

## **6 RED FLAGS**

# **What to Watch Out for When Evaluating Recreation Management Software**

How to spot the most common red flags when deciding on your recreation management software provider.

## About Us

Xplor Recreation offers a frictionless, all-in-one recreation and leisure management software.

With a modern, easy-to-use interface that scales to any size, our platform lets your community members easily self-serve their needs, and makes your staff's lives simpler. It's a complete solution we've engineered for growth, so you can focus on delivering the service your customers deserve.



**Activity + Program Management**



**Membership Management**



**Facility Management**



**Point-of-Sale (POS) + Payments**



**Cloud-Based CRM**



**Modern Online Experience**



**Custom-Branded Mobile App**



**Self-Serve Kiosk Solution**



**Data, Analytics + Reporting**



**Workflow + Automation Engine**



**Configurable Platform + Open API**



**99.9% Uptime Guaranteed**



**Dedicated Account Management**



**Integrated Direct Debits**

# Table of Contents

- Intro: 6 Red Flags to Avoid When Buying Rec Management Software
- Red Flag #1: Poor Self-Serve Customer Experience
  - Questions to Ask Potential Vendors
  - What to Watch Out For
  - Partnership with Xplor Recreation
- Red Flag #2: Lack of Innovation
  - Questions to Ask Potential Vendors
  - What to Watch Out For
  - Partnership with Xplor Recreation
- Red Flag #3: Insufficient Support or Account Management
  - Questions to Ask Potential Vendors
  - What to Watch Out For
  - Partnership with Xplor Recreation
- Red Flag #4: No Open API Integrations
  - Questions to Ask Potential Vendors
  - What to Watch Out For
  - Partnership with Xplor Recreation
- Red Flag #5: Deceptive Pricing Models
  - Questions to Ask Potential Vendors
  - What to Watch Out For
  - Partnership with Xplor Recreation
- Red Flag #6: Hasty Software Implementation
  - Questions to Ask Potential Vendors
  - What to Watch Out For
  - Partnership with Xplor Recreation
- Partnering with Xplor Recreation



INTRO

# 6 Red Flags to Avoid When Buying Rec Management Software

## 6 Red Flags to Avoid When Buying Rec Management Software

Choosing new recreation management software is a big decision—one that will affect your staff's day-to-day operations and your community for the next 5-to-10 years. It's such an important relationship, in fact, that we believe it should feel a lot more **like a partnership**. One that you can count on—wherever and whenever—to help make things less complicated and a lot less difficult for you and your team.

Doing your due diligence is key to finding a software partner who can meet your needs both now and in the future—while saving you from having to repeat this "exciting process" any time soon!



It's for this reason that our team put together this guide. We want to help you make the best decision possible for your facility by sharing a few major red flags to watch out for when evaluating potential software providers.

### IN THIS GUIDE

You'll find insights and practical tips like:



#### TOP RED FLAGS

Common Recreation Management Software Red Flags



#### QUESTIONS TO ASK

Things to Always Ask Potential Software Vendors



#### INFO ABOUT US

What You Can Expect from a Partnership with Xplor Recreation



**RED FLAG #1**

# **Poor Self-Serve Customer Experience**

# Poor Self-Serve Customer Experience

These days, just about everything can be done online. As a result, people expect to be able to engage with everyone and everything, from restaurants to entertainment, directly through the internet—right from the palm of their hands.



And while many industries now offer self-serve capabilities through various smart devices, the majority of recreation management software platforms have yet to adapt. This means that you and your facility could end up with a software solution that is 10—or even 20!—years behind the average user.

To avoid partnering with an outdated provider, look at their:



WEBSITE EXPERIENCE



MOBILE APP OFFERING

# An Outdated Website Experience

One look has you saying, “Is that from this century?”

Many recreation management software vendors offer online registration experiences that have not been updated in awhile. Sometimes not since the turn of the Millennium! As a result, their workflows really don't match the modern online consumer experience that the majority of your members are used to.

Be sure to test every vendor's web experience for yourself to see how it stacks up against your own personal online shopping expectations.

## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to the website experience of a vendor's software by asking the following questions:



### Mobile Optimization

Is there anything you can do on a desktop that you can't do on a smartphone? Is the experience mobile-responsive and optimized for smartphones?



### Online Capabilities

Can we embed your online registration portal directly into our website? What about facility bookings—can they be managed online? Can we brand these modules?



### Live Backend Demos

Can you provide our team with a live demo of the backend of your software?



### Hidden Costs

Are there any fees associated with offering standard functions like online registration through either the desktop or mobile experiences?



### Browser Compatibility

Is your website experience—especially, your online registration—compatible across all browsers?



# An Outdated Website Experience

## What to Watch Out For

### “Mobile-Optimized” Claims

- ✗ Key features, like online registration or member portal, can only be accessed by desktop
- ✗ Current clients’ online registration experiences are unimpressive via mobile

### Money for What?!

- ✗ Additional fees for what should be standard functionalities, such as online registration capabilities



## Online Web Experience with Xplor Recreation

When you partner with Xplor Recreation, you get access to our innovative recreation management technology that provides:



### Mobile-First Design

Our mobile-optimized platform enables a cohesive online registration portal experience across all devices—without compromise.



### Custom Branding

Customize and embed our portal directly onto your website, for a seamless experience between your site and our software.



### Browser Compatibility

Our platform is compatible with all internet browsers, eliminating friction for your members when it comes to accessing your offerings.

# A Mobile App that's Not Native

Look out for hybrids and ones that simply don't exist.

Did you know that 76% of adults use their mobile phones for making purchases? Of those consumers, 60% prefer mobile apps over mobile sites because of better user experiences.

With that in mind, it's so important to offer your members a functional and engaging mobile app. This makes it a big factor when evaluating recreation management software partners.

While many platforms offer mobile app solutions, most of them are either shared with other facilities or are "hybrid" apps with limited functionality. And sometimes? They don't exist even yet—and may not for many years to come.

## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to the mobile app experience of a vendor's software by asking the following questions:



### **Native vs. Hybrid**

Do you offer a mobile app? Is it a native or hybrid application?



### **User Experience**

Can our community members manage their accounts and browse, register and pay for programs all within your app?



### **Marketplace Experience**

Is the app shared with other facilities or is it unique and custom-branded to our facility?



### **Workflows + Implementation**

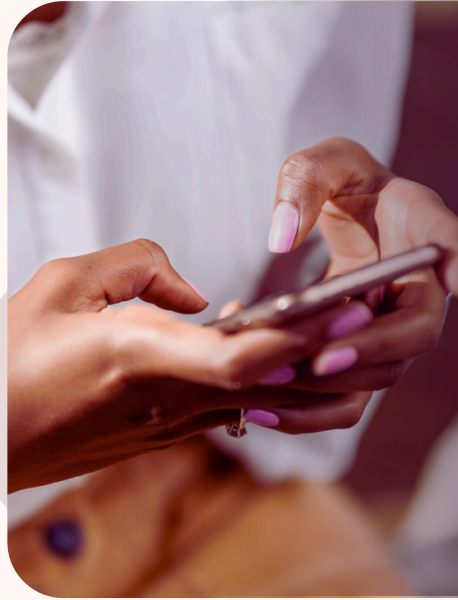
Does our facility need to do any extra work to setup and maintain the mobile app?

# A Mobile App that's Not Native

## What to Watch Out For

### Hybrid Apps

- ✗ Only a portion of the experience is built in the app itself
- ✗ The rest is through a mobile-responsive web page
- ✗ You get kicked out of the app part way through the experience
- ✗ Less secure, poorer performance, and clunkier than native apps



### Marketplace Platform

- ✗ A platform that isn't unique to your facility
- ✗ Many other facilities are also listed on the app
- ✗ Members must search for you every time they use the app
- ✗ Your facility is like one of many restaurants listed on "Uber Eats"

# A Mobile App that's Not Native

## What to Watch Out For

### Unclear Launch Timeline

- ✗ Some platforms claim their mobile app is coming soon
- ✗ Unable to provide timelines on when they'll be releasing it
- ✗ Inability to communicate more details on this functionality



## Mobile App Experience with Xplor Recreation

The Xplor Recreation mobile app gives your facility its very own custom-branded native app that empowers your members to access your offering anytime, anywhere.

Natively built on iOS and Android, our mobile app solution is aligned with the modern, intuitive experience people are used to.

It provides facilities with better performance, security, and functionality by seamlessly integrating into our platform, with no additional workflows or hidden costs.



RED FLAG #2

# Lack of Innovation

# Lack of Innovation

As years go by in a partnership between a facility and a vendor, a lack of software innovation can be an all-too-common issue. This lack of progress can greatly harm your ability to effectively engage your community and staff.

Choosing the right software for your facility today is just one of many ways you can better connect with those who live and work in your community—now and into the future.

When assessing a particular platform, make sure you really dig into the capabilities of the software. You should also look into the provider's commitment to rapid and continuous innovation.



## What to Watch Out For

### No Overview or Roadmap

- ✗ Inability to provide a high-level overview of past and planned innovations
- ✗ Lack of knowledge on their company's stance on innovation and improvements

### Little Investment in R&D

- ✗ Vendors are not investing in research and development, nor do they plan to
- ✗ Disinterested in improving to meet the needs of their customers and end-users

### Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to the innovative nature of a vendor's software by asking the following questions:



#### Past Developments

What are some of the major developments you've released over the last five years and when were they deployed?



#### New Release Cadence

How often do you release new features?



#### Upcoming Innovations

What releases do you have planned for next year?



#### Process for New Features

What is your process for prioritizing new features?



#### Product Team

Do you have a team that's focused on developing new features?

### Innovative Solutions with Xplor Recreation

From our forward-thinking partnerships with solutions like Data Lake to our dedicated research and development product team, Xplor Recreation is constantly evolving our software. We want to ensure that you can breathe easy, knowing our team will support you today and going forward.

You'll never have to worry about simply meeting your members' expectations—our goal is always to help you exceed them.

This results in more smiling faces, a lot less worry, and an increase in staff time and resources.



**RED FLAG #3**

# **Insufficient Support or Account Management**



## Insufficient Support or Account Management

You and your team work hard to provide your members with the best customer experience possible. Why should you expect anything less from your providers?



Unfortunately, dedicated customer support and account management isn't always standard practice with some recreation management software vendors. In certain cases, these key support systems either don't exist or will end up costing you a lot more money.

To avoid partnering with an unaccountable provider, look at their:



CUSTOMER  
SUPPORT



ACCOUNT  
MANAGEMENT

# No Customer Support Availability

When you can only get ahold of the bots.

To best serve your community, your software partner should act like an extension of your business. Your vendor should be available to help you find quick and effective solutions to any problem that may come up. Because even when the bots are friendly, they certainly can't replace the support of a real-live human!

With many vendors offering limited support or charging extra for this service, it's important that you look out for certain red flags when discussing this key deliverable with potential providers.

## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to a vendor's customer support by asking the following questions:



### Support Ticket SLA

What is your Service Level Agreement (SLA) for support tickets? How quickly can I expect to hear from you when I have an issue?



### Hours of Operation

What are your support team's hours of operation?



### Cost of Support

Do you charge for access to your support team or is it included in your fees?



### Accessibility of Support

What channels can we access your support team through?

## No Customer Support Availability

### What to Watch Out For

#### Limited Support

- ✗ Seeking support comes with long wait times and extremely delayed ticket turnaround
- ✗ Inexperienced support team

#### Money for What?!

- ✗ Additional charges for access to a vendor's support team



### Customer Support with Xplor Recreation

Xplor Recreation is proud to offer (human) support to all our customers at no additional cost.

Our team will be there to help you sort out any challenges you might encounter.

# No Dedicated Account Management

There's no point of contact or proactive communication.

To get the most out of a partnership with your recreation management software provider, regular account management calls are key.

The purpose of these calls should be to proactively review how you are using the software and notify you of any product updates. You should also use this time to communicate any future plans of your facility's that could impact your account or how you use the software.



## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to a vendor's account management by asking the following questions:



### **Dedicated Account Manager**

Will we have a dedicated account manager for our account?



### **Meeting Cadence**

Will we have recurring meetings with our dedicated account manager?



### **Hidden Fees**

Is there an additional cost for having a dedicated account manager and/or recurring meetings with your team?

# No Dedicated Account Management

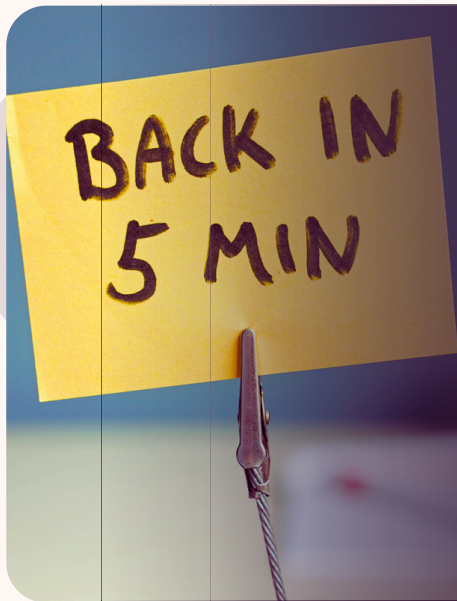
## What to Watch Out For

### No Consistent Point of Contact

- ✗ Dedicated account management (AM) services are not offered
- ✗ You do not have a main point of contact

### The Silence Is Deafening

- ✗ No proactive investment in ensuring your facility's success
- ✗ No plan to help you make the most out of the technology and services
- ✗ Updates to their software are not communicated



## Account Management with Xplor Recreation

Our account management team follows you throughout your onboarding and implementation process—and beyond. We want to make sure that you and your team have everything you need to succeed with our software.

After you transition to Xplor Recreation, you will be partnered with your dedicated account manager. You can expect to have regular meetings with your AM, in which they will help you sort through any roadblocks, as well as answer any questions you may have.

Your account manager will also proactively provide you with all the details you need on upcoming innovations and new software releases.



**RED FLAG #4**

# No Open API Integrations

# No Open API Integrations

We understand that you may have certain ways of doing things at your facility. This, of course, includes the technology and software you use.

From internal communications to bookkeeping, you and your team are probably most comfortable working with the systems and user interfaces that you know. And while some recreation management software platforms, like Xplor Recreation, offer open application program interface (API) integrations—not all do.



This means that you and your team may be forced to switch to new interfaces due to incompatibility with a vendor's recreation management software.

## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to a vendor's API integrations by asking the following questions:



### Open API

Do you support open API integrations?



### Integration Fees

Do you charge to integrate our existing APIs?



### API Calls

Do you charge for your API calls?

### What to Watch Out For

#### No Integration Options

- ✗ Vendor's API is unable to integrate with external applications

#### Limited Integration Options

- ✗ Vendor's software can only integrate with certain applications

#### Money for What?!

- ✗ API integration is an additional cost
- ✗ You're charged for every API call

## Open API Integration with Xplor Recreation

Xplor Recreation has a robust, open application program interface that supports user-friendly inter-connectivity with your third-party solutions.

In the past, our clients have utilized our open API capabilities to build integrations with systems like their student management and library management.

We also have native integrations with many popular leisure and recreation vendors, such as:

- Single Sign-On
- Technogym
- ActiveXchange

These integration capabilities help make the transition to Xplor Recreation a more seamless experience for you, your staff and your community.





RED FLAG #5

# Deceptive Pricing Models

## Deceptive Pricing Models

“If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.” Phishing emails promising riches, voicemails claiming you’ve won a cruise and, yes, even some seemingly affordable rec management software, all fall under this category!



With certain providers, pricing can seem much better than it is when vendors do not disclose additional fees until much later—if at all. Customers end up paying substantially more than they thought they would and, sometimes, they don’t even know why.

Make sure that you clearly understand what you’re paying for before you sign on for a long-term partnership.

To avoid partnering with a costly provider, look for:



HIDDEN  
FEES



LONG-TERM  
COSTS

# Undisclosed or Hidden Fees

Determining what you're paying for is near impossible.

Many recreation management software vendors provide pricing that only shows the cost of their software subscription.

This "overview" is definitely not an accurate summary of what you'll be paying month-over-month. Instead, by the end of your partnership terms, you'll have paid a lot—like, a lot, a lot—more.



## Charges You May Not Know You're Paying

Certain software providers will keep you in the dark about how they charge you on a monthly or annual basis for things like:

- ACH/EFT fees, which can range from \$5 to \$25 per transaction
- Monthly service charges, ranging from \$50 to \$200 per month
- Interchange fees, "handling" fees, surcharge fees, etc.
- Card Present and Card Not Present fees
- Credit card rates
- Automatic annual subscription fee increases
- Add-on modules or services

Some of these additional charges can cost you up to 3.2% of the total transaction.

## Undisclosed or Hidden Fees

### What to Watch Out For

#### Unclear Pricing

- ✗ No all-inclusive cost summary of their software and services
- ✗ Unable to find specifics on percentages taken as fees or annual fee increases (look in the fine print!)
- ✗ Hard to decipher what you're actually paying for

#### “Cheaper” than Most

- ✗ Always pause if a vendor appears to be substantially more affordable than other providers

#### A Laundry List of Hidden Costs

- ✗ From payment fees to charges for standard support, some vendors charge for just about everything

## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to a vendor's overall pricing by asking the following questions:



#### All-Inclusive Cost

What is the all-inclusive, annual cost of using your service, including transaction fees and payment processing fees?



#### Hidden Fees

What modules and services are included in this cost? Are there additional costs for online registration, facility booking, customer support, or account management?



#### Missing Services

Are there any software functionalities or services that are not reflected in the cost you've provided?

# Long-Term Cost of Training on Software

Not everything is included. Even when it should be.

Another important factor to consider when evaluating a vendor is the long-term cost of doing business, such as keeping your team trained up on their software.

Whether you want to ensure your staff is getting the most out of the platform or you have a group of new hires, periodic refresher training is always a good idea.

This can help ensure that you, your team, and the members of your community are getting the best possible experience out of your recreation management software.

Unfortunately, many vendors make their training modules unnecessarily complicated and drawn out, while charging incredibly high fees.

## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to a vendor's long-term training fees by asking the following questions:



### Available Training

What kind of ongoing training services do you offer?



### Cost of Training

What are the costs of your refresher training courses?

## Long-Term Cost of Training on Software

### What to Watch Out For

#### Unclear Logistics

- ✗ There's little to no information on the frequency or cost of training

#### Longer than Necessary

- ✗ Unnecessarily long training blocks that result in higher costs

#### Restrictive Location

- ✗ Only in-person training options, leading to a much larger bill



### Fee Structures with Xplor Recreation

We are always transparent about our fees. From your implementation cost to your annual charge, you will always know what you're paying for.

Our team will never hide fees from you or claim to be cheaper than we are just to secure your business.



**RED FLAG #6**

# Hasty Software Implementation

## Hasty Software Implementation

While you'd never plan to switch software providers on a tight timeline, sometimes, these things happen. If you ever find yourself in this tricky situation, we have one main piece of advice—don't panic! Even if you feel pressure to find a solution, and fast, don't simply sign on with the first provider who says they can get you up and running in two-to-three months.

Why? Because implementing a new recreation management software in that amount of time is simply not possible.



They may be able to get the bare minimum set up in a hurry—but this typically doesn't include several key parts of the actual implementation. In the end, you'll end up paying much more to extend and finish everything properly.

To avoid  
partnering with a  
hasty provider,  
look at their:



IMPLEMENTATION  
TIMELINE



DATA  
MIGRATION



# Super Quick Implementation

In this case, faster is rarely better.

Fast implementation is not only unrealistic but can cause a lot of chaos for your facility and the members you serve. This is because a hasty transition leaves you and your team very little time to get familiar with the new software.

Without enough time to learn the basics of how to use the platform, staff are typically unable to serve members to the best of their ability.

Often, this leads to increased wait times, unanswered questions, and a lot more friction for your facility—resulting in both your team and your customers becoming incredibly frustrated.

## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to a vendor's implementation timeline by asking the following questions:



### Implementation Timeline

How long is implementation estimated to take from start to finish?



### Implementation Process

What does the implementation process and schedule look like?



### Client Requirements

What are the requirements from our facility for you to proceed with implementation?



### Implementation Costs

Will we incur additional fees if implementation takes longer than planned?

# Super Quick Implementation

## What to Watch Out For

### Less than 4 Months

- ✗ Beware of implementation timelines of less than four months
- ✗ Clients often end up paying more to extend implementation

### Out-of-the-Box Solutions

- ✗ Shorter implementation typically means less custom software
- ✗ Adjustments to software are not available
- ✗ When adjustments are possible, customization costs much more



## Customization with Xplor Recreation

Before our team demos our software, we make sure that we understand the priorities of each facility we talk to. Our team wants to understand your goals and what you're trying to accomplish to ensure that everyone is aligned before we enter into a partnership together.

Our ability to customize workflows for your facility means that once everything has been implemented, you and your team will be set up for success.

We take our time understanding your organization, so you can launch our software within your community with peace of mind.

# Unclear Data Migration Process

There's zero guidance on what to do with your data.

Regardless of whether you want to migrate your data from your old platform or start fresh, when talking to a potential new software partner, make sure that you discuss this key part of your transition.

Without it, you and your team will be left to figure things out on your own in the thick of launching a new platform.

Unfortunately, not all recreation management software providers include this important consideration in their implementation offering.



## Questions to Ask Potential Vendors

Uncover possible red flags when it comes to a vendor's data processes by asking the following questions:



### Data Migration Experience

Have you conducted data migrations in the past? What is your process?



### Migration Costs

Are there any fees involved in migrating our data from our old platform to yours?



### Client Expectations

What preparations and deliverables are required from our facility?

## Unclear Data Migration Process

### What to Watch Out For

#### No Data Process

- ✗ Transition to your new software becomes stressful and chaotic
- ✗ Lost data and friction for your members

#### Money for What?!

- ✗ Data recommendations or migration costs a lot extra

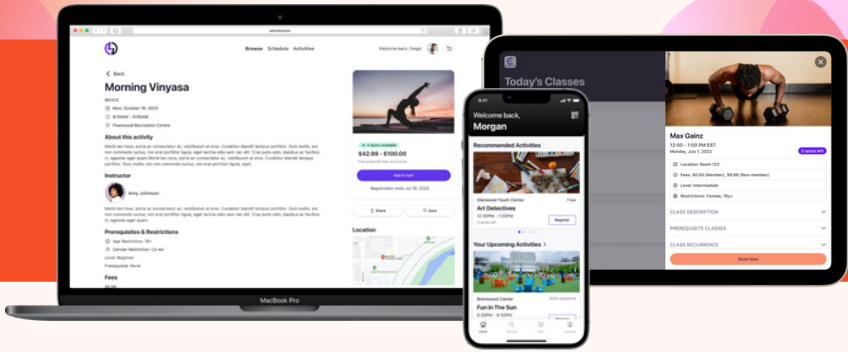


## Historical Data Management with Xplor Recreation

Over the years, Xplor Recreation has performed data migration from over 35 different platforms.

While our team recommends starting fresh as a best practice, Xplor Recreation can help you with your data management—regardless of the implementation approach you choose.

If you'd like to migrate data from your old system, our team will build a tailored migration plan for every one of your locations and sites. This plan will follow the trickle-down principle to minimize downtime for your facility, so you can focus on what matters—bringing joyful experiences to your community.



# Book a demo call today!



## STEP 1

Schedule your demo call with our team.



## STEP 2

Transform your leisure and rec operations.



## STEP 3

Start serving your community even better.

[Book Your Demo](#)



“A little while ago, we had our gates go down on a Friday afternoon at about 4:50 pm. I put in a case ticket saying we needed an urgent fix. Within five minutes, I had a phone call from Xplor Recreation, and it was done.”

Billy Allen - Melbourne University Sport  
[Full Case Study](#)