

Insight 

TOGETHER. BETTER.

Extended
Teams for
Software
Development
101



INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced tech landscape, businesses face the double-edged challenge of maximising internal resources while addressing the growing need for specialised skills and scalable solutions.

Extending your team with external technical resources has emerged as a powerful tool to meet these demands, offering flexible access to a deep, rich global talent pool.

But is it for you?

Is it what your business needs to achieve its ambitions?

And how can you get started?





EXTENDED TEAMS CAN BE AN EXCELLENT SOLUTION FOR:

- **Resource Shortages:** When internal teams lack the bandwidth for a project.
- **Skill Gaps:** To access specialised skills not available in-house.
- **Cost Efficiency:** To reduce development costs without compromising quality.
- **Scalability:** To quickly scale teams up or down based on project needs.
- **Time-to-Market Pressures:** When you need to expedite product development.

It's important to remember that seeking help from extended teams isn't about a lack of competence or capability on your team's part. You can have teams of extraordinarily talented people, but still lack specific skill sets — or even just time in the day — to deliver projects. Because of this, and several other, negative connotations, we've shifted away from the phrase 'outsourcing,' in favour of 'extended teams.'

Remember: you're capable alone, but you're exceptional when extended.

With all of this said, for those new to seeking extended teams — or even those with less-than ideal past experiences — diving into the process can be daunting. The most effective partner will go beyond the traditional models, integrating into your business as a true strategic partner to your success and exceed your expectations. Of course, finding such an effective partner is half of the struggle.

It's easy to get tangled up in the details, so to help unravel everything and offer some much needed clarity, we've created a comprehensive guide to help you understand the basics of extended software development teams to address any pressing questions and provide a foundation for further knowledge.

By the end of this piece, you should feel confident understanding the different types of models, the advantages and limitations of each, the methodology that drives them and, ultimately, the scenarios where seeking an extended team's partner would benefit your business



LET'S START FROM THE BEGINNING...

What does it mean to extend your software development team?

For many, it's a complete game-changer, offering a blend of flexibility, expertise and cost-efficiency that's difficult to match with internal resources.

Imagine being able to tap into a global talent pool, scale your development efforts up and down with ease, access specialised skills and technologies, and do it all without the overhead of maintaining a large, in-house team. It's a little like having a team of superheroes ready to tackle

your tech challenges and drive your success. Whether you need to hire resources for a specific project, contract talent for an extended period, or augment your existing in-house capabilities, extended teams can help. There are different models, depending on your need.

Let's move on to breaking down the benefits and downsides of each to help you figure out what's the best fit for you.

THE DIFFERENT MODELS: WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU?

Onshore

Onshore extended teams means partnering with developers within your own country. Here's some reasons this might be a great choice for you:

- + **Easy Communication:** With no language, time or cultural barriers, communication is straightforward and effective, with little to no possibility of any misunderstandings.
- + **Smooth Integration:** Being in the same country often makes it easier to integrate with your internal process and culture, leading to a quicker kick off and faster alignment.
- + **Quality Assurance:** Proximity allows for more frequent and direct oversight, ensuring that the work consistently meets your standards.
- **Cost:** Onshore extended teams can be more expensive than nearshore or offshore, and arguably deliver less value for money.

Nearshore

Nearshore teams retain the 'local' feeling and benefits, while being more cost effective than an onshore model. Here's why it can be a good option:

- + **Time Zone Alignment:** Nearshore teams operate in similar or overlapping time zones, meaning you can still hold realtime meetings without late nights or early mornings.
- + **Cultural Fit:** With nearshore teams you can often still find a common shared understanding around cultural and business practices.
- + **Cost-Effective:** While not as budget friendly as offshore options, nearshore teams offer a nice balance between quality and cost.
- **Relatively small talent pool:** Compared to large, offshore extended teams in countries like India, some larger businesses may struggle to find all of the capabilities required. Think about whether your project is large enough to warrant considering an offshore partner.





HYBRID GLOBAL MODEL

The best of all worlds. Reap the benefits of the nearshore delivery model with flexible access to the perks of offshore and onshore offerings.

Insight offers a unique approach through strategically placed delivery centres in the UK, EU and the US, providing onshore and nearshore, as well as access to other offshore locations if required. Thanks to this, our clients benefit from everything mentioned above: cost-effectiveness, flexibility, scalability, and cultural alignment, all without every compromising on quality. Access to UK-based developers also grants access to fully security vetted teams.

This hybrid approach also carries the benefit of Insight's culture of continuous learning, development, and knowledge transfer. Developers working on secure projects in private locations in the UK can still access a wealth of experience and knowledge from developers in Eastern Europe, and vice versa. With access to such an extensive network of experience, our developers and clients alike stand to benefit immensely

PRICING AND DELIVERY APPROACHES

Understanding the differing models of software development extended teams is just half of the battle. With a comprehensive idea of the pros and cons behind each methodology, you need to understand the difference between the rigid 'waterfall' structure, and the fluid 'Agile', along with the financial considerations that go along with them.

Fixed Price Waterfall

Bespoke software development is inherently unpredictable, with requirements often evolving throughout the project lifecycle. Fixed budgets hinder adaptation to changing needs, leading to compromise in quality or functionality. This often prioritises cost over optimal solutions.

Unless the scope of work is crystal clear, prices aren't truly fixed. Changes to scope result in cost uncertainty and delays, often leading to conflict and disagreement. Waterfall's linear approach typically involves a lengthy discovery period, meaning that when work on the project/ product begins, the value may no longer meet expectations.

Once the project is complete, the business may have changed significantly, leading to new challenges and expectations from the product/ project. The initial budget may have already been spent on something that no longer fits the brief.



PURE AGILE

On the other end of the spectrum is Agile, which promotes iterative development, allowing for continuous improvement. This fosters collaboration and empowers innovation.

In the last 10 years, Agile has become the standard model for software development. Unlike the waterfall method, Agile projects start with a minimum viable product (MVP) and add new features in stages called iterations. Clients feedback on each iteration, and any shift in priorities can easily be addressed. This process will continue until the product is perfect, or the time limit or budget of the project runs out.

Agile ensures that clients always receive an outcome, but it can be a very blunt tool. It is really useful for organising routine, day-to-day processes, but Agile has no answers for the really difficult situations that can arise in any project:

- What happens when there is a major problem that prevents work from continuing?
- What if there is a personality conflict?
- What happens if the communication between the client and the development team breaks down?

Due to the iterative nature of the work, it is also easy for budgets to spiral rapidly out of control. The solutions to these issues are far from easy.





WHEN OUTSOURCING MADE THE DIFFERENCE

Case studies of businesses that successfully navigated outsourcing can provide valuable insights. For instance, a tech startup leveraging offshore development to accelerate product launch or a large enterprise utilising a dedicated team for a critical project.

Here are just a couple of partnerships that Insight has been involved with, offering real-world examples of how outsourcing can benefit you:

Autoguard Group's ambitions to continue deliver exceptional, multi-award-winning products and services as the global performance partner for OEMs, dealer groups, and independent dealers required the assistance of a dedicated application support partner.

AMBITION THROUGH SOFTWARE EXCELLENCE
Autoguard Group was looking to reduce tickets, improve the overall stability of its web app, and open the door to welcome further innovation.

AN AGILE AND FLEXIBLE PARTNERSHIP
Insight's agile and flexible dynamic delivery pods brought the reliable software innovation and maintenance that Autoguard Group needed.

TANGIBLE RESULTS
After two years, Insight launched a brand-new application from the ground up, with extensive innovation carried out on existing software as well.

UNITING GLOBAL OFFICES WITH A BESPOKE CRM SOLUTION
Robert Walters worked with Insight to become technology-first leader in the recruitment sector, with a bespoke CRM software solution.

CONNECTING EXCEPTIONAL TALENT WORLDWIDE
Robert Walters, a world-leading specialist professional recruitment firm, is pioneering the way forward by connecting exceptional talent with top opportunities worldwide.

STREAMLINING GLOBAL OPERATIONS
In an effort to streamline and harmonise internal operations, Robert Walters identified the need for a unified Customer Relationship Management system.

TECHNOLOGY-FIRST PARTNERSHIP
To become a technology first leader in recruitment, Robert Walters partnered with Insight for their software development and data management capabilities.

How Insight can help

Bring your product to market faster to maximise profitability and enhance your ROI, all while retaining full ownership and control of your IP.

Our experts deliver innovation and true business value through a proven Agile, collaborative approach and a robust internal governance framework. We align your internal processes with industry best practices and uphold the highest security standards.

Speak to one of our experts today with a free consultation to see how we can help you to imagine your seemingly impossible software challenges.

**Our unique combination
of hardware, software,
and services expertise
provides everything your
business needs to excel.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT US.**

08444 723 800
contactus@insight.com

Insight 

