

HOW TO SELECT AN OUTSOURCING PARTNER

Choosing an outsourcing partner for your company's software development is a decision that can have a profound impact on your business goals and function. Making the right choice requires not only an understanding of the market, but also significant preparation on the vendor and client side in order to ensure success. In our seven years in the industry, we've spoken with hundreds of clients and gleaned insights from both their and our experiences in outsourcing. We have gained deep knowledge of clients' pain points, as well as what makes for a successful outsourcing relationship.

This information is more relevant than ever as more and more companies move towards outsourcing part or all of their software development to external teams, especially given the recent shift to remote work in 2020.

Here, we will outline some of the key points that will define whether an outsourcing relationship will be successful – or leave something to be desired. This guide will prepare you to select the right outsourcing partner for your business needs and help you foster a smooth working relationship.



1. Define your goals

To begin, determine what it is you need. Be specific about what you are hoping to achieve – don’t tell your potential outsourcing partner that you want to “update your website,” explain that you want to increase conversion rates and resource downloads. The more precise you can be about what you are trying to achieve, the better chance your development partner will be able to help you achieve it. A good outsourcing partner will not only be able to help you reach your goals, but they will ideally be able to give you suggestions and recommendations on how to get there.

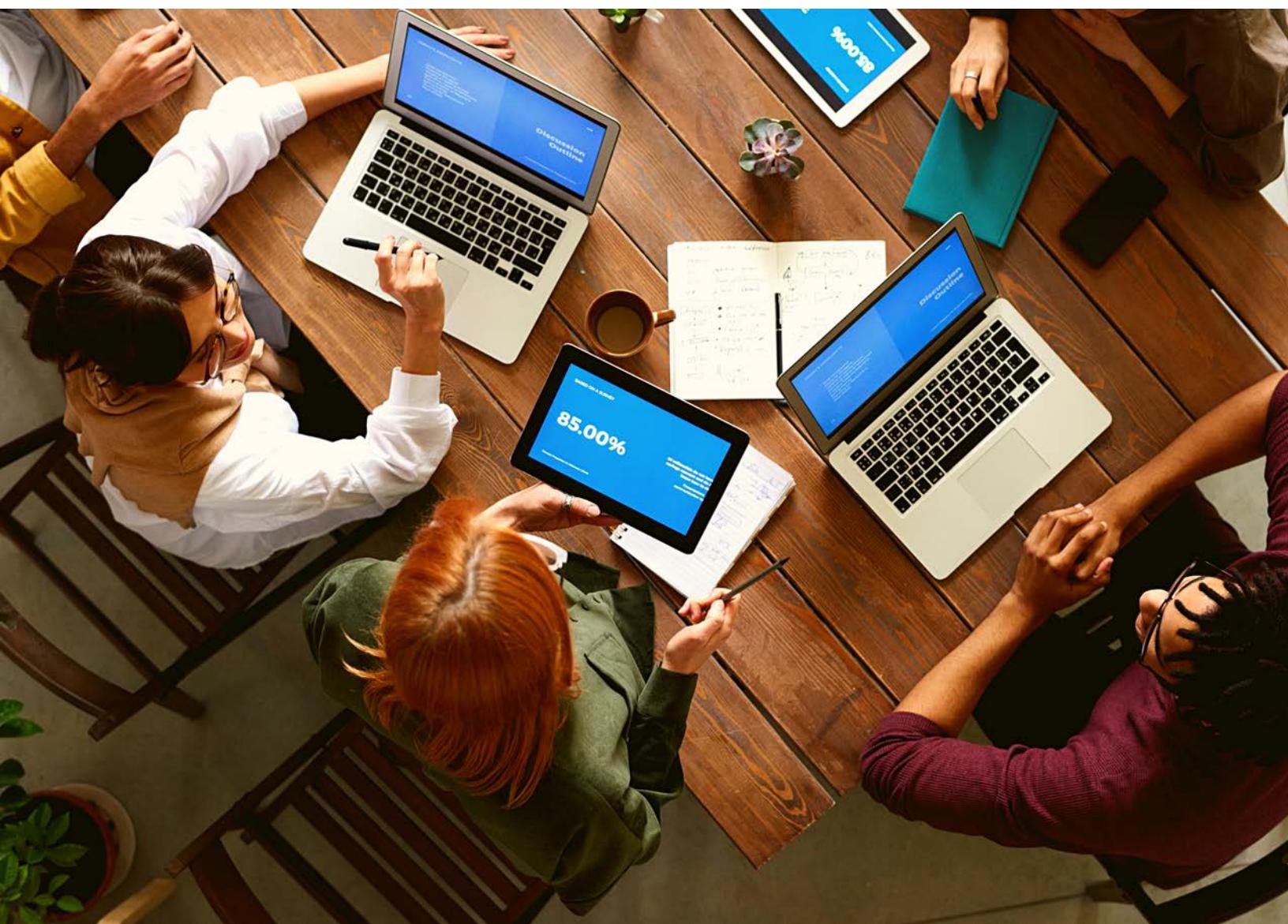
The sign of a knowledgeable software company is often that they are unafraid to tell you something won’t work, and then recommend something better – be it more efficient, cheaper, or some other advantage. This type of expertise only comes from many, many successful projects completed (and probably some setbacks along the way, which they’ve learned from), so be sure to ask about prior projects and times when their teams have had to adjust their game plan to achieve clients’ goals.

The more precise you can be about what you are trying to achieve, the better chance your development partner will be able to help you achieve it.

2. Don't be afraid to get detailed

While you may take your day-to-day business functions for granted, an external outsourcing partner will need to be walked through at least your key business logic in order to best serve you. Things like mission and vision, as well as more nitty gritty information on your market and product, may seem unnecessary to share with an external partner, but the more they know about your business, the better they can help you. Some of the best solutions we've seen have been suggestions from external outsourcing firms themselves, and those types of ideas can't come to be if they do not have sufficient background on your company and market.

...the more [your development partner] know about your business, the better they can help you.





3. Set clear expectations

A surefire way to ensure an outsourcing partnership goes *badly* is to assume you're both on the same page without explicitly discussing expectations. When discussing a potential partnership with an external company, don't assume anything – get specific about what you expect from the relationship, and give them the opportunity to address your questions and concerns before signing anything.

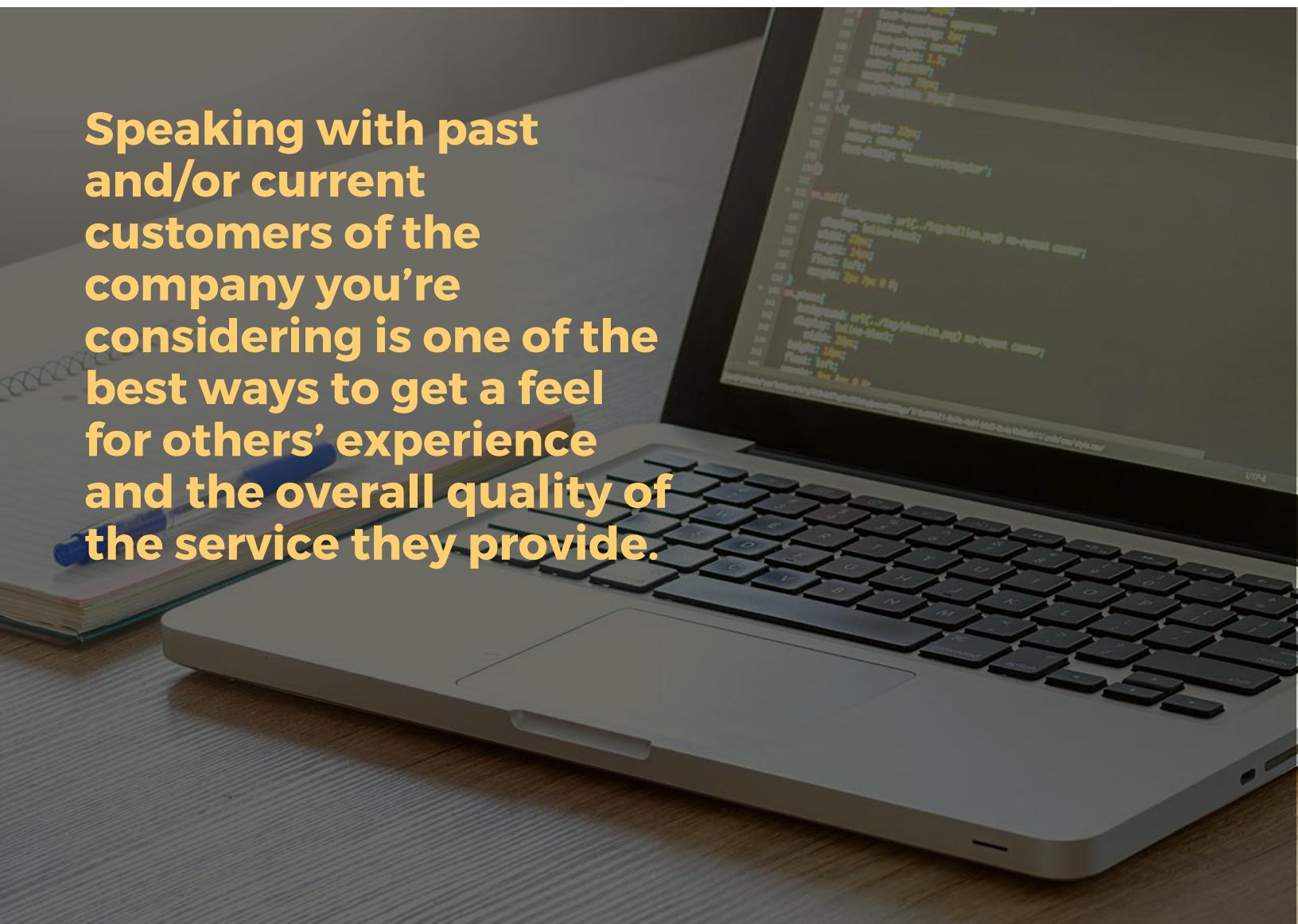
When you feel like through the course of your conversations with a potential partner, you have come to a mutual understanding of the work that needs to be done, you've likely found a good match for your needs.

4. Let their work speak for itself

One question you should always ask when beginning to seriously consider a provider is whether they can provide you with references. Speaking with past and/or current customers of the company you're considering is one of the best ways to get a feel for others' experience and the overall quality of the service they provide.

You may wish to hop on a phone call with a reference to have a quick conversation, or you may feel that a brief email exchange will suffice. Either way, make sure you're asking questions that relate to your specific pain points and any discrete concerns you might have. It's always better to know about potential red flags or issues beforehand instead of several months into an engagement.

Speaking with past and/or current customers of the company you're considering is one of the best ways to get a feel for others' experience and the overall quality of the service they provide.



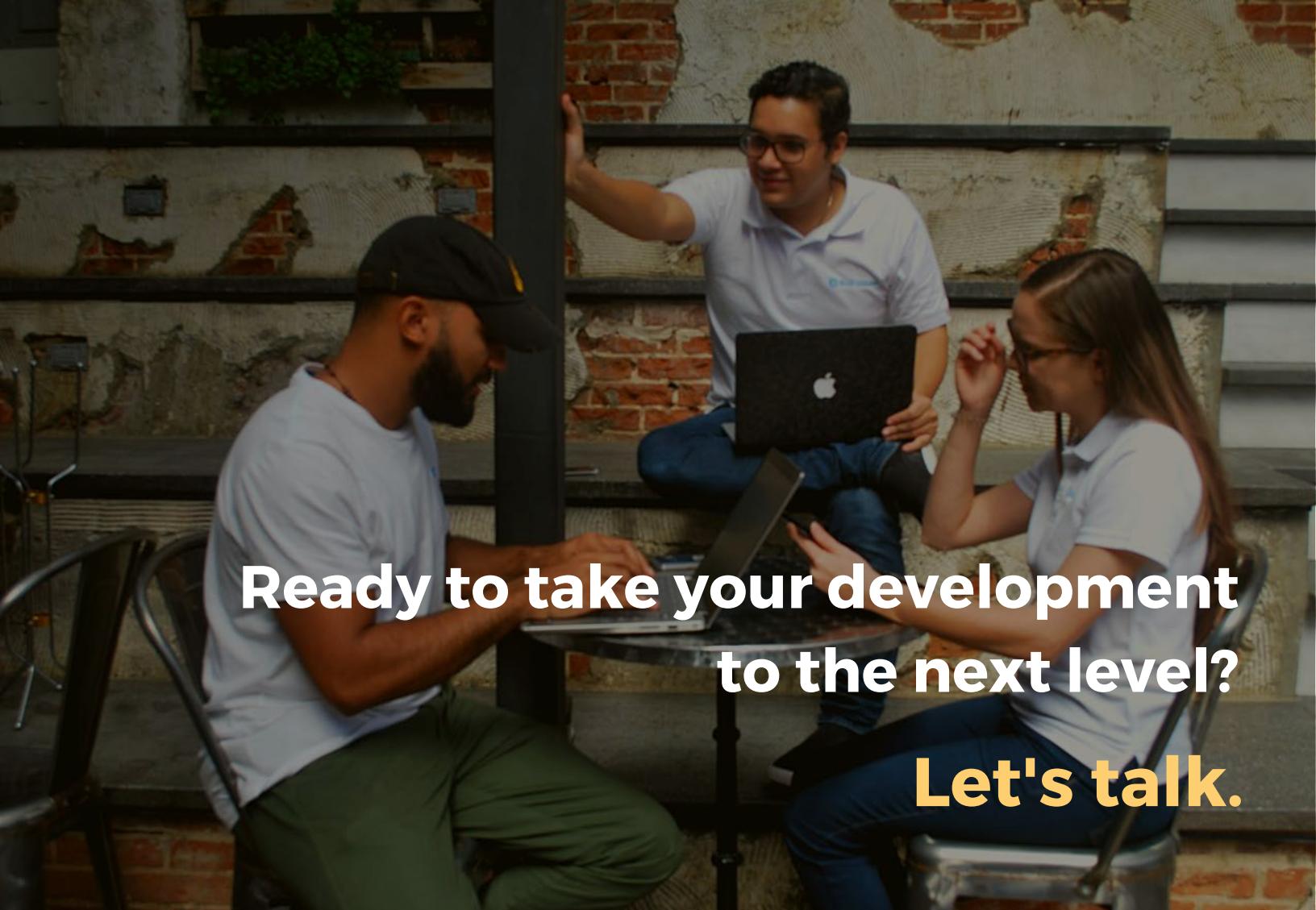


5. Communicate, communicate, communicate

Make sure that no information is falling through the cracks by establishing good communication habits early on. Some good ways to do this are by setting up a daily check-in call with the team lead managing the developers that are developing their product, or by having your team added to a Slack channel with any points of contact on the customer side, so that everyone has a clear channel of communication.

It's important to note that, while communication of business objectives is important, reliability and availability are critical, as well. Make sure that the team you're working with knows when they are expected to be "in office" and working (for example, 9:00 AM – 5:00 AM PST), and that they are expected to respond promptly to communication within that time frame.

Ensuring that all stakeholders have the same understanding of what's expected by good communication reduces the risk of information being lost or of deadlines missed due to poor communication.



Ready to take your development
to the next level?
Let's talk.

Blue Coding has over seven years of experience as the development partner for a variety of innovative companies, from startups to large, established businesses. We tailor our services to fit your needs – there is no such thing as one-size-fits-all in software development, and every team needs something different.

Whether you're looking to expand your development capacity or build a team from scratch, we will help you do it right.

Visit us at bluecoding.com to schedule your free discovery call.



info@bluecoding.com

 **BLUE CODING**