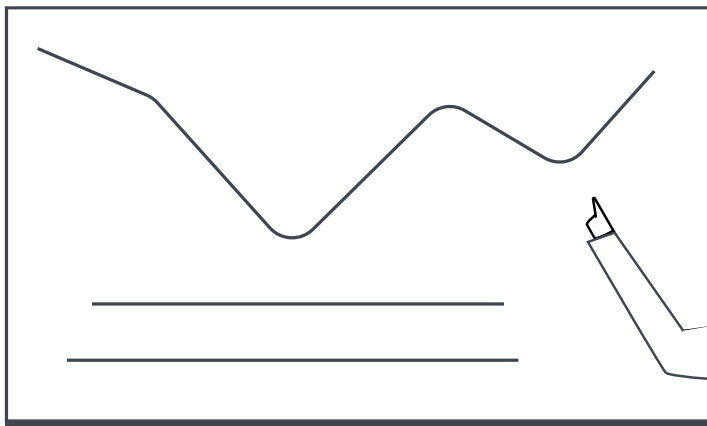# Salesforce Solutions for Fintech: Developing Payment and Purchasing Products for AppExchange

Streamlining the path to market

By Matt Baker

The Salesforce ecosystem is a particularly rich business environment. It provides a broad array of proprietary products with regular rollouts of new offerings, all augmented by AppExchange, the vast cloud marketplace where customers choose from thousands of powerful applications – and Salesforce ISVs reap lush profits.

Unlike ecosystems in the natural world, the Salesforce ecosystem isn't red of tooth and claw. It's friendly and accommodating, as its cute menagerie of mascots – Astro, Appy the Bobcat, Blaze the Wolf, Codey the Bear, Cloudy the Goat, and the rest – make clear. But that doesn't mean it's easily engaged. Richness denotes complexity, and Salesforce can be a challenging environment to negotiate.

That's especially the case with financial services. At this point, it's almost de rigueur for financial institutions to support payment and purchase options integrated with Salesforce's ubiquity and power. The temptation, of course, is to handle it all in-house. Few CTOs are reflexively inclined to hand off a challenging project to a Product Development Outsourcer. But more often than not, such a decision is the wisest choice.

A Salesforce-certified PDO brings specific skill sets to Salesforce integrations that are unlikely to exist within any financial institution's tech team. Each of Salesforce's suite of products – Marketing Cloud, Revenue

Cloud, various iterations of Commerce Cloud among them – requires specialized knowledge to optimally employ.

Only a company like Customertimes – which has made Salesforce integration and support its core business – can provide the needed expertise to assure bulletproof development and implementation. We deploy more than 1,800 top-tier development experts to take your product from discovery and ideation through release, maintenance, support, mobilization – and growth. We stand on our record: more than 10 products on Salesforce AppExchange, and more than 100 products developed.

What should a fintech company look for in a PDO? Consider the following six points:

01 — Broad Expertise in All Things Salesforce

02 — Compatibility

03 — Relentless Emphasis on the MVP

04 — Acing the Security Review

05 — Investment

06 — Post-Build Services

01. Broad Expertise in All Things Salesforce

You may have just embarked on your Salesforce journey and are unsure of the best route – or you may be well along the road and find yourself wrestling with the ins-and-outs of the Security Review. In either case, you find yourself impeded. A good PDO will quickly apprehend your specific problem and provide the precise remedy needed to see you through your crisis. They will be able to deploy experts in every phase of the Salesforce process, assuring a speedy and successful resolution.

02. Compatibility

The PDO relationship can be challenging – particularly when it comes to dovetailing with in-house talent. Your PDO partners must be more than proficient in their respective disciplines; they must be adept at collaboration. Simply put, they must know more than their work – they must know how to work with people. Let's face it: this is a skill that is sometimes poorly represented in the technological realm. The best PDOs acknowledge and respect your core competencies; their only goal is to help you define and develop your

product, and shepherd it through the Salesforce gantlet. At Customertimes, our associates aren't just good at technology – they're paragons at working with fellow technologists.

03. Relentless Emphasis on the MVP

Creating and future-proofing an application requires prioritization. Sometimes pressures develop to divert the resources necessary for creating a new Salesforce product to the enhancement of existing products or other purposes. A good PDO will help you stay on track, relying on their deep familiarity with Salesforce to ensure sufficient assets are committed to produce a Minimum Viable Product on deadline.

04. Acing the Security Review

It's true: the Salesforce Security Review can be daunting. But it's not simply a matter of rigorous vetting. Salesforce is constrained from explicitly telling a customer what to build – or not to build; they are compelled to an unyielding neutrality. If a product doesn't make the cut with AppExchange, the reasons for rejection likely will remain opaque.

A good PDO cuts this Gordian knot, serving as a critical liaison between the customer and Salesforce. At Customertimes, we specialize in helping clients successfully negotiate the Salesforce Security Review. We understand it on a deep, almost intuitive level. We explain what Salesforce looks for in a commercial product, and we are with you every step of the way. For us, the only acceptable conclusion is a successful Security Review and a presence on AppExchange.

05. Investment

Budgetary constraints are an issue with any project, and product development for Salesforce is no exception. That can convince companies to go it alone when building a product for AppExchange. But that's hardly a cost-cutting measure. Consider the staff investments necessary for building a product: $185,000 for a senior architect, and $98,000 for each developer. On top of that, several consultants may be required. By the time the dust settles, the project could easily top $500,000.

A seasoned PDO like Customertimes, on the other hand, can conclude projects for as little as $90,000. Our performance record speaks for itself:

51%

time savings compared to using in-house teams

30%

cost savings over building a product in-house

Six

-month PDO cycle compared to the industry-standard 13 months

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06. Post-Build Services

It's not enough to simply build an outstanding Salesforce product: it must be ushered into the world. In other words — you have to sell it. And if you don't know all the nuances and niches of the Salesforce ecosystem, your offering will languish. To ensure your product flourishes on AppExchange, your PDO must be able to support customers who "speak" Salesforce fluently. Also needed: the skills, concern and attention that will allow you to work through your backlog and manage releases in an adroit and cost-effective fashion.

As noted, Salesforce is a rich and detailed ecosystem; it supports a vast array of interconnecting components, each of which is complex in its own right. No wonder, then, that building a Salesforce product is a heavy lift, one that requires skills no single person – or small team – can wholly encompass. In-house team members who are familiar with Commerce Cloud likely will be stymied if they try to transfer their knowledge and skills to, say, Revenue Cloud.

 That's why stellar PDOs are essential for virtually any Salesforce project. We respect broad and generalized skills at Customertimes, but we don't expect our 1,800 plus associates to be jacks-of-all-trades. Digital technology and its associated commercial applications have become so multiplex that deep

specialization is essential. Your PDO must be able to effectively analyze any problem and bring the right assets to bear, meeting – or beating – deadline.

We have those assets because we specialize in specialization at Customertimes. If you hit a snag in your Salesforce journey, we know who to call; after all, they already work for us.   We are certified as a Salesforce Navigator Expert for PDO/AppExchange services with seven specializations to our credit. When we help build a product, we build it right – the first time. That's more than our motto. It's our solemn pledge.

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Customertimes is a Salesforce Navigator Expert for PDO & AppExchange services. Get started on your own product today.

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SPECIALIST II
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SPECIALIST II
Architecture &
UX Design

Matt Baker is the VP of Product Development Services at Customertimes. Located in the UK, he has more than two decades of CRM technology and consulting experience.

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