

OUTSOURCING APPS



Best Practices For Outsourcing App Development

Best Practices for Outsourcing App Development

Outsourcing remains the most compelling value proposition for businesses, and app development is one of the major areas for outsourcing for a variety of reasons, including cost savings. Even if you have an in-house team already creating apps, you can teach them to collaborate with a remote outsourced team to complete fuller, richer apps.

As global business expands, companies are under pressure to invest in better infrastructure if they want to keep delivering the best services to their clients. But investing in extra infrastructure as it relates to apps could be a waste of company resources, especially if you can make room in your business for third-party app developers who aren't employees of your company.

But coming in under budget is only one reason you might decide to outsource your app development. Others include:

Timeliness

In business, time is of the essence. If you outsource app development to a third party, you get time-bound delivery, mostly because third-party delivery will always be integrated with the most updated features and technologies.

Expertise

When you outsource app development, you get access to a very technically adept team with updated skills and knowledge. You can make use of this rich repository to your best advantage.

Flexibility

When you work with a team of developers who have a wide range of skills and experience with the latest technology, you are going to have the ability to create apps with hugely-desired features that will build your business and authority.

Support

Once you hire a mobile app company, you can entrust them with everything that is related to the project. And that means, brainstorming according to your seed ideas, planning, creating the app, testing it for holes, providing security and ongoing support, and finally, analytics.

Perhaps the best things about hiring an outsource team is that you can rest assured the project is in experienced hands and that the price for the development of the app is fixed.

Cutting-Edge Technology

Companies that accept outsource tasks must keep their technology up-to-date to be able to fulfill the demands of their customers. Technology is rapidly changing, and it's simply not cost-effective to continually updating app development technology every time something new comes out when you run your own business. Simply put, you wouldn't receive a good return on investment (ROI) on continually purchasing the latest equipment necessary for building new apps if you don't run an app development company. This is another important reason why so many businesses outsource their app development to competing agencies.

With Respect to the Cost...

We need to clarify some important distinctions between apps and how much you'll spend to have them developed. One factor in cost is where your development team is. For example, if you hire a team from India, the cost is likely to be lower because of the differences in the economic structure of that country. Other factors that dictate the cost are:

- Whether you want an iOS, Android, or both
- Rating system for the app, standalone app, or an app that connects to a webpage
- The physical attractiveness of the app
- Creating an app icon

Getting The Most Out Of Your Outsourcing

No matter who you hire to develop your app, there are best practices that you'll want to pay careful attention to. We've outlined some of the most important ones here.

Choose your App Developer Wisely

Many app development companies are overseas. And, as we mentioned above, those companies tend to be cost-effective for Western business. However, you have to decide if you will be comfortable working with someone you can't meet face-to-face. There may also be language and cultural barriers that will have to be negotiated. So although the cost of development might be much less expensive, you will have to be extra diligent in overseeing the project on a consistent basis to make sure there is no miscommunication that causes problems down the road.

When choosing a developer you should start by reviewing any apps, they have developed and looking at user reviews for feedback on their work.

If you are using a freelancer website for outsourcing app development then you have access to reviews, ratings and examples of previous projects to help you make your decision. But don't stop there. You should have video meetings (i.e., Skype) with your

chosen developer. You'll want to do this regularly, but it's vital at the early stages so you can use visual cues to make sure they are understanding what you need.

Scope of Work Must Be Clear

Before a project starts, the client generally has a clear expectation in their mind. This is where project documentation comes in. Whatever needs to be developed needs to be documented thoroughly, in a clear and concise manner. This can be in the form of custom app designs, wireframes, and flow charts, as well as functionality and technical specification documents.

Without solid documentation, the outsourced team will be forced to fill in the gaps themselves, which often leads to them building the wrong thing or a misinterpretation of the client's vision or expectation.

Involve the Development Team at an Early Stage

It is extremely important to treat an outsourced partner like a true partner, getting them involved in the project from the start, even in the project planning and discovery phase. This is highly beneficial since they will then have a greater understanding of the big picture and of your expectations.

Confirm Timeline and Resources for the Project

Informing the development team of the deadlines of the project as early as possible ensures that the outsourced partner will be able to meet those deadlines and has the resources available to commit to the project.

Communicate Constantly

Communication and project management are imperative between all parties of the project to ensure its success. Project management guarantees that the project is managed and kept on track with all parties being informed of progress. There are many different project management online tools both parties can use to keep communication clear and all in one location.

Any delays, changes in scope or other factors that impact the project must be communicated as soon as possible.

Delegate and Collaborate

When you outsource your app development, take advantage of the company's experience and expertise since they are more in tune with the current app trends. Even though this is your concept, and it's important that you love what they come up with, you will have to delegate and then log go to some extent so the company can do their job. This comes back to the importance of finding a company that you are in

total synergy with, so you feel secure in delegating it and then collaborating, not micromanaging them.

Ensure Access Details are Provided Upfront

Certain projects need integration with third party APIs and tools, for example, payment gateways, booking engines, version control platforms, and the like

It is imperative that these systems are setup and that access details are tested and provided well in advance to ensure that the project is not delayed by lack of access or incorrect details.

Test your App as Much as Possible

All good app developers should be able to provide you with a test platform to allow you to evaluate the progress they are making. As the concept creator, you should be involved as early as possible to monitor progress and then, once the app has been developed to a workable state, you should involve friends or colleagues to participate in testing.

You need to clearly document any issues that you encounter during testing and provide this information back to the developer in an organized manner so that you can check later that the problem has been fixed. This also gives you a written record to work from if problems develop later.

One of the most common problems that arises when outsourcing app development is whether an issue that is considered a bug is actually a change to the original specification. This can be avoided in many cases by having a detailed project brief as referred to earlier where you can go back to check what the expected functionality was supposed to be.

Even then, especially if language barriers are involved, this can become a problem. However, with consistent involvement from the start and thorough testing throughout the development process, many of these problems can be avoided before they become critical issues further down the path.

Support and Maintenance

One of the huge benefits of outsourcing app development is that the same vendor will be able to handle tech support and maintenance after publishing. They will be able to take care of regular updates, fix bugs, etc. and ensure the smooth running of your app.

Conclusion

There are other outsourcing project best practices that companies develop as they gain more experience with projects, but the most important thing to remember is that you must be willing to take control of an outsource project process from

beginning to end. While the cost of outsourcing might seem cheaper at first, the math can rapidly change if things go wrong and you're not there to intercept and to correct them at early stages.

Your growth into the global arena is possible only if you have the right partner—a partner who understands your customers like you do, respects your market position, and works well within your budget.