



# 6 Questions to Ask When Looking for a Software Engineering Partner

A Guide for Media and Entertainment Businesses



# Introduction

Tectonic shifts are changing how media content is delivered in the digital age.

**O**rganizations are racing to create software and digital experiences that will help them deliver high-quality content faster and at lower costs.

At the same time, they want to stay relevant and differentiated while unlocking new business value and revenue streams — and improving the consumer experience.

Tremendous opportunities and challenges abound in both the short and long term. As a result, more and more media businesses have realized they need a software engineering partner.

**Outsourcing may seem an obvious solution, but there's a significant difference between traditional outsourcing vendors and today's software engineering partners.**

“Outsourcing” typically means throwing a business problem over a wall and then receiving a solution sometime later. It's a model fraught with poorly set expectations, misaligned visions, and outright failure.



The global OTT video market — \$238 billion in 2021 — is expected to top \$476 billion by 2027.

A common response to such poor experiences is the use of a staff augmentation model.

However, this may yield incrementally better results or reduce risk somewhat at the expense of efficiency, commitment, and value creation potential.

We don't recommend either of these models.

To deal with the pace of change and technical sophistication of today's environment, you'll find much more value and innovation working hand-in-hand with a knowledgeable, scalable, and trusted technology partner.

In this e-guide, we'll assume you are, in fact, looking for a software engineering partner. More importantly, we'll provide you with best practices for selecting the right software engineering partner and ensuring your partnership succeeds.

# Question 1: Why do you want a partner?





They don't  
have the  
right skills  
in-house.

They have  
the skills but  
lack scale &  
time.

Companies may want to build a media streaming platform, service, pipeline, or user-facing OTT application.

Even the most tech-savvy media companies will lose market share or miss opportunities if they can't continuously deliver better outcomes, greater focus on user experience, and more efficient use of platform or network resources — while delivering their streaming content to users.

They might be trying to leverage smart devices or automotive functionality or integrate with third-party media and analytics providers. But doing so requires niche skills, experience, or deep domain knowledge they can't access locally.

You need a partner who can help you quickly scale your engineering operations through established teams, established industry processes, solution accelerators, and world-class infrastructure.

T

his may sound like a very basic question, but identifying exactly why you want a software engineering partner is crucial to selecting the right one.

Different partners have different strengths and ways of working with clients, so it's important for a business to truly understand its own vision, capabilities, and maturity.

In our own 10+ years of experience as a software engineering partner for media and entertainment organizations, we have found that most clients partner because they face one or more of the following challenges.

# They need to do more with less.

We'd be remiss if we didn't mention cost savings as a reason to partner.

Budgets are tight for many companies right now.

Partnering with a leading player in live and OTT software product development and engineering services could **help you achieve a more significant return on your investment.**

# They need to transform the business.

We often work with traditional businesses who are on the cusp of digital transformation but don't yet have the processes, infrastructure, or mindset to drive the changes required to digitally transform.

*Are you looking for a partner to help you develop a complete media streaming platform, user-facing OTT application, manual and automated QA, ad-tech solution or monetization system, or cloud and DevOps services?*

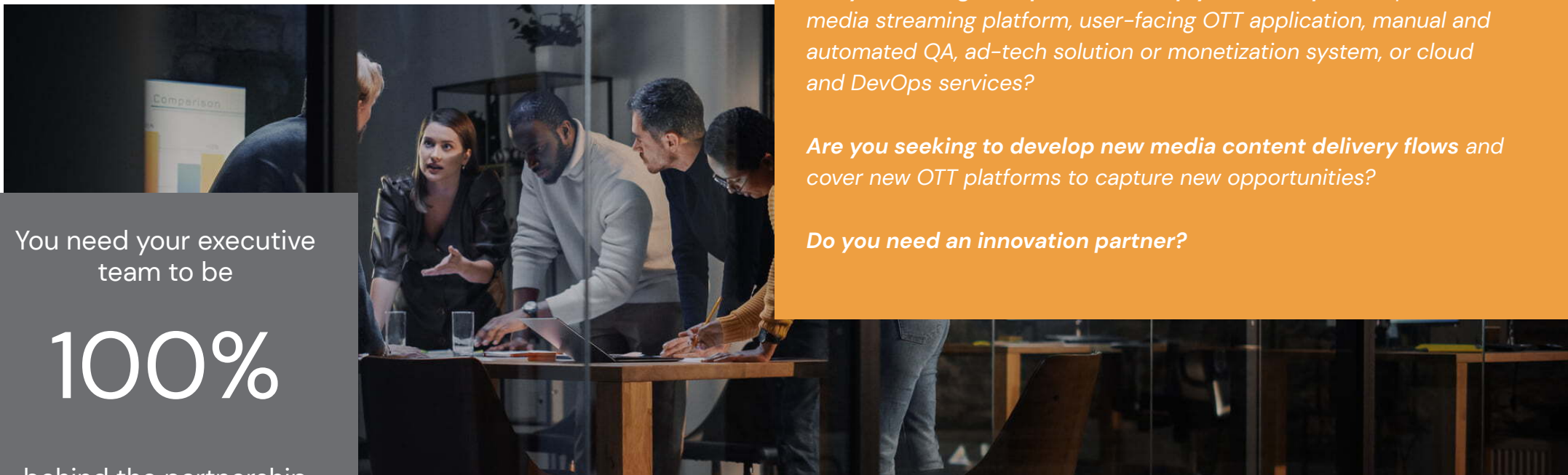
*Are you seeking to develop new media content delivery flows and cover new OTT platforms to capture new opportunities?*

*Do you need an innovation partner?*

You need your executive team to be

# 100%

behind the partnership for it to succeed.





Question 2:  
How mature is your organization?



You must be not only able to see where your market is going and how you will (or want to) fit into that evolution but able to identify your own maturity parameters.

**D**oes your organization have the culture, executive buy-in, and processes to work with a software engineering partner in the first place?

You have to know what your future goals look like in order to sell a partnership to your executive team, and you need your executive team to be 100% behind the partnership for it to succeed.

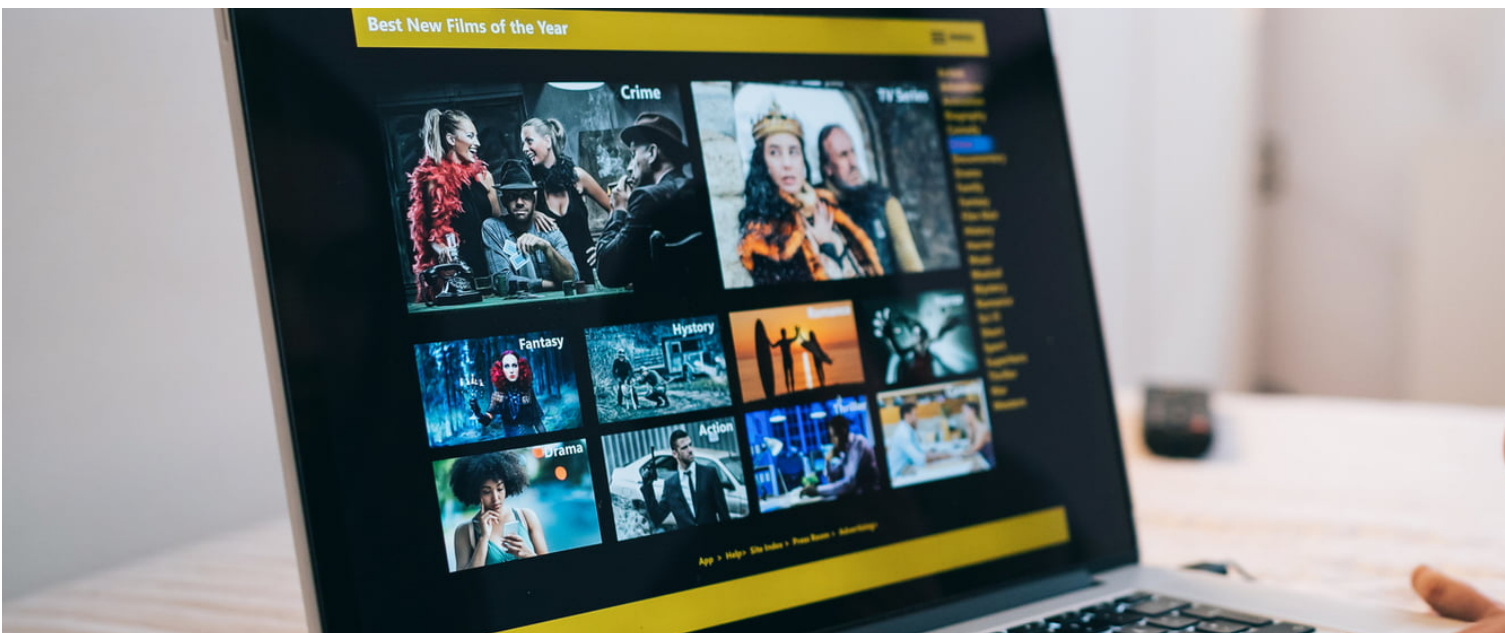
## Process Maturity

- Do you have a consistent, repeatable development process?
- Are you releasing high-quality media products?
- How often do you have post-release field issues?
- Are your processes automated?
- How is your customer satisfaction and retention?

## Organization Maturity

- Does your leadership have a solid vision and strategy for developing over-the-top media solutions?
- Do you have the support and resources to engage with a partner?
- Do you have the metrics to measure success?





## Partnership Maturity and Cost- Effectiveness

Do you have the people, processes, technologies, domain expertise, and infrastructure in place to collaborate with a third-party partner and do it cost-effectively?

Most media companies can self-assess, but maybe not in all areas. This is especially true for companies that are emerging onto the digital scene.

Much like the adage, “You don’t know what you don’t know,” a business may have a general idea of where they want to go but not the knowledge of how to get there.

In this scenario, it’s crucial to bring in an advisor who can help you clarify your goals and identify the specific steps to achieve them.

For example, we once partnered with one of the leading American streaming companies to help create their streaming service from scratch.

Our assessment showed that the engagement would include massive back-end development and refactoring together with complete development of their front-end applications for a large variety of platforms.

### GlobalLogic provided:

- our vision for software architecture
- components implementation
- and communication between system components together with cloud and DevOps services.

This approach allowed the client to keep development and cloud costs efficient and transparent while still maintaining high quality standards.

A diverse group of business professionals, including men and women of various ethnicities, are gathered around a table in a modern office setting. They are all looking down at documents or a tablet on the table, appearing to be in a collaborative meeting. The lighting is bright and professional. The text 'Question 3: Is the right person driving the search?' is overlaid in white at the bottom left of the image.

Question 3:  
Is the right person driving the search?

W

e realize this can be a sensitive topic since this section may apply to you. We've found

that when companies want to differentiate themselves through software or digital products, they need someone with experience in software or digital products to drive the search for a software engineering partner.

These individuals are the ones who are most informed about the business context and technical roadmap and can identify whether or not potential partners can meet their requirements from a skill and process perspective.

IT, procurement, legal, and other support functions should also be involved in the process of selecting a partner.

However, they should not be leading the charter because they will not be the ones to ultimately consume that partner's services.

For example, we partnered with a media company that was looking for an outside team to help further innovate, develop, and maintain their existing streaming platform.

In our experience, the most successful partnerships are driven by the:

- Chief Technology Officer
- Chief Product Officer
- Chief Digital Officer
- Chief R&D Officer
- SVP/VP/Director of Software Product Development and Engineering

The management team initiated the search to find the right partner to help them with software development, the project plan, the architectural roadmap, software verification, and testing — and chose GlobalLogic.

We currently are the primary partner for their software engineering services covering every aspect of their ecosystem.

Today, five years into the process, 126 engineers work together developing one of the world's leading streaming platforms that unites five video networks and has almost 10,000 titles available for customers.





Question 4:  
How do you select the right partner?

**D**ifferent software engineering partners have different strengths. For example, if you want to industrialize your current processes or optimize a platform for third-party systems, you should partner with a provider who specializes in IT services.

These types of partners are more traditional

“outsourcers.”

They will execute on your specific guidelines, manage repetitive tasks, or maintain your current systems.

However, if you need help digitally transforming your business or developing media streaming, OTT, VOD, client-facing applications, ad-tech solutions or monetization systems, then you need a very different



# We refer to this as “partnered insourcing” rather than outsourcing.

type of partner.

## GlobalLogic represents the second category.

We create distributed teams that blend seamlessly with our clients’ teams to provide high-level innovation and end-to-end engineering services.

We believe it is important when our potential partners ask questions. If a partner simply agrees to everything we say

without exploring the business value — that’s a red flag.

The smart partner will ask how his planned investment in the partnership fits his business goals and strategies.

It is crucial for a partner to understand and agree with our approach rather than to face challenges later.

Say you simply want to partner with an IT

outsourcing vendor to collaborate on a short-term project?

Value and choose a partner who demonstrates the ability to say, “No.”

If you do not have an advisor to guide you through the software engineering and IT service provider landscape, we suggest leveraging analyst reports to find a matrix of who does what.



Once you narrow down partners to interview, some good questions to ask include:

- How are you different from your competitors?
- What are your core competencies?
- How much attention can you provide me?
- Have you previously done what I want to do?
- Have you worked with someone like me before?
- Do you have case studies/customer references?
- Do you have experiential learnings that can be applied to my unique situation?



Question 5:  
Does team location matter?

Y

ou've heard the terms "onshore, nearshore, and offshore."

Some companies have strong reasons for wanting their partner team to be in a specific location or time zone, such as customer support, increased value, location-specific markets, or even a long-term strategy to establish teams in major technology hubs.

But most companies simply need access to specific skills. In this scenario, it really doesn't matter where those skills are located — as long as you have the right processes in place for distributed engineering.

**We call this mindset "right shoring."**



GlobalLogic searches to find the people with the right skills, experience, and competencies to staff all our ISO 13485-certified locations, with a long-term plan to build a training and resource certification program for our individual team members.

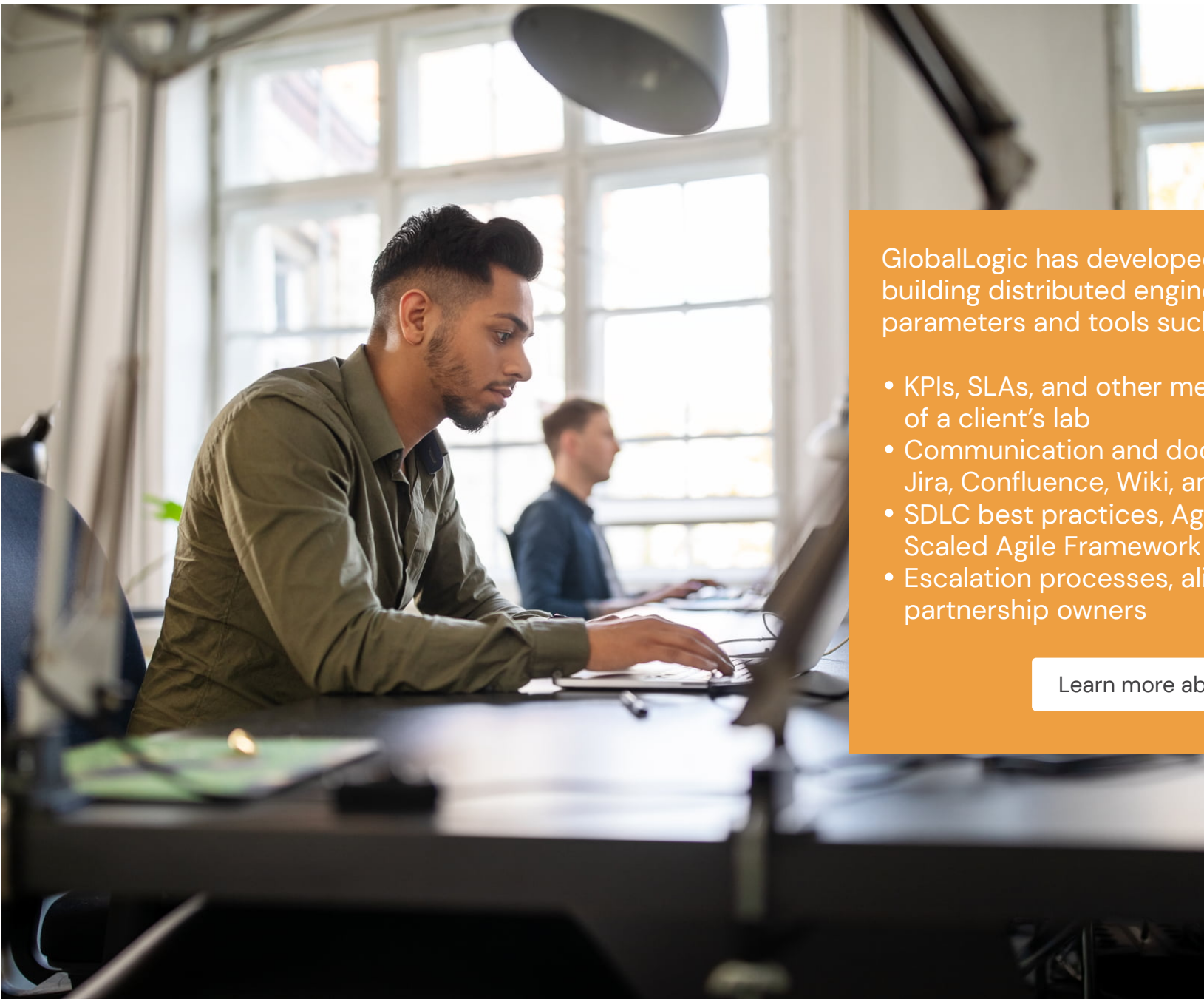
We once consulted with a company that wanted a development center in a specific location because it had a big overlap with the client's working hours.

In our opinion, the targeted location would be unable to support the client's skill sets and other requirements, but the company was insistent.

We ended up not working with the company, and they moved forward with establishing a development center in their desired location. A year later, they were facing significant collaboration challenges, even though their teams were located nearby.

So, regardless of whether your teams are distributed across a building or across the world, what matters is **establishing solid processes and tools for distributed collaboration.**





GlobalLogic has developed an entire science around building distributed engineering labs, which includes parameters and tools such as:

- KPIs, SLAs, and other metrics to measure the progress of a client's lab
- Communication and documentation tools, including Jira, Confluence, Wiki, and SharePoint
- SDLC best practices, Agile and Scrum processes, Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)
- Escalation processes, aligned organization structures, partnership owners

[Learn more about GlobalLogic Labs](#)



Question 6:  
Do you have a team  
integration plan?



**Y**ou've selected a partner — great! You already know that you'll need to set up the right processes, infrastructures, and technologies for distributed engineering before bringing your

partner onboard.

We won't go into detail about these requirements because your partner will provide you with (or at least advise you on) everything you'll need.

### **Instead, let's talk about team integration.**

One of the biggest challenges that many don't think about when bringing in a software engineering partner is the people aspect.

We often experience pushback from a customer's in-house teams because they feel threatened about working with an "outside" partner.

They may be resistant to the change or even actively undermine the partnership.

If you don't have a communications and collaboration process in place before working with your selected partner, you will face significant cultural challenges.

Here are three crucial lessons that we've learned over the years to smoothly integrate our teams with our clients' teams.

# 1. Start planning at the contract level.

Many contracts are structured in a standard vendor–client format, which creates unequal footing at the very beginning of the partnership.

Format your contracts to read like a true partnership with team incentives, MBOs, and other success metrics that put your internal and partner teams on equal terms.

In our client partnerships, we operate under a “shared burden, shared success” mentality.

# 2. Be transparent with your internal team.

Be upfront and direct about bringing in a partner. Create a plan to win over your internal teams.

Assure your teams that they are still very much valued; tell them exactly what to expect of the new partnership. Explain specifically how a partner will benefit both the company and them personally.

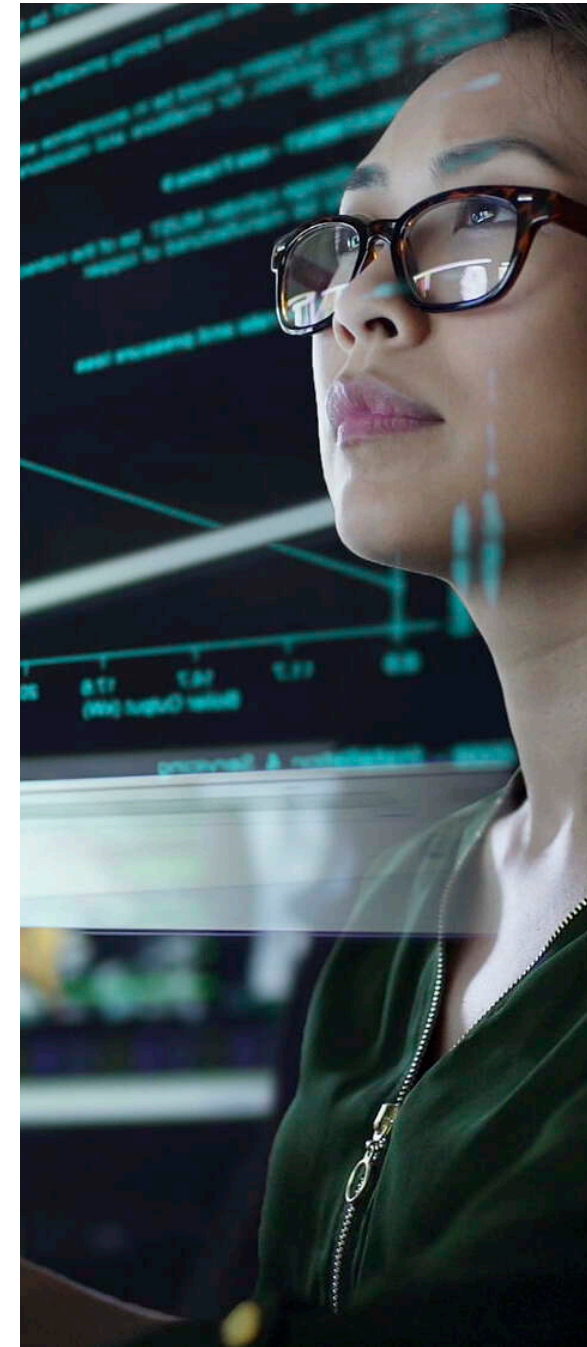
A well-thought-out communications plan is just as important as your technology or process plans.

# 3. Integrate your teams right away.

To further cement a “one team” mentality, create a common organization chart and make sure that your internal and partner HR teams are talking to each other regularly.

Identify a partnership champion on both ends, and create “partnership ambassadors” among both teams by sending members to work at each other’s engineering centers for a few weeks.

Video chat is a great tool for real-time collaboration, but nothing compares to creating relationships in a face-to-face environment.





Conclusion

# Conclusion

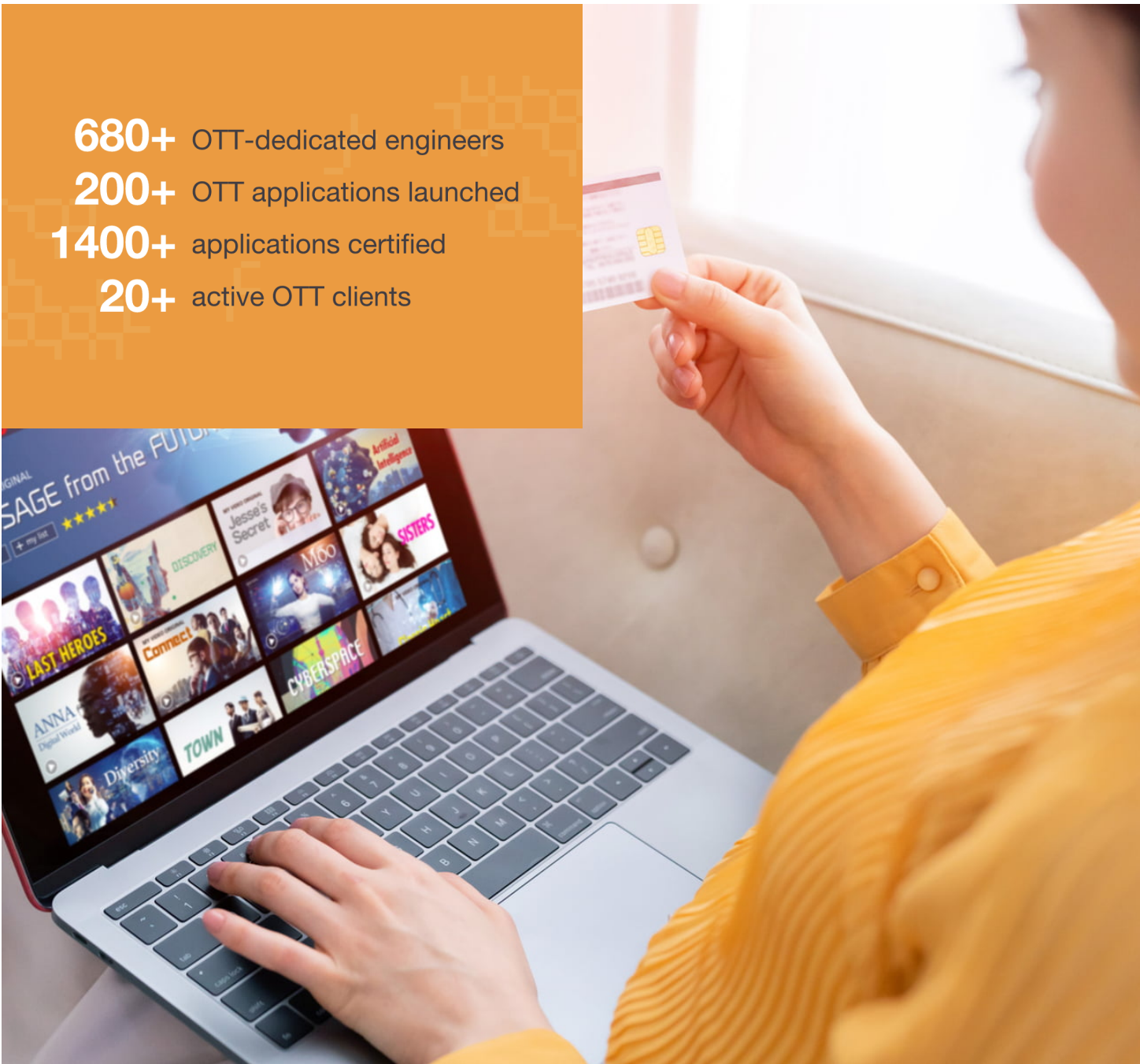
For companies that specialize in the Media, Streaming and OTT space, finding the ideal software engineering partner can be daunting. But with the right strategies and the ability to self-assess, it can lead to enormous benefits.

Beyond black-and-white metrics like ROI, partnering with a software product engineering company that specializes in high-quality software product development can provide you with a unique outside perspective that leads to surprising new innovations — and new and expanded revenue streams.

We hope this e-guide has provided you with a valuable blueprint for selecting a software engineering partner.

To learn more or to speak with one of our own experts, please reach out to [info@globallogic.com](mailto:info@globallogic.com).





**680+** OTT-dedicated engineers  
**200+** OTT applications launched  
**1400+** applications certified  
**20+** active OTT clients

**We offer more than 20 years of experience in software product development and engineering services.**

GlobalLogic helps some of the world's leading media streaming and VOD companies create world-class media experiences, accelerate new product development, and capture new revenue streams.

Over 680 OTT-dedicated engineers from GlobalLogic have contributed to 200+ OTT applications launched and 1400+ applications certified for 20+ active OTT clients.

Explore available services, find case studies, and meet members of our expert team at [GlobalLogic.com](https://GlobalLogic.com).

[Learn More](#)

Thank you for reading

# 6 Questions to Ask When Looking for a Software Engineering Partner

