



## 8 Considerations for Hiring a Mobile App Development Partner

HOW TO CHOOSE THE BEST TEAM FOR YOU

# You need a developer.

For many companies, hiring an app developer isn't terribly scary if those businesses have a good understanding of software. For others considering a business app, software development can be full of unknowns. So where do you start? I'd like to take some of the mystery out of app development for you.

**8 questions to ask when engaging a mobile software consultancy:**



# 1.

What kinds of apps have you already developed?



Not every developer has experience developing every type of app. They may be great at creating marketing apps or social communities, but haven't developed a mobile commerce app that integrates credit card tokenization or order tracking or geo-fencing. Do they build backends? Have they integrated a CMS or an analytics platform or streaming media? **Having a strong background in building the feature set you need is an important consideration in your selection.**

## 2.

### Which platform do you perform the strongest on?

**Ensure your developer has extensive experience building on your target platform.** You need someone passionate about that platform, who understands that Android and Windows users interact differently than iPhone users and that they all have different expectations. The developer you choose should also be passionate enough about the platform to use that type of phone. Using the smartphone of expertise will provide a much better understanding of the experiences users want.



# 3.

## What types of clients have you worked with?

**Developers who have worked with many clients in a particular industry have a lot of learned knowledge that could be useful to your business.** Their experience with other brands gives them an opportunity to provide suggestions for your business that you might not have considered. Developers with a breadth of experience also build efficiencies that eliminate some of the development that another developer might need if they have no knowledge of your industry.

Additionally, if a developer has only worked with startups, they aren't going to understand the complexities of working with a global brand. Many aspects of the business are entirely different; processes, payment terms, expectations and many other factors. On the flip side, a developer who has only worked on apps for big brands may not fit your startup's development needs. They may have more overhead than your budget allows. They may not be able to adapt to the work as easily.

**Finding a developer that has worked with a good mix of brands helps you to understand if they are better equipped to work with a company like own.**

PS: Ask for references from those clients!

# 4.

## What is your approach to UX?



**The success of your app hinges entirely on whether or not it adds value to a user's life.** You need a team that will listen to you and understand your goals for creating the app. What will this app accomplish? What will it do for users once it's in their hands? Does the team conduct stakeholder interviews? Do they map out the user's journey? Have they thought about the extra features that will delight your user? Every choice your development team makes must be based on whether or not it enhances the user's experience.

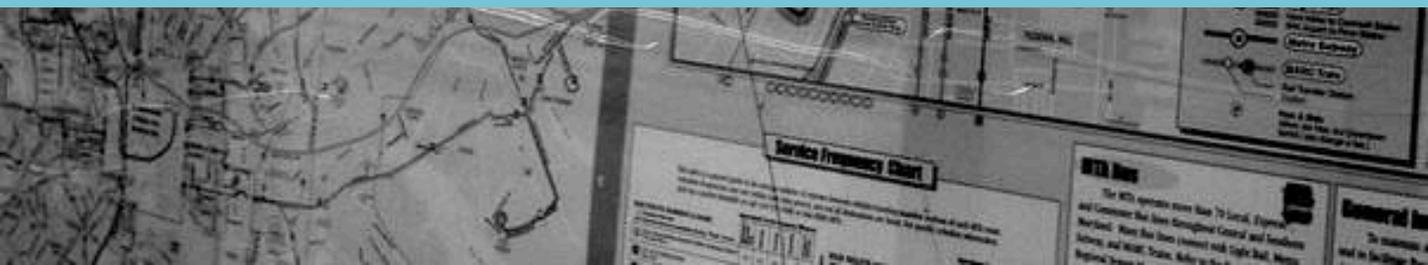
# 5.

## What is your process?

Once you're in development, the last thing you want to do is go a few days without any sort of a project update. So before hiring an app developer, you'll want to know how and how often the team communicates with you. What are the roles and responsibilities of each party? **Laying out clear expectations before beginning the project is part of good planning.** Keeping clients closely involved with developers ensures important decisions are not left to chance and ensures timely resolutions when issues surface.



*Our general approach is to initially collect as much information as possible and create a map and architecture for the application. The application map becomes a living document that holds the 'truth' of the complete application blueprint.*



# 6.

## How do you create efficiencies?

Has the development team created any design patterns or extensive libraries that give them a jumpstart on your project? Do they practice Continuous Delivery which automates many tedious and error-prone activities, saving significant time and energy? Often, an experienced team of developers will have discovered and developed ways to decrease the amount of time it takes to fully develop an application.

Every developer at stablekernel follows a code style that allows for multiple team members to work on different parts of a project. By sharing the same “dialect,” we communicate more effectively as a team. We’ve also built libraries for routine functionalities that give us a jump start on most projects. Passing this time-savings on to you can also save you a significant amount of money.



# 7.

## How are costs calculated?

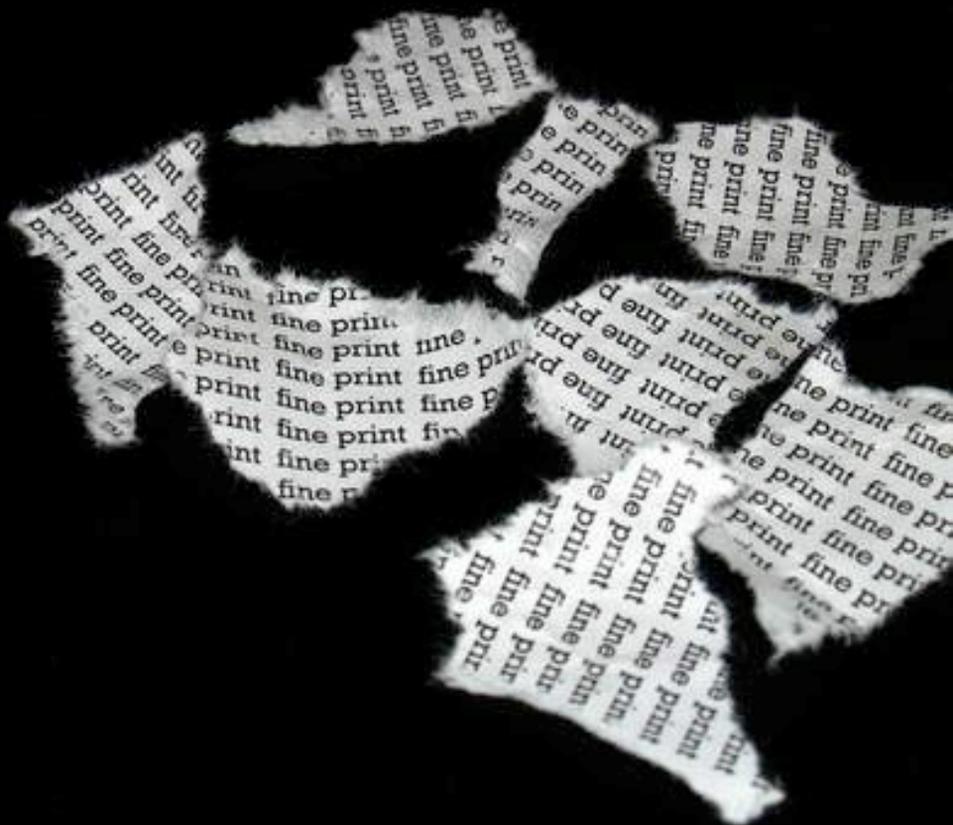


**Quality and user experience should be the most important priorities for any product owner.** That said, we all have budgets we must work within. Generally, a team will either bill for time and materials or by fixed bid. There are valid reasons for both practices. If the project scope is clear and all decision makers are aligned, a fixed bid approach can help measure performance and delivery of the product against a known dollar value. However, if the project has many unknowns or if you want to try various features or test multiple designs, having a team on retainer assures you always have a development team available to work on your software when necessary.

# 8.

## What are your payment terms?

Find out the consultancy's payment terms. Do they want half of the budget paid upfront and the rest upon completion? Do they want a fixed monthly retainer? Many shops will work around your standard payment terms. Additionally, if you know you want to develop more than one app for more than one platform, find out if the developer will offer any cost-savings based on the promise of a long-term engagement.



# Finally...

Apps are capable of far more than filtering pretty pictures for Instagram. They have the power to solve serious business challenges. Your development partner should respect the trust you put in them to create those solutions.

Hopefully these questions have you thinking about what you should know when considering hiring an app developer. There are other considerations to think about as well: Who handles testing? Will the developer deploy your app to the App Store or Google Play? Do they offer ongoing maintenance and support? Further inform yourself of the possibilities in app development and you'll know the right questions to ask for your business. Lastly, be sure your consultancy team is keeping up with emerging mobile trends and has experience actually implementing them.

**Have more questions? Let's talk.**



## stablekernel

Founded by Joe Conway, author of the best-selling iOS Programming: The Big Nerd Ranch Guide, stablekernel is an Atlanta-based mobile app company offering end-to-end development services to craft smartly-designed software that connects brands directly with their users – across tablets, smartphones, desktops, wearables and the Internet of Things. Our team of developers takes clients from strategy through design, development and deployment, ensuring timely delivery of the highest quality apps

[www.stablekernel.com](http://www.stablekernel.com)

678-464-2657

 @stablekernel