



## **The Hidden Cost of Outdated Systems: How Disconnected Technology Is Draining Your Team and What to Do About It**

A guide for nonprofit leaders ready to move beyond manual workarounds, patchwork platforms, and tech-induced burnout

# Is Your Technology Keeping Up with Your Mission?

***Nonprofits drive change, strengthen communities, and deliver impact with limited resources. That kind of dedication deserves tools that match the quality of the work.***

Yet many teams are still relying on disconnected systems, manual workarounds, and spreadsheets that weren't built to scale. Even routine tasks, like preparing reports or tracking expenses, can consume more time than they should. When technology can't keep up, it doesn't just affect efficiency. It can hold back your mission.

This guide is designed for nonprofit leaders and finance teams feeling the pressure of tools that no longer meet their organization's needs but are hesitant to move forward with a technology upgrade. It breaks down the hidden costs of outdated systems: dollars lost, staff time consumed, delayed decisions, and missed opportunities to expand your impact.

Modern systems give people better tools to lead, plan, and move their mission forward. With the right technology and a thoughtful implementation partner, an upgrade isn't a disruption. It's a step toward clearer reporting, stronger collaboration, and more time for the work only your team can do.



## **What you'll learn:**

- How to recognize the tipping points where technology starts holding you back
- Where nonprofits typically lose time, clarity, and capacity—plus how to recover it
- What a right-sized, integrated tech stack looks like across different nonprofit types
- How Maner Costerisan supports change without overwhelming your team
- Strategies to align a technology investment with your board, budget, and long-term goals

# The Cost of Outdated or Disconnected Systems

At first glance, your systems might seem to be working fine. But many teams spend more and more time just keeping things afloat.

That could mean pulling data from three different systems to build a single board report or routing approvals through long email chains that are hard to track. These manual processes and disconnected tools introduce friction. And that friction adds up.

Reports take longer to complete. Information becomes siloed. Staff shift their focus from planning to troubleshooting. Internal IT teams stay busy supporting outdated systems that weren't built for a modern, cloud-based environment.

## These inefficiencies come with real costs:



### Time

Hours lost to manual entry, spreadsheet gymnastics, chasing down data, and maintaining outdated systems



### Security

Legacy systems often lack modern protections, increasing the risk of data breaches or compliance gaps



### Visibility

Strategic decisions stall when data is outdated, incomplete, or difficult to access



### Productivity

Skilled team members are pulled into tasks that could be automated or streamlined



### Morale

Frustration builds when staff are stuck in workarounds instead of focusing on their mission



### Momentum

Without real-time insight, it's harder to anticipate needs, act on opportunity, or plan ahead

*Small inefficiencies compound over time. Outdated systems slow progress, scatter information, and exhaust capacity. Better tools help you reclaim control and move forward with purpose.*

# 10 Signs Your System Is Holding You Back

It's not always obvious when it's time to upgrade. Especially in the nonprofit space, where teams continue to deliver results despite limited tools and growing complexity. But when workarounds become routine, and technology starts shaping your operations more than supporting them, it's time to take a closer look.

*These are **10 signs** your current system may be holding you back:*

- You're constantly exporting data to Excel just to build basic reports
- Budgeting requires too many spreadsheets, emails, or meetings
- You can't easily track expenses across multiple grants, programs, or locations
- Your accounting, fundraising, and grant systems do not connect
- It takes weeks (or months) to prepare board reports or grant summaries
- Staff are creating their own workarounds to bypass system limitations
- New hires struggle to learn outdated or overly complex tools
- You rely on one person who "knows how it all fits together"
- Your IT team is focused on maintenance instead of strategy and support
- You're hiring people to manage systems, not advance your mission

Sometimes the strongest signal is silence. Teams stay focused on day-to-day demands and stop questioning how things could work better.

Still, you don't need a system failure to justify change. Often, the shift begins when leaders stop asking, "Can we make this work?" and start asking, "What would it look like if it worked better?"

If several of the signs above apply to your organization, it is not a setback. It's a signal.

It suggests your systems no longer fit your needs. It also means your team is ready for tools that reflect how you operate today and where you want to go.

Fortunately, you don't have to plan the next steps alone. The following section offers a practical look at how modern nonprofit technology works in practice and what it takes to move from slowdowns to momentum.

# Making Your Systems Work Together, Not Just Side by Side

## ***What does a better system look like?***

Modern nonprofit technology replaces patchwork systems with purpose-built tools that connect data, reduce duplicative work, and match how your team works.

Whether you are moving beyond spreadsheets or navigating the limits of a legacy platform, the goal is not more software. The goal is a system that fits your organization.

Maner Costerisan supports several cloud-based platforms, including Sage Intacct, Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, Martus, BILL, and OnBoard. Each offers distinct strengths based on your organization's size, structure, and growth strategy.

## ***Moving from Makeshift to Mission-Aligned***

The examples below illustrate how nonprofits are modernizing budgeting, reporting, approvals, and board governance with better-aligned solutions.

### ***If You're Using...***



### ***You Could Move To...***



# Technology That Works Together and Works for You

*Modern systems are built to integrate*



They streamline reporting, simplify workflows, and reduce manual steps. When systems connect, whether through syncing budgets or embedded approvals, your team spends less time managing data and more time using it. This shift supports faster decisions and gives leadership greater visibility into financial performance.

## Nonprofit Software That Drives Results

**sage** Intacct

 **MARTUS**



Microsoft Dynamics 365  
Business Central

**bill**

 **intuit**  
**quickbooks.**

  
**OnBoard**

# A Technology Partner That Knows Your World

Upgrading your technology can feel like a major undertaking, especially for lean teams with limited time and capacity. But with the right partner and a proven process, it becomes an opportunity. For many nonprofits, the shift brings immediate relief by replacing tedious tasks with systems that truly support the work.

At Maner Costerisan, we don't just implement software. We guide your team through every step, from early planning to long-term support. You'll work with a team that understands the unique challenges of nonprofit finance, including complex funding structures, grant compliance, and board reporting. We know how to align technology with your day-to-day operations and long-term goals.

## What to Expect During Implementation



### **Timeline**

Most projects run 3 to 5 months from kickoff to go-live



### **Team**

You'll collaborate with platform specialists and a project manager who keeps everything moving



### **Support**

Maner handles configuration, data migration, and training

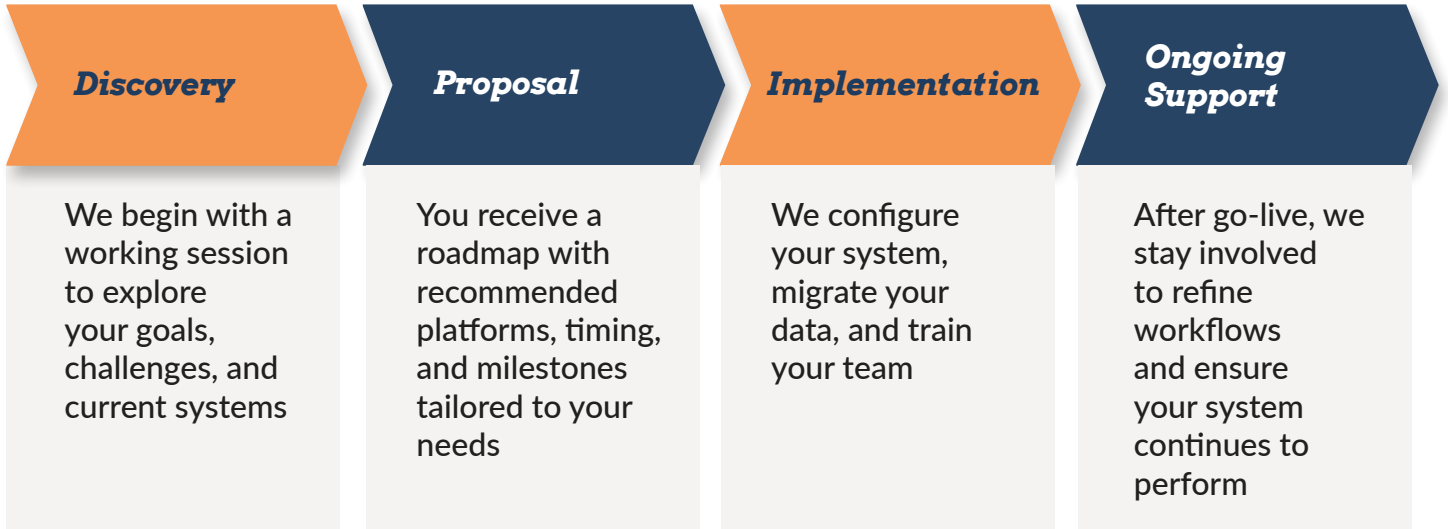


### **Your Role**

Maintain clean data, participate in testing, and give your team time to adapt

# What the Process Looks Like

Modernizing your systems doesn't have to feel overwhelming. With a clear roadmap and dedicated support, you can take the next step with clarity and control.



## **What the Right System Unlocks:**

- More time for strategic work and less time on manual tasks
- Faster, more accurate reporting that builds confidence
- Clearer insights for audits, reviews, and board meetings
- Software your team won't avoid using
- Stronger return on your technology investment and a better return on your mission



Maner Costerisan is a full-service advisory and accounting firm based in Lansing, Michigan, serving clients throughout the Great Lakes region. For more than 120 years, we have helped mission-driven organizations strengthen their operations through financial, strategic, and technology expertise.

We support more than 400 nonprofit clients across Michigan, including associations, charities, and private and community foundations. Our nonprofit team includes more than 50 professionals who understand the unique demands of funding, reporting, compliance, and growth. Whether you are modernizing your systems or refining your strategy, we help you navigate change and achieve your goals.

## Nonprofit Technology Services

- Strategic technology assessments
- Implementation and support for Sage Intacct, Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, QuickBooks Online, and other platforms
- Process review and optimization
- Budgeting, planning, and reporting tools
- Training and ongoing support tailored to your team

 **Ready to make amazing things happen?  
Talk To An Expert:**



Sarah Jennings, CPA, CFE, CAE  
Principal, Director  
sjennings@manercpa.com

Tim Bograkos  
Director of Business Development  
tbograkos@manercpa.com