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Choosing the Right Document Management System & Client Portal:

A Checklist for Accounting Professionals

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A strong document management system (DMS) and client portal platform keeps your team and customers in sync, supports productivity, increases security while simplifying compliance, and empowers you to grow.

Complete this checklist to compare key criteria, with a special focus on collaboration capabilities, security protections, and vendor services.

Collaboration and Efficiency

A DMS and client portal platform can simplify your everyday workflow and eliminate the need for physical files. This helps staff save time on admin tasks and makes it easy for employees and clients to collaborate. You'll want a platform that enables you to:

☐ Work safely in the cloud with unlimited storage that lets you scale
☐ Capture, organize, and securely store documents or files digitally
☐ Full text search that lets you quickly find the file you need
☐ Create any fillable form you need, from templates or from scratch
☐ Create custom folder templates for automated, intuitive organization
☐ Send documents for eSignatures, approvals, and payment, and route them back to the correct folder in the DMS automatically
☐ Distribute documents in bulk to one or all of your clients in a single step
☐ Simplify how you request, collect, and manage client documents
☐ Set alerts so you know when a client has uploaded or viewed documents
☐ Give you and applicable users 24/7 access to file, anytime from anywhere
☐ Provide an integrated custom-branded client portal that gives clients a secure, easy, and professional way to collaborate with you and access documents from wherever they're located
☐ Add a log-in link to your website so clients can easily access the portal
☐ Integrate with a scanner to make going paperless easy
☐ Integrate with leading business apps, like Microsft® and DocuSign®
☐ Save documents directly from Microsoft Word®, Excel®, and Outlook®
☐ Create custom email templates and mail merge to automate document distribution

Modern, Digital Forms Powered by Your DMS

Digital forms are easier to manage and help you meet your clients' expectations for modern service.

Create any form by editing existing files, using pre-built templates, or starting from scratch.

Share the form with clients via a link on your website, in your emails, on printed material, etc.

Clients review, complete, and sign the forms securely, from anywhere and on any device with Internet.

Track progress of each form; submitted forms are automatically saved to the client's folder in your DMS.

Security and Compliance

You must have a system that can protect your data and create peace of mind for everyone.
Ensure that the DMS offers the features below:

- ☐ Bank-grade security and automatic data back-up
- ☐ AES-256 encryption and SSL
- ☐ Two-factor authentication for you and your clients
- ☐ Granular access controls and ability to assign employees to specific clients
- ☐ Document version tracking so you never lose history
- ☐ Automatic file locking to prevent simultaneous edits
- ☐ Activity tracking and robust reporting for compliance
- ☐ Ability to send encrypted links directly to files and password-protected files via e-mail
- ☐ Support compliance with FINRA, SEC, GLBA, and others

Vendor Services and Trust

You'll want a vendor who will set you up for success and offers things like:

- ☐ U.S.- based Client Success Manager and tech support
- ☐ Onboarding and system configurations, including migrating data as applicable
- ☐ A detailed knowledge base and academy with training resources, webinars, "How To" guides, articles, and courses
- ☐ Personalized, live, one-on-one training sessions to get you up and running
- ☐ System usage reviews that include suggestions for improvement based on your needs

SmartVault

Enjoy secure, flexible, and modern document workflows across teams and clients

Securely gather, store, share, and eSign documents with SmartVault, a cloud-based document management and client portal platform built for accounting professionals.

Keep everything organized and scalable
Enjoy unlimited storage and users. Quickly find the file you need, when you need it, and manage advanced user permissions so only authorized persons have access.

Easily manage documents, requests, and eSignatures
Give clients an easy way to view, upload, eSign, and download documents anytime, from anywhere.

Simplify how you request, gather, and track documents
Create and send forms and request lists to clients. Receive notifications and manage documents in one place. SmartVault saves submitted files to the right client folder.

Don't stress about compliance and security
SmartVault is built with bank-grade security and supports compliance with regulations, like FINRA, SEC, GLBA, HIPAA, GDPR, CCPA, and more.

Over 3 million people use SmartVault for digital, secure, and compliant workflows.

Schedule a Demo Today

Unlimited Document Storage

Maintain secure, organized documents across your departments, with 24/7 online access.

Secure File Sharing

Make collaborating on and sharing files easy for yourself, your team, and your customers.

Branded Client Portal

Empower customers to quickly share forms, images, and other documents 100% online.

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