



# Product Development Labs: An on-demand approach to product success

Great product ideas can come anywhere: a few doodles on the back of an envelope, a sudden epiphany – even a dream.

But inspiration is one thing and execution is another.



## The idea for a game-changing product may spring from a sudden insight, but bringing it into the world requires a dedicated and competent staff. And many times, it demands something more: a skilled Product Development Outsourcer.

The reason is simple enough – creating and marketing superior commercial products can be so complex that specific expertise is needed at multiple points. No matter how deep the bench, few companies have the right in-house experts ready to address every problem that crops up. That's why a PDO can make the difference between success and failure.

Few decisions are more important, then, than choosing the right PDO. But how to do it? First, **embrace the concept of true partnership**. Your PDO must understand your company's priorities and your culture; they must know your strengths and weaknesses, and they need the latitude to augment the former and candidly assess the latter.

Second, **your PDO must have the assets and talent at hand to transform brilliant ideas into powerful products**. At Customertimes, we bring more than 15 years of experience designing and building products, both for Salesforce AppExchange and for other platforms. We deploy 1,600 experienced, highly talented and globally-distributed staffers to take our partners from concept to product – and ultimately, to an enthusiastic customer base and concomitant profits.

Though each of our customers presents a unique set of issues, **we have developed six tested and proven processes to help them achieve their goals**. It's what sets us apart from the competition, and what ultimately results in success for our clients.



**Matt Baker**  
VP, Product Development Services

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# The 50,000 Foot Overview

Your PDO should be capable of much more than creating one-off solutions. That's why Customertimes takes a holistic approach to any project, familiarizing ourselves with your organizational structure and culture and building products that fit your specific needs.

**We offer a full suite of product development services, including DevOps, Backlog Management, Beta program & testing plans, ongoing product support, and more.**



**But what if you don't require all of those services?**

Defining the exact parameters of any project can be a challenge, so we've developed an on-demand, lab-based PDO model that takes our partners from concept to resolution, **no matter which stage of the Product Development Lifecycle you are at.**

Are you a new ISV? You'll likely start with the first step, and Customertimes' specialists will guide you through to step eight.

Are you an established ISV? Maintain control of your own product while we help you develop new features, reach new customers, and refine and revise your roadmap.

**Our lab-based approach allows you to match your specific needs with our services,** and our team of expert software developers, QA engineers, business analysts, project managers, product designers, and technical writers are ready to help, as needed and around the clock.

# CT Discovery & Ideation Lab

## Benefits of the Lab Approach

- Access to talent pool of 1600+ resources
- Benefit from 15+ years of CT product development experience
- Accelerate your roadmap
- Low cost & executed in under 4 to 12 weeks
- Aligned with your Salesforce ISV Success Team

The Customertimes Discovery and Ideation Lab is designed to help ISV partners transform their initial product concept into a designed, costed, and planned product.

Customertimes' approach is focused on three core areas:

### Product, Organization, Customer Readiness

At the conclusion of the Lab, the ISV partner will have the information needed to build their business plan, raise necessary funds, and understand the proper steps to build and launch their product.

Our team of skilled product consultants, architects, and UI experts will help you through the often-difficult task of understanding the Salesforce eco-system, product set, and licensing models, and show you where your product will fit and succeed.

We partner closely with your Salesforce ISV AE and TE to ensure alignment throughout the journey so that by the conclusion of the Lab, all parties are ready to quickly move to the next steps.

## Activities

- Review of organization, current product set, and opportunity presented by building the Salesforce product
- Salesforce engagement to date
- Education on Salesforce platform, licensing, AppExchange deployment, and target customer expectations
- Competitor Analysis in and out of Salesforce eco-system
- Review of use cases and potential product features
- Research, identification, & documentation of key user personas and journeys

## Deliverables

### Product Readiness

- Define technical/cloud strategy within Salesforce eco-system and expected customer product maturity
- Salesforce-aligned UI Mock-ups and/or clickable demos
- High level architectural design
- Definition of product MVP & roadmap
- Budget estimates

### Organizational Readiness

- GTM Strategy
- Product Support Services: planning, resourcing, and costs
- Customer support services: planning, resourcing, and costs

### Customer Readiness

- Beta Customer Program plan and implementation estimates
- SI Partnership plan



# CT Incubation Lab

## Benefits of working with Customertimes

- 15+ years building Salesforce Products
- Quicker time to market and revenue
- Lower costs
- Comprehensive end to end service
- Aligned with your Salesforce ISV Team

**Move from “concept” to “customers” as quickly as possible. The Customertimes Incubation Lab provides the skills and experience you need to define, build, test, and install your product on AppExchange.**

When building a new product, time to market is key. Finding a team with the right combination of skills and experience is critical to your success.

If you’re building a Salesforce product, you must consider:

- Installation wizards, automated seed data population, and post install scripts to ensure that your product is installed correctly every time
- Thorough uninstall and clean up scripts to ensure your product leaves no trace when uninstalled
- End user extensibility and compatibility so your customers can extend or merge their existing functionality with your product
- Modularity of features, product packaging, and licensing to avoid a monolithic application, plus a flexible license model
- Release management, distribution strategy, backwards compatibility, multi-version support, patch releases

**Building a Salesforce product is not the same as building features in a single Salesforce environment that you own. Without the right knowledge, ISV partners risk considerable delays, increased costs, failed security reviews, and an under-achieving product.**

## Activities

- Feature list and roadmap
- MVP definition and documentation
- Functional design
- Prototyping/working models & UI/UX design
- Architecture & package strategy
- Development & QA
- Security review submission & management

## Deliverables

### Product Readiness

- Define technical/cloud strategy within Salesforce eco-system and expected customer product maturity
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- Budget estimates

### Organizational Readiness

- GTM Strategy
- Product Support Services: planning, resourcing, and costs
- Customer support services: planning, resourcing, and costs

### Customer Readiness

- Beta Customer Program plan and implementation estimates
- SI Partnership plan



# CT Research & Development Lab

## Benefits of the Lab Approach

- Access to talent pool of 1600+ resources
- Benefit from 15+ years of CT product development experience
- Accelerate your roadmap
- Low cost & executed in under 4 to 12 weeks
- Aligned with your Salesforce ISV Success Team

**Product development strategy often focuses on the “what”:** What are we going to build? What features will our product have? What should the minimum viable product be?

These questions are important, but often, we need to start with a more fundamental question: "How is this going to work?" Specifically:

- How do we integrate our current platform with Salesforce?
- How do we leverage third-party APIs, SDKs, or other frameworks?
- Which cloud should align with?
- Do we need an intermediate proxy service?
- How do we adhere to the governor limits?
- How much data is too much data?

These technical questions must be answered before they commit to building a new product or even extending an existing one.

**The Customertimes R&D Lab will answer these vital questions.**

Our team of highly qualified product architects will review your product use cases and devise an architectural model that can be successfully implemented within the Salesforce platform. Where needed, we will also build prototypes and POCs to ensure your full understanding of the path forward.

## Activities

- Education on Salesforce platform, Cloud Products, Licensing, AppExchange, Product Deployment, Target Customer expectations
- Review of use cases and potential product features
- Research, identification & documentation of business-critical architectural components

## Deliverables

- Define technical/cloud strategy
- Present architectural options and recommendations
- Build prototypes to demonstrate the technical options that align with Salesforce platform best practices
- Non-Salesforce prototypes to demonstrate connectivity to Salesforce via SF SDK, custom API, 3rd party ESB, etc
- Integration testing: performance testing, big data transfer & storage, data visualization concepts & techniques
- Development, testing, & release best practices



# CT Feature Lab



## Benefits of Feature Lab

- Quickly react to customer demands
- Balance tactical feature release with strategic roadmap
- Add scale and velocity to your team
- Bring in new skills when you need them, for as long as you need them
- Cost effective near/offshore model

The Customertimes Feature Lab gives you the agility to build, test, and scale new features.

We will work with you to understand the goals, requirements, and interdependencies of each feature within your existing product and provide a team that can quickly build, test, and handover to your own team.

Our customers typically use a Feature Lab when they:

- Struggle to maintain release velocity
- Build customer specific functionality, aside from the main roadmap
- Plan to work with a new Salesforce feature and need additional experience and skills
- Need to improve user experience via wizards, new lightning components, or mapping tools
- Need to integrate with a new platform or application outside their current skillset

Our experienced product teams will align with the customers' engineering teams, adopting their development environments, methodologies, and release processes.

In many cases our 'temporary' feature teams have become permanent extensions of our customers' product and engineering teams. We provide the scale and skills our clients need to react to their customers' demands, take advantage of new Salesforce capabilities, and ultimately bring more agility to their organization.

## Activities

- Feature analysis
- Development and testing
- Release and handover
- Product-focused delivery practice setup
- Delivery team product and consulting training
- Bug fixing and customer issue resolution
- Long term managed service offering

## Deliverables

- Requirements documentation
- Technical design documentation



# CT Beta Customer Program

## Benefits of working with Customertimes

- Fully managed by CT Product Specialists
- Access to talent pool of 1600+ resources
- Benefit from 15+ years of CT product development experience
- Accelerate your roadmap
- Aligned with your Salesforce ISV Success Team

Launching your product on Salesforce AppExchange can be daunting. Releasing a product with features that don't quite hit the mark can be risky, so we've developed a Beta customer program that serves as a vital step on the journey to AppExchange success.

There are two approaches to running a beta program::

- **Involve prospective customers at the very beginning to help shape product features.** Generate real-world feature requirements & gain commitment from customers before you invest heavily in the product build process. Test pricing & licensing concepts with existing Salesforce users, building working groups to guide vision and roadmap.
- **Recruit beta customers to take part in the first rollout of your product, before general release.**

Beta customer programs are crucial to understanding how your product will be adopted and used in the real world. You will learn a great deal & be able to identify potential problem areas to address before wider release on AppExchange.

A high-quality Beta customer program gives you confidence in the customer base, pricing model, and business case on which your product is built. At the conclusion of the program, you should have an install base of referenceable, paying customers that will serve as the foundation for your product's growth within the Salesforce ecosystem.

## Activities & Deliverables

### Pre-Build

- Identification and recruitment of Beta customers
- Technical consulting, Beta customer readiness assessment
- Beta customer working group facilitation
- (Pre)Discovery requirements capture and analysis

### Build & Beta Release

- Product prototyping & playback to working group
- Beta customer technical readiness support
- Installation of Beta product
- Customer support services
- Upgrade and hot fix application
- Training & handover

### GA Release

- Beta to GA release migration
- Training and handover to Beta customer Salesforce team(s)



# CT Implementation Partnership

## Benefits of Partnership

- Maximize sales opportunities
- Global implementation reach
- Zero cost to ISV
- Low implementation costs to customers via CT near/offshore services
- Industry vertical expertise

**Your product is built! Now you're ready to win customers and ensure they get value from it as quickly as possible. Some products are easy to install - the customer's technology team can implement it without support – but many products do not fit this profile.**

If your product is more complex – i.e. your customer needs business process change, end user training or data transformation - you need a solid implementation strategy. This does not mean "leave it to the customer."

To achieve product success, you need references and renewals, so it's critical to ensure that your product is installed correctly and adding value.

Scaling and maintaining a professional services team is time consuming and expensive, requiring funds that could be better invested back into your product. ISV partners often consider building either a hybrid product/consulting team or a dedicated consulting team, but this can prove to be a costly mistake.

**Your company, particularly in the first phase of growth, should be investing in product development - not diverting funds to building, maintaining, and expanding a consulting team.**

Customertimes' product practice model offers ISV partners the ability to build a product consulting and implementation team with global reach at no cost to the partner.

## Challenges to product implementation and adoption:

- New consulting skills are required
- A feedback loop between implementation and product teams must be established
- Any technical barriers to sale must be removed using Salesforce services to "fix" customer Salesforce environments
- Bugs or other issues that arise during implementation must be fixed

## Activities & Deliverables

- Correctly installed products, happy customers
- Co-sell process alignment
- Pipeline and forecast collaboration
- Joint customer mapping
- Quarterly business reviews
- Marketing and events collaboration
- Product-focused delivery practice setup
- Delivery team product and consulting training
- Bug fixing and customer issue resolution
- Long term customer managed service offering





# Every project represents a long-term commitment to our partners.

 CUSTOMERTIMES

No matter the industry, we're ready to build, test, launch, and support your product – seven days a week, all around the world.

 [Get in Touch](#)