

# The 7 Best SOP Software Options



Every business runs by using processes and procedures that help ensure consistency and compliance - but many fail to take advantage of the incredible advantages SOP software has to offer. Processes help employees perform tasks correctly and include step-by-step instructions.

Typically, a process is a higher-level document, while the SOP is much more detailed with specific assignments and workflows that ensure the desired outcome. Some say that anything you do more than twice needs to be documented - and so the SOP was born. An SOP doesn't have to be complicated; those written in plain language with a clear checklist have the power to improve business outcomes significantly without being challenging to understand.

Thankfully, there is SOP software that helps to streamline the creation and management of your SOP.

## Why do you need SOPs?

Effective Standard Operating Procedures can help ensure that employees are guided through completing routine tasks using proven methods and procedures. SOPs empower employees and enable cross-training. They allow your company to run like a well-oiled machine, and who doesn't want that?

### You need SOPs to ensure:

- **Safety and compliance** - don't take risks with your business. By standardizing processes, you can ensure a safer workplace and stay in compliance with laws and regulations. SOP software can also help

with record-keeping and audits.

- **SOPs help you maximize production, improve quality, reduce errors, and increase consistency** – repeatable processes help employees provide stable outcomes.
- **Quickly train new employees** – by providing SOPs, new employees can easily get up to speed on even the most complicated processes. The step-by-step nature of the SOP helps new employees gain confidence, ensure their understanding, and rapidly learn new procedures.
- **Reduced wasted time** – the routine nature of following an SOP allows employees to eliminate errors and reduce downtime due to confusion or rework.
- **SOPs drive increased collaboration** – and SOP software can help drive workflows and reduce approval bottlenecks.
- **Drive brand reputation** – by consistently meeting customer expectations and monitoring your processes, your company will become known for high-quality products

In addition, some companies may put SOPs in place to meet a variety of standards and regulations for accounting, IT, food and pharmacology, quality systems, health and safety, and HR purposes.

Particularly at the federal level, there may be various government-regulated requirements for the documentation of SOPs, their retention periods, and versioning to show previous changes. If your organization works within the public sector, make sure you understand the full requirements for maintaining documentation, policies, and procedures. There may be contractual requirements that obligate your organization, potentially even being penalized for \*not\* keeping adequate SOPs!

The need for SOPs in business is clear cut – they help prevent problems and allow you to scale while providing consistent service and products.

### **There are several formats for SOP documents:**

- **Simple checklist** – easily followed steps outlined in checklist form.
- **Step-by-step process** – useful for procedures with a lot of steps and simple yes/no decisions.
- **Hierarchical format** – with bulleted lists and sublists, and possibly an approval chain.
- **Flowchart** – this format works well when multiple outcomes are possible.

### **What is SOP software?**

SOP management software takes those stacks of paper processes or outdated manuals and makes it easy for employees to access them at any time. Storing your company procedures and processes in a cloud-based environment allows you to update them in real-time easily. This type of software or app acts as a central repository and helps ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Creating a system that allows for easy collaboration, tracking, and reporting can be a considerable business improvement. Building automated, repeatable processes is easy when using the right software. They enable automation and connection to existing HR and business apps, as well.

### **SOP software can help your company:**

- Create customized SOP templates.
- Draft, revise, and release SOPs quickly through version and author control.
- Track tasks.
- Enable sharing and collaboration.
- Keep SOPs up-to-date.
- Easily access SOPs.
- Implement SOPs with built-in workflow and automatic routing.

- Integrated video or multimedia content into your SOPs.
- Access reporting and process results for procedures.
- Automatically synchronize and deploy new versions to all employees.
- Easily navigate SOPs for various departments.
- Enable cross-company and interdepartmental sharing of information.
- Create SOPs that are searchable and categorized so all employees can access the appropriate processes for their department.
- Develop secure, cloud-based, and efficient SOPs – that you can access from anywhere.

## What SOP software is best?

The right software or SOP app will vary based on your business needs.

First, you'll want to make sure that the software or app is entirely secure and meets any contractual or process guidelines your IT team has in place for sharing and access with employees, customers, or stakeholders.

Many of these tools integrate/federate with Microsoft Active Directory to enable easy management of employee access. Ideally, including the ability to review SOPs on multiple platforms (such as computers, tablets, and mobile devices) will help expand your capacity and reach your employee community.

Next, you should verify that the software will allow you to create and update your SOPs easily; many include default templates for this purpose, but you might also want to create customized options that include corporate branding and personalized content.

Finally, make sure that the software is easy for you and your employees to use. It should be intuitive, work within your existing network, and available to be accessed anywhere via approved devices.

A software solution that is cumbersome to administrate or difficult to consume as an end-user will not be something of significant value to you or your organization.

## Here are just a few of the many SOP software solutions and apps available today:

- [SweetProcess](#) – this software allows you to keep documents, procedures, and tasks all in one place. It provides a systematic way to document procedures, implement policies, craft processes, and manage tasks.
- [ProcessStreet](#) – this tool lets you create templates, track progress, and collaborate with your team. ProcessStreet integrates workflows, conditional logic, and approvals and can integrate with thousands of apps.
- [Lucidchart](#) – this software helps you create visuals, build diagrams, and document processes in one centralized location.
- [TKO](#) – with a multitude of preloaded templates, TKO is a platform that allows you to document SOPs, access them from any device, send notifications, embed video, and secure sensitive content.
- [Smartsheet](#) – this tool allows for workflows, content management, templates, and integrates with your existing tools.
- [Pipefy](#) – this software lets you create smart, repeatable workflows and include vendors, customers, and other stakeholders. It includes ready-to-use templates, or you can create custom SOPs.
- [Microsoft SharePoint](#) – is an on-premise or cloud-based solution that offers various capabilities, such as document versioning, retention and storage, multiple templates, and integration with other Microsoft products.

## Benefits of SOP software

In today's modern world, managing SOPs means keeping processes and procedures up-to-date and enabling easy consumption for end users.

Many cloud-based platforms have mobile-friendly browser iterations or even applications for your mobile devices. This is beneficial because whenever you deploy updated documentation, you can ensure that the end-users expediently receive that information.

Additionally, SOP software can help during transitory periods, such as earlier this year when COVID-19 caused many companies to react and rapidly modify their work environments quickly.

By updating SOPs within a centralized, cloud-based environment, organizations can promptly communicate updated policies, procedures, and expectations to employees who need to transition from an in-person office to a home office quickly.

**Additional Resource:** Need help on how to start an SOP manual? [It's easier than you think.](#)