

**THE CØDEST**

IN CODE WE TRUST

# ENGINEERING SCALING PLAYBOOK FOR CTOS

How high-growth product companies scale engineering delivery without hiring bottlenecks, missed roadmaps, or organizational chaos.

Inside this guide:

- **THE MOST COMMON ENGINEERING SCALING MISTAKES**
- **EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF DELIVERY BOTTLENECKS**
- **A FRAMEWORK FOR DECIDING BETWEEN HIRING AND AUGMENTATION**
- **PRACTICAL STRATEGIES USED BY GROWING PRODUCT TEAMS**

# INSIDE THIS PLAYBOOK

1

## WHY ENGINEERING SCALING GETS HARD

Common delivery bottlenecks growing product teams face

---

2

## DIAGNOSING DELIVERY BOTTLENECKS

Signals that scaling challenges are already affecting execution

---

3

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT SCALING MODEL

How to evaluate internal hiring, augmentation, and hybrid approaches

---

4

## ENGINEERING SCALING CHECKLIST & DECISION MATRIX

Practical frameworks for evaluating team structure and delivery capacity

---

5

## REAL-WORLD SCALING EXAMPLE

How product teams reduce inefficiencies without overgrowing teams

---

6

## FINAL TAKEAWAY

Key principles behind scalable engineering organizations

# WHY THIS MATTERS

Scaling an engineering team sounds simple on paper: hire more developers, ship faster, grow the product.

In reality, the opposite often happens.

## AS PRODUCT TEAMS GROW, MANY COMPANIES START FACING THE SAME ISSUES:

### ■ ROADMAP DELIVERY SLOWS DOWN

Cross-team dependencies are a top cause of delays (McKinsey)

### ■ RECRUITMENT CANNOT KEEP UP WITH BUSINESS NEEDS

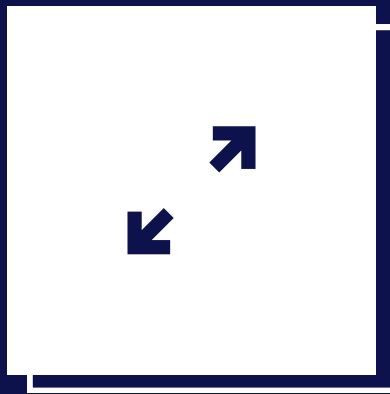
72% of organizations outsource software development to achieve better access to talent (deloitte report)

### ■ INTERNAL TEAMS BECOME OVERLOADED,

50% of developers still lose 10+ hours/week to inefficiencies (State of Developer Experience Report 2025)

### ■ AND ENGINEERING LEADERS SPEND MORE TIME SOLVING CAPACITY PROBLEMS THAN BUILDING PRODUCT MOMENTUM.

42% of engineering time is lost to organizational overhead



# WHY ENGINEERING SCALING GETS HARD

The hidden delivery challenges that appear as product teams grow.

# THE 3 SCALING PROBLEMS MOST PRODUCT TEAMS HIT

The 3 most common scaling blockers:

## 1 PRODUCT ROADMAP DELAYS

You have priorities defined, but not enough engineering capacity to deliver them on time.

## 2 HIRING BOTTLENECKS

Recruitment takes too long, senior talent is expensive, and key roles stay open for months.

## 3 TEAM SCALING WITHOUT STRUCTURE

More developers do not automatically mean more output. Without the right setup, growth creates coordination overhead, unclear ownership and delivery friction.

The question is not just **“How do we hire more engineers?”**

The real question is:

**“WHAT TEAM SETUP WILL HELP US SCALE DELIVERY FASTEST AND SAFEST?”**

**“THE BIGGEST VALUE IS WHEN EXTERNAL ENGINEERS REDUCE PRESSURE ON INTERNAL TEAMS INSTEAD OF ADDING MORE COMPLEXITY.”**



Jakub Jakubowicz  
CTO & Head of Delivery

# WHEN AUGMENTATION WORKS

When team augmentation makes the most sense

- ROADMAP DELAYS ALREADY EXIST
- HIRING PIPELINES ARE TOO SLOW
- NEED TO SCALE IN WEEKS, NOT MONTHS
- MISSING SPECIFIC CAPABILITIES
- OVERLOADED INTERNAL TEAM

THE BEST TEAMS DON'T  
CHOOSE BETWEEN HIRING  
AND AUGMENTATION.

THEY USE BOTH  
STRATEGICALLY.



# DIAGNOSING DELIVERY BOTTLENECKS

Signals that scaling challenges are already affecting execution

# WHEN GROWTH STARTS AFFECTING DELIVERY

## HOW SCALING CHALLENGES ACTUALLY SHOW UP IN ENGINEERING TEAMS

Most teams don't experience scaling issues as a clear "stage".

Instead, they show up as small signals, and over time, those signals start affecting delivery.

## COMMON SIGNALS THAT GROWTH IS IMPACTING DELIVERY

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→ ROADMAP COMMITMENTS START SLIPPING MORE OFTEN

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→ TEAMS ARE BUSY, BUT PROGRESS FEELS SLOWER

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→ DEPENDENCIES BETWEEN PEOPLE OR TEAMS CREATE DELAYS

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→ HIRING PIPELINES CAN'T KEEP UP WITH PRODUCT NEEDS

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→ SENIOR ENGINEERS SPEND MORE TIME UNBLOCKING OTHERS THAN BUILDING

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→ DELIVERY BECOMES HARDER TO PREDICT

**“SCALING ISSUES RARELY APPEAR ALL AT ONCE. THEY SHOW UP GRADUALLY – USUALLY AS SMALL DELIVERY DELAYS THAT BECOME HARDER TO IGNORE OVER TIME.”**



Jakub Jakubowicz  
CTO & Head of Delivery

**“ONE OF THE CLEAREST SIGNS IS WHEN TEAMS ARE CONSTANTLY WORKING, BUT IT FEELS LIKE LESS IS GETTING DONE.”**



Monika Nabielec  
Delivery Lead

**“AT FIRST, IT JUST FELT LIKE NORMAL DELAYS. BUT OVER TIME, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE WAY WE WERE SET UP COULDN'T SUPPORT OUR GROWTH.”**

Justinas  
CTO at KSD

## WHAT THESE SIGNALS USUALLY INDICATE

These are not just operational issues.

## THEY OFTEN POINT TO DEEPER CHALLENGES:

→ GAPS IN CAPACITY

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→ MISSING OR OVERLOADED ROLES

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→ UNCLEAR OWNERSHIP

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→ TEAM SETUP NOT ALIGNED WITH CURRENT PRODUCT NEEDS

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## WHAT HELPS ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES

✓ IMPROVING VISIBILITY ACROSS WORK AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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✓ REDUCING DEPENDENCIES WHERE POSSIBLE

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✓ ADDRESSING CAPACITY GAPS (INTERNALLY OR EXTERNALLY)

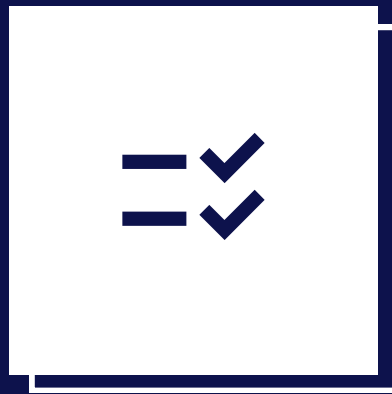
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✓ ALIGNING TEAM STRUCTURE WITH HOW THE PRODUCT IS EVOLVING

## KEY TAKEAWAY

SCALING DOESN'T FAIL  
BECAUSE TEAMS GROW.

IT FAILS WHEN THE SETUP  
DOESN'T EVOLVE WITH  
THAT GROWTH.



# **ENGINEERING SCALING CHECKLIST & DECISION MATRIX**

Practical frameworks for evaluating team structure and delivery capacity

# ENGINEERING SCALING CHECKLIST

Ask yourself:

DO WE KNOW WHERE OUR DELIVERY BOTTLENECKS REALLY ARE?

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ARE ROADMAP DELAYS CAUSED BY PLANNING – OR BY LACK OF ENGINEERING CAPACITY?

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WHICH ROLES ARE TRULY STRATEGIC TO HIRE INTERNALLY?

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WHICH GAPS COULD BE SOLVED FASTER THROUGH EXTERNAL SUPPORT?

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ARE OUR SENIOR ENGINEERS SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME ON RECRUITMENT AND ONBOARDING?

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CAN OUR CURRENT TEAM SETUP SUPPORT THE NEXT 12 MONTHS OF PRODUCT GROWTH?

IF YOU ANSWERED “NO” OR  
“NOT SURE” TO 3 OR MORE  
OF THESE, YOUR CURRENT  
TEAM SETUP MAY ALREADY  
BE LIMITING DELIVERY.

**WANT TO BENCHMARK YOUR  
CURRENT ENGINEERING  
SETUP?**

**WE HELP PRODUCT COMPANIES IDENTIFY:**

→ **WHERE DELIVERY IS SLOWING DOWN,**

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→ **WHERE AI-NATIVE DEVELOPERS CAN HELP REDUCE TEAM SIZE WHILE  
MAINTAINING DELIVERY EFFICIENCY.**

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→ **AND WHERE TEAM AUGMENTATION CAN ACCELERATE EXECUTION WITHOUT  
ADDING ORGANIZATIONAL CHAOS.**

# **BOOK A FREE ENGINEERING TEAM SETUP REVIEW**

**SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION**

# THE AUGMENTATION DECISION MATRIX

A practical one-page framework for CTOs deciding between internal hiring, team augmentation, or a hybrid model

How to use this tool:

Score each dimension from 1–5 based on your current situation. Then total your score and review the recommendation zone below.

Decision Dimension	1	2	3	Your Score
Urgency to deliver	Timeline is flexible	Moderate delivery pressure	Critical deadlines / delivery blocked	
Role criticality	Nice-to-have support role	Important contributor	Business-critical engineering gap	
Internal hiring speed	Can hire within 1–2 months	Hiring timeline uncertain	Hiring pipeline is slow or frozen	
Budget flexibility	Tight fixed headcount budget	Some contractor flexibility	Flexible delivery-focused budget	
Knowledge transfer risk	Low dependency on internal systems	Moderate onboarding needed	Requires deep product/domain knowledge	
Need for scalability	Stable workload	Some fluctuation expected	Need to scale team quickly up/down	

# SCORING GUIDE

## 6–12 POINTS → HIRE INTERNALLY

Your situation suggests long-term stability and enough time to recruit carefully. Building internal ownership likely delivers the strongest long-term value.

Best fit when:

- Delivery timelines are manageable
  - The role is strategic long-term
  - Internal onboarding and hiring capacity already exist
  - Team continuity matters more than speed
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## 13–18 POINTS → INTERNAL HIRING WITH SELECTIVE EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Your company likely benefits from primarily building internal capabilities while using external support tactically where needed.

Best fit when:

- You still have reasonable time to hire internally
- Product delivery pressure is manageable
- Some specialized expertise may be temporarily required
- Long-term team ownership remains the priority

Typical setup:

- Core product ownership stays internal
- External specialists support short-term delivery goals
- Internal hiring continues alongside roadmap execution

# SCORING GUIDE

## 19–30 POINTS → STAFF AUGMENTATION

Your situation prioritizes speed, flexibility, and immediate execution capacity.

Best fit when:

- Product delivery is at risk
- Critical expertise is missing internally
- Hiring delays are slowing roadmap execution
- You need senior engineering capacity immediately
- Scaling requirements may change quarter-to-quarter

Typical outcomes CTOs optimize for:

- Faster roadmap delivery
- Reduced hiring bottlenecks
- Access to specialized expertise
- Lower operational overhead during growth phases



## REAL-WORLD SCALING EXAMPLE

How product teams reduce inefficiencies without overgrowing teams

# HOW WE HELPED A MARKETPLACE SCALE WITHOUT LOSING EFFICIENCY

Context (Berlin-based marketplace platform)

Scaling product with multiple partners + increasing complexity across frontend and backend systems

## CHALLENGES

- DELIVERY SLOWED DOWN DUE TO DESIGN INCONSISTENCY AND LEGACY ELEMENTS
- GROWING COMPLEXITY CREATED REDUNDANCY AND INEFFICIENCIES
- LACK OF STANDARDIZATION MADE IT HARDER TO MAINTAIN SPEED AT SCALE

## WHAT WE DID

- AUGMENTED TEAM WITH SENIOR RUBY DEVELOPERS (FAST INTEGRATION)
- INTRODUCED NEW DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGIES TO IMPROVE DELIVERY
- BUILT DESIGN SYSTEM + REUSABLE COMPONENTS
- ELIMINATED REDUNDANCY THROUGH SYSTEMIZATION & TOKENS

## OUTCOME

→ FASTER, MORE PREDICTABLE DELIVERY

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→ CLEANER, SCALABLE ARCHITECTURE

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→ NO NEED TO OVERGROW THE TEAM

**SCALING ISN'T ABOUT ADDING MORE PEOPLE.**

**IT'S ABOUT ADDING THE RIGHT CAPABILITIES (INCL. DEVS WITH AI CAPABILITIES) + REMOVING INEFFICIENCIES.**

“I’VE BEEN IMPRESSED THAT THE CODEST CAN DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY DEVELOPERS WITHIN A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME. THE CODEST COMMUNICATES WELL. HOWEVER, ONCE THE DEVELOPERS ARE INTEGRATED INTO OUR TEAM, I DON’T HAVE TO TALK TO THEM AS MUCH. OUR DEVELOPMENT TEAMS FOLLOW SPRINT METHODOLOGIES AND WE HAVE WEEKLY CHECK-INS TO DISCUSS PROGRESS.

JORDI PIQUERAS BRUNET  
CTO, Helping

*Helping*

# CREATED BY THE CODEST

The Codest helps scale-ups and enterprises accelerate software delivery through senior engineering expertise, team augmentation, and delivery-focused consulting.

For over 15 years, we've supported companies across FinTech, RegTech, SaaS, E-commerce, Logistics, and HealthTech in scaling engineering teams and delivering digital products.

## TRUSTED BY PRODUCT COMPANIES ACROSS EUROPE

BONNIER  
NEWS



Ramp

KAYAK

YOGOBE

K

supplierplus



Helping

## WHAT'S INSIDE THIS PLAYBOOK

- ✓ ENGINEERING SCALING CHECKLIST
- ✓ AUGMENTATION DECISION MATRIX
- ✓ REAL-WORLD SCALING EXAMPLE
- ✓ INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS AND DELIVERY INSIGHTS
- ✓ PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ENGINEERING LEADERS

# ABOUT US

The Codest supports enterprises and scale-ups in various industries worldwide to accelerate growth with senior developers who understand product, data, compliance, and delivery at scale, using AI-powered tools to increase speed, efficiency, and delivery quality.

With 150+ successfully delivered projects for blue-chip brands such as Alpha Bank, Deutsche Bank, Ramp Network, and Wizz Air, we bring proven experience, speed, and trust to the table.

Having built and scaled our own product - Yieldbird, recognized twice in the Top 25 Deloitte ranking, we know what it takes to grow digital platforms from the inside out. That product DNA still defines how we work today.

**+15**

years in the game

**+70**

senior level devs at hand

**+15**

technologies

**+150**

projects

[LET'S TALK](#)