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The Essential Enterprise Scheduling Software Guide

For organizations with complex scheduling needs

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The Problem:
An Enterprise Scheduling Process Rooted in the Past



Consider this common enterprise scheduling scenario: The customer phones in to book an appointment. A representative answers the call, finds an open time slot for the customer (perhaps via a tool like Outlook or Google calendar, a spreadsheet, or even a paper calendar), and each go about their merry way. That's the way it's been done for years, and it works. So, what's the problem?

Well, while the preceding method is undoubtedly a scheduling experience that businesses and consumers have become accustomed to dealing with, that doesn't make it the ideal experience. As a matter of fact, this classic way of making, changing, and cancelling appointments has a number of hefty drawbacks, especially for an enterprise with complex scheduling needs.

Let's walk through some of the shortcomings.

First of all, it's expensive. For high-volume operations, the number of staff needed to field calls can be astounding, and the costs could be astronomical.

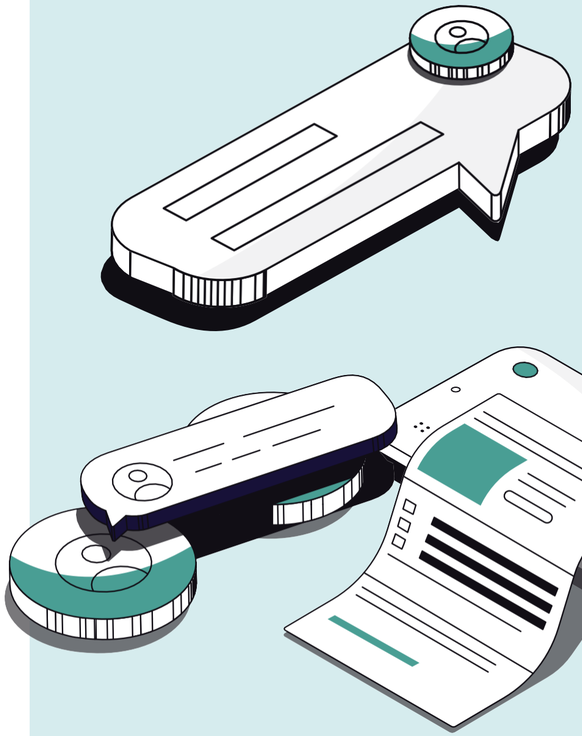
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It also doesn't scale well for larger organizations with multiple locations, as the expenses associated with taking appointment calls are directly correlated with the number of people wanting to schedule. Next, there's the fact that this process relies upon technology that wasn't built to be an enterprise appointment solution, or is dated, non-collaborative, and doesn't integrate well with other systems. And let's not even get into the security issues.

But, perhaps most importantly, there's this factor:
Today's customers just don't like having to call in to make an appointment.

It's true, traditional phone-based appointment booking continues to be a popular way of handling this critical exchange of dates and times. But, for the modern enterprise, it simply doesn't work anymore.

> *"80 percent of Americans would be motivated to book a doctor's appointment online because it is more convenient or they can do it at any time.* -Zocco survey



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The Solution:
Enterprise Scheduling Software

Fortunately, today's advanced technology has made it possible to solve the productivity, scalability, and customer experience challenges associated with large-scale scheduling operations. Enterprise-grade online scheduling software was specifically designed to streamline the appointment booking processes for larger organizations.

Some benefits of a quality enterprise appointment solution:

- Outstanding return on investment (ROI)
- The capacity to scale with a business as it grows
- Enablement of customer self-booking
- Seamless integration with other core systems

But that's not all. Online appointment booking software also allows for a higher degree of customer engagement, as well as ample opportunities for brand promotion and awareness. There's also the time-to-market factor. Often, an enterprise scheduling system implementation process can be accomplished in as little as three to six months, compared to the three to six years it could take for a company to build their own solution.

But, even though the business case for implementing an online booking solution is convincing and the benefits are plentiful, it doesn't mean the decision should be taken lightly. Replacing your current scheduling process is no easy task. There are many factors to assess when considering this option.



The Disparity:
Scheduling for Enterprises vs SMBs

Enterprise scheduling requirements are drastically different from those of smaller businesses. That's why third-party software systems designed for startups simply won't work for these larger organizations.

The unique software needs of enterprises include:

- Live, 24/7 support
- Dedicated account management
- Advanced API capabilities
- Robust SSO support
- World-class security
- Proven company stability
- Operational scalability

And that's just the beginning. Once an enterprise finds a vendor and solution that meets those core requirements, there's still much more to consider.

Implementing an enterprise scheduling solution is an important decision that requires substantial planning and preparation. The Essential Enterprise Scheduling Software Guide was designed to help you prepare for and navigate through some of these critical considerations.



The Implementation:
Enterprise Scheduling
A Project, not a Download

An enterprise's switch to online scheduling technology doesn't happen overnight. It requires a thoughtful assessment of your current scheduling processes and must also respect the needs of your existing business units and core technology.

Because scheduling affects so many areas of a business, it's essential that appropriate preparation is done well in advance of choosing a solution.

Things to Consider When Selecting a Scheduling Application:

- What are the key business objectives driving the demand for enterprise scheduling software?
- Who are the main stakeholders who need to be part of the project team?
  What are the risks associated with using cloud-based booking?
- How will you approach change management?
- How will you measure success?

There are, of course, many more questions to answer. A qualified enterprise scheduling software advisor can help you refine your specific business requirements and make sure your team is on the same page. Doing so is vital to ensure a successful implementation.



The Bang for Your Buck: Calculating Your Potential ROI

Calculating return on investment (ROI) is a practice that should be conducted whenever you're considering a major initiative to make sure it's worth the resources. When it comes to an enterprise scheduling system, there are several ways to calculate your estimated return. How you choose to do so depends on your objectives.

> *Know what you own, and know why you own it.* -Peter Lynch

For example, if your goal is to save labor costs, you can compute a simple analysis to determine your return. Let's assume you use a call center to take all of your appointment-related calls. The monthly cost for this service is $50,000. If the investment in an online scheduler is $10,000 per month and it allows you to eliminate the call center, your ROI is 300%.

Here's the calculation:

A Scheduling Software ROI Calculation: Call Center Comparison	
Call Center Monthly Cost	$50,000
Scheduler Monthly Cost	$10,000
Savings	$40,000
ROI Calculation	$40,000 - $10,000 / $10,000 (Return - Investment/Investment)
Return on Investment	3x or 300%

In the case of an enterprise scheduling solution, an ROI calculation would also need to factor in the savings on hardware costs, the labor required to support and maintain the system and other overall efficiencies gained.

Another critical factor to consider when analyzing ROI is that customers book more appointments when they can do it themselves. Studies show that customers prefer the control and convenience of online booking. So, not only is online booking good for the bottom line, it can also add a pop to the top line.

The Integrations:
Why a Robust API is Key

The implementation of an enterprise scheduling solution often requires one or more integrations with existing systems. While it's possible to use an online scheduling application as a stand-alone platform — thousands of businesses do — ensuring that the software works with core systems is a requirement for most organizations.

> *For enterprises, a partner's API is the lifeblood of their technology. If it's not enterprise-grade, it could cause serious problems at scale.*

In today's highly connected world, integrations are created and maintained using APIs (Application Program Interfaces). There are middleware applications that more easily allow systems to talk to one another, but more often than not, a custom interface is needed.

That's why ensuring your scheduling partner has a robust API is critical. It's not just about an API's ability to confirm that the right data is being passed back and forth. The design of the API, how it's documented and supported, and its scaling capabilities are also crucial. For enterprises, a partner's API is the life blood of their technology. If it's not enterprise-grade, it could cause serious problems at scale.

A mature API is only part of the equation when it comes to the success of two or more systems talking to each other. If the integration isn't designed properly, the strength of the API is meaningless. To effectively structure an integration, it's essential that application experts — architects, engineers, or analysts — are highly involved with the project, leading detailed discussions, analyzing options, and providing design documentation. The team handling the technical details of the integration plays a key role in the success of the overall implementation.

Although integrations are common in the world of technology, you should never underestimate the effort required to get them right. Many enterprise scheduling system projects have stalled because of failed integration attempts. Be sure to provide sufficient time for detailed planning with your enterprise scheduling software advisor if you're implementing an application that needs to integrate with existing systems.

The Infrastructure:
Dedicated or Multitenancy?

> *The availability of a dedicated infrastructure should be a serious consideration for enterprises considering scheduling software providers.*

However, enterprises have been slow to adopt this new way of approaching software. Big companies have a lot more at stake than smaller ones and replacing software systems can require a huge effort in time and coordination. Plus, the idea of data being hosted at a data center not under their direct control is enough to bring some CTOs to their knees.

Popular Saas solutions like Salesforce have helped enterprises become more accustomed to hosting their software and data in the cloud. This has in turn paved the way for web-based applications to target every nook and cranny of an organization.

Saas systems utilize a concept known as multitenancy. Multitenancy significantly lowers the cost to distribute and maintain software by leveraging one code base and, often, one database. It's a concept that embraces server virtualization and on-demand scalability — two of the best features cloud computing has to offer.

Yet, for all the benefits of SaaS, the idea of an enterprise's infrastructure and data being shared with other businesses is an unnerving thought. To allay these concerns, some enterprise scheduling software providers offer dedicated environments for their clients. These walled-off segments provide businesses with separate databases, web, and API servers. While the cost is typically higher for dedicated resources, it's quite often worth the added security, scalability, and overall peace of mind.

So, in the process of your due diligence, don't forget to look under the hood. The availability of a dedicated infrastructure should be a serious consideration for enterprises considering scheduling software providers.

The Dilemma:
To Buy or to Build

Because large companies generally have sizable software engineering teams, they often are met with a dilemma: Should they buy or build a needed software system? It's an important decision that has far-reaching implications.

> *In the realm of online scheduling, the question of buying versus building is a legitimate one. But for most enterprises, finding an existing enterprise-scale scheduling solution to work with is definitely preferable.*

The fact is that even though bigger organizations have the wherewithal to take on large development projects, most prefer not to. Enterprise technology teams are busy, to say the least. They usually have a backlog of work that spans years. This includes adding new systems as well as updating and maintaining existing ones.

So, it's no surprise that most enterprises prefer to find third-party systems that can meet their needs. But even that is easier said than done.

Take enterprise scheduling solutions, for example. Finding an off-the-shelf application that perfectly aligns with a company's current scheduling processes is nearly impossible. Enterprises are faced with the difficult decision of either changing the way they do business or modifying the third-party system. Most enterprises end up somewhere in between. They'll create a list of must-haves and accept that they'll need to tweak their business models to accommodate the design of the scheduling software.

What this means, however, is that an enterprise's selected scheduling vendor must have the capacity to take on custom development projects, and staff the project managers, solution engineers, business analysts, and dedicated developers as it takes to get the job done. It also means that the vendor must be willing to modify their core code. No enterprise wants to end up with a "one-off" SaaS solution.

In the realm of online scheduling, the question of buying versus building is a legitimate one. But for most enterprises, finding an existing enterprise-scale scheduling solution to work with is definitely preferable.

The Shift:
Change Management is Crucial

Humans are built to resist change. Ask anyone who has ever tried to change a habit — it's difficult. We like to know what we're doing, we like predictability, and we like to feel that we are in control. When you try to introduce change into those stubborn pillars of inertia, the end result can sometimes be painful.

Rolling out a new enterprise software system is no different, and that's why a dedicated change management process is vital to the success of the project.

Change management is the process of preparing a company, and specifically the people in it, for a new process, policy, or system. It involves providing the communication, training, and tools that employees will need to adapt to the change.

If change management is handled correctly, it can be incredibly effective, allowing even the most impactful changes to be implemented with nary a whisper about the way things used to be. But, when the process is ignored or handled in a haphazard manner, it can cause an entire project to fail.

When it comes to an enterprise-wide rollout of online scheduling software, change management must be front-and-center from the outset. For businesses that take appointments, scheduling is often the cornerstone of their business model. Your team's entire effort of honing your offering and promoting your brand converges into a single critical decision point: Will a customer or prospect book an appointment?

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To ensure that the answer is a resounding "yes", it's imperative that an effective change management process is put in place during the implementation of your scheduling system.

The Risk Factor:

Why Security is Paramount

This question is not one to mess around with: Will your choice for an online scheduling application protect your data?

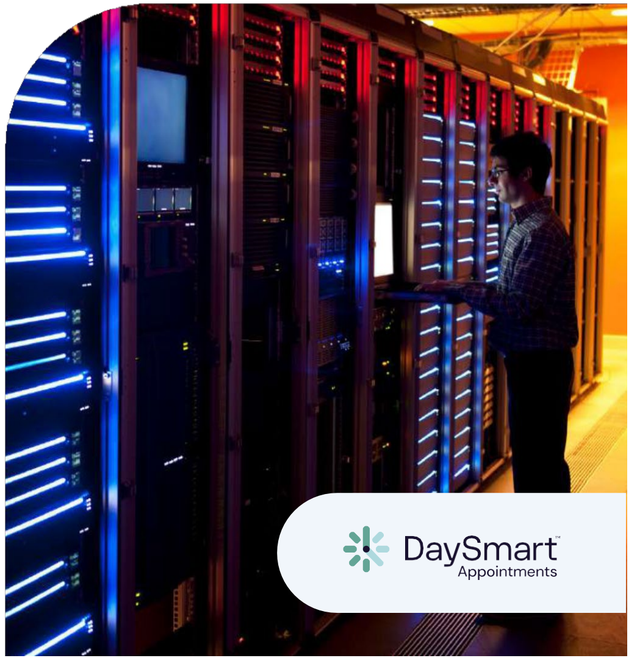
In 2024, the global average cost of a data breach was $4.88 million according to IBM's Cost of Breach Data report. And while the financial impact of a breach can be shocking, the reputational hit that companies risk from these events often prove to be even more painful. There are organizations that have spent years trying to rebuild the trust lost from one security event.

Even the most security-conscious organizations, like government entities, consistently suffer data breaches. They spend millions of dollars on firewalls, anti-virus software, and intrusion-detection systems. But all it takes is one employee error to allow hackers to gain access and wreak havoc on critical systems.

Software companies can prevent human error by implementing strict controls. While these controls definitely address server access, security-aware companies go way beyond that standard. They create and enforce processes ranging from who can access the building to how often passwords have to change.

The best software companies not only implement tight controls on their own, they also have a third party certify them.

While a certification can't guarantee that a software company won't have a breach, it can reduce the likelihood of such a crisis. Because your data and your organization are too important to take chances, be sure that any scheduling vendor you consider has this certification.



The Difference:

A Solution Designed for the Unique Needs of Enterprise

At DaySmart Appointments, we understand that the scheduling needs of enterprises are drastically different than those of smaller companies. That's why we've spent the last two decades building an infrastructure that supports the unique requirements of enterprise businesses. Backed by the most flexible scheduling technology on the market, our system serves even the most complex use cases, regardless of industry.

Powered by a robust API, our best-in-class technology is designed to handle complex enterprise scheduling and security needs, integrate with existing systems, and scale with your business as it grows.

And with a security methodology rooted in "Defense in Depth" concepts, our infrastructure safeguards your data with multiple layers of protection.

Finally, we're committed to scheduling success for every one of our subscribers. Each enterprise client is paired with a dedicated Account Management team that's available on a moment's notice. And our team is at the ready to assist with training and custom implementations.

Members of the Fortune 500 trust DaySmart Appointments for their enterprise scheduling needs. Choose the Online scheduler that was built to meet the needs of larger organizations — and exceed them.



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Our Enterprise Partnerships:

Consultation Built on Collaboration

With our customized, four-step consultative approach, we're committed to building a solution that meets your unique enterprise scheduling needs.

STEP 1: We Consult - In this first phase, we consult with your team to assess your current enterprise schedule process, address challenges, and define your specific business needs.

STEP 2: We Train - To ensure a successful implementation and long-term success, our team trains your staff members across all locations to use your new enterprise scheduling software.

STEP 3: We Enable - Once your enterprise scheduling system is configured and your staff members are trained, it's time to enable the application in a live environment. Our team is with you every step of the way.

STEP 4: We Support - Your dedicated Account Manager is always there to provide quick answers and support your future business growth.



