



White paper: How online tools are revolutionizing ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation



WHITE PAPER

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the past there were two main routes to gaining ISO 27001 and ISO 22301. Piece together the documents and information needed from a variety of sources, or hire a consultant to hold a hand through the process. The former option was cheaper, but often ended in failure. The latter was very expensive and resulted in the valuable knowledge and expertise gained from implementation not being retained in the business.

Now the landscape of ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation has fundamentally changed. Custom-built online tools now provide budget-savvy IT or security managers with the high quality information and advice they need in one place. This is drastically reducing the cost of implementation, while ensuring a project is quickly and effectively completed.

The benefits these tools bring (large cost savings compared to hiring consultants, high-quality ready-to-use document templates, retained knowledge in the business, step-by-step guidance and community support) make this new approach to ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation a compelling option.

2. INTRODUCTION

The tools available to help a business implement ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 have taken a huge leap forward, to the point they have now made the need for consultants almost a thing of the past.

Choosing the do-it-yourself approach no longer risks the failure of a project. In fact, it's now one of the easiest, most cost-effective options available. In this white paper we will look at each option in more detail, providing an easy comparison for decision-making. First, let's take a look at the old approach.

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3. THE OLD-FASHIONED APPROACH TO ISO 27001 AND ISO 22301 IMPLEMENTATION

In the past there were effectively two options available: search high and low on the Internet to piece together all the information and documentation needed to conduct an implementation project; or hire a consultant to come into the business to help take all the necessary steps.

1. Attempt implementation without support

In the past, without the new tools and platforms we have today, attempting to collect all the information needed, from a variety of online sources, was an onerous task. And one that did not guarantee consistent, high quality results. This approach presented a number of problems:

- **Poor quality documents** – With no single reputable location for document templates, people had to search a variety of online sources and struggled to find the high quality and consistently formatted documents needed.
- **No implementation guidance** – Without a clear structure and plan for ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation, a project can get out of control and expensive.
- **No support if a project gets stuck** – Implementation projects can be challenging, so there's a good chance at some point help will be needed. The answers *can* be found on various Internet forums, but this often means relying on advice with uncertain credibility.
- **It's time consuming** – When unsure exactly how to do something, everything takes much longer than anticipated. So although there are not the obvious costs, such as paying for a consultant, the process can still become very expensive (just think of the value of time).

And, ultimately, it can be a frustrating option; not knowing what to do next, or even where to start and never sure if the documents are correct. And doing everything with no support along the way.

2. Hire a consultant

Hiring an expert, experienced in ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation, is going to help get the job done. However, consultants do not come cheap, so this option is an expensive one.

And with the rise of new online tools that have dramatically reduced the cost of implementation (primarily by negating the need for consultants), the cost-benefit equation begins to look less attractive. The problems with this option are:

- **Consultants are expensive** – This is the time of an expert and the invoice will reflect that. And with the amount of time required for a typical implementation project, this bill can soon skyrocket.

- **No knowledge transfer** – A consultant can help a business implement ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 faster (although with progress still the company’s responsibility, this is no guarantee). However, when that consultant leaves they take the knowledge and expertise with them. The consultant has little incentive to pass on his knowledge because it’s his livelihood; he wants to be needed further down the road. It’s much better that the knowledge base of the ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 certification process remain firmly within the organization.
- **No guarantee of certification** – No consultant, how ever experienced they are, can promise ISO 27001 / ISO 22301 certification. What is often forgotten about when hiring consultants is that, although they offer a guiding hand through the process, they are just there to advice. The success of implementation and certification remains in the hands of the business.

This white paper is not about bashing the work of consultants. There are many experienced and effective consultants who will come in to a business and hold its hand through the entire process of preparing for and gaining certification.

However, the argument posed here is that nowadays a proactive company can get the same job done for a fraction of the cost of hiring these experts. While not a silver bullet solution, new online tools do offer an effective alternative choice.

4. HOW ONLINE TOOLS CAN HELP WITH ISO 27001 AND ISO 22301

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Firstly, what are these tools? They are online services that provide all the document templates and advice needed to implement ISO 27001 and ISO 22301. The idea behind these services is to allow implementation without requiring a consultant.

This approach will not be for everyone and it’s not a magic wand. In fact, none of the solutions available will take away *all* of the hard work. But online tools do provide the ability to successful complete an implementation project with a lot less fuss, stress and cost.

So what should the online tools provide?

The information needed – The best of the online tools should provide a large bank of resources, templates, advice and support (all focused on helping with implementation). By avoiding the need to hunt around for the information, this can save a big chunk of time and hassle.

Help when it’s needed – Unless experienced in ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation, some guidance will probably be required. These tools should perform most of the functions of a consultant, walking through the process step-by-step in a similar way (even providing live one-to-one support with an expert). It’s not quite the same as having a consultant sat in the office, but the tools should provide all the support needed (and, most importantly, when it’s needed).

No ISO 27001 or ISO 22301 qualifications required – The process should be designed to take even a beginner from start to finish through an implementation project. That means there is no need for prior ISO 27001 or ISO 22301 qualifications to understand everything (although having them is great). With a logical approach and sufficient motivation the structured process should be easy to follow.

Ready to use document templates – Access to all the templates needed for ISO 27001 and/or ISO 22301 implementation is a big advantage. Online services should provide templates that are mostly complete (while also offering the flexibility to adapt them to the specific needs of the company).

Community support – During an implementation project it's very useful to be able to communicate with experts, but also with other people in the same situation. Good online tools should allow conversations with real life experts but also with peers, meaning ideas can be shared and vital help sought.

Additional tools – Beyond the guidance, document templates and support service, the best sites should also offer some useful tools to help with key decision-making. For example, tools that help determine what specifically is needed for implementation, which of the documents and information required are missing and how long such a project may last.

5. SO WHICH IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTION IS BEST FOR YOU?

Which path you take to ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation depends on your unique situation. So to help you decide which approach is best for you, here is a quick guide to your options:

Hire a consultant:

- If time is a major concern for you. Hiring a consultant will help you achieve success in a short timeframe.
- If you don't have people that can allocate time to an implementation project. A consultant can act as that person on the ground.
- If cost is not your primary concern.
- If you're sure you will get a top level consultant as this is the best way to ensure they bring added value to the table.

Do it on your own without support:

- If you have a lot of time to put into your project.
- If you do not have sufficient funds or your budget is close to zero.
- If your project scope is very narrow, otherwise it can get complicated.
- If you already have in-house people that are familiar with the topic of ISO 27001 or ISO 22301.

Use the online tools:

- When you need to implement quickly.
- If the scope of your project is wide or involves a number of processes.
- Even if your in-house experience and knowledge of the topics is low.
- If you have some spare time but don't want everyone's daily routines to be overly impacted.
- If your budget is low.
- If you want the knowledge of ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation to be retained in-house.

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6. CONCLUSION

Where once the most likely route to a successful ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation was to hire a consultant, the options available to you have now expanded. Instead of having to locate all the information you need from a range of online sources, you can now use dedicated one-stop-shop online services.

The rise of these new online tools has, for the first time, made the do-it-yourself approach to implementation a feasible one. But just because you now have the documents, advice and support all in one place online, it doesn't mean this option is ideal for you.

Before embarking on an implementation project it's vital to choose the method that best suits your needs. And that very much depends on your unique situation. For some hiring a consultant will be the best option; for others the new online tools provide an attractive choice.

One thing is for sure; the rise of online services has changed the landscape of ISO 27001 and ISO 22301 implementation.



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