



BOOST YOUR R&D PRODUCTIVITY WITH TEAMS OF DISTRIBUTED DEVELOPERS IN THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN TIMEZONE

Your Situation

- **Hiring Difficulties:** Due to a general shortage of qualified engineers in the local labour market, you find it difficult to hire additional staff in the required time.
- **Missing Qualifications in Potential Hires:** Particularly in software engineering you cannot find the required qualifications or the necessary seniority in the available candidates and you are not able or willing to compromise on know-how and/or experience.
- **Difficult Relocation:** Since the COVID epidemic, fewer and fewer software engineers are willing to relocate (even within a particular country) and remote work is getting more and more popular.
- **Delayed Product Introduction:** Due to delays in development, you are concerned that you could miss the ideal product launch window.
- **Limited Resource Budget:** Your R&D department needs more development engineers but you do not have enough additional positions in your budget for local hires.
- **Tight Budget for External Resources:** You cannot afford local consultants in the necessary quantity.

How Does Distributed Development Work?

- **Set up a distributed remote team:** Define the number of engineers and the qualifications you need and we will assist you in hiring the corresponding distributed resources in a particular region or timezone of the globe. The contractual formalities will be handled by local legal entities but you will be directly responsible for the people management. These engineers will all be working remotely and in direct contact with you via permanent video and voice communication (e.g. Skype, Zoom, Google Meet etc.) in English or German. Ideally they will be connected to your distributed configuration management system, your bug-tracking tool and your automated testing and integration facility (similar to the systems used for home-office work).
- **Keep key responsibilities local:** Keep the roles of software architect, project manager, testing expert and at least one senior developer in your local team in your home country. Thus, you will keep all the key know-how about your products/solutions in house.
- **Organise initial introductions in your local offices:** In order to build a good team spirit at the beginning of a collaboration, organise a 2-week local presence for all the

distributed resources. During this time they will get to know each other and your local work colleagues, the main aspects of the software to be developed and important elements of your company culture.

- **Schedule daily stand-up meetings with the complete team:** Like in traditional agile developments teams (e.g. Scrum) schedule short, daily stand-up meetings which the near-shore resources attend via video conferencing infrastructure.
- **Recruit distributed resources in the same time zone +/- 2 hours:** Watch that the near-shore developers all work in a similar time zone so that they are also able to attend multiple (sub team) meetings during the normal work day.
- **Work with a local (EU) representative for coordination:** By combining the presence of Sofismo in the EU with our remote partners in the remote locations, we provide a development partnership that combines cultural familiarity with your local market and very attractive costs.

Advantages of Distributed Development in the Central European Timezone

- **In general, Eastern and Southern Europe are preferable to other locations:** The current low-price locations in Asia (e.g. India, China, Vietnam or the Philippines) will rarely provide an adequate quality/price ratio: The cultural fit will be bad, the average level of education and skills is worse than in Europe and regular travel will be difficult due to jet lag, flight costs, etc. Furthermore, in these countries employee fluctuation is very high especially if you do not raise salaries significantly every year (typically >15%). Experience shows that these locations are worse than Eastern and Southern Europe for small and midsize teams.
- **EU member states are getting expensive:** Eastern Europe had several attractive locations a few years back: Bulgaria, Romania, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, etc. These countries have very good skill levels, they are easy to travel to and the cultural fit is good. However, since these countries joined EU, prices have risen dramatically and the availability of qualified engineers in the local markets is sinking rapidly because they often migrate to Western Europe.
- **Eastern and Southern European countries outside of the EU have great potential:** These countries basically consist of the territories of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (mainly Serbia and Macedonia, since Slovenia and Croatia have already joined EU). In a recent analysis, we ruled out Russia and Belarus because of the sanctions related to the invasion of Ukraine. So Serbia, North Macedonia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan turn out to be a really good choice for distributed development in the Central European Timezone (CET) at a reasonable price and quality level.
- **Same time zone:** All the countries mentioned above are in the Central European Timezone +/- 2 hours and open to travel. Therefore, team meetings are easy to organise at very modest costs.
- **Minimal start-up costs:** Every near-shoring developer is set up by Sofismo at no initial cost for recruitment, supporting staff/local management, office space, establishing legal entities, etc.

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