Due diligence questionnaire

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ATLAS
_CLEVER SOFTWARE

DUE DILIGENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

The majority of the systems that we create for customers are business critical. As such, many of the customers we go on to work with undertake some level of due diligence on Atlas in order to ensure that as an organisation we are in good working order.

Many of our customers raise similar queries, and so we have compiled a list of the most commonly asked due diligence questions in this document. We update this document annually, and if there is anything not covered here you would like to ask please speak with either your account manager at Atlas, or e-mail **hello@atlascode.com**.

If you find this information useful, you might also find our **FAQ on the Atlas website** of interest too.

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COMPANY BACKGROUND

What is the full name of your company?	Atlas Computer Systems Limited
How are you structured? Limited company? Partnership or sole trader?	We're a Limited Company registered in England and Wales - 05078708
How many years have you been trading for?	12
How many people do you employ?	24
What insurance do you have in place?	Professional Indemnity £2,000,000 Public Liability £5,000,000 Employers Liability £10,000,000
Last filed set of accounts?	March 2018 - https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/05078708/filing-history

EXPERIENCE

What type of solutions do you typically build? What is your software development experience?	The vast majority of the bespoke development work we undertake includes back office and customer facing systems. The solutions we build in partnership with our customers are often mission critical, and provide foundations for businesses looking to increase the quality, efficiency and consistency of the services they offer. The solutions also provide a platform through which they can better engage with their customers, which adds a USP to their service offering. As our case studies show, we're able to understand and add value across a range of industries. (Cont'd overleaf)

	We also own and operate three successful software products Fundipedia, Staff Squared, and Atlas Barcode.
	We manage the build, sales, marketing and support for all three of our products.
	Over a decade of experience building solutions which drive businesses forward has created a team of people in Atlas who understand that useful software does not exist in isolation. Software is living component of a business that must be aligned with its objectives.
What are your USPs?	1. We work in partnership. The vast majority of Atlas' custom is generated via repeat business or word of mouth. We don't churn and burn customers – instead we invest time and effort to build relationships that span many years.
	2. We provide the Atlas Framework free of charge – a reusable set of code modules that ensure new customers do not spend time/money building basic functionality needed by all web applications and we get to work sooner than our competitors on features and benefits our customers specifically require.
	3. We build, sell and maintain our own software products. This ensures that every person working within Atlas understands both software development and the business of software. We know that good software can be useful, but more importantly we understand how to build software that positively impacts your bottom line.
How would your other clients describe you?	Helpful and approachable software development partners.
What steps do you take to ensure the quality of the deliverables you provide?	Our QA department are actively involved in the scoping of requirements. In their being involved at the outset they can ensure that acceptance criteria and test plans are created that efficiently and accurately confirm that the work our developers complete meet requirements.
	We take advantage of user stories, wireframes, prototypes and other document requirement gathering and risk reduction techniques to ensure that before a single line of code is written all stakeholders truly understand what is being delivered and can sign off with confidence.
	We use a form of project management methodology called DSDM Agile. One of the 8 principles of this methodology is to never compromise quality. Agile also ensures that we ship small incremental updates, rather than large difficult to manage updates to software.
	We take advantage of test automation in QA wherever possible. E.g. unit tests, web browser automation (Cypress) etc.
	Code reviews are mandatory. Pull requests are a core part of our development culture.
	Documentation – whether this is the requirements, architectural decisions, QA outcomes. You name it, we document it. Accountability and traceability is only achievable with sufficient documentation in place.

TECHNICAL

What would your approach to security of our code/servers be?	We build software with security by design. The .NET code we write follows best practices and we design, develop and test in accordance with leading industry standards such as OWASP. Our quality assurance department are equally focussed on security, and will as standard carry out security related testing as part of their processes.
What are your recommendations on hosting the completed solution?	We host all of our applications on Microsoft's cloud platform Azure utilising Azure SQL. This allows us to scale the application with demand and also allows us to take advantage of security features such as transparent data encryption, along with the knowledge that we are running on up to date and secure hardware. Azure provides numerous security compliance offerings. https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/trustcenter/compliance/complianceofferings
Would you provide documentation on the development you do, and could you provide documentation on what has been done?	Absolutely, we create a range of documentation as we go about building your solution but if you require anything specific just let us know ahead of our starting your project.

RESOURCING

How would you resource this project?	We resource each project according to the particular skills required and to ensure that we meet any agreed deadlines. The ideal minimum team we would assign to most projects includes: • Business Analyst • Project Manager • Front End Developer • 1 – 2 Software Developers (at least one of whom will be a senior/lead developer) • 1 – 2 Quality Assurance Testers
How would we communicate during the project with you? Would you envisage verbal or written progress reports? Ad hoc? Every day? Would we meet in person?	During the build phase of your project we hold weekly telephone calls, and provide weekly status updates. We will provide examples of our status updates as part of our proposal for your project. You are always welcome to meet with us at our offices.
What information and/or resources would you need from your customer to ensure a successful project?	Product owners, project managers, technical experts who can guide us through the existing software solutions and work with us to define requirements for improvements and new software are always essential. It is for this reason that partnership working is so essential, it is typically not the case that we can deliver a successful solution in isolation from our customer. Careful risk management and mitigation is always essential. A joint effort to evaluate, prioritise and mitigate risks will be necessary and this is something we can provide guidance on as it's a core component of our DSDM agile methodology. (Cont'd overleaf)

	With the range of projects and deliverables therein, it's essential that we ruthlessly prioritise the work and define milestones accordingly. This is again something we'll need to collaborate on to achieve.
	Overall, the onus exists on both parties in a relationship to work in partnership. No project is ever without problems and challenges, and we'll need individuals representing our customer who are committed to working transparently and coherently with Atlas.
What is your response time to calls and emails? What are your usual business hours?	Usual business hours are Monday to Friday 9 – 5:30pm (GMT).
	During the build phase your project manager is always on hand to answer your queries either via e-mail or telephone usually on the same, if not the next business day.
	Your software developers will of course build a relationship with you, and from time to time will be in touch direct rather than passing information through our Business Analyst or Project Manager, especially if doing so creates unnecessary delays or potential confusion.
	Following the build phase your support and maintenance arrangement with us begins. Support requests are responded to on the basis of their priority which is defined in our support and maintenance agreement with you. The support desk is overseen by your project manager and dedicated support staff.
If someone is ill or unavailable how does our project get managed/completed - how are we guaranteed continuity of care for our project?	We resource your project in such a way that information is spread around the team so that if one person is taken ill other people can pick up where they leave off.
	Another advantage of having our own software products is that the developers we assign to our products can be moved on to customer projects at short notice.
	The tools, processes and systems we use across all projects are identical so that any one of our developers can slot in should the need arise.
Could you send us an example SLA or other similar document which you adhere to?	Of course, just email hello@atlascode.com and we'll provide an example.
Can you explain to us how the IP works during the project and if the project were to be terminated could you please provide details of how information and IP/code etc handover would occur?	You own the IP – this is outlined in our standard development agreement, get in touch on hello@atlascode.com for a copy of the same.
What would be your ideal way of working with a customer?	In partnership.

What systems do you have in place for data security and back up?	We're CyberSecurity Plus and ISO 270001 audited.

To comply with these accreditations, we have the following policies and procedures in place for the project:

- Our internal network is protected against intrusion using a router-based firewall
- All PCs are protected against intrusion using Kaspersky Internet Security
- All system passwords will meet the standard level of security
- User details for the project will be salted and hashed to SHA256 standard
- All code will be stored and backed up securely in the cloud using BitBucket
- All databases will be stored and backed up securely in the cloud using Microsoft Azure
- All staff members will comply with our Clear Desk and Screen policy
- Access to the system will be restricted to only necessary persons to comply with our Access Control policy.

FEES

How much will my software project cost?	The answer to this depends on a number of factors. We have created a comprehensive guide for our customers which outlines these factors and provides project cost examples for you to compare your project against in the Atlas Resources area of our website.
What is your fee structure and how do you charge for your projects?	**Approach 1: scope entire Minimum Viable Product (MVP)** We suggest building a MVP to begin with. This consists of only the functionality/benefits that deliver real and tangible value to both you and your customer's. Ahead of building the MVP, if you don't already have detailed requirements we will work with you to create them including wireframes using our Atlas Roadmapping service. We use the documentation from our Roadmapping service to create a fixed cost and timescale quote with a detailed delivery plan. Once a quote and project plan is created, we'll break the work down in to sprints of 2 weeks. At the end of most sprints we will release the latest version of the software solution to your test environment for you to review/provide feedback where necessary. This is in addition to pre-defined User Acceptance Testing (UAT) periods, following which we ask for more formal sign off for one or more components of the software. We find that this approach works well when a customer needs a firm budget for the overall build of the MVP at the outset but has set aside additional budget to make changes/add additional functionality as the solution takes shape. **Approach 2: Scope 2 – 4 sprints at a time** An alternative approach is to specify the first 2 to 4 sprints at the outset to a level of detail that can be taken in to the build stage. This is less upfront work and means we can start development sooner, but doesn't come with a fixed quote for the overall system build. Instead we provide a ballpark estimate. We are open to both approaches depending on how you feel you would like to work with us. Happy to discuss the pros and cons of either approach with you ahead of you making a decision about how best to move forward.

Approach 3: Day rate

For projects that involve initial research and development or only need a short amount of development or consultancy we are able to provide services on a time and materials basis.

Atlas Roadmapping

The process we use to create detailed specifications and wireframes we can provide fixed quotes and timescales against is called **Atlas Roadmapping**.

What is Atlas Roadmapping?

Roadmapping helps you be sure of your app and your process before diving into development. We take the opportunity to sit down with you in an interactive workshop environment and understand the specific detail of how the above workflows should flow before we start development. As part of the Roadmapping process we create wireframes that allow you to see how the software will look and function before we begin building it. At the end of the process you're provided with a detailed proposal, specification, wireframes with an accurate cost and timescale quote for the build.

Can you provide us with an estimate/ ballpark for the software project without any detailed upfront work?	We can often provide a high level estimate with just the bare minimum of information about your project. If you're able to provide us with a high level written or verbal summary of what you're looking to achieve, we can probably provide you with a best and worst case scenario for the cost and time required to build you required software solution.
How soon can you begin work on our project?	We are generally booked up 3 – 6 weeks in advance depending on existing client workload. Atlas Roadmapping workshops can typically be booked within 2 – 3 weeks.

OTHER FEES

What other, potentially ongoing, costs are associated with the build of a software solution that we should consider?	**Hosting** Microsoft Azure can cost anywhere from £200 up to £2,000 per month depending on the amount and complexity of your requirements. **Support and maintenance** We offer one month of free support and maintenance following launch of your solution, and from month two onwards we charge a flat two developer days per month for ongoing SLA driven support. We review the amount of developer support time being consumed after six months, and every six months thereafter, and adjust the monthly support fee according to an average of the three most recent months usage. We typically see a drop off in the amount of support required after six months, and when this happens, we are able to amend our support fee down accordingly. **Optional services** We typically recommend that our customers use the following services which provide huge value for the modest fee they incur: • SendGrid – for reliable email delivery • Twilio – SMS message • CloudFlare – an additional layer of security for your web based solution