kbase

Offshore & Onshore Development Services

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APPROACH

Knowledge Base (K-Base) Outsourcing Approach is designed to assist you get the best out of your offshore outsourcing experience by using best practices. This Approach is continuously refined based on inputs from the "Best Practices" sessions held with the various clients.   K-Base's SEI CMMI Level 5 accreditation will ensure our clients gets the best quality of service to meet their expectations.

Opportunity Analysis

A good offshore outsourcing strategy begins with the analysis of risks and rewards of outsourcing specific IT functions of your organization. While developing a strategy, we take into consideration the following:

- Identify your key business objectives
- Identify, select, prioritize IT functions
- Determine what skills to keep in-house and what to outsource
- Risk and reward evaluation
- In short, we help you determine if outsourcing is right for you and if so, how K-Base can help you in going offshore.

Offshore Implementation

Upon understanding the business drivers, needs and requirements, K-Base will develop an Offshore Solution for the Client and present it as part of the formal contract. After identifying which of your IT functions are most suitable for outsourcing, our experts will help you:

- Develop a comprehensive action plan
- Determine how to move forward with speed and confidence
- Master Professional Agreement sign-off
- Statement of Work sign-off
- Skill set requirements and resource sign-off

Migration Strategy

Working offshore is totally different ball game, new rules, new issues and new risks. It is very important that you understand these challenges and have a plan to conquer them. Our expertise in this domain assists you with:

- Developing a comprehensive offshore migration strategy
- Organization structure
- Modifying existing processes to support the new arrangement
- Knowledge transfer
- Environment replication or transfer
- Talent Sourcing
- Offshore communication process and channels
- Offshore transition task management
- Transition is the time when your IT department is the most vulnerable. We ensure smooth transfer.

Governance Strategy

Governance is the key to a successful outsourcing initiative. Governance in an outsourcing setup involves putting a monitoring and evaluation program in place and deciding on various performance levels and deliverables to be measured. Our experts work with you and your team to develop monitoring and evaluation programs that best suite your business environment. We help you identify area of potential improvement, take certain proactive measures and derive an action plan for the future.

K-Base has a proven Value Addition Model that defines a steady progress from being just a development partner to a business partner. As the relationship evolves, K-Base gains sufficient knowledge about the Client's products and services to identify and

implement improvements proactively. K-Base adds further value to the projects from the extensive experience in developing the best solutions. At the highest level, K-Base works with Clients to achieve their business objectives.

TECHNOLOGY

Our Core Development Skills includes:

Language & Development Environment	VB.NET, ASP.NET, Java J2EE
RDBMS	SQL Server, Oracle, Informix, DB2 and Teradata
Data Warehouse	SAS ETL, Informatica, DataStage, Dataflux, Microsoft Integration Services, Pentaho ETL, Oracle OWB, SunOpsis
Business Intelligence & Data Mining	Qlikview, Cognos PowerPlay, Microsoft Analysis Services, Business Object, MicroStrategy, SAP and SPSS Clementine
Mobile Application Development	Android, iPhone, J2ME based Mobile App development. Windows Mobile 6.0., SQL Mobile, Oracle Lite.
Enterprise Portal	SharePoint

RESOURCES

The following resources can be provided:

- Project Directors & Managers certified with PMP

- Solution Architect and Data Modelers (experienced with UML and ER Modeling tools)

- Software Engineers/Developers (Microsoft .NET and Java certified)

- Testing Consultants experienced with automated testing tools

- Quality Consultants experienced with CMMI Level 5 and ISO 9001:2000

- Technical Writers (develop user manuals)

ENGAGEMENT MODELS

K-Base offers multiple engagement models to meet diverse needs of global clients. You can choose from any one the generally accepted models below or a combination of them for different phases of your project. We can work with you to customize a model to address your specific need.

- Effort based pricing or Time & Material
- Milestone based billing
- Dedicated Development Facility or Retainer
- Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Model
- Project based pricing or Fixed bid

Any of these pricing models can be applied to our suite of services in ingenious ways for convenience and best value for money.

Effort based pricing or Time & Material

- In the Effort based pricing model, the project cost is a function of the total project execution time and the corresponding resources deployed.
- This engagement model is particularly useful in contexts where the projects are quite complex and are prone to specification and design changes midstream.
- This model gives customer greater flexibility in terms of developing the project specification on an ongoing basis and modifying the specifications based on the changing market needs.

Milestone-based Billing

This option works for Clients who are concerned about progress in remote projects, milestones-based payment schedules reinforce progress monitoring. It helps justify payment based on achievable milestone and visible progress reduces risks.

Dedicated Development Facility or Retainer

A Dedicated facility is an extension of the customer's own engineering/development center. Through such Dedicated facilities, we offer the best skill sets, resources, flexibility and time-to-market advantages to the customers, taking all necessary efforts to protect the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of the customers. All rights to the IPR developed in the Development Facility vests with the customer. The Dedicated Facility also provides a cost effective solution to customers requiring continuous offshore support. For such dedicated relationships, we also implement customer specific quality/process frameworks and teams are trained for the specific needs of a Client. The resources are paid on a retainer basis.

Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Model

In the Build-Operate-Transfer Model, K-Base launches a dedicated facility for the client. This facility is like an extension of the client's own facility. The dedicated facility leverages K-Base's technical infrastructure, processes and execution capabilities. The dedicated facility is staffed either by existing K-Base's resources or by Client's resources or by resources hired specifically for engagement or a mix of them all. K-Base has a well-defined mechanism for the smooth transition of the facility to the client.

Clients see the following benefits by working with this model:

- Faster Time to Market
- Lower Establishment Costs
- Risk Reduction
- Flexibility
- Process Expertise
- Option of owning the facility

Project based pricing or Fixed bid

- A low risk option, which you can choose when the scope and specifications for the projects are reasonably clear.
- We offer Project based pricing in domains wherein we have the expertise and also have well defined estimation tools to determine the resource commitments.
- Our process optimization ensures reliability, predictability and optimized performance of the projects to deliver on time, on budget, on target.

DELIVERY MODELS

K-Base's offshore outsourcing delivery models are designed to suit varying comfort levels and scenarios. Whether outsourcing is part of your strategy for cost reduction, improving operations and / or restructuring, the services we offer will provide financial return, risk mitigation, strategic alignment, political impact and intuition.

Offshore Delivery Model
The offshore delivery model entails that all project development, from initial study to testing, is done on K-Base's premises. This particular model works well in scenarios where the project goals are well defined and deviation from the same is unlikely. Management and communication during the course of the project is the responsibility of our program managers - the internal clients, who work with tried and tested methodologies to ensure that delivery is as per schedule. The offshore dedicated project team, works within predefined processes, thereby making this model the most cost effective.

Onsite Delivery Model
The onsite delivery model entails that skilled K-Base professionals are deployed on the client's premises. This delivery model is viable only if fluidity is required in a project, if there is need for a specific resource type or if post-deployment support is imperative. From initial consultation to maintenance and support, our representatives are highly qualified and combine excellent business acumen and strong inter-personal skills.

Hybrid Delivery Model
This model, a combination of both onsite and offshore, is the best of both worlds, and results in optimized costs and maximized efficiency. The onsite team will directly interact with the clients and will serve as consultants, program managers and developers, depending on project requirements. They will do requirement studies, design and development, while interfacing directly with clients. The offshore outsourcing team will interact only with the onsite team and will provide additional crucial support, thereby reducing costs and implementation time. The model allows for scalability and has enormous operational benefits

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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GENERAL

How does the offshore development work?

The offshore development methodology does not change, whether the development is done domestically in the United States, Europe or any other part of the world. Our team works with an industry standard offshore development methodology. You will be in direct communication with the project manager who will track your project through all the phases of development, from needs analysis, requirements documentation, prototyping, development, testing, release, business practice integration and support. The work will be done in our offshore office, but through the power of the Internet and through our very strong communication skills, it will feel as though we were working right in your facility.

What are the main benefits that businesses gain from offshore outsourcing?

Today's organizations must find ways to cut costs, obtain higher productivity from skilled resources and have in place best practices, de-risked business through diversification, and accelerate time-to-market for products and services. Offshore outsourcing helps companies meet these objectives by providing:

- Cost effectiveness - Salaries of IT professionals are significantly lower than those in North America and Europe. This wage differential translates into cost savings.
- Large pool of IT talent - Malaysia has a large resource pool of highly qualified and experienced IT professionals with expertise in a wide variety of domains and sectors. This cost effective talent pool can be tapped into and world-class IT resources can be deployed for a reliable services delivery.
- Best Practices - Focused heavily on quality and continuous process improvement, offshore development centers operate at high levels of efficiency, predictability, and reliability. High process maturity greatly reduces the risk of project failures and provides significant advantage when managing service level agreements.
- Round-the-clock operation - Offshore development facilities located in Malaysia are in a distant time zone. There is a time differential between onshore and offshore destinations which translates into a virtual 24/7 kind of operation for your projects. Different time zones can lead to reduced development cycles and time-to-market for your solutions/products.

Why does Malaysia score over other destinations for offshore outsourcing?

Offshore development centers have appearing throughout the world. Buyers can choose from locations across Asia/Far East (Malaysia, China, Philippines), Europe (Ireland, Russia, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic), the Americas (Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Argentina), and Middle East/Africa (Israel, South Africa).

Although there are many choices for offshore outsourcing, not all offer the right formula of success. Selecting the right option requires right mix of factors such as cultural affinity, geo-political risk, cost advantage and resource availability. Malaysia has emerged as the dominant player because it is the strongest option across a range of factors:

- **Competency in delivering IT services** - Malaysia has a strong understanding of business applications and has many decades of experience in delivering IT services. Many of the IT blue-chip corporate like Microsoft, IBM, EDS,

Dell, HP, Compaq, Sun Microsystems etc have their own captive development facilities as well as outsourcing relationships with offshore vendors.

- **Availability of skilled resources -** By any measure, Malaysia has the largest pool of skilled, experienced IT professionals. Malaysia's premier universities and colleges churn-out thousands of well-educated professionals pool every year.
- **Government support** - Malaysian government is a strong supporter of IT initiatives and has invested heavily in building its capabilities and supporting it.
- **Cultural affinity** - Malaysia is one of the most populous English speaking country in Asia and IT professionals have extensive experience working with their American and European counterparts.
- **What are the implications of outsourcing?**
  How do I manage outsourcing relationships? Surveys and studies have proven that more than 90% of Fortune 1000 companies outsource some part of their IT operations. Also, their spending on offshore IT outsourcing is repetitive, i.e. they do it on a year-on-year and not experimental basis. If this is the case, why would an organization not outsource and benefit from reduction of the cost of IT initiatives. Selection of the right vendor is also very important in determining of the success of the new paradigm. If the vendor has an onshore office in your country, your relationship is highly de-risked as you have someone in your country to respond to you as any point in time. After you have made the decision to outsource and also selected the right vendor, you need to also maintain a regular and seamless communication so as to constantly monitor the project's progress and maximize out of the outsourcing possibility.

How do I know if my company is a candidate for outsourcing?

Outsourcing is now being considered as a mainstream business strategy to improve overall corporate performance and bring about efficiencies. The Outsourcing Model has evolved and has undoubtedly become the preferred way of doing business by corporations of all sizes. Your company may be a candidate for outsourcing if you are asking yourself the following:

- Are my resources being utilized optimally?
- Can my IT department improve our corporate efficiency?
- Is my company ready to meet the future challenges of technology?
- Is there a quicker, more effective method to handle IT function?
- Should we consider offshore solutions and services?
- Are 40-50% savings for real; what are the after-effects?
- Will employees have a basis for litigation? What are their options?

BUSINESS

What services does K-Base provide?

K-Base works with leading organizations world-wide to provide them with offshore development solutions and services. We specialize in establishing offshore development centers for our clients and partners with teams of IT professionals working dedicatedly for their projects and processes. Broadly, we provide the following services:

- Application Development and Maintenance
- New Media and Creativity
- Internet Marketing and SEO

Where is K-Base's Offshore Development Center located?

K-Base's Offshore Development Centre is located in MSC zone i.e. CyberJaya

What are the normal working hours in a day and week?
8 in a day and 40 in a week.

What are the modes of communication?

The modes of communication are the following:

- Telephone using VOIP technology
- Email
- Instant Messenger Chat

What type of processes does K-Base have in place?

At K-Base, we have in place sound processes that enable us to deliver best- in-class services to our clients. Our processes are designed to help our clients check project updates on a real-time basis, QA methodologies that enable us to deliver defect free service and project management tools that allow us to manage the projects effectively. To ensure the timely and quality delivery for high client satisfaction, we have implemented the following processes:

- Prototypes & Staged Deliveries
- Weekly Status Reports
- Comprehensive Bug Management System
- Configuration Management
- Knowledge Management System

What are the company's core competencies?

Our core competencies are the following:

- Expertise in Microsoft .NET
- Best-of-the-breed IT talent .
- Fortune 1000 customer endorsement.
- State-of-the-art offshore development facility with a capacity of X seats .
- Partnerships with leading global software companies .

Do you provide post-development maintenance?

Yes, we do support all software we design and deliver on the basis of a separate support/maintenance contracts. This generally includes bug-tracking and fixing. Feature enhancements and developments are handled as separate contracts. We track all post maintenance requests, issues, bugs, etc. in our proprietary software TAR Manager. We also do support and maintain software developed by other vendors.

How can we be sure that the software you develop for us will not end up in a competitor's hands after it is completed?

We have confidentiality agreement with our with each and every team member. This confidentiality is also validated on the basis of existing laws. Most importantly, our team consists of skilled professionals, who would not risk their career or professional integrity by misusing a customer's code.

What kinds of guarantee do we get that the work is done well?

We give you a one month of warranty after the final delivery for all bug-fixing, etc. After the warranty period, we sign a separate monthly or quarterly support/maintenance contract with you, so that you continue to get ongoing support.

How does K-Base protect confidentiality?

Before a initiating a project, K-Base signs a Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA) and Project Confidentiality Agreement with the client. Under this agreement, we keep the client and offshore project-related information in strict confidence. Any references or client's outsourcing project details are not revealed without the prior approval of the client. We also sign a Non Disclosure agreement with our employees so that the confidential information of the client is not shared with any external entity.

Can you provide references?

Yes, we can provide you with our client references. We have built solid relationships with our clients and partners by helping them meet their business objectives and providing them high quality service that exceeds their expectations.

How do you ensure quality of services?

At K-Base, we have adopted a quality framework that is aligned as per SEI CMM Level 5 standard. Quality at K-Base is a continuous process and it permeates deep down in the corporate hierarchy starting from the top management. Quality is a culture for us. Our processes are derived from industry standard practices and have been customized to suit the requirements of offshore development.

How flexible are you in accepting our standards or methodologies for development on our projects?

K-Base is flexible enough to accept your methodologies and standards that suit your project. We can work the way you want us to work and ensure that your business objectives are met.

What engagement models does K-Base offer its clients?

We offer multiple engagement models to meet diverse needs of our clients. We offer the following engagement models or a combination of the three:

- Project based pricing
- Effort based pricing
- Dedicated Development Facility

We offer a de-risked offshore project migration methodology that enables us to deliver a zero-defect delivery of offshore service.

Can I outsource the projects and assignments that I have from my clients to K-Base?

Yes. Partnerships are at the core of our business philosophy. We have built solid relationships with consulting companies globally in order to help them reduce their cost of development through strategic offshore delivery model. We partner with companies that are looking at reliable offshore services provider that can bring about tremendous synergies to their businesses.

OPERATIONS

What is the response time to an initial communication?

The response time to an email is a few minutes, whereas IM chat is instant with no response time at all. Our team in Malaysia can also be available virtually 24/7 for the purpose of responding to customer query.

How do you provide project estimates and project schedules?

Before the initiation of the project, we carry out a very comprehensive scoping and estimation exercise using intelligent tools developed in-house. We have onboard systems analysts who are adept at project analysis and estimation. On the basis of the work-load involved in the development phase as well as the project delivery requirements, we provide the estimate for the project. Once when the project has been estimated and scheduled, we use Microsoft Project Server 2000 for scheduling the deliverables and monitoring of the project progress. We have also developed our own custom-designed tool named TAR Manager for issue and bug tracking.

How do you handle change request and changes in project scope?

We use a time-tested change management procedure for any changes in the project. For ongoing minor changes in the running project, the changes are communicated to the project manager concerned, who gets them executed. If the changes are significant and can greatly add to the work-load that has been estimated at the beginning of the project, then we scope creep the project again and submit the revised quote, for acceptance to the client.

How is testing and quality assurance performed?

We have a well organized process for testing and qualification. We have a team of quality assurance specialists located in our offshore development center who provide systematic testing, verification and quality assurance. We have aligned our

development methodology as per CMMI and ISO 9001 development standards. We have a process in place to ensure that quality is maintained every single time. These processes are derived from industry standard practices and have been fine-tuned to meet the unique requirements of remote development. The following points summarize our quality initiatives:

- Testing is performed at every step in the SDLC
- Quality is assured through our rigorous project management methodology and quality assessment procedures
- ISO 9001 has been streamlined and adopted into K-Base's organizational and project management models to ensure predictable results and repeatable success
- K-Base has a dedicated team that ensures Software Quality Assurance
- All quality issue tracking will be done using our proprietary TAR Manager.

How do you ensure knowledge retention in your organization pertaining to the projects that you handle?
At K-Base, we understand the importance of knowledge pertaining to the project and ensure that we deploy a shadow resource for every 5 or 6 resources who work on the project. This ensures that despite the attrition that may happen in the future, there is an extra resource (who will be the knowledge source) pertaining to that project. Majority of our projects have shadow resource deployments in order to ensure safety of our client's and partner's projects. Detailed project documentation at all stages of the project also helps us manage the project knowledge.

How do you deal with urgent bug fixing?
We have a bug fixing and bug tracking mechanism. In this system we prioritize the issues on the basis of priority P1, P2, P3 and P4. All urgent bug fixing issues are put in the priority P1 list and our support team addresses them immediately.

How detailed a set of requirements do you require from us?
Again, it's an interactive process. In scenario one: if you do not have any spec outlined we ask you to give us minimal requirement specifications (may be a page or two page description of the system). Then we start developing the formal requirements document from that. Every release of this document is reviewed by the client and we do modifications accordingly. Generally it goes on from few weeks to a couple of months (depending on size of the project). In this process the Requirement Specifications becomes the Bible for development. All changes and modifications are captured continuously in this document. On the other hand if you already have a specification document we start with a discussion on that, refine it for some period of time, try to freeze it once all agreed.

Offshore software development strikes fear in my mind... Are you easy to reach and how fast do you respond to calls?
Our greatest advantage of working with K-Base over other offshore companies is the fact that we have an onsite Project Management Office in Dallas, Texas. You do not have to worry about the constant headaches that communication and cultural barriers often bring to the software development process. You will be in direct communication with our Dallas office who will work with you and with your team on a regular basis. We also have web based project management tools and mechanism for each and every page, so that each project can be monitored 24/7 and updates and bug tracking can be done any time. Also at our offshore development center, we can have an IPLC connection that gives us a local American Number that reaches our Malaysian Office. You can make a domestic call from America and speak with your team in Malaysia as long as you like, and vice versa. This way you have access to some member of our team 24 hours a day.

Are there mechanisms in place to ensure deadlines, milestones and timely delivery?
We follow all standard project management methodologies using all available tools (e.g., MS Project). We have a sign-off process for each delivery after the specification is firmed up.

How do you deal with people who change their minds all the time and want something changed in mid-project?
This is a very difficult question. Our processes have been designed around "XP" Extreme Programming? which works towards being able to handle just this situation. We spent close to 50% of the time allocated to any project on Design, Architecture, Prototyping and thorough documentation before we write a line of code. We do understand that no client can be hundred percent sure about their requirements at the start of the project. To counter this we first develop the prototype of the entire application (Minus the backend code) and get that signed off screen by screen for the entire application. Usually it has been

seen that majority of gaps get filled up at this phase and the chances of missing out important functionality as well as making changes mid-project are reduced. In addition we recommend a iterative process for managing changes. Our methodology makes this possible and practical.

Can you provide us with onsite consultants?

Yes, we can. In cases where onsite consulting is required, we can follow a Hybrid Development Model. In this model, there is an onsite component together with the offshore mix in the development methodology. We can fly consultants for knowledge gathering, requirement specification design, solutions architecture etc. and then set-up a dedicated team of IT professionals in our offshore development center to work on the project. This way, we can ensure that you get the dual benefits of cost-effectiveness through offshore development and effective onsite consulting through consultant deployment onsite.

How do you manage resource attrition in your company?

At K-Base, we have implemented HR policies which are very people-friendly as well as a work culture that promotes healthy competition, dynamism and continuous learning and improvement. Our compensation packages match industry standards and are performance based. All this has ensured that the attrition rate in our company is low and our people retention rate is high.

How do you manage recruiting process in your company?

We have access to thousands of highly qualified IT consultants with expertise in various domains like .NET, Oracle, Java, PHP, C#, etc. We have a team of Recruiting experts who swing into action as and when a requirement comes in for any particular resource. The qualified and experienced consultants are contacted and a initial interview is scheduled. We follow a rigorous selection procedure in order to ensure that the best people join our team. Our selection process includes technical test, communication and English proficiency test, group discussion and interview. If required, we can also arrange an interview with the client over the phone.

TECHNOLOGY

Does the company have any certification's)?

Our quality processes are adapted to SEI-CMM and ISO standards and our methodology has enabled us to deliver software projects on-time and on-budget. Currently, we are undertaking the initiative for making compliant our processes as per ISO 9001 standards and hope that to complete within a time-period of 6 months.

What is company's project management procedure?

For every project (big or small), there is one project manager, who is responsible for heading the project and ensuring the delivery of the end solution on time and on budget. The client corresponds with the project manager directly and he/she is the sole point of contact for the client for any issues related to the project. The Project manager manages the resources internally using Microsoft Project Server 2000. Internally, the tasks are assigned to the teams through a custom developed solution, known as TAR. This ensures that the team is allocated with sufficient amount of work and the progress of the same can be monitored and measured using this system.

What version control system is used?

We are currently using Microsoft Visual SourceSafe for version control.

How complex a software project can you develop?

We have done and are doing fairly complicated projects (involving 10-20 team members in a project over a period of more than a year). The number of lines of code varied anywhere between few thousand lines of code to more than couple of million lines (however it depends on what type of code/system you are referring to .NET, Java, C++, C, OO, Assembly, Oracle, FoxPro, VB, etc.).

Who owns the code at the end?

Our clients will own all the code, documentation, design, and conceptual ideas. We have a very strong legal process in place to assign all proprietary and ownership rights to you.

Do we get the complete set of development files at the end?

You get files continuously in the development process. After starting the project we ensure a high-level of interactivity in the development process (status meetings happen once in week, in some of our projects we even have international conference calls everyday). Every document, design or code generated in either side is exchanged continuously and reviewed and fine tuned very frequently (sometimes daily). Therefore you keep on getting the files and other deliverables very frequently.

What technology experience does K-Base have?

K-Base has worked on diverse technology platforms and build a solid backbone of technical strength, which enables us to deliver best-in-class services to our clients. K-Base has worked extensively for its various clients in the following technology areas:

- Web-based technologies
- Client/Server Applications
- Web Services
- Application Packing Services
- Legacy Migration Applications

Do offshore programmers write code in their native language?

Code development is done using English language and all code is written using the same tools used by developers in the U.S and elsewhere. Development team members have good knowledge of English language and world-class communication skills. Our Project Managers work directly with the clients and regularly communicate using a host of channels like email/telephone/IM chat etc. English language is never a problem working with us.

Is the code documented?

Yes, we document all the codes that we develop. We have processes in place that make it compulsory for our programmers to document the codes and we also follow standard coding practices. Code documentation also helps us better maintaining the code and providing warranties during the active life of the application.