



Offshore Software Development

Offshore software development is the provision of software development services from a company that is located in a different country to you, the advantages and disadvantages of this are discussed in this article.

The most popular regions for offshore software development are India, Eastern Europe, Ireland, Canada and Israel.

Advantages

Cost

The main reason companies choose to use offshore developers is because of their significantly lower cost. This is usually because there is a large supply of appropriately skilled labour and/or the cost of living is much cheaper.

Large Pool of Skilled Labour

In the UK there is a shortage of skilled software developers. Therefore, many projects are outsourced because a suitable available developer could not be found in the UK.

Disadvantages

Communication

This can be the biggest problem when outsourcing your project to an offshore IT company. Misunderstandings regarding the project specification can occur, especially if their first language is not English. These misunderstandings can then result in the final software being significantly different from what you had expected.

Even if your developers speak fluent English, it can still be difficult to convey your requirements to them when face-to-face meetings are difficult.

Stability

Many countries offering offshore development services can be unstable, both politically and economically. This may cause a potential risk to your project.

Qualifications

Many offshore software development companies will offer you a wealth of qualifications to prove their abilities. However, unless you are familiar with that country's education system and institutions, it can be difficult to assess the quality and validity of these qualifications.

Trust

It is very important that you can trust your software developer, as they may have access to sensitive information about your organisation. As you may never meet an offshore software developer, it can be very difficult for you to trust them

Cultural Differences

Offshore software development companies will most likely have a variety of cultural differences compared to a UK based company. These can include differing public holidays and contrasting options on design / colour.

Inexperience

The software development industries in many of these countries are comparatively inexperienced and unproven. This means there are a lot of development companies that have little experience, particularly in dealing with foreign clients. It can be very difficult to separate the good experienced offshore development companies from the poor ones.

Legislation

Depending on the functionality of your application it may contravene legislation for you to outsource your project, particularly if you are outsourcing outside of the EU. For example, if the developers will have access to confidential details of your customers it may be against Data Protection legislation for you to give offshore developers access to this.

Why not [search the UK software developer directory](#) to find a UK based software developer today.

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