



Get Your Software Product to Market Fast

Two Approaches to Support

Revelry

In the world of software development, unexpected problems are par for the course. Priorities shift. Projects become more complex than anticipated. Systems crash. The list goes on and on.

Such challenges can leave entire departments (and even entire organizations) reeling, because teams seldom have the extra resources (people and/or bandwidth) required to address surprises — without letting something else drop. In situations like this, business leaders often turn to technical experts outside of their own company for help. Those leaders are then able to:

- Resolve technical problems quickly
- Fill skills gaps in the company
- Accelerate project timelines
- Perform tasks beyond on the scope of what in-house teams can manage

...all while reducing overhead associated with new hires and team growth.

Two of the most common models for this are:

- Staff augmentation
- Project outsourcing

While the two approaches are similar, they also carry some important distinctions. Each has its own pros and cons that should always be considered when deciding how best to support product and team success. **Here's what you need to know...**



The Importance of Staff Augmentation and Project Outsourcing

Technology is central to how modern businesses function, and regardless of your organization's industry or purpose, yours relies on it, too. Unfortunately, not every company has the internal resources to meet its tech needs (planned or unplanned) — and even dedicated software companies can bite off more than they can chew.

While instinct may suggest the solution to the problem is to “just hire more people,” hiring comes with its own challenges. First and foremost, the process of recruiting, onboarding, and training new employees takes time (time you may not have). And then there's the all-too-common later-stage challenge / question: You may only need the additional help temporarily, so then what?

Fortunately, there are better ways to get the professional and immediate technical support you need for short-term projects. **Staff augmentation and project outsourcing are used by companies of every shape and size.**

How the Two Models Are Similar

While staff augmentation and project outsourcing each have unique strengths and weaknesses, both provide a host of similar benefits, including:

- **Better options:** Because both staff augmentation and project outsourcing are often done remotely, you can choose the best options from across the country — or even around the world.
- **Lower costs:** Hiring experienced professionals for an immediate need or short-term project is often more cost effective than recruiting, hiring, and training a new employee.
- **Improved productivity:** Not only can you save money by skipping the traditional recruiting process, but you can also boost productivity. Training new employees saps valuable time and energy from your existing team, and a new hire will take a while to fully ramp up. Both staff augmentation and project outsourcing models reduce the time and energy needed to start (and finish) the project.

- **Expertise:** You won't have to gamble on an employee who may or may not have the skills you need. Instead, you can work with professionals who have already proven themselves in exactly the roles you need.
- **Scalability:** Both staff augmentation and project outsourcing make it easier to scale your company without having to take on the overhead of recruiting more full-time employees.
- **Job security:** Nothing hurts company morale like professional insecurity. When you augment your staff with temporary colleagues or outsource a project to an outside vendor, your current employees won't have to worry that you're hiring new employees to replace them.
- **Cultural flexibility:** Ensuring new hires are a good fit for your company culture is essential to your organization's long-term success. When you work with temporary staff or outsourcing vendors, however, that becomes somewhat less important, as contributors are short-term rather than permanent.
- **No hard feelings:** When you no longer need help from your temporary staff or an outsourcing company, you can end your contract with them without guilt or hard feelings. The agreement was for a temporary engagement from the start.

But how exactly do staff augmentation and project outsourcing work — and which is better for you?

Let's take a closer look...



Staff Augmentation: A Closer Look

Staff augmentation means temporarily hiring specialists from a consulting or staffing company to complement your in-house team. These specialists bring the precise skills you need to fix a problem or complete a project as required. Then, when they are no longer needed, they step away from their role within your company.

This model lets you enhance your staff with skilled, experienced workers who will work directly under your company's leadership.

Staff Augmentation Pros

- **Control:** Because the outside staff members are joining the company's existing team, department heads and managers can oversee their work directly.
- **Flexibility:** If you end up having to change project details or accelerate the timeline, it's typically easier with an augmented internal team than a completely outsourced team.
- **Easier integration:** Onboarding individuals makes it easier to integrate them to your internal processes. Managers and staff alike can help them adapt to your methods and culture.
- **Focus:** Keeping the project internal may pull attention away from other projects and tasks, some of which may be more central to your company's goals.
- **Training:** While the new team members will already be experienced in their technical area, you will still have to bring them up to speed on internal processes, tools, and culture. You will also have to arrange for team introductions.
- **Responsibility:** Staff augmentation leaves internal management in the driver's seat. This gives managers more control, but also places the responsibility for success or failure squarely on their shoulders.

Staff Augmentation Cons

- **Higher costs:** Since staff augmentation means handling the project internally,

you will be providing the resources and management needed. This can lead to higher costs than outsourcing.

Project Outsourcing: A Closer Look

Project outsourcing means contracting with an outside company to fix a problem or manage a project. These companies maintain a staff of skilled professionals who are ready to take on a variety of projects at a moment's notice.

Under this model, you establish expectations at the start of the contract. The vendor then manages the project themselves — separately from your team — until the product is delivered. Once this happens, they can move onto the next priority or you can end the contract.

Project Outsourcing Pros

- **Lower costs:** Depending on the details of the project, outsourcing it entirely to an outside vendor may reduce your costs. This is because the vendor will supply their own resources and handle all management and personnel-related expenses.
- **Freedom:** By passing the reins of your project to an external team, you free up your internal resources to focus on other projects and tasks.
- **No training:** In most cases, you won't have to worry about training or integrating new staff, since their work will be managed outside of your company.
- **Support in Achieving Milestones:** In order for a tech outsourcing vendor to succeed in the market, it must develop a reputation for consistently hitting milestones. This means when you agree to one (or many), you can safely expect your vendor partner to follow through as promised.
- **Project security:** An outsourcing vendor's contract is based on completing a project. The resources used are irrelevant. This means if a system crashes or one of their employees is unable to proceed, the vendor likely has procedures

in place to fill the gap and continue work as planned.

- **Shared responsibly:** When the outsourcing vendor takes on your project, they assume a large part of the responsibility for its completion.

Project Outsourcing Cons

- **Loss of control:** Handing a project over to an outside team removes some of your internal control over the process. In some respects, you are putting the fate of the project in another company's hands (which means finding a trusted, proven partner is paramount).
- **Limited flexibility:** The outsourcing vendor will agree to the goals, deliverables, and milestones for your

project before work begins. It may be difficult to adjust the terms once the project team gets started.

- **Additional costs:** While outsourcing is often more cost-effective than staff augmentation, it may not be worth it if the project is too small. Outsourcing vendors tend to charge a premium fee for smaller projects to make it worth their while.
- **Communication:** Depending on the policies of the outsourcing vendor you contract with, maintaining clear, transparent communications throughout the project may prove difficult. Things like international time zones and language barriers can compound challenges.

CHECK LIST: Staff Augmentation or Project Outsourcing

So, which is better, staff augmentation or project outsourcing? The answer depends on the details of the project and needs of your company and tech team. There's no easy one-size-fits-all solution.

Staff augmentation may be the best choice if you:

- ☐ Have a robust internal technical team
- ☐ Have reliable and available management to support temporary staff
- ☐ Only need help with a small project or a minor portion of a larger project
- ☐ Need lots of flexibility to adjust your timeline or approach to the project
- ☐ Prefer to maintain direct control over the project
- ☐ Can afford to allocate the resources needed to complete the project internally (including the time and attention required)
- ☐ Are able to shoulder the responsibility for the ultimate success or failure of the project

Project outsourcing may be the best choice if you:

- ☐ Have a technical team that is inexperienced or spread thin
- ☐ Have a management team that already has its hands full
- ☐ Need help with a large or long-term project
- ☐ Are confident you know exactly what you need (and when you will need it)
- ☐ Are comfortable giving up direct control over the project
- ☐ Need to keep your internal resources free for other projects

These are only general guidelines, not hard rules. For example, there are times when staff augmentation is better for a long-term project (or multiple projects), and project outsourcing may be smart for even a small task.

You may even want to consider a combination of the two models. You could use different solutions for different stages of a project or leverage both at the same time. Many companies have had great success with this kind of hybrid approach.

In Conclusion

When deciding between staff augmentation and project outsourcing, it pays to evaluate your needs honestly. Just as important is partnering with a vendor you can trust. Whether your partner provides staff augmentation services, project outsourcing, or both, being able to rely on them to help you achieve your goals (on time and without drama) is a must.

At Revelry, we've been helping businesses in a variety of industries innovate for more than a decade, and we'd welcome the opportunity to support you in achieving your technology goals; let's [connect](#).

About Revelry

Established in 2012, Revelry is a New Orleans-based digital innovation company that specializes in creating custom software solutions that help its partners across a variety of verticals (from healthcare and logistics to finance and start-up) succeed and scale. To learn more about Revelry's strategic development services, or our team of passionate product managers, design engineers, and back-end developers, visit [revelry.co](#).

