



SELECTING THE RIGHT REQUIREMENTS MANAGEMENT SOLUTION.

OVERVIEW

Understanding the requirements of requirements management.

We understand how you feel right now – you’ve just been tasked with selecting an RM tool for your team and you’re wondering where to get started. Evaluating and selecting new software can often be a time-consuming process, but we’ll try to help you streamline it.

The goal of this guide is to provide you a baseline set of requirements for selecting an RM solution based on our personal experience and the criteria we often see from our customers of Jama Contour. The guide looks at the selection process from a few different categories of requirements from the questions to consider about the vendor to the administrative needs to the features and benefits to your end-users.

Granted, we’re biased on the importance of certain criteria such as flexibility, collaboration and a Web-based approach, so we won’t pretend to claim objectivity. Essentially we sat down and wrote this guide from the perspective of being in your shoes and wanting an experienced friend in the business to offer up their checklist for selecting the right solution.

We hope you find it useful in your hunt for the right package. Since you already found this guide, you’re already on your way. Read on >



PROCESS

The four-step process to selecting the right solution.

Step 1 – Pinpoint your pain.

Since you are evaluating requirements management tools, we'll assume there is some pain (or room for improvement) you're trying to solve. It's helpful to define the specific goals you'd like to achieve with an RM solution. Do you want to reduce the time spent keeping the team up to date? Meet deadlines more often? Improve quality? All of the above? Once you define the pain points, then set some measurable objectives that can be used to evaluate the results of using your new software.

Step 2 – Identify your specific requirements.

Next, capture your needs for an RM solution. We've compiled the following checklists within this document to help get you started, but it should be customized to meet your specific requirements. It's designed to be a template to help get you started.

Step 3 – Make a build vs. buy decision.

Once you've identified your requirements, do a quick build vs. buy analysis. In most cases, purchasing an off the shelf RM solution provides the fastest ROI. You may want to utilize our RM ROI calculator available at www.jamasoftware.com to determine your specific returns.

If you have ample development resources, unique feature requirements and have the ability to update, support and maintain an in-house system, it might make sense to custom build.

Another option is to implement an open RM solution such as Jama Contour and add feature plug-ins. This provides the best of both worlds with immediately deployable software, custom functionality and an ongoing support and maintenance agreement.

Step 4 – Select a vendor & package.

The last step is to start talking with vendors and find one that meets your needs. You are likely establishing a long-term relationship, so it's also important that you share the same vision as your vendor, as software is always evolving. How accessible is the vendor? How good is their support? Do they offer flexible packages to choose from? These types of questions will be important in addition to determining the product features you'll want to meet your needs.

VENDOR REQUIREMENTS

When selecting a solution, you're also selecting a company.

One often overlooked aspect of selecting software is the vendor themselves. Use the checklist of questions below to help you first decide if the companies you are evaluating are a good fit for you and your organization.

Vendor Questions to Consider	Jama Software	Vendor A	Vendor B
Overall			
Do you like the company and how they do business? Do you feel like a valued customer?			
Vision			
Is the vision of the company clear? Does it align to your goals?			
Customer Participation			
How open are they with their product roadmap? Will you have influence over the direction of the product?			
Service & Support			
How responsive and helpful are they to your support requests during the evaluation? Do they have an active support community? Do they offer training and professional services?			
Product Updates			
How frequent are the product releases? How responsive are they to developing new features?			
Code Sharing			
Is the source code available to you if needed?			



ADMINISTRATOR REQUIREMENTS

Checklist for system administrators & IT managers.

The following checklist includes items that might be important to those responsible for purchasing, implementing and maintaining the requirements management software.

Requirements for System Admins / IT Managers	Contour	Product A	Product B
Deployment Options			
Downloadable Software <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full control over all aspects of deployment • Host within your corporate firewall • Leverage internal resources for system administration • Control when updates are applied 	X		
Hosted On-Demand Subscription <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy RM solution immediately to entire team • No software to install, configure or support • Automatic updates to latest version 	X		
Flexibility - Operating System			
Your RM software should work on your infrastructure, this ensures adequate support and minimal consulting expenses to deploy and configure the software. Contour is a pure Java application designed to run on J2EE application servers such as Apache Tomcat.			
Windows	X		
Linux	X		
Unix	X		
Flexibility - Database			
Most modern RM systems use a database for data storage. Does the RM tool work with your existing database software or will it require a software purchase and additional administration? Will the software continue to work as your infrastructure changes?			
Non-Proprietary Database to allow for data access, reporting, and integration with other systems	X		
MySQL	X		
Microsoft SQL Server	X		
HSQL	X		
Oracle	X		
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Requirements for System Admins / IT Managers	Contour	Product A	Product B
Client Application			
Purely web-based client to eliminate need for client software installs	x		
Multiple web browser support	x		
Security			
Role based security for control over who access what resources	x		
SSH Encryption	x		
LDAP Integration	x		
System Administration			
Backup and restore via web client	x		
Migrate system from one platform / database to another	x		

END-USER REQUIREMENTS

Checklist for the project team & end-users.

This next set of requirements covers the needs of the end-users, representing the entire project team that will be using and interacting with the RM tool on a daily basis.

Requirements for Project Team / End-users	Contour	Product A	Product B
User Interface			
Single interface for all administrative and user functions	x		
Purely Web-based (responsive interface – “Feels like users can work in the tool all day long”)	x		
Cross browser support (IE, Firefox, Safari and Chrome)	x		
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Requirements for Project Team / End-users	Contour	Product A	Product B
Capture (Requirements Definition)			
Centralized repository for team access & collaboration	X		
Hierarchal organization of requirements	X		
Microsoft Word Import <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables • Bulleted Lists • Retains hierarchal structure 	X		
Excel Import / CSV File	X		
Rich Text Editor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables, images, fonts • Spell check • Content templates 	X		
Include artifacts from other projects	X		
Project glossary	X		
Capture multiple artifact types (test cases, use cases, defects, business rules etc)	X		
Update multiple items at once	X		
Connect (Traceability & Impact Analysis)			
Create directional trace relationships between any project artifacts	X		
Trace across projects	X		
Define relationship types	X		
Impact analysis – can we see affected items prior to a change	X		
Suspect link tracking & notification	X		
Traceability Matrix	X		
Traceability Reporting	X		
Control (Change Management)			
Version control at the artifact level	X		
Side by side version comparison	X		
Change management (track the team process of implementing a change)	X		
Baselines (multiple)	X		
Auto suggest version comments	X		
Outbound notification to team members	X		
Collaborate (Team Productivity)			
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Requirements for Project Team / End-users	Contour	Product A	Product B
Collaborate (Team Productivity)			
Tags	x		
Create & Share filters with team	x		
Milestones for breaking down project into iterations	x		
Push & Pull email notification groups	x		
Create emails with links to specific items and other artifacts	x		
Ability to have reviewers participate	x		
Team discussions within items and other artifacts	x		
Create documents on the fly	x		
See recent project activity	x		
Reporting			
Produce requirements related reports and documentation	x		
Design custom reports	x		
Generate reports in a multiple formats: HTML, PDF, Word, Excel, PowerPoint	x		
Enable project team to run custom reports from within the application	x		
Ensure reports can include rich text (HTML, Images etc)	x		
Customization			
Customization of drop down lists (Pick Lists)	x		
User custom fields	x		
Modify order of fields displayed on screen	x		
Modify terminology / field Labels	x		
Modify look and feel (Graphics, Colors, Fonts et)	x		

Additional Resource: You may also want to read the guide, "Requirements Managements Redefined" which you can download at www.jamasoftware.com. This paper explores how requirements management solutions have evolved to meet the needs of today's development teams versus the traditional RM tools and their approach.

WELCOME TO JAMA. PEOPLE AGAINST PROJECT FAILURE.

This free guide was written by Jama Software, a team of experienced project management, product development and technology professionals who believe in taking a collaborative approach to requirements management. We are dedicated to building professional-grade, web-based applications that help companies ensure their projects and innovation efforts will be successful – delivered on time, on budget and meet customer needs.

The result is a product called Jama Contour. To learn more about Contour and to help shape the future direction of our solution, join us in the Jama Backstage, an online collaborative forum of professionals who care about moving requirements management forward.

PRODUCT



FORUM



503.922.1058 | success@jamasoftware.com | www.jamasoftware.com

