

NEARSHORING OF SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT AND IT SYSTEMS SUPPORT & MAINTENANCE

- A GUIDE FOR COMPANIES SEARCHING FOR IT SAVINGS -



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1. Summary

Nearshoring of software development and IT systems support and maintenance has been increasingly popular among EU companies in the recent years. This is due to the numerous benefits offered by the transfer of IT operations to countries characterised by lower costs but at the same time culturally and geographically close, which is precisely what IT nearshoring is about. Significantly lower IT costs while maintaining high standards of service, easy collaboration with nearshore IT providers thanks to their location in the same time zone, similar culture and the possibility of holding personal meetings at key stages of a project – these are advantages not to be ignored.

The most important destination on the map of European nearshore IT locations is Poland. This country is becoming an increasingly global destination for the outsourcing of IT projects due to its blend of critical factors including its cultural and geographical proximity to Western Europe, its skilled workforce with a high level of IT education and foreign language capabilities, as well as the Polish labour market well-equipped to provide competitive rates of IT projects implementations. An important factor is also the presence of highly experienced IT nearshoring providers on the Polish market. The largest of them is Multishoring.info.

This document presents more detailed information on the benefits of nearshoring your IT operations. It also describes the process of taking over software development, support and maintenance at Multishoring.info. The described procedures have been established on the basis of experiences gathered while working for the most demanding clients from the entire EU. The purpose of the document is to enable you to determine, with reasonable certainty, whether the nearshoring of your IT operations with Multishoring.info would be a good idea for your business.



2. Why nearshoring?

2.1. Nearshore IT development – what is it?

Nearshore IT development is about moving IT projects from your own country to another one, which is less expensive but close geographically and culturally. Geographical proximity eliminates the problem of different time zones in offshore IT development. Moreover, no major cultural differences are encountered and it is easier to arrange personal meetings when necessary. This promotes an efficient and cost-effective implementation of the offshore software development projects. For these reasons IT nearshoring has been more and more popular among the international companies in Europe in the recent years.

2.2. Nearshore IT development – for whom?

Are you responsible for an IT department in a large or medium-sized European company? Do you want to lower the costs of your IT projects? Are you tired with the problems caused by time zone and cultural differences inherent in using IT outsourcing services of companies from geographically distant countries? Do you also think that personal meetings can contribute to the smooth implementation of offshore IT projects? If your answer to these questions is yes, then nearshore IT development is the right choice for you!

2.3. Poland on the map of nearshore IT locations in Europe

The most important destination on the map of European nearshore IT locations is Poland. According to the Everest Group's "Global Location Insights: October 2011 – Perspectives on Global Services Market in Poland" report, Poland has all the characteristics of an ideal place for offshoring projects, including, in particular, those based on knowledge, such as IT projects. According to the report Poland accounts for almost a quarter of the total services market in the CEE and is experiencing double-digit growth. For this reason in 2011 the Everest Group included Poland in the elite group of the five most mature outsourcing countries for investment in the world, along with Brazil, China, the Philippines and India.

Key Facts about Poland*

- Poland is becoming an increasingly global destination for the outsourcing of IT projects due to its blend of critical factors including **cultural and geographical proximity to Western Europe**, its **skilled workforce** with a **high level of education** and **foreign language capabilities**.
- The Polish labour market is well-equipped to provide **competitive rates of IT projects implementation**. Average monthly gross remunerations in Polish R&D centres amount to PLN 4,200 for QA engineers, PLN 6,400 for software developers and PLN 9,500 for projects managers.
- The high number of R&D centres established in Poland by the biggest IT companies in the world is the best evidence of the outstanding skills of Polish programmers.
- Poland has **one of the world's best computer/IT education systems**, as confirmed by the fact that **Polish IT students won the International Collegiate Programming Contest twice**: in 2003 in Beverly Hills, USA, and 2007 in Tokyo, Japan.
- * According to "Onshore, nearshore, offshore unsure? A 2010 Polish perspective" by PAIZ, Jones Lang LaSalle, Grafton Recruitment, Association of Business Service Leaders in Poland and Ernst & Young.

2.4. Why Multishoring.info?

An important factor that contributes to the attractiveness of Poland as the most mature IT nearshoring destination in Europe is also the presence of highly experienced nearshore and offshore IT development providers on the Polish market. The largest of them is **Multishoring.info**. The company was set up in 2011 as an initiative of the capital group **EUVIC** to provide top notch IT outsourcing services. The EUVIC technology group employs over **1,000 consultants**, has **900 active customers** around the world and its turnover was **over EUR 28 million last year**. Multishoring has its headquarters in Warsaw, Poland, and it has a subsidiary in London, UK. The originator and founder of Multishoring is **Fild.NET** (www.fild.net), a leading integrator of Microsoft solutions in Poland, with extensive experience in conducting nearshore IT development projects.



3. Taking over software support, maintenance and development at Multishoring.info

3.1. Types of IT systems that can be supported on a nearshoring basis

Multishoring.info offers the nearshoring or offshoring of the IT support, maintenance and development of your existing applications **of any size** and the provision of cost-effective real-time nearshore or offshore services.

3.2. How we begin to provide software support, maintenance and development of IT systems

The cooperation usually starts with a personal meeting – at the stage preceding the signing of an agreement. During the meeting, our software support and maintenance consultant collects the basic information on the IT system to be taken over by our **Technical Support & Maintenance department**. Also preliminary tasks and a trial period are defined to allow the client to become familiar with the standard of our services. The duration of this trial period may vary, depending on the size of the IT system whose support, maintenance, and development we are to take over.

For example, the **trial period** for a medium-sized IT system lasts for about 1-1.5 months. In the first week of collaboration all support and maintenance tasks are performed remotely – on a shared screen, together with the client's IT specialist. From the second week, 1 hour of consultation a day is sufficient to discuss any problems that have arisen during the day.

After the trial period we are fully ready to take over the provision of technical support, maintenance and development of an IT system. If also the client is convinced of our ability to ensure technical software support, maintenance and development, the **cooperation is formalised**. Since this moment the project is run **on a multishoring basis**. If a personal meeting with the client is necessary, it is organised as needed. Otherwise, the IT support and maintenance operations are carried out remotely by Multishoring.info Technical Support & Maintenance department.



3.3. IT Support & Maintenance – Flexible Service Package

After formalizing the cooperation, we allocate the **agreed bank of time to be used for IT support and maintenance tasks**, giving clients the confidence that they have a resource to call in to help, guide and support them as they use and develop their IT systems. **Clients can call against this time as needed**. We will then schedule the time if it is required and then will inform a client of how much time a particular request will cost in time before it is started. Additional support days are available for purchase as needed. Where a client does not require support for specific systems, the Flexible Service Package also covers consultancy and development. This allows our clients to use our services as required for a broad range of projects.

3.4. IT Support & Maintenance – How Does It Look Like In Practice?

We always take a **pro-active approach** to the area of providing support, maintenance and other services. Over and above simply providing a reactive fault resolution service, we offer a service which delivers preventative maintenance, regular system checks and managed application of patches and updates. Additionally, if required, we also manage the system, making changes to functionality or installing additional features as required. Our clients can also take advantage of our IT development and consultancy services.

Management of supported IT systems

Our clients may call Multishoring.info to make changes to the current system configuration or install new functionality. We will agree the requirements for these changes and inform a client as to how long the changes will take. The work will then be scheduled and carried out by our IT support and maintenance staff.

IT Maintenance

We perform regular checks on the supported system to ensure that it continues to function optimally. As updates are released, we advise clients when patching is required and undertake the work required to update the supported systems. The time taken to perform these checks and updates is deducted from the support time remaining.



Maintenance tasks are managed by Multishoring.info and do not require a request from a client to instigate a system check or update. However, the work required is carried out by arrangement between Multishoring.info and a client to minimise disruption to service.

IT Development

Our clients may ask Multishoring.info to create new functionality using time from the agreed bank of days. We will advise a client if time is required to create a detailed specification in order to accurately estimate the time required to develop new functionality. Our clients may then elect to spend the appropriate number of days from the time remaining to deliver the requirements and provide development.

IT Consultancy

Our clients may ask Multishoring.info to deliver on-site consultancy for advice or work on an area outside of any systems covered by a support arrangement. We will deduct the time used from the bank of days as appropriate.

IT Support

Should our clients experience a fault with the supported system they may call upon Multishoring.info to investigate and resolve the fault. As part of this service, we usually are able to utilise additional support from manufacturers of supported systems, if necessary. The time spent by the Multishoring.info's staff to resolve the fault is deducted from the support time remaining.

3.5. IT support of small systems

A specific type of IT systems that Multishoring.info can provide technical support for are small IT systems that do not qualify for a large IT support contract because of their size. Virtually every company has a few to several such systems that do not have a signed SLA as they are too small. If your company also has such systems you presumably know that they can be a real nagging pain in the neck.

In general, technical support for this type of systems is provided by a single employee from the IT department. It takes up about a quarter of that employee's working time. The problem arises when this person is heavily loaded with other responsibilities and has **no time to deal with such small, relatively low-priority IT systems which, however, must be maintained**. And what if this person quit his/her job and left your company with all the knowledge about these not really critical, but still important small IT systems?

The solution is offered by Multishoring.info. It can be provided – depending on the type of systems that are to be covered by technical support – in two ways:

- 1) You need IT support for systems that require no special knowledge, but their names, the use of technology, as well as how and where to log in to them in the event of failure or need for modifications
- → In this case you buy a minimum number of working hours per month, to be determined based on your previous experience with the technical care of these IT systems. We take action within a few hours of the moment when you let us know about a system failure or a need to modify it. If the volume of work in a given month exceeds the purchased working time, you pay only for the additional time.
- 2) You need IT support for systems that require some knowledge and constant low profile maintenance
- → In this case you also buy a defined and guaranteed number of working hours. This allows us to maintain constant knowledge of the supported IT systems and to perform the regular maintenance work to prevent any potential problems. However, if something unexpected happens anyway, or you need some modification in the system, then you have IT staff on hand that will perform the task. And you pay additionally just for this extra work on solving the problem or introducing the necessary changes.

3.6. Tools that we use

ITIL-based IT service management and tools

Multishoring.info's IT help desk processes are based on ITIL 2011 best practices, which allows us to troubleshoot IT service requests faster and more efficiently.

ITIL based IT service management



First, a service strategy is designed to ensure that the services meet business needs. Then, the services are designed, implemented and operated. The ongoing management of services is accompanied by the continual service improvement process.

Typically, we use our own system enabling the smooth provision of technical support services based on the ITIL methodology. However, it is also possible to use any other tool requested by the client (e.g. BMC Remedy Action Request System, CA Services, IBM Tivoli).

Tools for IT development

The IT development support system recommended by us is **OnTime Scrum** for project management and bug tracking. It is available online via a secure login page. Its users can easily manage product backlogs, organize products, sprints and releases, automate processes with workflows, ensure secure operation by assigning user roles and perform many more actions.

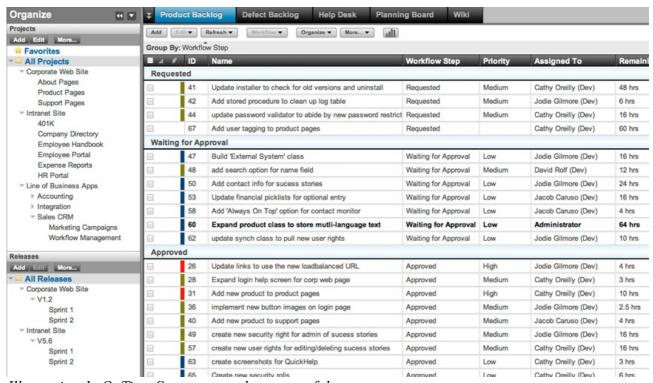


Illustration 1: OnTime Scrum - sample screen of the system

At the client's request also other IT development systems may be used, such as **Jirra** or any other tool that the client is familiar with.

Communication & collaboration environment

Users can report any failures or interruptions to an IT service or system to Multishoring.info's Help Desk Centre either by phone/Skype, Help Desk contact webpage or email. A **Microsoft SharePoint portal is used as a user front-end** controlling the incident process workflows, managing registers and assets lists (issue register, risk register, software & hardware asset registers), and providing access to the knowledge database and Help Desk & asset inventory reports. The reports enable users to review the performance metrics and the service level as well as to verify the fulfilment of the SLA conditions. In some projects, the service **SalesForce.com** is used as the software platform. We also have extensive experience in working in Google+ corporate communication environment. We can also adapt to any other communication environment that is preferred by the client.

3.7. Case study

To find out more, read a case study on how we took over software support, maintenance and



development of IT systems of HLDisplay, at: http://multishoring.co.uk/case-study	Europe's	leading	merchandis	ing company.	It is available



4. Nearshoring of software development

The cooperation with our customers usually starts with an order for the implementation of a specific IT development project, following which technical support and maintenance for the created solution are provided. Such orders are performed in a slightly different way, as in the case of taking over the support, maintenance and development of an existing application in a company. This process is described in more detail in the sections below.

4.1. Activities before signing the cooperation agreement

At the stage preceding the signing of a cooperation agreement a few personal meetings usually take place, during which Multishoring.info's consultant analyses the client's problem and suggests a solution. When an agreement is finally reached as a result of the consultations – regarding both the suggested solution and business matters (e.g. how the project is to be paid for – per hour or for the completion) – subsequent activities run along two lines. Multishoring.info's representative, responsible for technical issues, determines with his/her counterpart on the client's side all the technical details of the planned offshore IT project, such as which VPN is to be used (the client's or Multishoring.info's), tools for video-conferencing (e.g. Microsoft Lync, Skype, Google Hangouts) and for the exchange of materials (e.g. SharePoint). At the same time, Multishoring.info's project manager assisted by a lawyer draws up a contract and make sure that the cooperation terms are acceptable to both parties. Until the moment the contract is signed, most communication between the client and Multishoring.info takes place remotely (by phone, e-mail, video-conferencing).

4.2. Project implementation

After signing the contract, Multishoring.info's project manager meets the client's authorised technical staff. They determine detailed procedures for communication during the project and for project progress reporting. A solution typically recommended for this purpose by Multishoiring.info is the Kanban project management system.

The client can use it to monitor the progress and to submit comments. The system is available after logging in via the Internet. It is intuitive and very easy to use. However, at the client's request it is also possible to report progress by means of another tool.



Illustration 2: A Kanban system sample page used by Multishoring.info for managing projects, showing the progress of work and notes of team members

After establishing all the necessary details, Multishoring.info's team of offshore IT developers start their work and create a solution which is then tested. After testing, Multishoring.info's project manager visits the client again and installs the prepared software in the client's environment. Should it be necessary to change any settings, the project manager contacts remotely his/her offshore IT development team, whose members then prepare any modifications needed. This phase may be repeated several times until the final version of the solution is developed. It is then tested again – this time both in the client's and Multishoring.info's IT environment. After the completion of tests and the implementation of modifications (if necessary), the client receives the prepared documentation on the delivered solution. Workshops are also conducted during which the client can learn how to use the new solution. Subsequently, the client signs the solution acceptance document and Multishoring.info issues an invoice for the service.

4.3. Post-implementation support

Following the project completion, a service agreement is drawn up and signed, unless the client requested it at the earlier stages of the project. The agreement guarantees to the client the scope of



assistance expected by him when using the delivered solution. When carrying out maintenance services, Multishoring.info uses specialised software, such as e.g. the Kanban project management system (which also offers special features in this area), as well as such tools as SharePoint (for the exchange of materials) and Microsoft OCS or Skype (for video-conferencing).

4.4. What can be done remotely and on-site

Activities before signing the contract and the start of the project

• At this stage it is essential for the representatives of Multishoring.info and of the client to meet in person. This type of meeting enables Multishoring.info's project manager and the client's representatives to get to know each other. It facilitates further cooperation and contributes to solving any problems that may arise during the work on a nearshore or offshore IT project.

Project implementation

Projects carried out by Multishoring.info can be divided into two categories described below.

- 1) Nearshore or offshore IT projects that require communication with employees primarily from the IT department (for example related to the implementation of BizTalk Server and SQL Server)
 - In such projects there is no need for personal meetings. All communication can take place remotely by email or using video conferencing tools. Remote work can include: clarification of the scope of the project, determining the developer environment (of the client or of Multishoring.info), work programming, testing, installation and training.
 - Remote collaboration is quite sufficient as most of the topics discussed are technical issues. It
 does not matter whether the interlocutors see themselves in person or communicate at a
 distance. The communication is also facilitated by both sides' high proficiency in using video
 conferencing tools.
 - Personal meetings are not necessary due to Multishoring.info's method of implementing projects. We always try to carry them out in stages. This means that we divide the project into isolated modules. After creating and testing individual modules, they are immediately run productively. In this way the client can verify whether the project is proceeding according to his expectations by looking at the already operating piece of the whole solution.
 - It may happen that during the project unexpected problems arise that are best discussed in



person. Our experience shows that such situations are rare.

- 2) Nearshore or offshore IT projects that require communication with employees from departments other than IT (e.g. associated with the implementation of SharePoint Server or Dynamic CRM)
 - In this type of projects personal meetings are necessary due to the larger number of involved employees from different departments, who often have conflicting opinions and are not accustomed to the use of video-conferencing tools.
 - As a rule, in the course of the project we always organise at least one presentation for the client to show what has been achieved so far and to make sure we are moving in the right direction
 - However, if there is a need for more frequent personal meetings, they are arranged as appropriate.

Maintenance

- The specific feature of the nearshore or offshore IT projects implemented by Multishoring.info is our modular approach. This means that the issue of maintenance arises at a relatively early stage of the project after a production run of a closed part of the whole solution. Therefore, already at that stage details of maintenance are determined, such as response time and support level. If support services are to be provided during business hours, then for the duration of the project this job is assigned to Multishoring.info's project team. In the case of 24/7 support it is necessary to make additional financial arrangements. All of this is done remotely and afterwards the client is able to accurately test the support level provided by Multishoring.info already during the project.
- When the project is completed and the documentation handed over, it is time to sign an
 official agreement for technical support for the solution created by Multishoring.info. It is
 usually accompanied by a personal meeting, providing also an opportunity to summarise the
 project.



4.5. Case study

To find out more please read a case study on how we carried out a software development project related to the implementation of BizTalk Server at TIM SA, one of the leading distributors of electrical goods on the Polish market. It is available at: http://multishoring.co.uk/case-study/



5. Concerns over nearhoring – how do we deal with them

We realize that the beginning of cooperation on a nearshoring or offshoring basis may be accompanied by numerous concerns regarding the quality of work and profitability, such as: wouldn't we spend more time on creating a job specification than on the actual development? Would they be able to work at the same pace as we do? They are natural and it would be strange if they were not there. With this in mind, we do our best to dispel them using tools and activities described below:

- **Providing information to explain the way we work** before you decide to contact us, you can refer to a number of documents designed to familiarize you with the way in which we complete orders on a nearshoring and offshoring basis, such as this white paper. More educational materials you can find at www.multishoring.co.uk.
- **Personal meetings at the stage of partner selection** virtually every contract is preceded by a personal meeting with our consultant. At the meeting at a time and place convenient for you you can brief us thoroughly on the extent and duration of the project as well as present your expectations as to the financial terms of cooperation. During this process you will be able to form your own opinion on our competencies and communication skills
- A senior developer for daily contacts we designate a senior developer with experience in the technologies related to the project. His/her task apart from the development work is also coordinating with a counterpart on the client's side, which includes specifying the job to be done and setting time frames for given tasks. Two senior developers with similar experience and knowledge usually get along with each other very well.
- **Risk-free model of cooperation** In order to make it easier to start cooperation we offer Risk Free criteria when the client is not happy with the end result we simply do not issue an invoice.

We are also aware that the decision to start working together really just opens the process of building a relationship and mutual trust. That is why we constantly take steps to ensure more organized and structured collaboration. This is achieved by:

• Periodic analysis of the methodology used to manage projects, which allows us to constantly adapt to the needs of a client;

- Constant on-going contact and regular personal meetings on the level of senior developers and management that are useful in building a more structured model of cooperation. As a result, we are better able to solve occurring problems, which are expected and normal.
- Openness in communication, even when things go wrong. While working on large and complex projects it may happen that a member of our team makes a wrong move. In such a situation clients can expect open communication and proactive response from us. You can read more on it in the next chapter.

We do believe that **together we can do business bigger**, **better and more flexible**, and we are able to make the biggest sceptics in your comany reluctantly admit that perhaps it wasn't such a bad idea after all to start cooperation with Multishoring.info.



6. When things go wrong

Being only human, we sometimes make mistakes when cooperating with our clients. Of course, we strive for perfection all the time and do our best to prevent undesirable events. Nevertheless, while working on large and complex projects it may happen that someone of our team makes a wrong move. What can our clients expect from us in such a situation?

- We never try to hide a problem. It is always communicated openly.
- The communication of the problem is accompanied by a **recovery plan** aimed at minimizing the damage and eliminating the possibility of a similar error occurring in the future.
- The recovery plan is implemented which removes the problem. **Processes and solutions are optimized so that a similar problem will not happen in the future**.

We believe that **open communication and proactive response** to emerging issues is the way to deal with any difficulty during cooperation. It also promotes building long-term relationships based on mutual trust and partnership, which is a strategic goal for us in relation to each of our clients.



7. Nearshoring – pricing models

We offer IT support, maintenance and development services based on the following pricing models.

Fixed price

For projects in which it is possible to determine the scope in advance, a fixed price may be set. Usually this model is applied in the first project for a new client.

Time and material

Used when the determination of the final result requires too much effort or many changes in the scope are anticipated.

Travel and accommodation

An all-inclusive rate may be agreed upon after estimating the amount of work and the necessary travel expenses.

Risk Free

In order to make it easier to begin cooperation we offer the **Risk Free** criteria – when the client is not satisfied with the end result of a test order we simply do not issue an invoice.



8. Conclusions

This document presents the advantages and opportunities stemming from the nearshoring of IT operations and describes the process of taking over software development, support and maintenance by Multishoring.info. It provides you with a precise step-by-step knowledge of what to expect when deciding to reduce your IT spending with the assistance of Multishoring.info. If you have any questions or you wish to begin using our services, please contact our consultants by phone:

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or e-mail: sales@multishoring.co.uk.



9. Information on Multishoring.info

Multishoring Ltd. is **the largest nearshore and offshore IT development provider in Poland**. The company was set up in 2011 as an initiative of the capital group **EUVIC** to provide top notch IT outsourcing services. The EUVIC technology group employs over **1,000 consultants**, has **900 active customers** around the world and its turnover was **over EUR 28 million last year**. Multishoring has its headquarters in Warsaw, Poland, and it has a subsidiary in London, UK. The originator and founder of Multishoring is **Fild.NET** (www.fild.net), a leading integrator of Microsoft solutions in Poland, with extensive experience in conducting nearshore IT development projects.

Multishoring.info's consultants and architects have implemented nearshore IT projects for many global corporations, mainly from Germany, Italy, Sweden and the UK, such as ABB, Skandia, Airbus Military, Vatennfall, Opel. Our portfolio also includes deployment projects in medium-sized companies operating all over Europe. Our consultants are certified and recommended contractors of projects implemented by Microsoft and Oracle.

Multishoring.info conducts its business guided, most of all, by the following values: **continuous improvement of quality standards**, **mutually rewarding relationships**, **business ethics** and **sustainability**. More information available on our webpage: **www.multishoring.co.uk/our-values/**

TECHNOLOGY EXPERTISE

- Advanced Microsoft solutions (BizTalk, SharePoint, Dynamics CRM, Project Server, SQL Server, Exchange Server, Lync Server, Office 365, Windows Azure)
- Mobile solutions development (iOS, Android, Windows Phone, BlackBerry)
- Java Spring Web Development with VMware vFabric
- Oracle EBS
- SOA Software
- Google App Engine
- Salesforce
- TIBCO
- Webmethods
- FileMaker
- Scandinavian Technologies (inRiver, EPiServer, Jeeves)
- Other (.NET, JAVA, C/C++, JavaScript, PHP, COBOL, Ruby on Rails)