

3 Essential Tips for Choosing an IAM Vendor

The Identity and Access Management market is still defining itself. While, like in any industry, there are already market leaders, newcomers, and niche players, not all vendors (even the top ones) here offer everything possible that all customers need. Exercising discernment in your selection of a vendor is of extreme importance.

Here are 3 simple tips for evaluating an IAM vendor:

1) Be aware of who you are and what your needs are. Choose matching vendors based on this information.

Technologies and vendors that are not industry standard can often suit your requirements much better. You must know, clearly, what kind of company you are (size, sector, organizational structure and goals).

For instance – if you are a *small or medium* sized organization and in a *high threat* industry, you might want a *cost-effective* IAM package with powerful modules for Single Sign-On (SSO) and Password Management plus *Access Governance* (since your insider threats will be as big or bigger than outside ones.)

Not all players offer all of this, and those that do are often too expensive since they typically sell each module as a separate solution.

Likewise, an organization in a *high staff-turnover environment* will need an able *Lifecycle Management* solution. You must look for a vendor that specializes in this area.

Another example is if you are looking to *migrate* your IAM environment to the *Public Cloud*, you will need to find a company that specializes in *Hybrid Identity*. Such a company alone will have the tools and knowledge to integrate your old technology seamlessly with the Public Cloud.

These are just a few examples, but do your research, ask your potential seller to help you identify your needs, or even hire an IAM consultant so that you really know what you need and who can provide it.

2) Look for quality delivery of the core functionalities that are essential to you.

Vendors may pad their armor with hyped-up functionalities such as support for BYOD, Mobility, Big Data etc. However, you might need to assess whether their modules for basic SSO, Password Management, Lifecycle Management or Access Governance possess adequate depth.

For instance – provisioning to Active Directory and cloud applications may not be the most important thing if you need a quality Workflow Approval feature or enterprise application connectors.

You may also use a lot of thick-client apps in your organization. Many industries such as Manufacturing, Banking BPOs and Pharma use such apps daily. To support them, technology is required that is uncommon in the industry today. You will need to find a quality niche vendor in such cases.

3) Ask about implementation times, procedures and for case studies.

Businesses in our industry often fail to deploy and sustain their solutions not because of flaws in their products but due to inexperience and a lack of services capability.

IAM systems often need extensive implementation. Some companies are extremely slow, taking over a year to implement their solutions – watch out!

The IT industry is full of solutions that may have a division between the creator of the product and its implementation. Find out if your vendor is the developer of the product that they are offering to implement, and vice-versa.

In most cases, you want to buy a solution that has been created and is being implemented by the same business. The total cost is often much lower, support and implementation times are reduced, and troubleshooting is much easier.

With Identity becoming the newest attack surface for criminals, IAM is your last line of defense and will soon become an absolute necessity.

The consumer Identity and Access Management (IAM) market is expected to grow from USD 16.00 billion in 2018 to USD 37.79 billion by 2023. As your organization boards this train, keep in mind these 3 tips from Identity Insider. It will orient you correctly in your search phase and save you the frustration of choosing the wrong vendor.

