



White Paper

# Is Sage Intacct or NetSuite Better Suited for Property Management Companies?

A detailed guide to choosing financial management software based on verified insights from the hospitality industry.

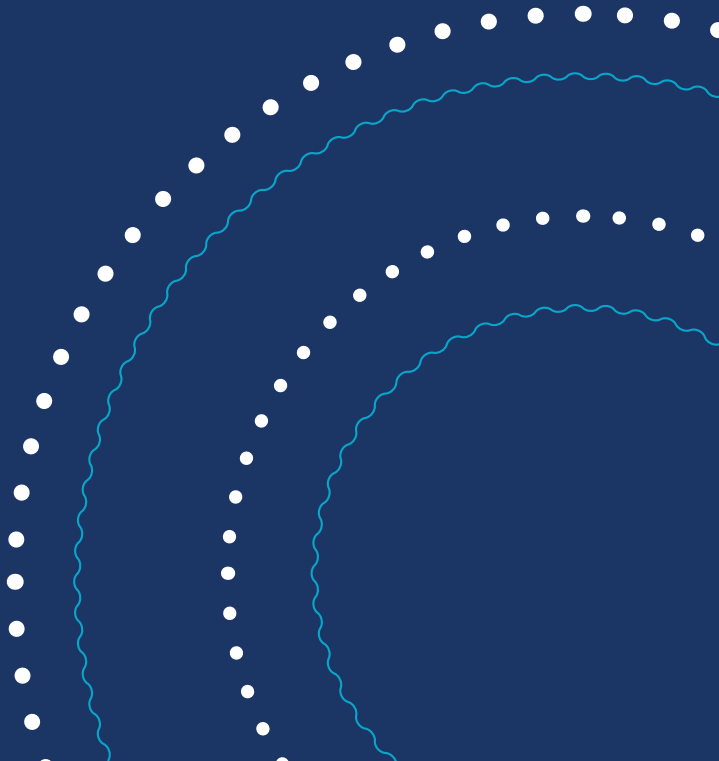


**Ximplifi**

Accounting simplified.

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# What will you learn?

Property management companies, or specifically short-term rental management companies, are part of the hospitality industry, which is a broad market comprising many different sectors, including food and beverage, tourism, recreation, and accommodation.

Some businesses even play in multiple sectors. For example, an enterprise that manages rental properties may also operate a boutique hotel, a cleaning services business, a tourism company, a cafe, or something else entirely.

The more you drill down into each vertical, the harder it is to find information or advice that will help you overcome specific challenges and set your company up for success. Finance, just like marketing and sales, is a core function of any business, and the strategy and software that you implement around it should be tailored to help you achieve your overarching goals.

When researching robust financial and ERP software for hospitality organizations, two solutions often come to the top of the list: Sage Intacct and Oracle NetSuite.

Both provide an array of core accounting capabilities, serve customers globally, and can perform advanced reporting functions, but there are a few key differences that property managers operating short-term rentals should take into consideration when making a purchase decision.

The purpose of this white paper is to drill down into the specific features and qualities of financial software that are especially important for property management companies.

Then, we will provide evidence comparing Sage Intacct and Oracle NetSuite on each of these factors. By the time you finish reading, you will have a better understanding of what your business can gain when you choose financial software with these characteristics in mind.





# Why should short-term rental managers consider financial software?

First, you may be wondering if your company even needs financial software. After all, many property management systems advertise that they offer some level of accounting functionality that's already integrated with the software. However, one big shortcoming of these applications is that they only offer visibility on guest-related transactions.

This means that other company expenses like payroll, administrative costs, or payments towards maintaining and furnishing the rental properties will still need to be accounted for in a separate system to fulfill tax and income reporting obligations.

If you are only managing a handful of properties, you might be able to do this manually in spreadsheets, but the best practice and a more scalable solution for companies who want to expand is to integrate operations software with a fit-for-purpose financial management system.

Additionally, financial management software offers enhanced reporting, tracking, and reconciliation features needed to automate the trust accounting processes required for many short-term rental management companies.

To learn more about trust accounting and how software can simplify the specific types of financial reporting involved, read our post titled *Trust Accounting For Vacation Rental Managers*.





# What are the **most important features** that short-term rental managers look for in financial software?

Understanding that you need financial software is quite different from knowing which financial software you need. There are at least a handful of options you can find online, all touting similar capabilities for businesses like yours. Side-by-side comparisons and customer reviews are readily available, but these are usually not industry-specific, so you may end up learning little about which application is better suited to you.

To focus on the key areas that matter to your business, we've summarized seven criteria that tend to carry the most weight for short-term rental management companies when selecting and using financial management software.

For each of these factors, we include specific details you can use to reduce ambiguity in your search.

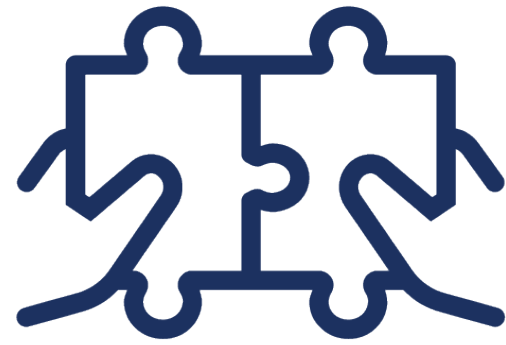
1. Ability to Match the Business
2. Ease of Use
3. Reporting Capabilities
4. Industry Expertise
5. Required Investment
6. Product Innovation
7. Cancellation Policy

**Let's dive in >**



# 1.

## Ability to Match the Business



What makes your business successful is often tied to what makes it unique. Therefore, choosing financial software that can flex to your organization, rather than forcing you to conform to a set structure, is extremely beneficial for your continued success.

Imagine, for instance, that you have spent that last few years developing processes that are perfectly suited to the needs of your organization, but your rigid financial software is designed with different rules in mind. You would either be forced to change your business processes or develop workarounds that are less than ideal.

If your finance department needs a *flexible* solution, here are a few examples of what you should look for:

### *Multi-Entity Consolidation:*

This is an important feature because many short-term rental companies operate multiple entities in order to separate their property management accounts from other hospitality businesses. Choosing a financial software that allows you to easily add new entities, automate intercompany transactions, and reconcile accounts across the organization will allow you to have cleaner accounting processes and see all your cash flows in one place.

### *Dimensions:*

When evaluating financial software, dimensions refer to the predefined values that help you classify data. Traditional general ledger dimensions include time and category, which allows finance managers to group transactions based on when they occur and which department or activity they are associated with. Most property management companies benefit from tracking other dimensions, like location, customer, and vendor, to name a few. Understanding what dimensions come standard, how they can be added or customized, and if there is a cost associated with additional dimensions can help you develop your own flexibility scorecard.



## *Integrations:*

Your company is going to need software outside of the accounting system, and the number of these applications will likely grow to support a variety of functions across the organization. Ensuring that these systems integrate with your financial software in some way is critical to enabling automation that keeps your operations running smoothly. Also, it is important to know in advance how these connections are supported and maintained, so that you know who's responsible for repairing any broken connections.

## *Chart of accounts (COA):*

The foundation for your financial record-keeping system, the COA indexes each type of asset, liability, equity, revenue and expense, plus subcategories of each. One of the most important characteristics of a flexible COA for property managers is the ability to easily add new locations or entities under the parent company without needing to replicate the entire list of accounts.

This gives you more options when it comes to reporting, since you can build hierarchies that accurately reflect the internal structure of your business and easily filter or segment the data in a logical manner that doesn't require complex computation.



# 2.

## Ease of Use



Hospitality organizations generally operate with low profit margins compared to other industries, and they depend on a high volume of transactions to generate positive cash flows. This means that managers need to keep a close eye on overhead costs, such as the number of full-time employees on payroll.

Since IT support or software developers are not typically kept in-house, financial software that constantly needs intervention from a technical expert will become a costly bottleneck for organizations that need to quickly grow and adapt as new opportunities and requirements arise. Therefore, vetting software for “ease of use” should take the following into consideration:

### *Is coding knowledge required to change the appearance of reports or implement new workflows?*

If the company has the resources to train or hire someone for these skills, this might not be an issue. However, keep in mind that the complexity of coding will likely increase as the needs of your organization grow and new functionality is needed.

### *Is the navigation intuitive?*

This can be subjective depending on the user’s level of experience, so don’t take someone else’s word for it. Make sure you request a product demo of the software and ask to see an example of a process you would regularly use, such as creating a report or adding a vendor.

### *What training resources are available?*

If you pay for a certain functionality, there should be resources available to help you answer questions that arise after implementation. Understanding what’s included in your subscription and what is an additional expense is key to getting the most out of your investment.



# 3.

## Reporting Capabilities



Managers in the vacation rental industry often have a variety of stakeholders with specific reporting requirements that go beyond basic. In addition to internal stakeholders like managers, executives and investors, these companies have property owners, consultants, local authorities, and landowners that may need to know how the business is performing.

Manually collecting, analyzing, and formatting data is a time-consuming and inefficient process, so choosing software that allows you to slice and dice income, spending, assets, liabilities, and other transactional data with versatile reports can pay dividends over the life of your business.

Reporting features that hospitality managers should look for include:

### *Built-in financial reports:*

Most financial software comes equipped with basic financial reports like the income statement, balance sheet, and statement of cash flows. However, property managers may need to build on top of these reports or start from scratch, depending on the type of audience and the information that's being analyzed. Owner statements are one example of a custom report that will need to be created on a frequent basis.

### *Dashboards:*

A curated collection of charts, reports, and performance cards will give your teams the ability to quickly analyze long-term trends and compare KPIs over consecutive periods. These are even more useful if you can click into the data or customize dashboards based on specific departments.

### *Statistical accounts:*

These are non-monetary accounts that companies use to track a variety of metrics. For a short-term property management company this can be used to track metrics like ADR, Occupancy, Nights Booked, and more.

# 4.

## Industry Expertise



Similar to how one financial management system can perform certain functions better than another, different software can also be a better fit for different industries. You can usually find a list of industries served on the company's website, but that may not be enough to narrow down your search.

Selecting a software that has a proven track record in your industry has a number of advantages, including a smoother implementation process, a more comprehensive set of features relevant to your business, and more knowledgeable support staff. To find a solution with the right level of industry expertise for your hospitality organization, consider the following:

### *Tailored messaging:*

One simple way to gauge whether a software is ideally suited for your business is to browse their website for messaging that's tailored to the hospitality industry. Does any of their content speak directly to challenges or goals you have? It's a good sign when you can find multiple online resources and examples of how the software is proven to work for companies with business models similar to yours.

### *References:*

Asking for industry references when you are evaluating a solution can reveal more about the company's level of expertise. Using a site like G2.com and sorting reviews by industry can also give you a sense of how many hospitality organizations have used the software and how many have had a positive experience with it.

### *Purchase options:*

In addition to buying directly, most financial software can be purchased through a reseller or a partner. These may be accounting firms or technology consultants who specialize in providing implementations, training, or other services on the platform. If you're able to find a partner who specifically serves the hospitality industry, you can leverage their experience and knowledge of best practices to optimize the software to fit your needs.

# 5.

## Required Investment



As with any purchase, there are trade-offs between cost and functionality, so it's critical to make sure that what you gain from financial software is a fair value for the required investment. To do this, you need to evaluate the total cost, which may be more than the out-of-pocket expense.

As the old adage goes, "time is money", and quantifying exactly how much your time is worth can help you avoid many headaches down the road. When we help clients assess the total investment required for a solution, we break it down into these components:

### *Subscription/service fee:*

This is the total cost quoted to you. Be cautious of aggressive discounting - some companies will draw you in with low startup fees, only to raise them when it's time to renew.

### *Charges for additional modules:*

Pay attention to exactly what's included in the subscription you're quoted. Are there modules or services listed that you don't really need? Conversely, if there is something missing that you will need to add later on, you should know the cost up front.

### *Service Level Agreement (SLA):*

This is a form of contract that outlines how the company will react or compensate you if the software doesn't work as expected. **Do not overlook this!**

### *Implementation time:*

The software is only useful to you once it is fully implemented. You should specify what a "complete" implementation means to you, get a "Go Live" date in writing, and understand what actions will be taken if that is not met.



# 6.

## Product Innovation



The hospitality industry continues to evolve with new technology and new businesses emerging every year. Remember that the capabilities you need today from your financial software may very well change over the life of your organization.

Therefore, short-term rental managers should consider not only how financial software is designed to meet their current needs, but also how that software will evolve over time. From this perspective, cloud-based software is ideal because upgrades can be applied automatically and universally, but not all software companies take the same approach.

To determine if a financial management system is suited to keep up with the pace of innovation in your industry, we recommend asking three important questions:

*Is software updated on a routine basis?*

*Are updates free?*

*Is there a risk that updates would break or disrupt existing functionality?*

# 7.

## Cancellation Policy



Finally, it might be uncomfortable to think about planning to break up with your financial software at this stage, especially because it can be stressful, disruptive, and expensive. After all, you may be going through that process as you read this article, but this is exactly why choosing the right solution shouldn't be taken lightly.

As every good business manager knows, change is the only constant, and whether it's due to acquisition, shutting down, or something else, new circumstances might call for an exit strategy.

When that time comes, you don't want any surprises. Before you make your decision, you should clearly understand the company's cancellation policy by asking questions like:

### *Is data archiving available?*

This refers to storing historical financial data that you might need in the future, usually offered for a fee.

### *How long will you have access to financial data?*

Know how much time your data will be stored after canceling your subscription.

### *What are the payment terms if you cancel?*

Some companies will force you to pay out the remainder of your contract term, even if you cancel.

# How do Sage Intacct and Oracle NetSuite **compare?**

Now that you understand the seven components of financial software that are important for property management companies, let's take a closer look to see how Sage Intacct and Oracle NetSuite compare.

Wherever possible, we've included quantitative metrics from G2.com along with qualitative feedback from users in the hospitality industry.

We trust these ratings because G2 is an independent company with over 1.7 million software product reviews. They are not paid for or sponsored by vendors, but are provided by real, verified users of the software.





## COMPARISON: Sage Intacct vs. NetSuite

# Ability to Match the Business

### G2 Rating on Dimensions:

*Sage Intacct - 8.3 | NetSuite - 7.3*

Sage Intacct comes with eight dimensions out-of-the-box, and NetSuite includes four. Additional dimensions can be added through custom scripting in NetSuite. It should also be noted that Sage Intacct helps customers determine the right number and types of dimensions to streamline your processes during onboarding, so you may not necessarily need to pay the additional fee for unlimited dimensions.

### G2 Rating on API Integrations:

*Sage Intacct - 8.2 | NetSuite - 7.6*

As a suite solution, NetSuite works best with modules developed specifically for its own platform. Sage Intacct, on the other hand, is built as a “best-in-class” solution, which means it integrates well with a range of industry-specific applications to give users greater optionality in functional areas outside of what is already included in Intacct.

Keep in mind that both Sage Intacct and NetSuite have the ability to perform multi-entity consolidations. Multiple users have commented that Sage Intacct allows them to have a flexible and concise chart of accounts that represents an accurate picture of the way the business is structured, often attributed to the system’s dimensional reporting features.

NetSuite users can achieve similar results, but due to the need for scripting to customize dimensions, this can take more time to configure, and once set up, it may be more difficult to change it in the future.

# COMPARISON: Sage Intacct vs. NetSuite

## Ease of Use

**G2 Rating on Ease of Use:**  
*Sage Intacct - 8.5 | NetSuite - 7.5*

While both systems have a relatively intuitive layout, one of the biggest challenges for new NetSuite users is the need to use scripting to add customization. The majority of modifications that Sage Intacct users need to make can be done without writing a single line of code.

**G2 Rating on Quality of Support:**  
*Sage Intacct - 7.9 | NetSuite - 7.0*

Sage Intacct and NetSuite offer help documentation and learning center training. The Sage Intacct Community gives customers access to training, user groups, support, and customer meetups. Both Sage Intacct and NetSuite have basic support plans included with the subscription, and both offer expanded support options, including 24/7 support for an additional cost.

One difference between the two is that Sage Intacct allows all users to submit cases online or by phone, while NetSuite only allows phone support for priority-1 issues unless you upgrade to the Premium plan.



★★★★★ May 21, 2019

**"Excellent system! Makes month end processing and daily general ledger reconciliation a snap!"**

**What do you like best about Sage Intacct?**

The system is very well-designed. It is comprehensive. It is very visually appealing. It processes data quickly and accurately. I most enjoy using the personalized features, the intelligent reporting capabilities, and the excellent support community. Makes month end processing and general ledger reconciliation a snap.

## COMPARISON: Sage Intacct vs. NetSuite

# Reporting Capabilities

### G2 Rating on Financial Statements:

*Sage Intacct - 8.5 | NetSuite - 8.1*

Unfortunately, reporting is one of the most frequently cited challenges by NetSuite users. One NetSuite hospitality user said "I wouldn't say I like the options for reporting as some needed functions are missing or hidden."

Sage Intacct, on the other hand, excels in this area and includes 150+ standard financial and operational reports that can be customized to meet users' requirements.

### G2 Rating on Dashboards:

*Sage Intacct - 8.2 | NetSuite - 7.9*

Sage Intacct hospitality users specifically mention the flexibility and user-friendliness of dashboards, while some NetSuite users find the structure and filtering options to be difficult to use effectively.



**"Intacct is very good for reporting purposes"**

What do you like best about Sage Intacct?

I like the possibility of uploading templates, and all the different reports that can be run to obtain info

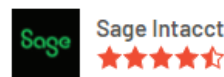


# COMPARISON: Sage Intacct vs. NetSuite

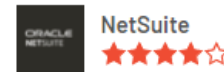
## Industry Expertise

Sage Intacct and Oracle NetSuite both state on their websites that they serve a range of industries, including hospitality. Filtering verified customer reviews for each product on G2.com by industry shows that Sage Intacct has 43 comments from users in the hospitality industry compared to 9 comments for NetSuite.

Out of those reviews, Sage Intacct received 5-star ratings from 47% of its hospitality users, and NetSuite received 5-stars from only 22%. This indicates that Sage Intacct has a larger base of hospitality users than NetSuite, and of those industry-specific reviews, Sage Intacct has an average rating of 4.5, while NetSuite earns an average rating of 4.3.



Hospitality		Region	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accounting		(242)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Profit Organization Management		(194)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer Software		(172)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology and Services		(125)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hospital & Health Care		(82)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Services		(53)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hospitality		(43)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marketing and Advertising		(40)



Hospitality		Region	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insurance		(10)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Media Production		(10)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Renewables & Environment		(10)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Entertainment		(9)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities Services		(9)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hospitality		(9)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial Automation		(9)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Philanthropy		(9)

## COMPARISON: Sage Intacct vs. NetSuite

# Required Investment

Pricing for Sage Intacct and NetSuite both depend on the types of modules selected and number of users. However, many NetSuite users dislike the sales process. One user says, “You must dig into days worth of analysis with the sales reps to determine what you’re going to pay.”

Additionally, one NetSuite user commented on price hikes during the renewal process: “the automatic price increases upon contract expiration is frustrating. If your business does not grow, it does not matter. The price of the ERP will increase no matter what.”

This is impacted by NetSuite Service Tiers that place limits on data storage and transaction counts, sometimes penalizing customers for growth. Another commenter said, “the contract process is overly complicated and confusing which makes it difficult to make sure you’re including everything you need.”

In many cases, Sage Intacct users are able to scale their businesses without needing to upgrade to another price tier. Sage Intacct promotes transparency in their pricing, and users back this up with comments like “the price is friendly and quite affordable.”

When evaluating the cost of non-productive time, consider that Sage Intacct also has a Buy With Confidence Guarantee, which guarantees uptime of 99.8% as well as integrations that are guaranteed not to break.



### Verified User in Hospitality

#### What do you dislike about NetSuite?

I find the thing that frustrates me most about Netsuite is the contract process. It is overly complicated and confusing which makes it difficult to make sure you're including everything you need.

## COMPARISON: Sage Intacct vs. NetSuite

# Product Innovation

**G2 Rating on (% Positive) Product Direction:**  
*Sage Intacct - 9.1 | NetSuite - 7.9*

Reviewers strongly prefer the direction of Sage Intacct over NetSuite for feature updates and roadmaps. When it comes to upgrades, Sage Intacct releases no-cost software updates four times a year, while NetSuite delivers two product releases a year via automatic updates to its users.

Sage Intacct hospitality users like that “the updates are very timely and relevant” and “they listen to user requests and suggestions when making their updates”.

Additionally, Sage Intacct guarantees that integrations won’t break and provides full backwards compatibility, meaning that programs will continue to work, even as new versions are released.

This provides more reassurance compared to NetSuite, which states in its terms of services that third party integrations are not supported, maintained, or upgraded, potentially leaving customers vulnerable to unplanned downtime when updates occur.



### "Improvements every quarter!"

What do you like best about Sage Intacct?

No website downtime since I've been using Intacct. Site loads fast, no issues with access. Each product release brings new functionality and greater ease of use

## COMPARISON: Sage Intacct vs. NetSuite

# Cancellation Policy

### G2 Rating on Historical Data: *Sage Intacct* - 8.4 | *NetSuite* - 8.0

If you need to cancel your subscription with Sage Intacct, you can reduce the number of users and modules during the renewal period. NetSuite users, on the other hand, may be required to honor the full term of their contract at the listed price.

According to Sage Intacct's terms of service, customer data will be available for up to 90 days after termination or expiration of the agreement. It also states that Sage Intacct may assist you with exporting customer data at an hourly consulting rate, and archival services are also available for a fee. There is no similar clause in NetSuite's terms of service.



### Sage Intacct Terms of Service - United States

Access to Customer Data. Customer Data may be exported at any time during the term of this Agreement. We will not delete Customer Data from our production environment for up to 90 days after termination or expiration of the Agreement and may assist you with exporting Customer Data during such period at our standard hourly consulting rate. After that 90-day period, we will have the right to delete all Customer Data and will have no further obligation to make it available to you. Should you desire longer storage of Customer Data, paid archival Services may be available.



## Summary

Whichever financial software you choose, it will serve as the foundation for your organization's accounting and reporting processes for (hopefully) years to come. While there are many options out there to choose from, it's your job to determine a) what results you hope to achieve, and b) which features and capabilities are most critical to helping you get there.

In this article, we discussed seven criteria that property managers look for in financial management software, but you may have more to add to the list. By developing your own scorecard, you'll be better equipped to make an informed decision and avoid experiencing buyer's remorse.

If you're considering upgrading to a robust platform like Sage Intacct, Ximplifi can help you compare plans, calculate your total investment, and even provide onboarding assistance to set your company on a path to success.



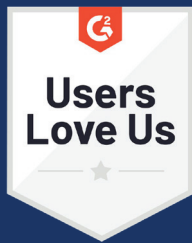
As a certified Sage Intacct partner, Ximplifi has a team of experienced accountants who specialize in serving the short-term rental industry.

Many of our clients choose to work with us when upgrading their financial management software, and many stay on after the implementation is complete by selecting a level of ongoing accounting support that fits their needs.

Whether you are looking for an advisor who can walk you through the process or a long-term accounting services provider, we're here to help.

**Contact our team today to request a demo and receive our honest recommendation.**

# Choose financial software more hospitality professionals trust.



Sage Intacct has remained a consistent leader in customer satisfaction on G2 Grid reports since 2015. Sage Intacct is also the only cloud-based financial software preferred by the AICPA.

Visit [ximplifi.com/sage-intacct/overview](https://ximplifi.com/sage-intacct/overview) to learn more.



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Accounting simplified.

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