nonprofit TECH SHOP

Empowering Museums with Software Solutions:
A Comprehensive Guide to Technology for 2025

A Comprehensive Resource by Nonprofit Tech Shop

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Introduction: Preserving the Past,
Powering the Future

Museums have always been magical places. They bring history to life, showcase human creativity, and connect communities in ways that few other institutions can. But today, museums are at a crossroads. As we move into 2025, the way we engage with the world—and how the world engages with us—is rapidly evolving. Technology isn't just nice to have anymore; it's the backbone of running a modern museum.

Think about it: how can you streamline memberships, connect with donors, host exciting events, or make your collections accessible online without the right tools? It's a lot to juggle! At Nonprofit Tech Shop (NTS), we understand these challenges because we've been there—working hand-in-hand with institutions like yours to uncover smarter, simpler ways to manage it all.

This ebook is your road map to the best software solutions for 2025. Whether you're looking to make your operations smoother, boost your donor connections, or wow your visitors with digital experiences, we've got you covered. By the time you finish reading, you'll be ready to take your museum into the future—armed with tools that make a real impact.

Chapter 1
Why Museums Need *Software Solutions*

Museums are standing at a unique moment in history. Tradition meets transformation, and technology is leading the way. Sure, museums will always be about preserving priceless artifacts and sharing culture, but now, they're also vibrant hubs of education, community, and even virtual exploration. It's exciting — but it's also a lot to manage.

In fact, here's a stat to consider: the global museum software market was valued at **$2.5 billion** in 2023. By 2032, that number is projected to hit **$7.65 billion**. That's a digital revolution. Visitors expect seamless ticketing, interactive exhibits, and online access to collections. Donors want transparency and personalized communication. And museum staff? They need systems that can handle it all without turning their operations into a giant puzzle.

Think of 2025 as a golden opportunity. With the right software, museums can overcome today's hurdles—like donor tracking, event management, and digital accessibility—and even unlock new possibilities. Keeping up is important, but thriving in a fast-changing world is where the real opportunity lies.

So, what's standing in the way? Let's break it down.

Challenges Facing Museums Today

Here's the reality: running a museum isn't getting simpler. The demands are growing, and so are the expectations. Here are just a few of the hurdles:

▶ **Donor Relationships:** Museums rely on donor and member support, but juggling renewals, contributions, and engagement can feel like spinning plates.

▶ **Visitor Experience and Ticketing:** Exhibits alone no longer satisfy today's visitors; they look for smooth ticketing, online reservations, and personalized follow-ups to complete their experience.

▶ **Digital Accessibility:** Virtual tours and online collections? They're no longer just "nice extras." They're must-haves, and they require robust, user-friendly systems.

▶ **Collections Management**: Digitizing and cataloging collections takes time, effort, and expertise—and often feels like a never-ending task.

How Software Solutions Will Shape Museum Success in 2025

By adopting the latest software, museums can transform how they engage audiences, manage resources, and preserve cultural heritage. With the right tools in place, museums can simplify operations and focus on delivering richer, more memorable experiences for visitors and donors alike.

To better understand the opportunities and challenges, let's explore the factors driving museum software adoption:

Software Solutions for Museums
Unlocking Operational Excellence and Visitor Engagement

Drivers

- Increased demand for tailored visitor interactions through digital tools

- A growing need to simplify workflows for donor, membership, ticketing, and event management

- Widespread adoption of integrated software solutions in the museum sector

- Enhanced analytics enabling informed decision-making

Restraints

- Limited funding, particularly for smaller museums

- Resistance to upgrading outdated systems due to costs and complexity

- Gaps in technical expertise for implementation and maintenance

- Ensuring compatibility between new and existing systems

Opportunities

- Leveraging AI to enhance donor management and visitor insights

- Expanding virtual tours and online exhibits to reach global audiences

- Opportunities for partnerships and grants to support digital transformation

- Scalability in tools designed to grow alongside museums' evolving needs

Key Tools Driving Museum Success

Museums have a variety of software options at their disposal, each designed to address specific needs. Here are some of the most impactful categories:

▶ **CRMs:** Advanced tools for managing relationships with donors, members, and visitors. These platforms combine automation with data analytics to help museums build stronger, more meaningful connections.

▶ **Digital Asset Management Systems:** Essential for preserving collections, these tools streamline archiving and make it easier to share high-quality digital content with wider audiences.

▶ **Integrated Ticketing Systems:** A seamless way to manage ticket sales and event registrations, these systems connect platforms to create efficient, cohesive workflows.

▶ **Mobile Apps and Digital Engagement:** Designed for both in-person and virtual experiences, these apps allow museums to reach visitors wherever they are, offering interactive and personalized engagement.

By combining these tools with a thoughtful strategy, museums can create an environment that prioritizes efficiency, accessibility, and innovation.

Chapter 2

The Essential Software Categories for *Museums*

Museums face a unique set of challenges in their day-to-day operations, from managing memberships to organizing events and preserving collections. Technology tailored to museum needs can address these complexities head-on.

Whether your focus is improving internal efficiency or enhancing the visitor experience, having the right software makes all the difference.

Below, we'll explore the essential categories of museum software and the features that can help your institution thrive.

1. Membership, Donor, and Volunteer Management

Building strong connections with donors, members, and volunteers is at the heart of a museum's mission. Software tailored for relationship management simplifies complex tasks and helps create meaningful engagement. For example:

▶ Automating membership renewals prevents lapses and keeps your membership community active.

▶ Managing household and individual memberships ensures the system fits the diverse needs of your supporters.

▶ Tools for upgrading, downgrading, or gifting memberships allow for flexibility and a more personalized experience.

▶ Detailed donor histories make outreach more targeted and effective, while insights into donor trends help optimize fundraising strategies.

▶ Volunteer management features, such as scheduling, hours tracking, and recognition programs, streamline operations and build stronger relationships with volunteers.

Pro Tip: Choose software that integrates membership and volunteer management into one platform, ensuring smoother workflows and better engagement across all supporter groups.

2. Integration with Museum Tools You Already Use

Effortlessly linking new software to your existing systems can save time and reduce frustration. The best solutions integrate seamlessly with tools like ticketing platforms, point-of-sale systems, and event management software, creating a unified workflow.

> **Helpful Hint:** If your software integrates with marketing platforms or CRM systems, it can provide a centralized hub for all your museum's operations.

3. Customizable Dashboards and Reporting

Understanding your data is essential for making informed decisions and showcasing your impact. Customizable dashboards and reporting tools provide clear insights tailored to your museum's specific goals. Key capabilities include:

▶ **Grant performance tracking** to ensure funds are allocated and utilized efficiently.

▶ **Visitor data analysis** to uncover trends and highlight areas where improvements can enhance experiences.

▶ **Customizable reporting formats** for sharing insights with stakeholders, board members, or grant providers.

> **What to Look For:** Tools that let you easily visualize key metrics, like membership growth, fundraising performance, or event attendance, in formats that suit your team's needs.

4. Event and Ticketing Management

Hosting events and managing ticketing shouldn't feel overwhelming. The right software can simplify everything from selling tickets to analyzing attendance patterns, ensuring events run smoothly. Key features to look for include:

▶ Tools for managing online and on-site ticket sales, making it easy for visitors to purchase tickets anytime, anywhere.

▶ Capabilities to handle ticketing discounts tied to memberships, ensuring members receive their benefits automatically.

▶ Management of multiple discount types, from promotional codes to group rates, providing flexibility for various audience needs.

▶ RSVP tracking and attendee lists to keep your events organized.

▶ Post-event surveys to gather feedback and improve future programming.

> **Did You Know:** Museums using integrated ticketing and event management tools often experience higher attendance rates and reduced administrative costs.

5. User-Friendly Interfaces

The best technology is the kind your team actually wants to use. Intuitive, easy-to-navigate systems reduce training time and ensure adoption across departments.

> **Practical Advice:** Test prospective systems with staff and volunteers to ensure they're accessible to users with varying levels of technical expertise.

6. Security and Compliance

Handling sensitive donor and visitor information comes with a responsibility to protect that data. Look for software that prioritizes security and complies with relevant privacy laws, such as GDPR.

Key Features to Prioritize:

▶ Encryption to safeguard data.

▶ Multi-factor authentication for secure access.

▶ User access controls to protect sensitive information.

> **Stat:** Nonprofit organizations have become the second most targeted sector by cybercriminals, accounting for 31% of all notifications of nation-state attacks.

Is Your Museum Exploring or Already Using a CRM?

Tracking the right metrics is critical for museums that want to measure success and refine strategies. Whether you're just starting with a CRM or already have one in place, focusing on key performance indicators (KPIs) ensures your software is working to its full potential. Here are some essential CRM metrics to track:

Indicator	What It Measures	Why It Matters
Donor Retention Rate	Percentage of donors who give again	Evaluates the success of your engagement and retention strategies.
Membership Renewal Rate	Rate of membership renewals over time	Highlights member satisfaction and long-term loyalty.
Average Donation Value	Average amount contributed by each donor	Identifies trends in donor generosity and potential growth areas.
Visitor Conversion Rate	Percentage of visitors who become members or donors	Measures the effectiveness of engagement efforts.
Event Attendance Growth	Year-over-year increase in event participation	Tracks the impact of your marketing and event planning strategies.
Email Engagement Rates	Open and click-through rates of campaigns	Shows how well your communication resonates with your audience.
Ticket Sales per Event	Revenue per event	Tracks event popularity and revenue contributions.
Website Traffic Growth	Increase in web visitors over time	Reflects your digital marketing performance and audience reach.
Volunteer Retention Rate	Percentage of returning volunteers	Gauges satisfaction and engagement with your volunteer program.
Grant Utilization Rate	Percentage of grant funds spent effectively	Ensures funding is used strategically for maximum impact.

> **Why Metrics Matter:** Consistently tracking these indicators helps you identify what's working and where there's room to improve, ensuring your CRM supports your museum's goals.

CRM Selection Checklist

Choosing the right CRM is as much about functionality as it is about finding a system that aligns with your museum's unique needs. Use this checklist to evaluate potential options:

Key Factors	Questions to Ask	Check
Organizational Needs	Does the CRM meet your donor, membership, and event management requirements?	☐
Budget	Are both initial and ongoing costs within your budget?	☐
Compatibility	Can the CRM integrate with your existing software tools?	☐
Scalability	Can the system grow with your museum's future needs?	☐
User Training and Support	Are sufficient training resources and customer support available?	☐
Ease of Use	Is the interface intuitive and user-friendly for all staff members?	☐
Security and Compliance	Does the CRM adhere to data protection regulations like GDPR?	☐
References and Reviews	Have you reviewed case studies or testimonials from other museums using the CRM?	☐

This framework ensures your museum selects a CRM that isn't just functional but also tailored to your mission and capable of driving lasting success.

Chapter 3

Top Museum Software Solutions for 2025

Museums thrive when technology works together seamlessly. Imagine your ticketing system syncing with membership management, your website providing actionable visitor data, and even your gift shop contributing to donor engagement campaigns. These tools aren't just for streamlining processes—they help museums connect with visitors on a deeper level.

Below are the top software solutions for 2025, showcasing what makes each one unique.

1. HubSpot for Nonprofits (Top Pick)

HubSpot is a highly versatile platform, offering museums an unmatched combination of advanced donor outreach tools, marketing automation, and nonprofit-focused analytics. By centralizing key operations, HubSpot enables museums to manage visitors, donors, and memberships seamlessly—without relying on multiple platforms.

A standout feature is its robust integration capabilities, particularly its ability to connect with Shopify, which so many museums already use. By using Shopify as a point-of-sale (POS) system, museums can track visitor purchases and funnel this data directly into the CRM. This creates valuable touchpoints for targeted marketing campaigns, such as encouraging donations or promoting membership upgrades— provided visitors have opted in for marketing communications.

HubSpot also supports ticketing and membership management, unifying systems to provide a comprehensive view of visitor interactions. Additionally, museums can host and manage their website on HubSpot's intuitive platform, allowing for streamlined updates and full control over their digital presence.

Read more about HubSpot's features and capabilities on the next page.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Integration Capabilities	Seamlessly integrates with ticketing, event platforms, and marketing tools.	▪ Supports a wide range of third-party integrations. ▪ Easy to set up and manage.	▪ Advanced integrations may require technical expertise.
Donor and Visitor Engagement	Provides tools for automating email campaigns and personalizing donor outreach.	▪ Saves time with automation. ▪ Personalization increases donor loyalty and visitor impact.	▪ Over-automation may feel impersonal if not carefully planned.
Custom Dashboards	Create tailored dashboards for monitoring grants, funding, and visitor analytics.	▪ Highly customizable. ▪ Visualizes complex data for strategic decision-making.	▪ May require initial setup effort to align with specific museum workflows.
Pricing Flexibility	Offers a free CRM tier for small-scale use with paid options for more advanced features.	▪ Affordable entry point. ▪ Scalable for growing organizations.	▪ Some advanced nonprofit features require higher-tier subscriptions.
Ease of Use	Intuitive user interface designed for both tech-savvy and non-technical users.	▪ Short learning curve. ▪ Strong support resources and training.	▪ Occasional updates may introduce minor interface adjustments requiring retraining.
Analytics and Reporting	Robust reporting tools for tracking donor performance, campaign ROI, and audience trends.	▪ Helps optimize marketing and outreach strategies. ▪ Accessible real-time data insights.	▪ Custom reporting can be overwhelming for new users without proper guidance.

Why HubSpot for Nonprofits Outshines Other Museum Marketing Tools

HubSpot combines flexibility, ease of use, and powerful features, making it an exceptional choice for museums of all sizes.

▶ **For Smaller Museums**
The free-tier CRM offers essential tools like contact management, email campaigns, and basic reporting. These features are perfect for managing donor and visitor relationships without incurring upfront costs, helping smaller museums stay organized and connected.

▶ **For Larger Institutions**
Paid tiers unlock advanced capabilities, including marketing automation, custom dashboards, and integrations with platforms like Eventbrite. These tools streamline complex workflows, provide detailed analytics, and offer solutions that scale with the needs of larger cultural institutions.

Key Advantages

▶ **Seamless Integration:** Works with ticketing, digital asset management, and marketing platforms for unified operations.

▶ **User-Friendly Design:** Intuitive interfaces reduce training time for staff and volunteers.

▶ **Scalability:** Tiered plans grow with your needs, ensuring long-term usability.

▶ **Data Insights:** Advanced reporting tracks donor retention, visitor engagement, and campaign ROI.

HubSpot's adaptable features ensure it's a reliable partner for museums looking to modernize and scale their operations while delivering exceptional visitor and donor experiences.

2. Altru by Blackbaud

Designed specifically for cultural institutions, Altru is an all-in-one system that integrates ticketing, fundraising, and membership management. Its donor analytics and event management tools make it ideal for improving visitor engagement and operational efficiency.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
All-in-One CRM	Integrates ticketing, fundraising, and membership management for cultural institutions	- Consolidates multiple tools into one system - Reduces administrative workload	- Steep learning curve for new users - Expensive for smaller organizations
Donor Analytics	Provides robust analytics to track and understand donor behavior	- Enables data-driven fundraising decisions - Visualizes donor trends effectively	- May require technical expertise to fully utilize - Custom reporting options are limited
Event Management	Simplifies the planning and execution of events, including ticket sales and promotions	- Improves visitor engagement - Automates ticketing and scheduling - Supports revenue growth	- Limited customization for non-standard events - Can be time-consuming to set up initially
Cultural Focus	Tailored for museums and cultural institutions to enhance visitor and member experiences	- Features designed specifically for arts and cultural missions - Improves membership retention	- Not suitable for general-purpose nonprofits - May restrict flexibility for diverse needs

3. Salesforce Nonprofit Cloud

Salesforce Nonprofit Cloud offers unparalleled scalability and customization. With AI-driven insights and comprehensive integrations, it's best suited for larger museums with complex workflows and significant budgets.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Custom Integrations	Allows extensive customization and integrations for unique museum workflows.	▪ Flexible to meet any organizational need. ▪ Supports third-party apps and add-ons.	▪ Requires significant technical expertise or consultant support.
AI-Driven Insights	Leverages artificial intelligence to analyze donor trends and visitor behaviors.	▪ Improves forecasting and campaign strategies. ▪ Highlights areas for donor growth.	▪ AI tools can be complex to configure and maintain.
Audience Segmentation	Advanced tools to segment and target donors, members, and visitors.	▪ Enhances personalization of outreach campaigns. ▪ Builds stronger audience relationships.	▪ Complexity may lead to underutilization without proper training.
Analytics and Reporting	Offers in-depth dashboards to monitor all aspects of museum performance.	▪ Real-time insights into donor and visitor data. ▪ Customizable and scalable dashboards.	▪ Initial setup and customization require significant time investment.

Scalability	Built to grow with your museum's needs, supporting massive data storage and workflows.	■ Ideal for large institutions with diverse needs. ■ Future-proof technology.	■ Costly for small to mid-sized museums.
Cost	Pricing depends on user licenses and additional features, which can add up quickly.	■ Flexible pricing structure. ■ Discounts available for nonprofits.	■ High costs for advanced features and integrations.

4. Neon CRM

Neon CRM is a budget-friendly solution perfect for small to mid-sized museums. It combines donor and membership management with marketing integrations to provide a simple but effective CRM.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
User-Friendly Interface	Designed with simplicity in mind, ensuring quick onboarding for museum staff.	■ Easy to learn and navigate. ■ Short setup time.	■ Limited customization options for advanced workflows.
Membership Management	Provides tools to track memberships, renewals, and benefits.	■ Streamlined workflows for small teams. ■ Affordable for smaller institutions.	■ May lack advanced features for larger or complex organizations.
Integration with Marketing Tools	Connects with platforms like Mailchimp for seamless email marketing.	■ Great for small campaigns. ■ Simple integrations save time.	■ Lacks deep integration with ticketing systems.

Data and Reporting	Offers standard reports on donor activity and campaign performance.	▪ Clear and actionable insights. ▪ Basic reporting tools included in all plans.	▪ Less robust than competitors like Salesforce or HubSpot.
Pricing	Affordable tiered pricing, making it accessible to smaller museums.	▪ Budget-friendly. ▪ Discounts available for nonprofits.	▪ Advanced analytics and segmentation require higher tiers.

5. DonorPerfect

DonorPerfect focuses on donor management and fundraising, making it an excellent option for museums prioritizing donor-centric operations. It offers tools for event management, donation tracking, and personalized outreach.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Donor Database Management	Centralized database for tracking donor contributions and communication.	▪ Simplifies tracking and reporting. ▪ Great for small development teams.	▪ Limited tools for audience engagement beyond donors.
Event Management Tools	Supports event planning, registration, and donation collection.	▪ Useful for organizing fundraising events. ▪ Integrates donations seamlessly.	▪ Not as advanced as platforms like Tessitura for cultural event coordination.
Real-Time Donation Tracking	Monitors online and offline donations with instant updates.	▪ Provides transparency for donors and staff. ▪ Enhances financial planning.	▪ Focus on fundraising limits its functionality for general museum needs.

Ease of Use	Intuitive platform with accessible customer support and resources.	▪ Easy for non-technical users to adopt. ▪ Strong community resources.	▪ Lacks advanced capabilities for larger institutions.
Pricing	Flexible pricing based on features and organization size.	▪ Affordable for small and mid-sized nonprofits. ▪ Customizable plans.	▪ High-end features can become costly over time.

6. ArenaMetrix

ArenaMetrix focuses on audience engagement and data-driven insights, making it ideal for museums looking to enhance visitor personalization.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Audience Segmentation	Advanced tools to segment visitors and members based on behavior and preferences.	▪ Enables personalized communication. ▪ Strengthens visitor engagement.	▪ Limited focus on donor-centric features compared to alternatives.
Integration with Ticketing Systems	Works seamlessly with ticketing platforms to provide unified visitor data.	▪ Streamlines visitor tracking and engagement. ▪ Enhances ticket sales analytics.	▪ May require additional integrations for broader museum operations.
Personalized Communication Tools	Tools for crafting tailored marketing campaigns to reach specific audience groups.	▪ Improves outreach effectiveness. ▪ Great for niche audience targeting.	▪ Smaller scale compared to larger CRM providers like HubSpot or Salesforce.

Analytics and Reporting	Provides actionable insights into visitor behavior and engagement patterns.	▪ Helps identify growth opportunities. ▪ Useful for exhibit planning and event targeting.	▪ Limited analytics for grant tracking or donor management.
Pricing	Designed to be accessible for cultural institutions, with options for small and mid-sized museums.	▪ Budget-friendly for its features. ▪ Transparent pricing structure.	▪ May lack advanced functionalities required by larger museums.

7. Tessitura Network

Tessitura is a comprehensive platform designed for arts and cultural organizations. It combines CRM, ticketing, and fundraising into a single system, making it an excellent option for museums seeking an all-in-one solution.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
All-in-One Platform	Integrates ticketing, donor management, and fundraising in one system.	▪ Reduces the need for multiple tools. ▪ Centralizes operations efficiently.	▪ High implementation and setup costs.
Business Intelligence Dashboards	Offers detailed insights into operations, audience behaviors, and revenue streams.	▪ Advanced analytics tailored for cultural institutions. ▪ Highly customizable dashboards.	▪ Requires significant training to fully utilize.

Extensive Customer Support	Dedicated support for cultural organizations, including resources and training.	• Responsive and knowledgeable team. • Large community of users for peer support.	• May not scale down well for smaller institutions.
Scalability	Supports museums of all sizes but shines for mid-to-large organizations.	• Ideal for growing institutions. • Flexible features for expanding programs.	• Too complex for organizations with limited IT resources.
Integration	Seamlessly connects with marketing platforms and other museum software.	• Supports specialized workflows. • Great for multi-department collaboration.	• Limited third-party integrations compared to more flexible systems like Salesforce.

8. Cuseum

Cuseum is focused on helping museums create engaging digital experiences. With tools for virtual exhibits, mobile apps, and on-site digital engagement, it enhances how museums connect with their audiences.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Mobile-First Engagement	Enables museums to connect with visitors and members via mobile apps and digital tools.	• Modernizes visitor experience. • Great for younger, tech-savvy audiences.	• Limited donor management tools.

Digital Membership Cards	Provides mobile-friendly membership solutions for increased convenience.	▪ Reduces reliance on physical cards. ▪ Enhances membership retention.	▪ Not a comprehensive CRM solution—best used as a supplemental tool.
Integration with Museum Software	Works with existing systems to extend engagement capabilities.	▪ Easy to integrate into existing workflows. ▪ Enhances digital presence.	▪ Limited analytics and reporting tools compared to full-featured CRMs.
Customization	Allows museums to create tailored digital solutions for members and visitors.	▪ Personalizes visitor experiences. ▪ Improves brand loyalty.	▪ Customization options may be limited without developer support.
Pricing	Affordable options designed for museums looking to enhance digital offerings.	▪ Great value for digital engagement. ▪ Transparent pricing.	▪ Requires integration with other CRMs for holistic donor and data management.

9. Versai Museum Management Software

Versai provides an all-in-one suite for CRM, ticketing, membership, and point-of-sale systems. Tailored specifically for museums, it excels at meeting the unique needs of cultural institutions.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Comprehensive Membership Tracking	Tracks memberships, renewals, and tiered benefits in an easy-to-manage interface.	▪ Simplifies membership management. ▪ Designed specifically for museums.	▪ Limited scalability for non-museum workflows.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Point-of-Sale Integration	Combines CRM with retail and ticketing POS systems.	■ Streamlines operations. ■ Provides unified data on visitor transactions.	■ May lack integration with advanced donor management tools.
Visitor Reporting Tools	Advanced analytics for tracking visitor behaviors and exhibit popularity.	■ Great for strategic exhibit planning. ■ Provides actionable visitor insights.	■ Less robust donor-centric features compared to general CRMs.
Ease of Use	Designed with museum workflows in mind for minimal training requirements.	■ Accessible for staff with varying technical expertise. ■ Intuitive interface.	■ Limited versatility outside the cultural institution niche.
Cost	Pricing tailored to museum-specific needs, making it a cost-effective option.	■ Affordable for its specialized features. ■ Transparent and predictable costs.	■ Smaller user base may mean slower updates and fewer third-party integrations.

10. Doubleknot

Doubleknot is a unified platform for ticketing, membership, and fundraising, making it a practical choice for museums looking to simplify operations and improve efficiency.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Unified Operations	Combines ticketing, memberships, and fundraising into one streamlined system.	■ Reduces administrative workload. ■ Ideal for small to mid-sized museums.	■ Limited advanced analytics compared to larger platforms.

Customizable Membership Tiers	Allows for flexible membership structures tailored to different audience needs.	■ Great for diverse member engagement. ■ Supports multi-level benefits.	■ Lacks in-depth audience segmentation tools.
Event Registration Tools	Simplifies online and onsite event registration workflows.	■ Easy to use for small event teams. ■ Integrates well with fundraising efforts.	■ Basic tools for larger-scale events.
Ease of Use	Designed for non-technical users with intuitive navigation.	■ Minimal training required. ■ Strong customer support.	■ Limited customization for larger institutions with unique needs.
Cost	Affordable for small institutions, with tiered pricing for more advanced features.	■ Accessible entry-level pricing. ■ Scalable as needs grow.	■ May not meet the demands of larger or highly complex organizations.

11. PastPerfect

PastPerfect is widely used for collections management, offering tools for cataloging, preserving, and sharing artifacts. It's ideal for museums prioritizing artifact documentation and public accessibility.

Feature	Details	Pros	Cons
Collections Cataloging	Provides comprehensive tools for documenting artifacts, including images, descriptions, and metadata.	■ Ensures accurate, detailed records. ■ Supports customizable metadata fields for flexibility.	■ Interface may feel outdated compared to newer software. ■ May require training for new users unfamiliar with cataloging tools.

Preservation Tracking	Tracks the condition of artifacts and schedules necessary preservation tasks.	▪ Helps ensure long-term care of collections. ▪ Enables detailed history logs for each artifact.	▪ Relies on manual input for condition updates. ▪ Limited automation for repetitive tasks.
Public Access Modules	Allows museums to create online exhibits and share collections with wider audiences.	▪ Enhances audience engagement through virtual access. ▪ Supports integration with external websites.	▪ Limited customization for public-facing exhibits. ▪ Requires additional effort to format digital exhibits attractively.
Archival Digitization	Supports high-resolution image storage and management for digital archives.	▪ Reduces reliance on physical access to collections. ▪ Facilitates better backup and disaster recovery strategies.	▪ Additional storage solutions may be needed for large digital files. ▪ High-resolution digitization may require third-party support.
Integrated Reporting Tools	Offers reporting features for grants, loans, and artifact statistics.	▪ Simplifies administrative tasks and funding applications. ▪ Customizable templates for key stakeholders.	▪ Basic reporting lacks advanced analytics found in other platforms. ▪ Export options are limited to specific formats.

Chapter 4

How to Choose the Best Software Solution *for Your Museum*

Now that we've discussed the different types of museum software solution systems, it's essential to determine which one best aligns with your institution's unique needs. Choosing the right tech is more than just selecting software—it's about finding a tool that supports your museum's mission and helps you build lasting relationships with donors, members, and visitors.

With nonprofit technology spending in North America projected to reach approximately **$92.4 billion** by 2030, it's evident that museums and similar arts and culture institutions are increasingly leveraging software systems to streamline operations and enhance audience engagement.

This chapter provides a framework to help you evaluate and select the CRM that's perfect for your museum.

Steps to Select the Right CRM for Your Museum

1. Assess Organizational Needs

Every museum has its own priorities and workflows. Identify what matters most for your institution:

▶ **Donor Management:** Do you need tools to segment donors, track contributions, and automate outreach?

▶ **Membership Programs:** Are you managing tiered memberships or renewals that require automation?

▶ **Event Coordination:** Do you need integrations with ticketing systems for exhibits and events?

▶ **Visitor Insights:** Are audience analytics important for planning and engagement strategies?

▶ **Volunteer Management:** Do you need tools to schedule shifts, track volunteer hours, and communicate efficiently with your volunteer base?

> **Pro Tip:** Involve your staff in defining these needs. Their feedback can reveal overlooked areas where a CRM could make a difference.

2. Budget Considerations

CRMs can vary widely in price, from free solutions to highly customizable enterprise systems. Consider the following:

▶ **Initial Costs:** Software purchase, implementation, and training.

▶ **Ongoing Costs:** Subscription fees, upgrades, and technical support.

▶ **Cost vs. Value:** Compare the potential return on investment (ROI), such as improved donor retention and streamlined workflows.

3. Compatibility

Ensure the CRM integrates seamlessly with your museum's existing systems.

Ask:

▶ Does it work with your current ticketing, point-of-sale, or event management tools?

▶ Can it integrate with email marketing platforms like Mailchimp or Constant Contact?

▶ Does it support custom APIs for unique workflows?

> **Pro Tip:** Prioritize a CRM that can grow alongside your museum's existing tech stack.

4. Scalability

As your museum grows, your CRM should adapt to your evolving needs.

Evaluate:

▶ **Data Capacity:** Can the system handle increased donor and member data?

▶ **Feature Expansion:** Does the CRM offer add-ons or upgrades to support new initiatives?

▶ **Future-Proofing:** Will the provider continue to develop and support the system?

5. User Training and Support

Adopting software is only effective if your staff can use it confidently. Look for:

▶ **Training Resources:** Are there webinars, tutorials, or in-person training sessions available?

▶ **Customer Support:** Is there accessible support for troubleshooting issues?

▶ **Ease of Use:** How intuitive is the interface for non-technical staff and volunteers?

> **Impact Stat:** 67% of nonprofit organizations cite ease of use as a critical factor when selecting software.

Chapter 5

Beyond Software Solutions – Unlocking the Full Potential of HubSpot for Museums

A fully integrated software ecosystem is the cornerstone of modern museum operations, but its true power lies in its ability to integrate with a broader ecosystem of tools and platforms.

With **HubSpot for Nonprofits** museums gain access to a comprehensive CRM paired with exhaustive integrations and customization capabilities empowering museums to create a streamlined system for managing operations. Additionally, HubSpot offers qualifying nonprofits exclusive discounts, making its advanced features accessible to institutions of all sizes.

With HubSpot, museums can integrate key tools—like ticketing systems, marketing platforms, and fundraising solutions—into a unified platform that provides a comprehensive view of visitor, donor, and member interactions. This means you can say goodbye to piecemeal, patchwork legacy tools and work inside a single source of truth.

HubSpot's Integration Ecosystem for Museums

Here's how museums can leverage HubSpot's ecosystem across different departments:

1. Ticketing Systems

Managing ticketing and visitor data becomes seamless with HubSpot's integration with popular ticketing platforms like Eventbrite and ShowClix. Museums can automate event registrations, track ticket sales, and manage guest lists directly from HubSpot, ensuring that visitor information is always up-to-date.

> **Use Case:** Museums can automatically sync visitor data from ticket sales into HubSpot, creating personalized follow-up opportunities, promoting future events, or encouraging membership sign-ups—all without manually transferring data between systems.

2. Marketing and Automation Tools

HubSpot's built-in marketing automation tools can be enhanced with integrations to platforms like Mailchimp or Zapier. This allows museums to track email engagement, automate social media campaigns, and sync audience data to deliver personalized, impactful marketing.

> **Use Case:** Museums can create automated email campaigns to promote membership renewals, upcoming exhibits, or special events. By syncing email engagement data with HubSpot, museums can segment their audience more effectively, ensuring messages reach the right people at the right time.

3. Engagement Solutions

Engaging visitors, both on-site and virtually, is critical to a museum's success. HubSpot integrates with tools like Cuseum and SurveyMonkey to help museums enhance their digital engagement and capture valuable visitor feedback.

> **Use Case:** After a visitor engages with an exhibit, museums can send automated follow-up surveys to collect feedback, which is then synced into HubSpot for analysis. This helps museums gauge visitor satisfaction and adjust their programming or exhibits based on real-time feedback.

4. Fundraising Platforms

Fundraising is essential for many museums, and HubSpot's integration with platforms like Fundraise Up and Classy allows museums to automate donor communications, track campaign success, and manage donation data seamlessly.

> **Use Case:** Museums can use HubSpot to segment donors based on their giving history, automate thank-you emails, and personalize outreach for upcoming fundraising campaigns. With real-time reporting, museums can easily track fundraising efforts and ensure that their communication strategies are optimized for donor engagement.

5. Team Collaboration Tools

HubSpot's integrations with Slack, Asana, and other project management tools help museum teams collaborate efficiently. Real-time notifications, task assignments, and internal communication channels can all be managed through HubSpot's workflows.

Use Case: Museums can create automated email campaigns to promote membership renewals, upcoming exhibits, or special events. By syncing email engagement data with HubSpot, museums can segment their audience more effectively, ensuring messages reach the right people at the right time.

Seeing These Capabilities in Action: The MNHS Case Study

These capabilities are not just theoretical—they're actively being used.

Case in point: Nonprofit Tech Shop (NTS) successfully worked with the **Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS)** to migrate their systems from Tessitura to HubSpot.

This transition has had a significant impact, enabling MNHS to streamline operations, enhance visitor engagement, and unify their workflows across ticketing, marketing, and fundraising.

Through this migration, our team helped **MNHS centralize all visitor, donor, and member data into a single system,** bringing together key functions such as ticketing, donor management, and marketing automation. This allowed MNHS to personalize communications, manage memberships more effectively, and track donations seamlessly—all within HubSpot's CRM.

For example, by integrating Fundraise Up and Mailchimp with HubSpot, we automated key donor communications, saving valuable time for the MNHS team and improving overall engagement. With HubSpot's powerful customization capabilities, MNHS was able to **reduce reliance on manual processes and third-party platforms,** creating a unified, efficient system tailored to their needs.
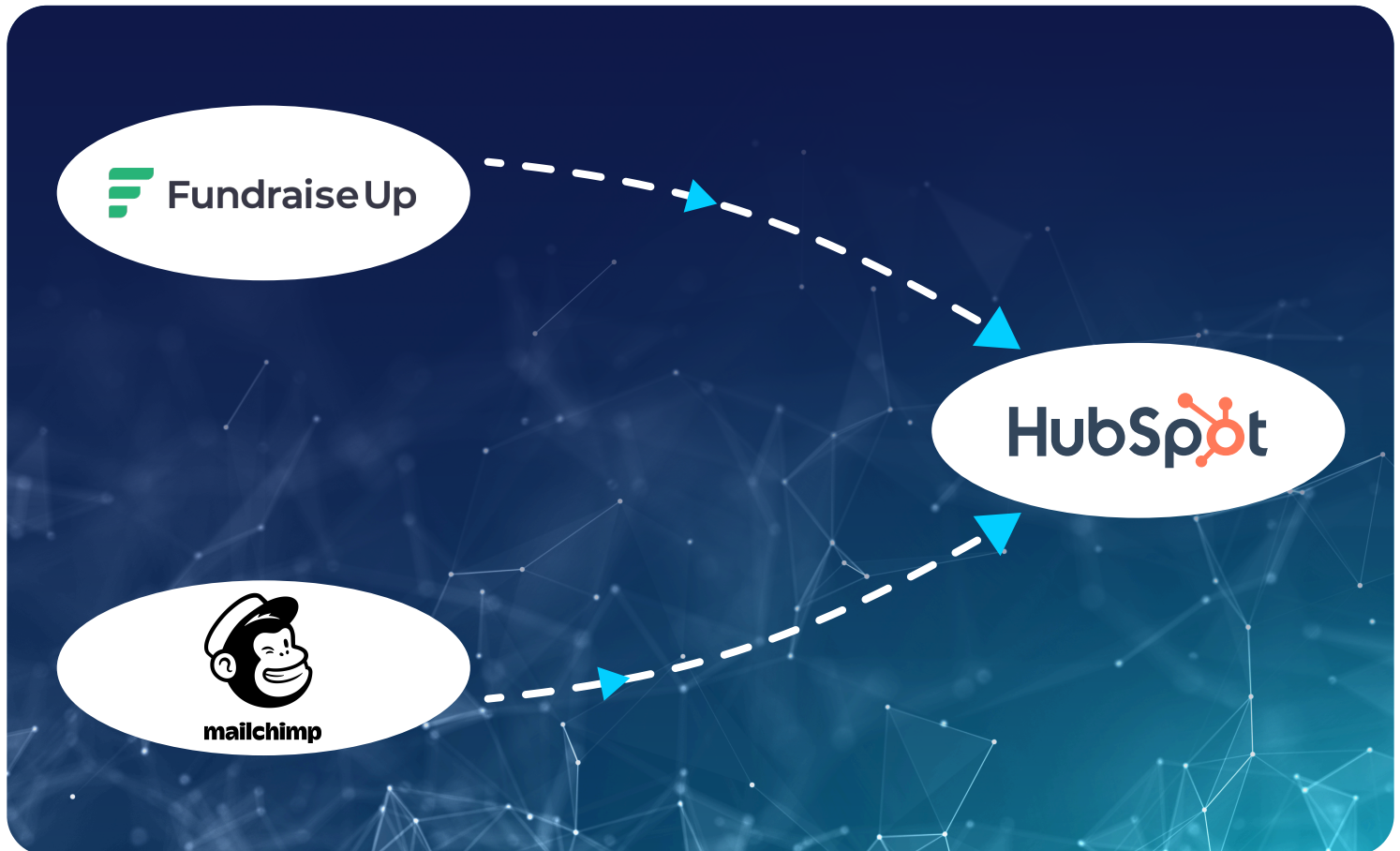
The impact has been remarkable: not only has this migration simplified their internal workflows, but it's also enhanced the overall visitor experience. With HubSpot, MNHS can now run highly targeted marketing campaigns, optimize ticket sales, and engage donors in more meaningful ways—all thanks to the seamless integration our team facilitated.

Results:

▶ **30% boost** in staff productivity

▶ **25% increase** in donor engagement

▶ **Improved visitor engagement** with integrated ticketing and marketing tools

▶ **Streamlined workflows,** allowing staff to focus on high-priority tasks instead of manual data entry

▶ **Enhanced fundraising capabilities,** resulting in more effective campaigns and higher donor retention

The Final *Word*

The right museum software solution combines robust functionality with the ability to empower your team, foster meaningful audience connections, drive donations, and deliver unforgettable visitor experiences.

Whether you're a small museum just starting to adopt technology or a large institution seeking advanced tools, the tech stack you choose should align with your goals and help your museum thrive in an increasingly digital world.

This ebook has explored the top software solution options for museums, the critical features to prioritize, and the steps to select the best solution for your unique needs. We've highlighted how tools like HubSpot and its extensive integration ecosystem can unify your operations, enhance donor and visitor relationships, and scale as your museum grows.

Now it's your turn.

Evaluate your museum's needs, explore the solutions we've outlined, and begin building a technology ecosystem that brings your museum's mission to life. The right tools are out there—this guide is here to help you find them.

Curious about how HubSpot can transform your museum's operations? Contact Nonprofit Tech Shop to learn more about tailored CRM solutions *for your institution!*

LET'S TALK