wolfsoftware

Our Services

What we can offer you?

An overview of the services that Wolf Software can offer you and your business.

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1 Background

Wolf Software is a privately owned rapidly expanding software engineering company with its headquarters located in Manchester, United Kingdom. The company was started in late 2008 and formally incorporated in early 2009.

We specialise in the development of secure, stable, scalable and affordable software. We aim to write the software you want for a price that you can afford, however the principle of 'free software' is still strongly embedded in the roots of Wolf Software and we will continue to gift a number of our products.

Since 2009 we have created and released over 160 scripts, tools, libraries and applications which have been downloaded in more than 180 countries worldwide. Over the years we have managed to build a solid team of software engineering professionals that come from a variety of backgrounds and have contributed to expanding the creative potential of the company.

More recently we have supplied software to or collaborated in development with a number of large companies including, but not limited to, Google, Coca-Cola and Nestle.

2 The Future

March 2013 will see the launch of our new website and branding.

Throughout 2013 we are planning to increase our portfolio of commercial products as well as launch a number of SaaS (Software as a Service) offerings.

We are also launching our new 'Software Services and Solutions' division. This division will be able to offer bespoke (custom) software solutions to you and your business as well as a number of other services including consultancy, engineering, support and training.

3   Our Services

Through our Software Services and Solutions division we are now able to offer you and your business a number of commercial software services.

3.1   Consultancy

The aim of the consultancy service is to provide you and your business with an answer to a question. Generally this will be in the form of 'is it possible to …' or similar.

A consultancy will normally take approximately 2 weeks to complete, but can take longer depending on the complexity of the request. During the consultancy we will carry out appropriate research and where required build a prototype of the solution to test out new concepts and ideas to solve your query.

A consultancy however need not be limited to requests for implementations; we are capable of carrying out research consultancies in order to research available solutions to a given problem on your behalf. This is particularly useful for companies who do not have the resources available to do this.

We are also able to offer our consultancy services with regards to software integration. This is useful for companies who find themselves already committed to a software solution but need help with the integration of the software into their existing systems.

3.2   Engineering

Engineering is the core focus of Wolf Software. This is the area where most of our team's skills lie. Engineering covers all areas of software engineering from the initial idea right the way through to the final installation of the software and ultimately the support of that software.

At every stage of the development process, from conceptual design to product release, the highest quality standards are maintained and industry best practices are followed. Implementation is not seen as the end goal but simply another of the steps in the full product life cycle and we are able to assist you and your business in any stage of this life cycle.

We are able to work with your in house development team (if you have one) in order to facilitate timely completion of these stages, or if preferred you can simply outsource the entire process (or single project) to us to complete on your behalf.

We can assist in any or all of the following areas within the product life cycle. Each stage of the process will be concluded with a formal sign off from the client to ensure that each stage is being completed their satisfaction.

3.2.1 Requirements Capture

The capturing of requirements is the first part of any project (or consultancy). This is one of the most important stages to get right as this will form the direction for the rest of the project. Collecting poor, incomplete or inaccurate requirements will result in something that is not fit for purpose being built and ultimately be a waste of time, money and resources for everyone involved.

We have extensive experience of capturing requirements and we take every effort to ensure that the requirements are not only complete but also accurate and appropriately detailed. We will work directly with the client to ensure all of their requirements are captured correctly and that those requirements are signed off by the client as an accurate record of their requests.

3.2.2 Feasibility

The feasibility stage of a project is a very important stage and is one that should not be rushed or skipped. This stage of the project will establish which of the requirements are actually feasible and which are not. This will contribute to key decision points later in the project.

We will carry all of the necessary research and where required a level of prototyping of the solution or key aspects of the solution in order to verify the feasibility of the requirements. The outcomes of the feasibility will be fully documented and will form a key input to the functional specification stage of the project.

3.2.3 Functional Specification

The outcome of the feasibility will assist in the decision making aspect of this part of the project. Anything which is found to be unfeasible will be marked as such in the functional specification.

The functional specification is the technical reply to the client; it will include a reply to each of the requirements that were captured at the start of the project. The functional specification will detail which of the requirements will be answered by the solution and which ones will not.

The final stage of the functional specification is to return it to the client so that they can see what will and won't be included in the design and ultimately the implementation. This could well be the end of the project if it is found that to many of the clients requirements are not possible. This is a key decision point for the project and a project will only progress to the design stage if the client is happy to accept the decisions detailed in the functional specification.

3.2.4 Design

The design stage converts the initial requirements, feasibility results and the functional specification into a cohesive solution. The design will include sufficient details on how to implement the entire solution that is required. It will address all of the accepted requirements in enough detail that it is possible to engineer (or implement) the complete solution.

Data flow diagrams, database schemas, pseudo code and many other software engineering techniques will be utilised at this stage of the project in order to ensure clear guidance is given for the implementation stage.

There must be no ambiguity around any aspect of the solution, so where there is any doubt in how the implementation will be carried out or where multiple possible options exist, then sufficient detail will be included to ensure that only the desired solution is implemented.

During the design stage special attention will be given to any security concerns and any legal or regulatory compliance requirements that you or your business may have, for example Data Protection (DPA) or ISO27001.

3.2.5 Implementation

If all of the previous stages have been completed correctly the implementation should be a fairly straight forward task. All of the necessary feasibility, research and prototyping will have already been carried out and documented.

The implementation is a simple process of following the design and building each component of the solution and testing it fully firstly in isolation and then as a whole once all of the components are connected together.

3.2.6 Testing

Testing is not a single one off stage of the process but instead testing will be carried out at various stages of the process, but primarily during the implementation and after completion of the implementation.

There are 2 areas that require specific testing. The first set of testing is to ensure that the software that has been implemented is actually fit for purpose. This will ensure that correct error checking is in place, and data is validated and verified fully.

The second set of testing is to ensure the software as a whole meets all of the agreed requirements and that it achieves the aims and objectives of the project. A full test specification document will be created for both key areas for testing.

3.2.7   Support

We include our basic support package with all of the bespoke software solutions that we create. This includes email based support during normal business hours and access to all security updates and patches relevant to that piece of software. This can be upgraded to one of our higher support packages if required by the client.

Unless agreed in advance our support is limited to the software that we have written. We will, when time allows, offer a level of 'best effects' support for other pieces of software that fit within our areas of expertise.

3.3   Review and Auditing

We are able to review any code that you or your business has purchased or developed in house. We can review the code and examine it for a number of key criteria.

Below is a list of example types of auditing that can be carried out, this is not an exhaustive list and the specific review criteria is defined by the client.

1. Security – We will examine the code to identify any possible security issues that may exist, this includes, but is not limited to stack and buffer overflow exploits, SQL injection and cross site scripting exploits.
2. Standards – We will review the code and compare it against the industry standard best practises and identify any nonconformities and areas for improvement.
3. Proficiency – We will review the code with regards to how the actual code has been written and suggest areas where the code can be improved.

3.4   Support

We supply our basic support package as standard with any software that we write for a client. We are also able to offer a level of support for 3rd party software or software that has been built by you in house, as long as we have access to the source code.

Support is provided on 3 levels:

1. Basic Support – This is limited to email support during standard business hours.
2. Standard Support – This is limited to email support during extended hours (including weekends).
3. Advanced Support – This includes email during extended hours (including weekends) and also phone support during standard business hours.

If additional support levels are required by a client then we are able to negotiate a specific support agreement with the client on a case by case basis.

3.5 Training and Education

We are able to work with any client and their in house development teams with regards to training and education. We offer training and educational documentation on a number of key areas.

3.5.1 Industry Best Practise

We have extensive experience and knowledge pertaining to programming best practise used within software engineering. We are able to share this experience and knowledge with your development teams in order to assist them in writing more compliant and standardised software.

Industry best practise for software engineering covers more than just the act writing of code; it also covers areas such as:

- Coding standards.
- Documentation standards.
- Source code management.
- Revision control.
- Product life cycle.

3.5.2 Secure Programming Principles

Secure programming is a very important skill for any developer or development team to have especially when the software being written is customer facing or open to the internet at large. We can work with your developers and assist them in developing their security skills using frameworks such as The Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP).

3.5.3 Software Testing Methods

Software testing is one of the most overlooked aspects of software engineering. It is important to ensure that all the software your developers write function as expected and are secure. This can only be achieved by implementing the correct testing practises within your business.

We can assist your developers in creating the correct testing methods that will benefit your business directly. There are many different methods that can be used when testing software, so it is important that correct method(s) are selected and used.

3.5.4   Writing Reusable Code

The ability to write reusable code is an important skill and will assist in the longer term move to component based development and help speed up future software development. Libraries of known working code that perform specific functions allow developers to rapidly develop new applications without having to extensively test every component each time.

Once a class or library has been written, tested and placed into the library it can be reused over and over with the knowledge of how it works and how to use it correctly. Changes to the library code can be quickly and easily rolled out across all products, speeding up and simplifying bug fixing and software support.

3.6   Project Management

Good project management is important to completing software engineering projects in a timely and cost effective way. Running the project at the correct pace, in order and communicating with all stake holders and relevant parties is a must, whether they are in house, cross department or external 3rd parties.

All of our staff are capable of running a project from start to finish and are often in charge of running their own internal projects.

We only offer project management services to software related projects; we do not offer general project management services.

4   Our Rates

We offer very competitive rates for all of our services; the rates are reflective of the type of work that is being carried out and the time scales on which the work is based.

We have rates that can be applied either:

1. Hourly.
2. Half Daily.
3. Daily.
4. Weekly.

If longer timescales are required or a set rate is needed for a specific piece of work, then we are happy to work with you and your business to discuss your individual needs.

5   Contact Us

If you have any questions or queries then please contact enquiries@wolf-software.com.