

WC1 ENTREVENTURES · BUYER RESOURCE

The Singapore Software Buyer's Pack

Five worksheets to pressure-test a custom software budget, SOW and vendor shortlist before you sign, in one working session.

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How to use this pack

Most software budgets aren't blown by coding. They're blown by what surrounds it: integrations nobody sized, testing that needed evidence, support everyone assumed was included, and contracts that went quiet on exit. This pack turns those risks into five one-page worksheets.

- **Who should be in the room:** the business sponsor, IT/tech lead, procurement, and whoever owns compliance or data protection.
- **When:** before you ask vendors for a number, and again before signature.
- **Output:** a driver sheet with owners, a SOW marked Accept / Negotiate / Reject, and a weighted scorecard you froze *before* proposals opened.

Three rules of thumb

- ① If more than 3 high-impact cost drivers have no named owner, your SGD total is a hope, not an estimate.
- ② If more than 3 SOW rows are still "Negotiate", you're not ready to sign.
- ③ Grants such as PSG or EDG may help *fund* a project. They don't change what it costs to build well. Size the drivers first, then check funding fit with Enterprise Singapore.

Four traps we see most often

- Soft-accepting UAT to hit a board date, then finding the SOW treats soft-accept as final acceptance.
- Warranty that starts at contract signature instead of acceptance or go-live.
- Skipping exit language because "we'll renew AMS anyway".
- Ignoring unnamed subcontractors when an offshore team does most of the build.

1 • Cost-driver sheet

Rate each driver High / Med / Low for *your* project, name an owner, and note how it will be estimated. Ask every shortlisted vendor to price against these lines, not as a single total.

Driver	What to count	H / M / L	Owner
Discovery & definition	Workshops, interviews, prototype fidelity, written out-of-scope list		
Team mix & seniority	Role map (PM, tech lead, engineers, QA, DevOps) × duration; where each seat sits; named people		
Integrations & data	System inventory, API documentation quality, sandbox access, data-migration volume; one line per integration		
UAT & acceptance evidence	Script count, environments, severity gates, evidence pack		
Compliance & non-functionals	Personal-data map, access logging, encryption, processor agreements; sector controls (e.g. MAS TRM) only if your compliance owner confirms they apply		
Environments & DevOps	Environment count, CI/CD, secrets management, infrastructure-as-code depth		
Change contingency	Visible contingency tied to change-control rules; never zero for net-new work		
AMS & hypercare (year 1)	Hypercare weeks, AMS hours/SLA tier, known-defect burn-down; priced separately from build		

Decide: defend, reshape or retender

- **Defend** the budget when every High driver has an owner, an estimation method and written assumptions in the same pack as the commercial.
- **Reshape** when integrations, UAT evidence or AMS are still “TBD”. Cut scope or add time before locking a number.
- **Retender** when a vendor refuses driver-level transparency, hides subcontractors, or only offers a single opaque total.

2 · SOW red-flag table

Mark each row Accept (A), Negotiate (N) or Reject (R). Educational only. Contract terms such as liability caps, cure periods and escrow should be settled with your own legal counsel.

Clause	Red flag	What good looks like	A	N	R
Scope	“Build the portal” / “agreed requirements”	Scope boundaries plus written out-of-scope examples	☐	☐	☐
IP & components	“Vendor retains tools; client gets a licence to deliverables” with no inventory	Schedule of custom IP vs vendor tools; open-source and SaaS dependency list, updated at acceptance; deposit/escrow triggers agreed with counsel	☐	☐	☐
Warranty vs defect liability vs AMS	One “support” line covering all three	Three defined promises, with start dates, durations and severity clocks aligned to your incident language	☐	☐	☐
AMS handoff	“To be agreed later”	Handoff pack as a deliverable with acceptance criteria: runbooks, access matrix, known defects, RACI, training evidence, support-readiness gate	☐	☐	☐
Exit & transition	“Reasonable assistance”	Transition-assistance days, fee schedule, and delivery timeline for code, documentation and credentials	☐	☐	☐
Acceptance	“Client sign-off” with no evidence rules	Acceptance tied to UAT scripts, severity gates, named environments; soft-accept consequences written down	☐	☐	☐
Subcontractors	Unnamed delivery partners	Named subcontractors or approval rights; flow-down of IP, security and confidentiality	☐	☐	☐
Change control	“Via email agreement”	Named approvers; written change order with cost, schedule and impact before work starts	☐	☐	☐
Liability	Capped at fees with broad exclusions and no data carve-outs	Align with data schedule and severity; carve-outs for material data/security breaches, as advised by your counsel	☐	☐	☐

3 · Vendor scorecard

Suggested weight bands. Adjust to your risk profile (a regulated firm may weight security higher), then **freeze the weights before proposals open** and publish them with the RFP.

Dimension	Weight band	Evidence to inspect	Score 1-5
Delivery model & ownership	15-20%	Named roles, decision rights, escalation paths, realistic timezone overlap	
Architecture & technical quality	15%	Reference approaches, non-functional handling, test strategy, observability	
Security & data protection	15-20%	Secure SDLC, secrets handling, PDPA posture, offshore access model, incident clocks	
Commercial clarity	10-15%	Change-order mechanics, assumptions log, definition of done, invoice entity	
IP, source & environments	10-15%	Client-controlled repositories, cloud tenancy, CI/CD ownership	
Integration readiness	10%	API contracts, error handling, multi-vendor ownership	
Hypercare & AMS path	10%	Week-one staffing, exit criteria, route into AMS	
References & samples	5-10%	Speakable references and sanitised artefacts, not logo walls	

Write anchors, then calibrate

Use a 1-5 scale with written anchors. Example for IP & environments: **1** = vendor-only Git and cloud; **3** = client Git, vendor-managed cloud; **5** = client-controlled Git, cloud, CI and secrets with least-privilege vendor access. Each score must cite the artefact that justified it. Score one sample response together first, so the panel agrees what a “3” means.

Veto or pause if you see

- Refusal to put source code in your repository from sprint one without a strong compensating control.
- “We’ll document later” on environments, secrets and runbooks.
- No named hypercare roster or go-live weekend cover.
- Integration ownership left “to be decided with your other vendors”.
- Security answers that are certificates with no mapping to your system.

4 · UAT & acceptance checklist

Agree severity before the first defect is logged

Severity	Definition	Go-live rule (example)
Sev 1	System unusable for a core process, or risk of data loss/corruption	No open Sev 1 at cutover
Sev 2	Major function broken, no acceptable workaround	No open Sev 2 without a written waiver (owner, workaround, fix date)
Sev 3	Function impaired, workaround exists	Tracked into hypercare
Sev 4	Cosmetic or minor inconsistency	Backlog

Before and during UAT

- ☐ Acceptance criteria frozen and linked to the SOW and approved change orders
- ☐ UAT environment mirrors production for the integrations that matter; deltas documented
- ☐ Persona-based UAT accounts (not everyone as super-admin) and a seeded data pack with real edge cases
- ☐ Smoke pack runs after every environment refresh
- ☐ Daily triage: defect vs enhancement vs environment issue vs test misunderstanding
- ☐ Enhancements routed to change orders, not “just fix it”
- ☐ Written waivers for any Sev 1/2 carried forward
- ☐ Fixes retested on the same build label that will ship

Sign-off is a decision, not a ceremony

- ☐ Scenarios planned vs executed, and pass/fail by module
- ☐ Open defects by severity, with known workarounds
- ☐ Cutover readiness: migration rehearsal, rollback plan, support roster, user comms
- ☐ Evidence pack archived: signed criteria matrix, defect export, environment notes, go/no-go minutes

5 · Handoff & exit pack

Warranty, defect liability and AMS are three different promises

Promise	What it should cover	Common failure
Warranty	Fixing defects against accepted criteria for a defined period after acceptance or go-live	Starts at signature instead of acceptance
Defect liability	Remedies and cure clocks for defects, with severity levels; the clock starts when a defect is reproducible with evidence	No severity matrix, so everything is urgent or nothing is
AMS / support	Ongoing operations, enhancements and SLAs, priced as its own line	Warranty used as a substitute for AMS after month three

Support-readiness gate (before hypercare ends)

- ☐ Runbooks and on-call/paging ownership
- ☐ Access matrix; credentials transferred to client-controlled vaults
- ☐ Known-defect list, matching the UAT evidence pack
- ☐ RACI across client, vendor and any other vendors
- ☐ Training evidence for BAU/support staff
- ☐ Environment diagram and CI/CD ownership confirmed

Exit & transition (write it while everyone is friendly)

- ☐ Transition-assistance days and fee schedule in the SOW or a numbered schedule
- ☐ Timeline for delivering code, documentation and credentials
- ☐ Open-source and SaaS dependency list, current at exit
- ☐ Knowledge-transfer sessions defined as deliverables
- ☐ Source deposit or escrow triggers (if used) agreed with your counsel, as a backup to client-controlled repositories, not a substitute

Want a second pair of eyes? WC1 Entreventures runs driver-based working sessions for Singapore and APAC buyers, from discovery to production. Start with a 20-minute conversation, no deck: wc1entreventures.com/contact · mark@neuworkcommunications.com · +63 927 873 9995

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