17 other local providers, 5 in-house, 6 no website).

See 2016 Private Club Software Survey Questions Document for detailed text of all survey questions.

Club Management Software Providers
Software Capabilities
Food & Beverage Dining POS - Please rate the ability of your software to manage the dining POS order entry, back office and reporting requirements of your Club.
Banquets & Catering - Please rate the ability of your software to manage room bookings, BEO's/Function Sheets, menus and item pricing, member billing and management reporting.
Club Events - Please rate the ability of your software to manage club events reservations and member billing.
Golf Pro Shop - Please rate the ability of your software to manage the POS, inventory, credit book and reporting functions of your Club's Golf Pro Shop.
Tennis Pro Shop - Please rate the ability of your software to manage the POS, inventory and reporting functions of your Club's Tennis Pro Shop.
Spa - Please rate the ability of your software to manage spa and activities reservations, staff/service assignments, check-in, itineraries, sales entry, billing and management reporting.
Fitness - Please rate the ability of your software to manage fitness check-in, activities management, POS and management reporting.
Member Demographics - Please rate the ability of your software to store and retrieve member information - members, dependents, interests, activities, committees, etc.
Member Spending Analysis - Please rate the ability of your software to provide information on member spending by various criteria such as member category, age, years a member, interests, etc.
Management Reporting & Business Intelligence - Please rate the ability of your software to query the database and extract information for special spending/activity analysis, member demographics analysis, member target marketing campaigns, etc.
Member Billing & Accounts Receivable - Please rate the ability of your software to manage the various member billing and accounts receivable functions of your Club.
General Ledger - Please rate the ability of your software to manage the various general ledger and financial reporting functions of your Club.
Accounts Payable - Please rate the ability of your software to manage the various accounts payable functions of your Club.
Software Reliability - Please rate the ability of your software to operate reliably and correctly, including accurate calculations, data consistency, report accuracy and "bug-free" performance.
Software Processing Speed - Please rate the ability of your software to respond quickly, and generate queries and reports in a reasonable time frame.

Club Management Software Providers (continued)
Customer Service Ratings
Start-Up Services - please rate your vendor on the services provided when your system was first installed.
* Project Planning
* Data Conversion
* User Training
Custom Software Enhancements - please rate your vendor on the services provided related to any custom software enhancements provided.
Response Time - please rate the speed at which your vendor responds to support calls from your Club.
Resolution Time - please rate the speed at which your vendor resolves problems reported by your Club.
Competency - please rate the level of experience and technical skill exhibited by your vendor's customer support personnel.
Overall Customer Support - please rate the overall performance of your vendor's customer support function.

Website Software Providers
Software Capabilities Ratings
Overall Capabilities - Please rate your Website Software on its ability to meet your Club's overall requirements.
Customer Service Ratings
Start-Up Services - Please rate your Website Vendor on its Start-Up Services.
* Site Design
* User Training
Customer Support - Please rate your Website Vendor on its Customer Support Services.
* Response Time
* Resolution Time
* Competency
* Overall Customer Support