

Avoid Time Sheet Software Failure: The Top 10 Questions to Ask Vendors



www.replicon.com

With a myriad of different time sheet solutions on the market, selecting the right one can be a daunting task! You want to select the best time sheet solution for your organization that will be adopted company-wide. How do you make this happen when your daily schedule is jam-packed and your budget is stretched razor-thin?

In order to make a sound assessment, take advantage of your complimentary copy of *The Top Reasons That Time Sheet Solutions Fail and How You Can Avoid Them: 10 Questions To Ask Vendors When Evaluating Time Sheet Software*. This comprehensive guide is designed to provide you with the materials to find the best solution for your company today - and tomorrow.

Here are the top 10 questions to ask vendors before purchasing a time sheet solution:

The Top 10 Questions to Ask Vendors

1. Will the Software be **Shelved** Because Users Don't Find it **Easy-to-Use**?
2. What **Key Features** Do You Deliver?
3. Is the Solution **Scalable** For Small to Large Organizations?
4. Will I Be **Charged** For Upgrades, Regardless of the Version I Buy Today?
5. How Will You **Guarantee** Us Superior **Service and Support**?
6. Where's the **Proof** That You Are a **Reputable Company**?
7. Can You **Integrate** With Our Current Software?
8. Do You **Provide** Any **Add-ons**, Such as a Productivity Reporting Tool?
9. What's the **Difference** between **Web-based** and **Web-enabled** and why does it Matter?
10. Will You Be Around in **Five Years** to Support and Maintain the Software?

1. Will the Software be Shelved Because Users Don't Find it Easy-to-Use?

Why Is This Important?

In a conducted study, leading analysts Gartner Group determined that usability methods raised user satisfaction ratings for a system by 40% (Bias and Mayhew).

It has been widely proven that software usability dramatically affects user satisfaction levels and adoption rates. Simply stated, solutions that don't emphasize usability will not be used! On the other hand, employees will rapidly embrace a well-designed product, helping you get the most out of your software investment.

In addition, poorly designed solutions usually require extensive and costly on-site training. Well-designed products require less training, less support, and improved productivity.

Another reason many solutions end up shelved is because they do not serve their intended purpose. The solution must easily configure to all of your business needs, now, and in the future. A complicated customization process that takes weeks, or even months to implement will dramatically interrupt day-to-day productivity and increase the chances of the software being rejected.

How Replicon Solves This:

Designed by a dedicated team of Usability Experts and Software Engineers, **WEB TIMESHEET** is the most [user-friendly time sheet application](#) on the market. **Over 98%** of our customers effortlessly install and begin using the solution with little or no training due to its simple installation, intuitive features, and user-friendly interface. We always provide you with [support documentation](#) like an installation guide, implementation guide, and user guide at no additional cost.

If you prefer instruction, **REPLICON** offers both on-site and web-based training programs. Training is customized to your unique business needs and delivered by team members that understand your requirements, assisting you in implementing the product the right way, the first time!

Install **WEB TIMESHEET** corporate-wide in minutes and implement in **2 days or less**. **WEB TIMESHEET** is fully configurable out-of-the-box, eliminating costly and time-consuming customizations. Build a time tracking system that fits your organization's unique needs with custom fields for any data type. The time sheet screen is configurable for users, groups, or the entire company.

"The best part of our experience with the program has been that it is easy enough and self-explanatory enough to use that it has made adoption of the program and process go very, very smoothly."

**Mike Lewellyn, Manager
Enterprise Unified Solution**

"Deploying and integrating Replicon's Web TimeSheet was a breeze, working with their support team, mainly Alexandru, made the rollout more of a learning experience rather than a nightmare. Thanks Alexandru for your continuous support and helpful hints. Replicon's Web TimeSheet has become a critical application in Lightbulb Press's arsenal, allowing us to control, manage and project cost much more efficiently!"

**Rickie Kowlessar, Director of Technology and E-business,
LightBulb Press**

"Most clients deploy our project tracking products without our help, but if you need us, we're here! Our team of professional service, support and training experts will see you through every phase of your implementation. Just ask us how we can help."

**Technical Support Team,
Replicon**

Here is a glimpse of **WEB TIMESHEET'S** user-friendly interface:

The screenshot displays the WEB TIMESHEET user interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for Promax, Admin, Project, Timesheet, Timecard, Expense, Approvals, Integration, Reports, and Config. The user is logged in as John Smith, and the Timesheet Approver is Rob Jones. The current date is Aug 26, 2007, with a due date of Sep 1, 2007. The interface shows a calendar for August 2007, a list of projects and tasks, and a grid for recording time. A pop-up window is visible for adding time off, with a comment field containing 'Approved vacation time'. The bottom of the interface includes buttons for Offline, Print, Copy From, Save, Cancel, and Submit.

Project	Task	Billing	S 26	M 27	T 28	W 29	T 30	F 31	S 1	Total	Location	ETC (hrs)	Progress
Administration	None	Non-billable			8.00					8.00	Texas		97% 292.00/300.00
Web Site	None	Billable				8.00				8.00	New York	40	75% 56.00/75.00
Graphics Engine	Maintenance	Java Developer					4.00			4.00	New York		110% 55.00/50.00
Web Site	Deliverables / Revisions	Billable						4.00		4.00	New York		40% 20.00/50.00
Time Off			S 26	M 27	T 28	W 29	T 30	F 31	S 1	Total			
Vacation (8.0000 Days Remaining)										8.00			8.00
Bereavement													
Family Emergency				8.00									
Holiday													
Jury Duty													
Total			8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00						

What To Ask Vendors:

- How long does it typically take employees to adopt the solution and become expert users?
- Is additional training and unlimited technical support also available? At what cost?
- To what extent is the solution fully configurable out-of-the-box?
- Can the solution adapt to our rapidly changing business requirements?
- How quick and easy is a typical software installation?
- How long does it take to implement and configure the software to our business needs?
- Can we test-drive the software before purchasing?
- Does the trial version come pre-populated with data or do we have to input it ourselves?

2. What Key Features Do You Deliver?

Why Is This Important?

Is the solution easy-to-use, yet falls short on delivering key functionality? Many time sheet applications allege an impressive list of features, yet are often poorly designed and require users to complete complicated, manual tasks.

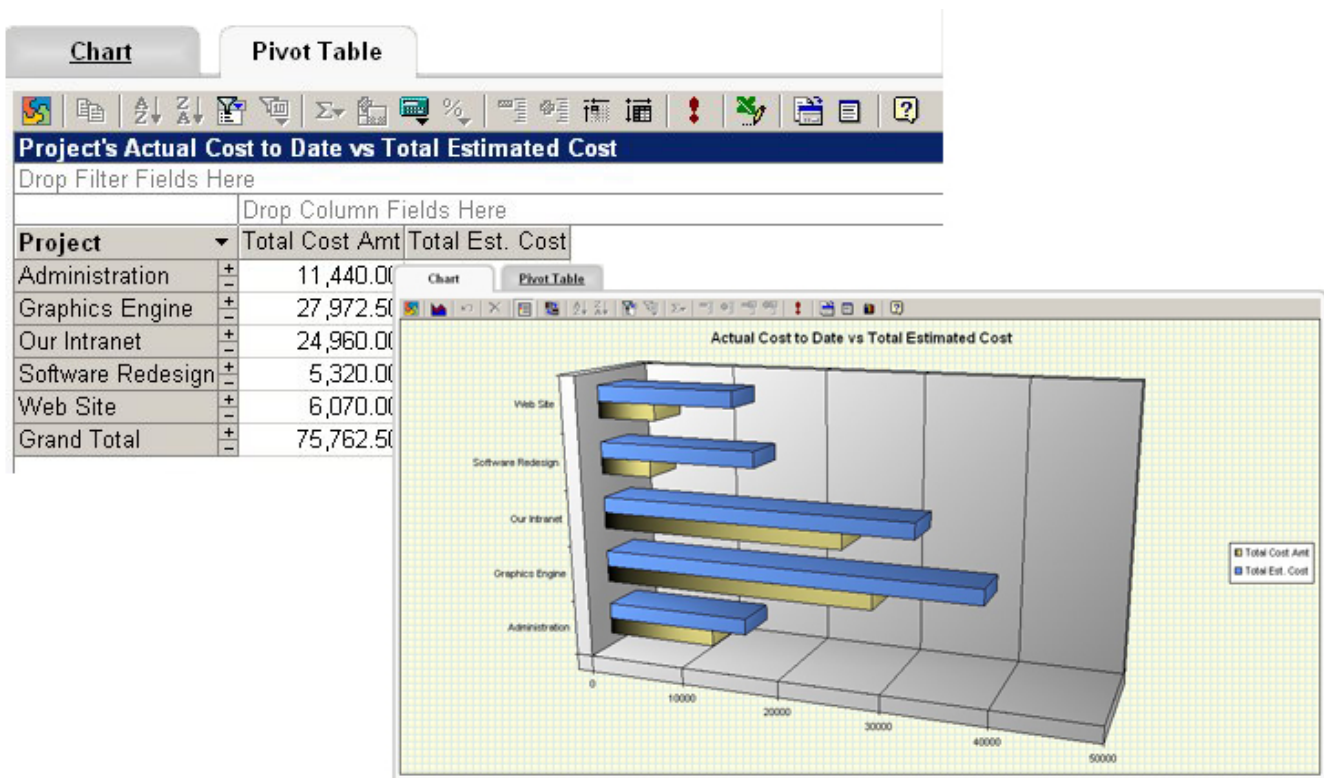
When evaluating the different solutions on the market, compare how each application delivers key features to find out what they are capable of so that you can make the smartest decision.

How Replicon Solves This:

REPLICON created a best-of-breed time sheet solution based on input from its customers, and thought leaders in industries such as corporate IT and professional services.

The latest version of [WEB TIMESHEET](#) offers richer functionality than ever before!

Real-time, Customizable Reports



WEB TIMESHEET uses Microsoft Excel PivotTable and PivotChart features built directly into the application, allowing users to view and manipulate charts and graphs without exporting raw data to another application. In addition, integrating MS Excel features increases software adoption rates by allowing users to create and edit graphs using familiar tools and interfaces. Over 30 unique graphical views are available to meet the distinct needs of your organization.

WEB TIMESHEET helped the CIS (Center for Information Services) reduce time spent on monthly analysis from one full day of work to one hour of work:

"For individuals responsible for reporting, we're saving about seven hours [on reports]. Accounting is also removed from the process, and the reports can be handled by middle management for easy review. It's saved us the annual maintenance cost by simplifying the quantifying of data so we can use it for reporting purposes."

**Greg Zickuhr, Director of Customer Service
Center for Information Services**

Flexible Approvals

WEB TIMESHEET provides up to 5 levels of approval and over 80 approval paths. Select the most appropriate approval sequence for your business requirements. Do your clients need to approve your time as well? We also address this approval path requirement. Ask us how!

Approval Path Name * Project Leader --> Supervisor

* Required Fields

Approver Type	Approval Sequence
Project Leader	1st
Supervisor	2nd
<Select Approver >	
<Select Approver >	
<Select Approver >	

Save

Timesheet | **Time Off Request** | **Expenses**

Menu	Path Name	Approval Sequence
1.	Supervisor	Supervisor
2.	Project Leader --> Supervisor	Project Leader, Supervisor
3.	Project Leader and Supervisor	Project Leader/Supervisor
4.	System Approval	System

Add

Default Approval Path is: Supervisor

Easy, Error-free Mass Editing

WEB TIMESHEET's mass edit feature allows for automated, error-free updates. Add a new employee or complete a rate change across multiple projects quickly and easily. Unlike other solutions, you'll never spend costly hours individually updating each record.

Smart Email Notification

With **WEB TIMESHEET**, an automated reminder email can be sent to employees to assist with workflow management, ensuring the time sheet process is automated. Examples of email notifications include a request to approve time, reminder to complete time sheets, or task assignment changes.

Displaying records 1 - 20 of 24

<< Previous 20 1 2 Next 20 >>

Menu	Description	Enabled	Send On	Time of day
1.	Timesheet is due	No		
2.	Timesheet is overdue	Yes	1 day after	00:00:00
3.	Timesheet is waiting for approval	No		
4.	Timesheets are overdue (Batch)	No		
5.	Timesheets are waiting for approval (Batch)	No		
6.	Timesheet approvals are due (Batch)	No		
7.	Timesheet approvals are overdue (Batch)	No		
8.	Timesheet is approved	No		
9.	Timesheet is rejected	No		
10.	Expense is waiting for approval	No		
11.	Expense approvals are due	No		
12.	Expense approvals are overdue	No		
13.	Expense is approved	No		
14.	Expense is rejected	No		

Convenient Offline functionality

With **WEB TIMESHEET**, an offline time sheet can be sent to employees as an email. This is an invaluable feature for users that cannot directly connect to **WEB TIMESHEET** due to extensive travel or remote office locations. Once the employee completes the offline timesheet, their time is automatically updated in **WEB TIMESHEET**. Unlike other solutions, our offline time sheet has the same look-and-feel as **WEB TIMESHEET** for enhanced usability.

“Compiling time sheets has never been a welcomed activity. As a result a major problem was the lack of accuracy of effort estimates. Since Web TimeSheet is very user friendly and consolidates time entry towards projects as well as holidays, sick time etc. our people are happier to enter time. We are now able to measure efficiency of our people and finally have accurate effort estimates that make sense.”

**Nicola Zarrilli,
Fujitsu Services**

What To Ask Vendors:

- Does the product offer real-time, graphical, customizable reports that are easy-to-use?
- Can we create reports within the application itself or do they have to be manually exported to another application?
- How many approval levels are available? How many approval paths?
- Can I mass edit records?
- What about our employees that don't have a reliable or fast Internet connection? How will these users enter their time sheets?
- Do the offline time sheets look the same as the web time sheets?

3. Is the Solution Scalable For Small to Large Organizations?

Why Is This Important?

You want to select a solution that can grow with your organization. Make sure that the solution can properly scale to accommodate an expanding user base and increased business requirements, without suffering debilitating performance issues.

The software architecture can seriously impact the solution's scalability. For large implementations, a scripting language can cause performance problems, whereas compiled code is much faster and more scalable.

How Replicon Solves This:

WEB TIMESHEET is built on a scalable, multi-tier architecture, enabling the solution to be deployed in medium to large-scale enterprises. **WEB TIMESHEET** is created using .NET 2.0, a programming language recognized for its stability and rapid execution speed, thereby increasing the product's efficiency.

As proof of [WEB TIMESHEET's scalability](#), global consulting firm Cap Gemini originally purchased **WEB TIMESHEET** to track projects and expenses for just 250 users. The firm now uses **WEB TIMESHEET** for over 10,000 users located remotely around the globe.

When Enterprise Unified Solutions (eUS) was looking for a solution, they compared **WEB TIMESHEET** to other time-tracking applications, but found that competitors came up short.

“One of the two applications didn't adapt at all to a small company, and the other was underdeveloped as a software solution and couldn't fulfill our needs. Web TimeSheet's polished, scalable product compared favorably.”

**Mike Lewellyn, Manager
Enterprise Unified Solutions**

What To Ask Vendors:

- Is the solution built on a robust, stable platform that will allow for rapid increases in end-users and changing business requirements?
- What type of programming language was used to create the application? Do you use compiled code or scripting language?
- How does the execution speed compare to other programming languages?

4. Will I Be Charged For Upgrades, Regardless of the Version I Buy Today?

Why Is This Important?

Make sure that upgrades, for both major and minor releases, are always included in your support or maintenance contract. Otherwise, you will find yourself purchasing countless, costly upgrades each time the vendor decides to release a new version.

It goes without saying that the upgrade process should be quick and painless, involving no manual and time-consuming data migration.

How Replicon Solves This:

Upgrades are always included at no additional charge in **REPLICON's** Maintenance Agreement, regardless of whether the upgrade is a point release or a full product release.

[Upgrading WEB TIMESHEET](#) typically takes less than 10 minutes and is just a few clicks away. Upgrades are always available on our website, so you can upgrade at your convenience. The upgrade process is so easy that most users don't require any support. However, **REPLICON's** technical support team is always ready to assist you. **WEB TIMESHEET** supports ALL software versions, therefore, you are not forced to upgrade to another version in order to receive support.

Unlike other time sheet solutions, upgrading **WEB TIMESHEET** does not involve a manual data migration. Upgrading your solution is seamless with **WEB TIMESHEET's** built-in data migrator. This allows you to upgrade your solution at your convenience.

What To Ask Vendors:

- Are all product upgrades (i.e., both major and minor) included in the support/maintenance agreement?
- How quick and easy is the upgrade process? Can we upgrade at our own convenience?
- Is the upgrade process too technical for us to complete by ourselves, in-house?
- Will our current data be automatically migrated?
- Do we have to upgrade to the latest version or can we remain on our current version?
- Will you continue to support all versions of the software?

5. How Will You Guarantee Us Superior Service and Support?

Why Is This Important?

Select a time sheet solution that provides superior service and support, both before, and more importantly, after the sale! From the initial installation to more advanced support, be sure to select a strong vendor with a knowledgeable and well-trained technical support team that you can rely on.

The best way to determine the quality of support you will receive is to test them. Call their support desk and see how long it takes them to respond and solve your issue.

Ensure a variety of different methods of support are available, such as live support, e-mail support, updated FAQs and comprehensive online help.

How Replicon Solves This:

REPLICON continuously strives to provide a hassle-free experience to their customers and that is why support requests are always answered with a live response or personal email. We promise you no automated voice or email responses.

For our customers that prefer the self-service method of support, we offer technical support through several different channels such as up-to-date FAQs and online help.

Over 85% of **REPLICON**'s customers renew their Maintenance agreements each year. **REPLICON** realized a customer satisfaction rate of **over 98%** during our most recent customer satisfaction survey.

Our users may be loyal, but they are also demanding. **REPLICON** regularly conducts customer satisfaction surveys and constantly strives to improve its products through input from industry leaders and customer feedback. **REPLICON** also features numerous [customer case studies](#) and [testimonials](#) on our website.

Visit **REPLICON**'s website to view more [Customer Case Studies](#).

"Replicon really has it together; you have an excellent product that has been a great investment for our company and a superb customer service team that is always friendly and willing to resolve any issues we may have."

**Jenny Hall, Service Coordinator,
RK Dixon**

What To Ask Vendors:

- How is support delivered? From a live person, an automated phone call, or an e-mail?
- How many customers renew their maintenance agreements per year?
- Can you provide positive customer references?
- How do you ensure that customers are satisfied?

6. Where is Proof That You Are a Reputable Company?

Why Is This Important?

Make sure that you purchase your solution from a reputable company. Look for clues that will reveal whether the company is in good standing. Select a sizeable company with a significant and respectable customer base. Do your homework. Read their published [case studies](#), [customer testimonials](#), and [press releases](#). Even go as far as to call up one of their big name customers for a referral.

Be sure to ask the vendor their number of purchased licenses. Vendors will often provide you with an impressive "number of users" when in reality, this number often includes every person who has downloaded a trial version of their software.

It is very important that you don't take the sales staff's word on anything that they promise. Have them prove all of their claims. Make sure you check out the credibility of their references and partnerships.

How Replicon Solves This:

REPLICON is the recognized market leader in developing web-based time and expense management solutions. Unlike other time sheet vendors, **REPLICON** has developed a sound reputation by always delivering on their promises.

REPLICON has over 135 employees and expects to grow to over 150 employees by the end of 2007.

With a current user base of over 1 million and growing, **WEB TIMESHEET** is used by more than 5200 customers in over 58 countries. Customers include HP, Nike, MLB, Compaq, AT&T Wireless, Sony Music, Schlumberger, and Charles Schwab. **REPLICON** also uses **WEB TIMESHEET** internally, to track employees' time and manage project timelines and budgets.

REPLICON is partnered with Great Plains, Intuit (QuickBooks), and ACCPAC, and is a member of the Microsoft Certified Solution Provider program and Oracle Partner Program.

REPLICON has been recognized for its excellence by [winning many awards](#), including:

- Alberta Venture Magazine's Fastest Growing Company
- Deloitte Technology's Fast 50 List
- PROFIT Magazine's "Profit 100" List
- Alberta Venture Magazine and Grant Thornton LLPs Fastest Growing Companies List (4 consecutive years)
- Canadian Export Awards' Top 25 Exporters
- Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award (3 consecutive years)
- InfoTech Alberta Hero Award for Entrepreneurship
- PROFIT Magazine's Top 15 Hottest Startups in Canada

REPLICON has been widely featured in industry publications such as The Wall Street Journal, Fortune, Business Week, Information Week, Red Herring, Alberta Venture, Dow Jones, Financial Executive, and SQL Server Magazine. Find out what they had to say about us by visiting **REPLICON's** [In The Media](#) section.

What To Ask Vendors:

- Do you have any partner relationships?
- Are you a Microsoft Certified Solution Provider?
- Who are your marquee customers?
- Can you share some recent testimonials from your customers?
- How many users are running your solution? What do you define as a "user"?
- How many customers do you currently have?
- What is your current number of purchased licenses?
- What is your current company size?
- Do you use the software internally?

7. Can You Integrate With Our Current Software?

Why is This Important?

Make sure that you select a time sheet solution that integrates with your existing software, thereby deriving the greatest value from your software investments.

Don't take someone's word on this one! Ensure that the vendor demonstrates the actual product integration. Many vendors will promise integration capabilities, yet the actual implementation often involves costly product customizations and manual file exports.

How Replicon Solves This:

WEB TIMESHEET integrates with any third-party application using Web Services and an XML, standards-based approach. **REPLICON** not only [fully supports and maintains all integrations](#), but also provides the XML API reference at no additional cost.

With several "out-of-the-box" Integration Managers, **REPLICON** provides easy-to-use, quick-to-implement solutions to integrate **WEB TIMESHEET** with leading project management, accounting, ERP, and payroll systems, including MS Project, Great Plains, ACPAC, PeopleSoft, QuickBooks, SAP, Ceridian, Peachtree, and ADP.

[WEB TIMESHEET seamlessly integrates](#) with MS Project Standard, Professional, and Server, and provides you with up to 10 levels deep of work breakdown structure. In addition, when additional users are imported from MS Project, this data is not lost; rather, **WEB TIMESHEET** creates a profile for each new user in the application.

"Web TimeSheet had the flexibility to integrate with diverse systems environments in North America and throughout Europe."

John Boyd, Vice President of Operations
Golder Associates

What To Ask Vendors:

- Will the solution integrate with any third-party software application?
- Do you provide any out-of-the-box integrations?
- Can you demonstrate these integrations to us?
- Will you fully support all of our integrations?
- If we choose to integrate on our own, can we have access to the XML API at no additional cost?

8. Do You Provide Any Add-ons, Such as a Productivity Reporting Tool?

Why Is This Important?

If you are trying to decide between two comparable solutions, and are satisfied that they both meet your requirements, ask each vendor what sets them apart from their competition. Do they offer something more than just time sheets?

How Replicon Solves This:

REPLICON delivers more than just time sheets. **PROMAX** is a 100% web-based add-on that provides dashboard reporting, offering a real-time productivity snapshot. This tool allows management to quickly analyze project costs and make intelligent and timely decisions on projects.

PROMAX extends **WEB TIMESHEET** with quantitative information and analysis capabilities. **PROMAX** enables executives, managers, and employees to monitor corporate-wide and individual productivity levels and set Utilization Rates that can be correlated directly to bottom line revenues. For the first time, CEOs, CFOs, and other senior executives have a powerful tool to quantitatively gauge individual, workgroup, and project productivity. Executives can set and enforce Utilization Rates that ensure revenue projections and can take immediate action to avoid negative bottom line impacts.

“Replicon is very well received by the workforce. They like having access to their productivity rates. Even lesser performers seem to appreciate the technology as a tool for having real time knowledge of how their hours impact the bottom line. They have a clear picture of how much work needs to be done in order to earn a bonus. They like the fact that management can very clearly see their value.”

**Jeremy Simon, Director of Engineering
Remington Associates**

What To Ask Vendors:

- What are your key product differentiators?
- Do you provide any add-ons?

9. What's the Difference between Web-based and Web-enabled and why does it Matter?

Why Should You Select a Web-based Solution?

With a web-based solution, users can access the application from any browser. It is not required that the computer be running any particular browser or operating system. Due to its software independence, a web-based solution provides widespread accessibility for clients, customers, and remote offices. Web-based solutions reduce costly software maintenance and increases usability.

What's Wrong With a Web-enabled Solution?

A web-enabled solution uses a web browser as an interface to access an underlying application. In addition, client software must be installed on each computer before running the application. Therefore, when the software needs to be upgraded, each client computer must install the upgrade.

In addition, with a web-enabled solution, the application often depends on a specific browser to be running on a particular operating system. Organizations, and even departments within organizations, often run various operating systems and web browsers. Due to its software dependency, a web-enabled solution is not available for geographically disperse offices or clients running different applications or versions of applications.

How Replicon Solves This:

WEB TIMESHEET provides a [100% web-based solution](#) to its clients. Software need not be installed on the client's desktop; therefore, employees and customers can have access to real-time data and can enter time sheets from any web browser, regardless of where projects may be occurring.

What To Ask Vendors:

- Is the solution completely web-based, or web-enabled?
- Must we install any software on the client's desktop?

10. Will You Be Around in Five Years to Support and Maintain the Software?

Why Is This Important?

Select a time sheet solution from a vendor that will take you the distance. Think long term. The last thing you want is to select a vendor that will go belly-up in a couple of years.

Many companies focus on selecting the software, without evaluating the vendors themselves. This can be very risky, as many software companies come and go. It is important to research the viability and financial stability of each vendor.

Select a vendor that can prove consistent growth, profitability, and positive cash flow. The company must have a rock-solid infrastructure to support and maintain the solution in the long term. Even privately held companies who cannot disclose detailed financials should be able to give you some general information.

How Replicon Solves This:

REPLICON was [founded in 1996](#) and over the last four years, has grown revenues in excess of 400 percent. Financial statements are audited annually by Ernest & Young LLP and the company always maintains a clean audit opinion. **REPLICON** is very financially stable with a strong cash flow and a strong balance sheet.

REPLICON is a privately held company. Additional funding has been provided by a diverse group of angel investors who have a history of backing successful technology companies

REPLICON benefits from the valuable insight provided by its highly experienced and knowledgeable Executive Management Team and Board of Directors. Visit **REPLICON's** website to read about the [Executive Management Team and Board of Directors](#).

What To Ask Vendors:

- How long have you been in business?
- Are you prepared to disclose your financial position?
- Do you have a positive cash flow?
- Has your company been continuously profitable? For how long?
- Will you be around in five to ten years to support the application?

Now What?

By knowing the right questions to ask, you are now empowered to choose the best time sheet solution for your needs. You are now on your way to maximizing both employee and project productivity and increasing your profitability!

Click here for a quick, 2-minute [tour of WEB TIMESHEET](#).

Click here for a full, [free trial version of WEB TIMESHEET](#).

For a complete demonstration of **WEB TIMESHEET**, email us at sales@replicon.com.

Would you like to speak with us directly? Have us call you by visiting our [Request Form](#).