



Stanford eCorner

Outsourcing Software Development to Asia

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Winblad talks about how whole projects are not outsourced. The core technology is separated and written, while incremental pieces that would be done linearly are outsourced abroad. There are a lot of talented architects and developers around the world, she notes, but they do not have the vision to be inventors.



Transcript

Ok, I'll answer that. The last question was, "What does outsourcing mean?" Realistically nobody is writing a spec and throwing it to a foreign country to write. In most cases, the VP of Engineering, and the Chief Architects, and the Chief Technology Officer that read core invention, core deep understanding of the technology are here. However, I'll give the example of Voltage. The VP of Engineering is Terence Spies. Terence spent nine years at Microsoft and was the Head of Cryptography there. Dan Boneh is the Chief Technical Officer and on the Board and he's a professor here at Stanford. Guido Appenzeller is also part of the Chief Technology Architecture Team. And when we got ready to launch our product we realized that there is a core platform that makes up the security platform. Then there are deployment pieces for email, Instant Messaging, Voice over IP and document.

As you touch each of this deployment mechanisms, you touch different clients, different gateways, different Operating Systems. We used to have to do as a company, you would basically sit there and have a porting lab and grind these things out. Once the core architecture is done and the core function, we didn't give anybody the algorithm and say go code it. In fact, we have mathematicians on board to do this stuff. The things we could easily define in the spec. Well, those engineers were sleeping there four hours a night. There were people in India still writing code. And they were able to write to the different platforms, the different email clients, the different IM clients, the different IM platforms, the different operating platforms. So we could actually deploy simultaneously across multiple platforms. We used to have to do that linearly.

So we really have separated the core technology team to stay here and the incremental pieces that you would do even linearly usually are outsourced to India. They were part of our engineering team. They're brilliant people in India. They have and we're coding 24 by 7 in these companies. Same thing is true in other companies. We may have intact task in engineering team in India. And it is a completely web services architected, hosted on Financial Management System. But it's got features out the wazoo. It has the dashboard for multi-currency written in India. No one wrote the Core Object Framework that drives the key ER pieces.

And that's written here by our Chief Architects. But there are very talented architects and developers around the world. And maybe they are not the inventors. They don't hold the vision but they build as much passion and capability to extend your products as anyone that's here.