



„WHICH SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY SHOULD I CHOOSE?“

CASE STUDY **FRONTENDART**

...or how QualityGate reformed the selection process.

The following case study shows how QualityGate gives an objective, important quality characteristic which was somehow rarely calculated in the past. This characteristic helps the client choose the development company suitable for his needs. The case study also shows how this newly introduced attribute affected a client's decision.

We recommend it to anyone who thinks finding the best developers is of key importance.

Preamble

A big, multinational bank needed the help of a software development company to start distributing their new product. The marketing team phrased their expectations towards the necessary IT background and none of the available commercial software seemed perfectly suitable for handling their planned product.

Goals

The bank's acquisition management team narrowed the potential suppliers to three development companies. Each of them had a retail solution, but neither of these met every requirement despite all having their strengths in different aspects. All needed further development to support this new product.

The aspects of decision

The acquisition team formulated the following deciding factors to help them make the final decision:

- price (for a 5 year term) – 30%
- functionality – 30%
- experience – 20%
- references – 20%

The three possible suppliers received these weighted scores:

	Supplier 1	Supplier 2	Supplier 3
price (30%)	4	4	5
functionality (30%)	4	3	3
experience (20%)	4	3	2
references (20%)	3	4	2
TOTAL SCORE	15	14	12

The acquisition team was in a hard situation because the top two development companies were pretty much head-to-head. Supplier 1 was better relying solely on the obtained scores, although Supplier 2 made an impression of a more professional development team during the presentations.

The marketing staff of Supplier 1 also seemed professional, which made it hard to compete with them, even with possibly more development knowledge.

Choosing the right supplier became a tough decision, especially because it was very important to sign the contract with a development team on which they could rely in the long run.

A new aspect

The acquisition management asked the IT department for help in expanding the aspects. The IT manager's proposal for the new aspect was:

Development quality – the quality of the software systems developed by the suppliers

They hoped that determining the source code quality would show which system stands on the sturdier foundations. International statistics and analyses have proven that better quality software can be maintained and developed further at a lower cost, so the source code with better quality should provide much lower maintenance costs.

Calculating source code quality with QualityGate

The measurements were taken with the QualityGate tool developed by FrontEndART.

The final results:

	Source code quality	Predicted maintenance costs
System developed by Supplier 1	2,8	178,57%
System developed by Supplier 2	6,11	81,83%

By summarizing the results, it is clear that comparing these software systems to a system with average maintainability

- The system of Supplier 2 will be cheaper, while
- The system of Supplier 1 will have almost twice the maintenance cost!

Relying on these measurements, the bank could easily choose Supplier 2 and its current system to be the foundation of their new product.

Conclusions

QualityGate showed a very important decision aspect to the bank's acquisition team. The objective measurement of source code became an essential aspect in selecting the proper suppliers and in rating them regarding their ongoing work.

The acquisition, marketing and IT teams drew these important conclusions about the acquisition process and its results:

- When relying on the traditional decision technique, a better score can be achieved with a professional sales team.
- There is an independent calculation method which provides both objective and relevant rating to either party, which helps choosing the supplier that is truly the best for the job.
- Qualification of the developed systems can mean further cost reduction for the bank, because the most cost-efficient systems can be chosen at the start.
- The acquisition team made the evaluation of the corresponding systems obligatory in case of rating the suppliers whether it is about a tender or they already have a live contract with the software development company.

Results

Achievements made with the help of QualityGate:

- A new, relevant rating aspect introduced into the decision process.
- This new aspect can be easily measured using QualityGate.
- Choosing the the best quality software can lower the future maintenance and development costs.