

# Case Study?

*WebMD*<sup>®</sup>

**How Optymize Helped Webmd  
Scale Their Engineering  
Capacity with the Right Talent**

# Case Study?

WebMD®

## Partner Overview

WebMD is the leading source for trustworthy and timely health and medical news and information. Providing credible health information, supportive community.

WebMD is an American corporation known primarily as an online publisher of news and information pertaining to human health and well-being. The site includes information pertaining to drugs. It is one of the top healthcare websites by unique visitors. It was founded in 1998 by internet entrepreneur Jeff Arnold.



Communication/  
Software



400+

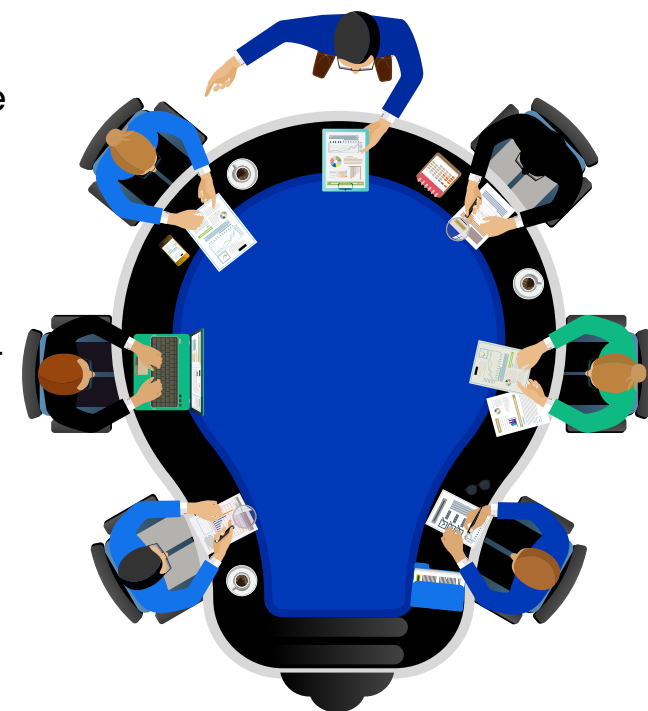


Go Lang, Postgres  
NSQ, React,  
Javascript

## The challenge

WebMD needed to effectively scale their engineering team's capacity without the significant costs that come with local hires. It was important that their existing engineering team be freed up to work on new areas crucial for business development, while maintaining the same quality of work in maintaining and expanding the feature set in their legacy product.

WebMD also encountered additional



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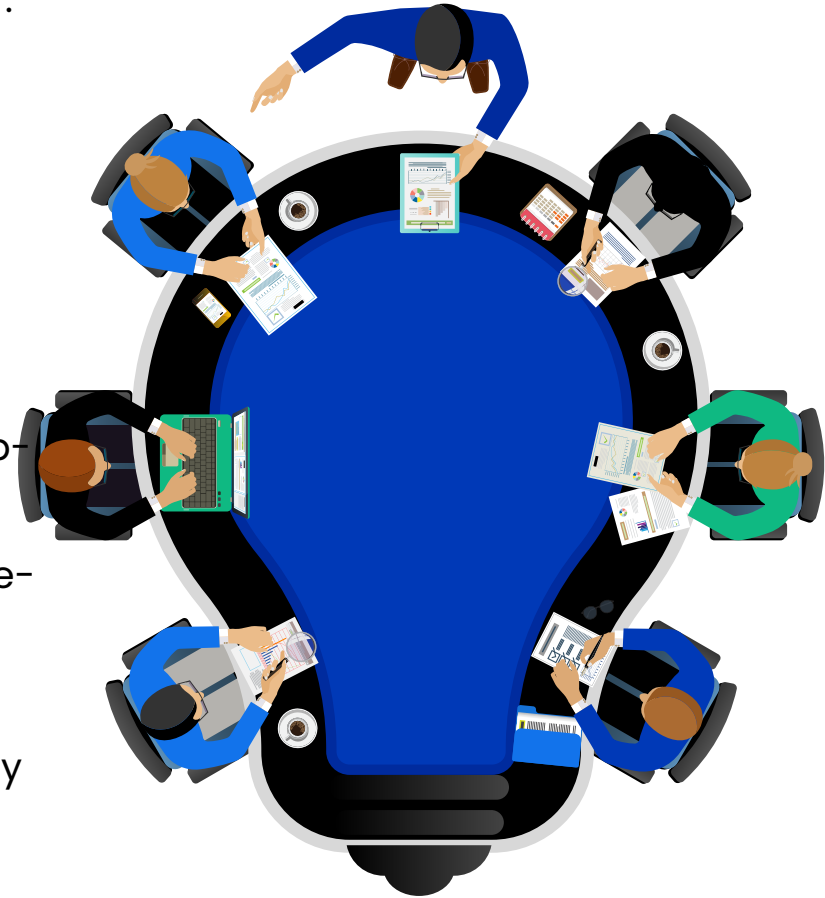
[www.optymize.io](http://www.optymize.io)

## The challenge

difficulties because of the privacy laws that govern companies in the health-tech sector. The engineering leadership team had experience at previous companies working with firms in Eastern Europe, South America, and India, but found limited success with these relationships.

They soon came to realize that cultural fit was the key component missing in each of these engagements – these were purely contract hires who often were equipped only work-for-hire, not developing long term relationships and partnerships. Specifically, WebMD's tech team found that these contract hires would neither ask questions nor contribute ideas on projects; contractors also had difficulty managing expectations when something would not be completed on time.

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## The solution

Upon learning more about Optymize's model and emphasis on creating embedded teams, the leadership team at WebMD decided to give it a try. They brought on four Optymize engineers: 2 junior/senior pairs, one for frontend and one for back-end. The Optymize engineers worked as a self-contained team on WebMD's legacy product, tasked with both maintenance and building new features. They reported to the Director of Software Development, while also cross collaborating with other in-house engineers. Although the WebMD team was initially nervous about not interviewing potential candidates, the onboarding process gave them confidence in Optymize's ability to make the right match with their team. "Even in the initial call, [The Optymize engineers] were incredibly engaged and curious about the tech, the organization, and the mission. They fit in with our team perfectly," Ben Mehling, Vice President of Technology, said

In the end, WebMD's initial foray proved a significant success. "The first project that the Optymize team got to do didn't have a lot of wiggle room in terms of the delivery date; it was a risky, complicated project; and to be honest I was a little bit con-

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## The solution

cerned,” Peter Johanson, WebMD’s Software Development Manager said. “I gave them a high-level architecture briefing, and they took it and ran with it. And they were great. After that I said we have to grow with Optimize.” This success led them to bring on more developers. They moved several of the original Optimize engineers into new product development teams (working alongside in-house engineers) while backfilling those earlier roles with more Optimize engineers. “The teams are fully integrated with our in-house engineers,” Mehling said. “We don’t think of them as Optimize and Domestic developers – it’s just one team.”

They feel like Optimize engineers are a perfect cultural fit – which they define as asking questions, being curious, bringing their own suggestions to the table, and not just taking orders. And because Optimize engineers integrated so well with the WebMD team, they were able to resolve HIPAA and contractual compliance issues via a set of process and technical controls that allowed the engineers to easily do their work without exposing sensitive data. Today, WebMD works with 23 Optimize engineers across 3 teams, and continues to look to Optimize as a long-term talent partner as they scale.



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—Peter Johanson

# Partner with Us



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