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# Accelerated Software Delivery<sup>SM</sup>

# Executive Summary

Leading companies need reliable development of high-quality software to remain competitive, and they often need it faster than internal resources can support.

**Accelerated Software Delivery<sup>SM</sup>** is a world-class “plug and play” rapid software production capability that drives your business initiatives.

**Why does it work? Because it's based on over 35 years of hard-won software development experience. We've cracked the code on how to build bullet-proof applications in a reliable and predictable fashion.**

**We're so confident in our ability to perform, we guarantee results.**

**If we don't deliver business value, it's free.**

## **Accelerated Software Delivery<sup>SM</sup>**

Our Accelerated Software Delivery<sup>SM</sup> offering is a unique combination of highly-experienced US-based experts and top offshore/nearshore technical talent. You'll have face-to-face interaction with your team leads while they insulate you from the various details of team management. This provides a huge amount of value at a competitive rate.

The engagement begins with a Strategy phase. We work closely with you to understand your vision and solidify your requirements, technology, and architecture. We create a prioritized “to-do list” – the *product backlog* – which will be used to guide the work of the team.

Once there is enough to get developers started, the Delivery phase begins. Senior software engineers and a quality assurance engineer are ramped up and they start executing in two-week production cycles called *sprints*.

Every 2 weeks you'll see new, fully-tested features that you can use in a private demo environment. As you see the product coming together and show it to your team and users, you'll inevitably come up with new ideas. We'll continuously work with you to respond to changing business conditions, adjusting the backlog to course-correct the work of the team.

## **Who Is it For?**

This program is designed for business leaders at companies that lack the internal bandwidth and/or expertise to produce software in the timeframe required to take advantage of time-sensitive business opportunities.

## **How Long Does it Take?**

In a typical engagement, we work with our clients over an extended period of time. The first phase typically takes 2 to 6 weeks, depending upon how much up-front work has been done to define the product. We then immediately shift to the second phase, spinning up the development team and launching 2-week production sprints. Scope can vary from product to product, but we often produce a minimum viable product (MVP) with 13 to 16 weeks of coding and testing.

For short projects where you “just need a developer for a few weeks,” our Micro team is a great option.

# How it Works

## Phase 1: Strategy & Planning



### Kickoff

We get together with your business and technical stakeholders to understand the big picture and overall vision.



### Deep Dive

Through working sessions we'll dig deeper to understand the full scope of the product and create a high-level roles and features list.



### UX/Visual Design

We work together to nail down the structure of the user interface and prepare enough of the design to feed the development team for at least the first two sprints.



### Product Backlog

We'll write a full set of user stories, which define the desired behavior of the system. We'll work with you to put them into a force-ranked list, which forms the product backlog.



### Size Estimate

Through a series of 3 to 5 estimating sessions, our technical experts review the product backlog and assign points to each user story to create a level of effort estimate.



### Schedule Projection

Leveraging the size estimate, development team size, and start date, we create an estimated completion schedule.



### Technology

Working with your technical stakeholders, we make back-end and front-end technology selections.



### Architecture

We design a high-level architecture to support performance, scalability, and extensibility requirements.

# How it Works

## Phase 2: Delivery

Your product is built via a series of 2-week sprints. At the end of each sprint, the team meets with you to review their progress, demonstrate new, fully-tested features, and re-prioritize the backlog based on changing business conditions. This always keeps you in control of what the team is working on next.

You'll also be able to use the new features in your own private demonstration environment following each sprint review. This allows you to take the product for a test drive, show it to internal stakeholders, and gather feedback from users.

**“There are a lot of companies who talk the talk, but you guys actually walk the walk. You do what other companies we’ve worked with claim they do but have never actually done. You execute quickly and actually ship on schedule.”**

*- David Young, Product Architect  
Honeywell Cybersecurity Division*



# Team Leadership

Most software projects fail because:

- The product doesn't do what users want
- Poor project management leads to slow throughput and schedule overruns
- Low technical quality causes the product to be buggy, slow, and unmaintainable

To eliminate these problems, every Ascendle team includes two senior leaders, each with 10 to 20 years of software development experience: the Project Lead and the Development Lead.

During the first phase of the engagement, these two leaders work closely with your product and technical team members to nail down a solid development plan, so once the development team is in place they are ready to go full speed ahead. During the Delivery phase, the Project Lead and Development Lead work closely together to drive development.



**Project Lead**

The Project Lead has overall responsibility for delivering what you expect, acting as your embedded representative on the team. They distill all your wants, needs, and desires and translate them for the development team. They communicate all day every day with the team to ensure what's being built meets your requirements.



**Development Lead**

The Development Lead ensures the coding and testing process runs smoothly and verifies the product is built to Ascendle's exacting quality and performance standards. They review every line of code and verify automated unit test coverage of 100% of the product's logic.

# User Interface/User Experience

You could build the best-engineered product in the world, but if it's difficult to use or unattractive to users, it will never get any traction. To avoid this problem, we include an additional role for web applications and mobile apps: the User Interface/User Experience (UI/UX) Designer.

Our designer can work with your existing UI/UX team or create a design from scratch based on the needs of your users, discovered through research, analysis, and prototyping.



UI/UX Designer

Our UI/UX designers have deep experience in human-computer interaction and visual design. User experience architecture addresses the workflow through the product to ensure it works in a way that quickly and easily allows the user to accomplish their goals.

User interface design focuses on the layout of individual screens to ensure the best possible usability. Our UI/UX designers also address visual design—the “dots and colors” of the product—to ensure the UI is attractive, engaging, and adheres to your styling and branding standards.

# Delivery Roles

Once enough of a product backlog has been formed during the Strategy phase to get coding started, the balance of the development team is spun up to begin the Delivery phase.

Each team is assembled based on the selected technologies for the product to be built, which is another benefit of forming the team once both the initial requirements and technology vision for the product have been nailed down.



**Sr. Software  
Engineers**

Senior software engineers write and test the product's code. They also write automated unit tests to exercise all of the product's logic.

Our software engineers have deep experience in a variety of contemporary technologies, such as Node.js and .NET Core on the back end, Angular and React on the front end, and microservice tools such as Docker and Kubernetes.

They also have experience with continuous integration, continuous delivery, and other DevOps processes, to ensure the highest-quality product is built in the shortest amount of time.



**QA  
Engineer**

Our quality assurance engineers have that unique ability to think, "what if?" They identify the various edge cases that no one else seems to come up with, driving the testing strategy for the entire team.

In addition to writing detailed test plans, they also test the product and guide testing efforts of the rest of the team.

Finally, they work with the software engineers to create automated end-to-end integration tests, to ensure the product remains at a high level of quality.



# Tools and Technology

We have experience with a wide variety of tools and technologies. Don't see what you're looking for? Just ask.

## Project Management

- Jira
- Team Foundation Server
- Azure DevOps
- Trello
- Slack
- Microsoft Teams

## UI/UX Design

- Sketch
- InVision
- Balsamiq
- Axure
- UXPin

## Platform Development

- C#
- .NET Core
- .NET Standard
- Entity Framework
- ASP.NET Identity
- Microsoft Azure/AWS
- Node.js
- Swagger

## Front End & Mobile Development

- JavaScript/TypeScript
- Angular/React
- Sass
- Xamarin
- TestFlight/App Center

## Microservices

- Azure Kubernetes Service
- Docker
- Azure Service Fabric
- AKS Engine

## Data/Analytics

- Power BI/Tableau
- Azure SQL
- Cosmos DB/MongoDB
- HDInsight/Hadoop/Spark
- Event Hubs/Kafka

## DevOps

- Git & Git Flow
- Team Foundation Version Control
- Azure DevOps Pipelines
- Azure Continuous Deployment
- Bitbucket Pipelines
- Bamboo

## Security & Compliance

- Azure Key Vault
- Secret Server
- Checkmarx
- Black Duck

## Testing

- NUnit
- Microsoft Test
- xUnit
- NSubstitute
- Moq
- Jasmine/Karma
- Jest/React Testing Library
- JMeter
- Selenium
- SpecFlow
- BrowserStack

## Integrations

- OAuth/OpenID/SAML
- Stripe
- Shopify
- BigCommerce
- Recurly
- SendGrid
- Salesforce.com



# Supporting Roles

When you engage with Ascendle, you'll also have access to our senior leaders, who have over 75 years of combined experience leading software development teams and building world-class products across a variety of industries.



**Dave Todaro**  
Founder & CEO

With over 37 years of software experience, Dave's expertise ranges across the full spectrum of commercial-grade application development.

Dave has designed and built multiple award-winning products and is a recognized expert in agile project management, software engineering, and DevOps. He's regularly hired as a strategic consultant and has spoken to thousands of people worldwide about software development.

Dave published the 500-page *The Epic Guide to Agile: More Business Value on a Predictable Schedule with Scrum* in 2019.



**Diana Bourns**  
President & Partner

Diana has deep software professional services experience gained over the course of a long and successful career. At Ascendle she's led a variety of agile software development teams to produce mission-critical web applications, mobile apps, and API-driven platforms for various clients.

She's also coached development teams at several multi-billion-dollar clients, significantly improving their ability to produce reliable results, on schedule, in a predictable fashion.



**Tina Reynolds**  
VP, Operations

Tina brings 30 years of technical prowess and large-scale project delivery to the leadership of our software development teams. She empowers our teams to find the biggest pain points for our clients, so they can drive the highest business value into their projects.

Tina's professional expertise in software development, quality assurance, application architecture, project management, operations management, and business requirements definition spreads across a diverse set of industries: retail, government, pharmacy, travel, and hospitality.

# Putting it All Together

The Ascendle leadership and delivery roles are combined to form your fully-managed software development and delivery team. The Project Lead is your “embedded representative” on the team throughout the engagement.



You and Other Business Stakeholders



Project Lead

*Your Embedded Representative On the Team*



Development Lead



Software Engineer

*One to Four Software Engineers Per Team*



Software Engineer



QA Engineer

# Team Structure

Every project has different budget and schedule requirements. Through years of experience, we've determined the best combination of specialized resources to drive maximum throughput.

Each team structure moves at a different pace based on its size. The team's velocity is measured in *points*, which are an abstract measurement of effort we use to scope your project. Every project varies in size but to put points into context, several minimum viable products (MVPs) we've built have ranged in size from 75 to 150 points.

	Micro	Small	Medium	Large
Team Size	4	5	6	7
Project Lead				
Development Lead				
Sr. Software Engineer				
Sr. Software Engineer				
Sr. Software Engineer				
Sr. Software Engineer				
QA Engineer				
Velocity/2-Week Sprint	6 to 10 Points	9 to 15 Points	12 to 20 Points	15 to 25 Points

25% Allocation  
 50% Allocation  
 75% Allocation  
 100% Allocation

# Unconditional Guarantee

We deliver  
business value  
every two weeks.

Or you don't pay.

At the end of any 2-week sprint, if you feel we didn't deliver business value, we will invite you not to pay for that sprint.



# Maintenance and Support

Our clients often ask what happens if they want to “push the pause button,” temporarily halting active development. This is fully supported by our engagement model. The Accelerated Software Delivery<sup>SM</sup> team can be placed on hold with a 30-day notice, during which time the engagement changes to a Maintenance and Support mode.

During this period, the engagement includes the following:

- Break/fix support
- Minor enhancements
- Product backlog maintenance
- Strategic consulting

During the maintenance and support period, the full delivery team can be re-started with a 30-day notice.

## Break/Fix Support

If any bugs are discovered in our code, we will fix them at no extra charge. Initial response times are outlined below:

Classification	Definition	Impact	Initial Response Time
<b>Type I System Down</b>	Critical production issue affecting all users, including system unavailability, data integrity issues, or defects having a significant impact.	Core program is shut down or adversely affected. Direct business impact. No workaround available.	4 business hours
<b>Type II Major</b>	Major functionality is impacted or significant performance degradation is experienced. Issue is persistent and affects many users and/or functionality.	Core or peripheral program is adversely affected. Indirect business impact. Possible workaround available.	1 business day
<b>Type III Minor</b>	Minor functionality is impacted with minor performance annoyance. Issue is experienced by some users under certain scenarios.	Core or peripheral program may be affected under certain conditions. Potential for business impact. Workaround generally available.	2 business days

# Maintenance and Support

## Minor Enhancements

Sometimes you have a minor update that you'd like made to the application. It isn't a bug and it's really too small to be considered a new feature. Making these changes are included at no extra charge. Below are some examples:

- Updating the text on a button or control
- Inserting a new logo or other image
- Changing the color of a background
- Making a modification to "system" data—i.e. "canned" lists of options the user can select from in the UI
- Updating static web pages with new text or adjusting their layout

## Product Backlog Maintenance

The product backlog acts as the prioritized to-do list for the team. When you are in Maintenance and Support mode, you'll typically be talking with your users about the product and collecting feedback. Included in your engagement is updating the product backlog with new features.

Also included is the process of Ascendle team members discussing any new features in detail and assigning point estimates, allowing you to understand what would be involved to add new functionality. This allows you to plan future development and determine when to spin up the delivery team again.

## Strategic Consulting

You occasionally may like access to Ascendle team leaders for discussions and strategic planning. Whether it's whiteboarding and brainstorming new ideas, getting your stakeholders or other contractors together, having discussions about technology and platform strategy, or discussing agile best practices, your team leaders are available to you upon request.

# Pricing and Payment Terms

## Strategy Phase

A fee of **\$4,495 per week** includes:

- Execution of all Phase 1 - Strategy tasks required to launch the development team.
- Provisioning and on-boarding to the project the full Accelerated Software Delivery<sup>SM</sup> team for a mutually-agreed launch date.
- High-level oversight by Ascendle leadership team members listed on the Supporting Roles page. This oversight continues throughout the Strategy, Delivery, and Maintenance and Support phases.

## Accelerated Software Delivery<sup>SM</sup> Team

The full delivery team is priced by the week and includes team member allocations as described on the Team Structure page. Pricing is shown below, including the blended hourly rate and weekly price:

### Micro Team

**\$109/hr**

(\$7,600/wk)

### Small Team

**\$99/hr**

(\$13,900/wk)

### Medium Team

**\$95/hr**

(\$19,900/wk)

### Large Team

**\$89/hr**

(\$24,900/wk)

## Maintenance and Support

A Maintenance & Support Fee of **\$7,495 per month** includes:

- Ongoing strategic planning activities such as maintaining the product backlog, whiteboarding sessions, brainstorming new features, and estimating the level of effort for new development work.
- Break/fix support and minor enhancements at no extra charge, at any time the full delivery team is not actively engaged.

## Payment Terms

The first work period's fee is due at signing. Each additional work period is invoiced on the first day of each period, due net 15 days, based on the team allocation for that period. Team size can be changed upon your request. If the team size changes mid-period, invoices are pro-rated based on the number of days at each allocation. The engagement is week-to-week, though we request a 30-day notice of cancellation to better manage our resources.

For projects with an estimated duration of less than 6 weeks, each work period is 1 week. Otherwise each work period is 2 weeks.

Maintenance & Support is invoiced at the start of each month, due net 30 days and can be canceled at any time, at which point the contract will terminate at the end of that month.





## Web Development

Web Applications • Angular • React



## App Development

Mobile • Watch • Desktop • TV • Xamarin



## Platform Development

APIs • Data • Microservices • AI



## Product Strategy

Technology Strategy • MVP Feature Prioritization



## Product Design


UI/UX • Visual Design • User Testing





## Agile Training & Coaching


Agile Assessments • Scrum Training • DevOps


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