

Delivery management for cloud-based digital services

Equal Experts provides experienced delivery management across multi-disciplinary delivery teams, ensuring all teams produce high-quality solutions that satisfy user needs and organisational objectives. We establish and embed solid agile working practices and governance models to ensure risks are managed and services are successfully delivered.

Our delivery management service is recommended for any public sector organisation embarking on cloud technology adoption and usage, with the need to deploy new cloud-based digital products and services as part of managing their transition. We can help establish and deliver against the success criteria for any service and meet Government Digital Service standards.

Features

- Ensures that delivery is high quality and fit for purpose
- Guides teams to use appropriate delivery practices
- Helps teams grow as required, through planning capacity
- Plans go-live activities to take the service into production
- Helps teams conduct appropriate levels of testing and validation
- Ensures a consistent, timely and open flow of communication
- Ensures that useful metrics are captured and distributed
- Helps teams produce and update estimates for key milestones
- Helps teams identify and resolve risks and dependencies
- Provides an escalation point for the swift resolution of issues

Benefits

- Adoption of sound organisational governance and processes
- Helps teams grow through developing and maintaining a resource pipeline
- Ensures services are ready to take live users
- Builds strong supplier relationships for resources and products
- Improves cross-team communication
- Defines, captures and shares appropriate metrics effectively
- Creates smooth release processes across teams and the wider organisation
- Identifies and resolves team dependencies
- Swiftly resolves issues to smooth the path to delivery

- Provides strong risk and dependency management and controls

Our approach to delivery management

Our delivery management approach is predicated on a highly collaborative working relationship, effective lightweight governance, transparent reporting and open communication with all interested client stakeholders such as product owners, analysts, architects, executive sponsors and legal, regulatory and operations teams.

Close collaboration is central to our approach and fundamental to our delivery success. Our Delivery Managers / Leads facilitate and optimise agile delivery and governance processes, with frequent, regular touch-points for feedback and communication. Our approach includes:

- Regular ceremonies. Disciplined ceremonies centred around feedback and delivery efficiency, such as daily stand-ups, planning sessions, regular showcases and team retrospectives.
- Responsiveness to change. We anticipate change throughout the project lifecycle to meet user and organisational needs. Therefore, we must maintain a tight-knit, cross-functional team so that updated priorities can be acted upon quickly and with little disruption.
- Active scope management and adaptive planning. Includes regular iteration planning meetings during which prioritisation decisions are made and delivery progress is reviewed, including reporting on any issues/risks for resolution.
- Open reporting policy. All reports are made available to stakeholders with metrics including productivity and performance metrics, risk/issue management, team morale, retrospective issues, etc.
- Co-location of stakeholders and the delivery team, where possible. The delivery team area will have visible information radiators on progress, productivity and quality metrics. Access to stakeholders with decision-making capability also serves to remove any blockers to progress and improve delivery team productivity.

Our approach requires continuous involvement from client team members and stakeholders, and we encourage the following behaviours to ensure a successful outcome:

- Be transparent with regards to progress - we are forthcoming with the progress being made on a fortnightly basis. We showcase fully tested working software and keep stakeholders apprised of quality and current defects.

- Provide timely feedback - we expect stakeholders to attend showcases to provide feedback on completed features. We also encourage users and stakeholders to test the evolving solution through user research to regularly provide feedback to enhance the service.
- Be realistic about scope discussions - we work closely with Product Owners and Service Managers to understand needs and be realistic about the team's ability to deliver. We help to prioritise the scope to attain a successful outcome.
- Make timely decisions - we aim to defer decision-making to the last responsible moment so that decisions are made with the most up-to-date information and do not become stale and irrelevant.

Governance

At Equal Experts we use agile methodologies to manage our projects. Although 'agile' is a broad term, the goal is to work collaboratively with cross-functional teams in an iterative fashion to get value to users quickly. Typically, at the start of engagement, we adopt a formal structure to our approach and then, as team relationships and ways of working stabilise, we may move to a more lean flow-based management style, as it allows us to get work into production with a minimum of friction.

We favour a strong, but lightweight governance layer to operate our projects within. This allows us efficient access to decision makers to allocate resources, manage dependencies and remove blockers. We recommend that the service governance layer operates with "management by exception" principles, whereby the delivery team is free to organise themselves to deliver their objectives within the overarching constraints set by the governance team. We also recommend the governance team meet regularly, weekly if possible, to ensure there is high-bandwidth communication and optimised decision-making.

To make decisions about how to best manage the team, we solicit regular feedback from stakeholders via regular iteration showcases and other informal governance meetings, and from the team itself via retrospectives.

Ceremonies and feedback

Rather than a cumbersome process, we follow lightweight delivery management and governance processes for short time-bound delivery iterations (usually 2 weeks in duration) that have proven valuable without getting in the way of work. Including for each iteration:

- Iteration Planning: ensuring that everyone understands what we are looking to build

- Daily Stand-up: a short meeting where risks and blockers are highlighted
- Story kick off: sharing understanding and validating each work item is ready to start
- Story acceptance: where we check that each story is complete, with working tests
- Showcase: where work completed during an iteration is demonstrated to stakeholders

Stakeholders must attend the regular iteration showcases where working software is demonstrated. These are an excellent opportunity to engage with the development team to see the software evolve, monitor progress, provide feedback on delivery at regular intervals and be active participants in the development process.

Backlog prioritisation and management

The initial product and technical roadmap will be created during the inception phase of the project, where a series of intensive workshops with stakeholders will be used to drive out requirements once a common understanding is reached. Of the many techniques we deploy, story mapping is the primary method we use to map out the user journey. Features and stories will be identified and prioritised across the journey to determine the scope for the initial release and future release scope.

Beyond story mapping, additional techniques, such as as-is and to-be analysis, value stream analysis and impact mapping can be used to identify the pain points or opportunities within the user journey.

Once the feature stories have been discovered, more technical-focused stories, such as Non-Functional Requirements (NFRs) and other operational tasks, are also prioritised and added to the master backlog.

This backlog is then prioritised with the Product Owner and brought into planning and delivery.

Planning and reporting

Once an initial backlog has been formed, the high-level features are estimated to give a rough indication of how the release will be planned and what resources are required for delivery.

As delivery transitions from the discovery phase into more standard sprint rhythms, high-level stories are captured in the project tracking software (Jira or similar) where they are further analysed in detail and estimated for delivery. This cycle continues as the

backlog is continuously refined, reviewed and prioritised by the Product Owner working in conjunction with the Business Analysts and Technical Leads.

Status reporting will conform to the service's needs, however, status reports are usually generated every 1-2 weeks and contain common elements, such as overall project status, risks/issues, summary of progress (via burn up charts, cumulative flow diagrams or similar), future planning and may contain information about budget tracking and/or team resource changes, etc.

Our Delivery Manager / Lead will also participate in governance meetings to verbally report status and answer any questions.

Examples of delivery management in action

Equal Experts has worked with many different organisations, including HMRC, the Home Office, and the Cabinet Office, to manage the delivery by multi-disciplinary teams of digital services to cloud-based infrastructure, meeting GDS standards along the way.

We have been the key programme delivery partner for HMRC's Multi-channel Digital Tax Platform from its outset at the start of 2013. The aim is to move approximately 600M+ transactions a year, across 50M+ customers, from traditional/voice channels to digital channels.

The tax platform was one of the UK Government's totemic 'exemplar' projects, and therefore had to be Digital by Default – a continuously improving service that sets the standard for how digital solutions can enhance the Government's ability to offer straightforward, accessible services.

Integrated transactional services provide seamless end-to-end experiences for business and individual customers, with self-service applications 'bundled' together to provide services based around life events (eg, a customer setting up a business), and address tax risks.

To deliver all this, the tax platform needed to be as technically robust and flexible as possible. We have provided multiple multi-disciplinary delivery teams, under our delivery management and leadership, working collaboratively with HMRC team members and stakeholders to deliver the platform to Digital by Default service standards for Alpha, Beta and Live services.

We also helped establish and build HMRC Digital's 1,000+ strong delivery organisation comprising 60+ feature teams across multiple locations in different delivery centres. This included introducing and embedding modern working practices such as iterative delivery for frequent feedback loops, test-driven development, pair programming, refactoring and continuous integration.

A 20-strong dedicated platform team of WebOps engineers has iteratively built the Platform as a Service that underpins the MDTP, across multiple cloud providers (to provide resilience and disaster recovery). It has provided build, test and live environments that meet stringent security and data compliance regulations, and monitoring and deployment pipelines that allow for an automated, repeatable path to production.

Our approach at HMRC allows services to be tested and deployed independently within a continuous delivery environment, without impacting other production services. Teams are able to release multiple times each week across each of their digital services. We practice zero downtime deployments driven from Jenkins and can rollback using the same mechanism.

Delivering a digital service of this size and scope takes more than technical proficiency. The culture in which development takes place and the processes underpinning it are equally important, and Equal Experts has played a key role in both these areas. Our consultants work side-by-side with HMRC's own internal resources, mentoring on a day-to-day basis by 'sharing the pain'.

It's an approach that not only gets things done – it helps to embed successful working practices that make delivery a smoother, more frequent occurrence. Delivering a digital service requires extensive experience, pragmatism, enthusiasm for great software and the working practices that best make it, all traits you can expect from every Equal Experts consultant.

Services

We have four core UK-based teams that provide expertise and advice to the organisation, our clients and our partners:

Data and AI

The Data and AI service helps clients make better use of data and create powerful AI solutions that improve and transform any business. We use our deep expertise in data engineering to improve the quality of data that flows through the organisation, providing

better insights into customers and operations. Applying our expertise in MLOps, Generative AI, AI in the SDLC and algorithms, we help upskill client teams, automate key services and create new ones.

Design and Product

The Design and Product service helps clients increase adoption and user satisfaction by designing exceptional digital products and services. We use our expertise in user-centred design and product management to discover and solve the most valuable problems, aligned to a client's digital strategy. We help to create delightful customer experiences that deliver real business value, increased user engagement, better brand reputation and additional revenue.

Technology Strategy

Our Technical Strategy service helps teams to confidently navigate the technology landscape and make decisions that will sustain long-term value. Our expertise covers all aspects of technology strategy, including architectural choices, operating model changes and the adoption of emerging technologies. Using our extensive industry and technology experience, we help to plan the practical steps clients need to be ready for the future.

Modernisation and Platforms

Our Modernisation and Platforms service helps to accelerate time-to-value and reduce total cost of ownership, while scaling digital products and systems. Using modern engineering practices, we help to build and run cloud-native services and improve heritage systems. We bring deep expertise in cloud architectures, secure delivery, "you build it, you run it", and platform engineering on AWS, Azure and GCP clouds.

Team

Our core culture and business model prioritise providing value and doing what is best for all our stakeholders, particularly our clients, rather than maximising short-term profits and shareholder returns. Our founders sold the business to an Employee-Owned Trust (EOT) in May 2024 to secure the long-term future of our collaborative approach, highlighting this commitment. The EOT trustees include the founders and representatives of our employees, Associates and clients, ensuring the interests of all stakeholders are considered and balanced in our operations.

Equal Experts is a worldwide network of technology experts who are dedicated to driving

innovation. We have Business Units in the UK (London and Manchester), USA, South Africa, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia and India. Our resourcing model is based on a core of permanent senior consultants and a supply chain of 4,000+ carefully selected, expert, independent SME consultants - our Associate network. On a typical engagement, we pass ~£2 in every £3 of our contract income directly to this network, creating opportunities for entrepreneurship and helping new SMEs to grow.

90% of our consultants have more than 12 years of experience (average more than 18 years) in the development, delivery, operation and maintenance of digital services using agile methods. Many have significantly more and, in some cases, are global influencers, authors and presenters. Their maturity and pragmatism mean they are highly collaborative, happy to transfer knowledge and keen to help clients build internal capability.

We have grown organically, mostly through personal referrals, prioritising quality, experience and cultural fit above all else. After a rigorous selection process, experts are added to our network, whether we need them immediately or in the future.

We select the most suitable people for any contract role from this large pool, not just from a bench of off-charge employees. Our model is resilient and efficient; we form small expert teams, reducing cost and risk for our clients, while achieving outcomes faster than less experienced teams. Our experts train and upskill the whole supply chain, including client staff and those of other suppliers. We have delivered many public and private sector systems (e.g., for HMRC, HMPO, Defra, DWP and MoJ), including CNI, over the past 17+ years using this model. Our approach is data-driven, user-focused and sustainable, allowing us to deliver results quickly and efficiently, using small teams of real experts.

Our standard working model for teams is hybrid remote/on-site, with a core generally based close to client offices, minimising travel costs and environmental impact. This ensures they can be on-site for workshops, meetings and onboarding activities, and can work collaboratively with client team members, stakeholders and other suppliers. In the words of one client, *“your consultants truly leave their Equal Experts badges at the door”*.

Our focus on senior talent means that all our consultants have the skills and experience required to thrive in dynamic, challenging client environments. It means we can focus on work that adds real value, rather than micro-managing more junior consultants. Our non-hierarchical structure also allows us to operate with lower overheads. For our teams, this creates a mature, pragmatic and innovative working environment, where they can implement the best solutions of their already distinguished careers. And for our clients, it translates to better services, delivered faster and at lower overall cost. We were ranked

2nd in Glassdoor's UK Best Places to Work 2025, up from 4th in 2024, and 15th in Newsweek's Most Loved Workplaces 2022.

For more information and case studies, please visit <https://www.equalexperts.com/> or contact us at solutions@equalexperts.com.

Roles

Collectively, our consultants have the multi-disciplinary experience and expertise needed for successful transformation to cloud-first delivery, live service maintenance and new operating models. Our network gives us fast and flexible access to the DDaT skills our clients need. We have specialists in all areas required for digital success, including:

- Delivery managers
- Change managers
- Product managers
- Engagement managers
- Strategic advisors
- Security specialists
- Data scientists
- Data engineers
- Data architects
- Technical leads
- Technical architects
- DevOps consultants
- Developers
- Testers
- Business and performance analysts
- Accessibility experts
- Service designers
- User experience designers
- Content designers
- User researchers

When a client needs specialists or niche skills, we can rapidly and confidently engage with other organisations in our established ecosystem of proven partners. EE interviews each partner consultant to ensure a high level of knowledge and cultural fit before we assign them to clients.

Public sector clients

We're proud to be one of the top suppliers to the public sector via the G-Cloud and DOS frameworks. Our services are also available through RM6190 Technology Services 4, RM6195 Big Data and Analytics (the only supplier on all 6 capabilities), RM6335 DALAS (Lot 2a) and DPS Frameworks including RM3764 Cyber Security 3, RM6173 Automation Marketplace, RM6094 Spark, RM6200 Artificial Intelligence and RM6235 Space-Enabled and Geospatial Services.

The Equal Experts approach has a successful track record of delivery across the private and public sectors. Some recent award-winning deliveries include:

- HMPO's passport renewal service,
 - ranked #1 public service with a score of 81.2/100 in the July 2025 ICS customer satisfaction survey.
 - Winner of Public Sector Project of the Year and Development Team of the Year at the UK IT Industry Awards 2024.
- HMRC's Data Platform Services Core Engineering Platform, winners of Computing DevOps Excellence Awards 2025 Best Implementation of DevSecOps.
- John Lewis & Partners Best Implementation of DevSecOps at the DevOps Excellence Industry Awards 2023

We know what it takes to implement and support cloud-based applications within complex public sector organisations and across large multi-vendor programmes. We understand and adhere to the GDS digital service standards for delivering solutions and handling and securing data within critical national systems. We have experience in consulting, deploying and supporting security-accredited solutions and have passed numerous GDS assessments. Many of our consultants hold current SC clearance (some have DV) as they have previously worked with public sector clients.

Equal Experts has helped implement digital services to government digital service standards (including passing many formal GDS service standard assessments) for:

- His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- The Home Office and His Majesty's Passport Office (HMPO)
- Ministry of Justice (MoJ), His Majesty's Prisons and Probations Service (HMPPS) and His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
- Border Force
- Department for Education (DfE)
- Registers of Scotland
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- Intellectual Property Office (IPO)
- States of Guernsey
- Cabinet Office
- Government Digital Service (GDS)
- Valuation Office Agency (VOA)

Planning

To build detailed knowledge of the context and domain for any project, an initial phase of planning, definition and knowledge transfer will generally take place at the start of an engagement.

We have found that this takes place most effectively through a short time-bound inception to develop a shared understanding and agreement on vision and objectives across a broad stakeholder group. This covers the business, technical and user aspects of the project and the outputs may include user personas and scenarios, key user journeys, as-is and desired business processes, a prioritised backlog of user stories, technical constraints and vision, and a release roadmap and plan. The techniques and principles applied are also used on an ongoing basis throughout the course of delivery, to ensure the solutions developed are fit for purpose and meet real and changing user needs.

This initial inception phase can be contracted separately if required.

Setup and migration

In addition to ongoing development and operation of live cloud-based services, we can help with the initial set up and migration as part of a transition to cloud. We look for opportunities to automate processes (for example, test, deploy) that will yield real benefit and high ROI. Our approach helps to address integration, dependencies and risk early. We capture actionable metrics to measure and manage progress towards meeting the agreed success criteria and KPIs identified for building and operating the service. The highly collaborative, interactive processes we follow foster continual learning and improvement of services. They help to establish and evolve the overarching service design, management processes and the team capabilities.

We can ensure projects hit the ground running through our experience in designing, configuring and setup of many continuous delivery and automated cloud deployment environments. These techniques allow software to be repeatably and reliably deployed and tested through each stage into production on the cloud. We have substantial experience when it comes to the tooling required for continuous delivery and automated software deployment, greatly facilitating the software set up, build and migration process, which increases programme productivity and reduces project risk and cost.

Quality assurance and performance testing

We hold ISO9001:2015 Quality Management System certification. All our consultants have extensive experience in both manual and automated testing, including performance testing, continuous integration and delivery into production environments at scale. With all clients, we actively encourage the adoption of robust and meaningful automated test coverage, delivery and test techniques, to reduce risk and safely increase delivery velocity. We are happy to work with a client's existing quality management system (QMS) where appropriate.

Security services

We hold ISO27001:2022 Information Security Management System, Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus certifications.

We can provide the following security services if required:

- Security strategy
- Security risk management
- Security design
- Security incident management
- Security audit services

Training

For every client, we aim to transfer and embed knowledge of technology and process innovation. Our consultants have the expertise, skills and enthusiasm to help transfer knowledge of new technologies and ways of working to our clients' team members, upskilling staff and helping to build their internal delivery competence and capability. This improves internal competencies and builds long-term sustainable capability, as clients migrate to modern cloud-based products and services. We tailor particular practices to address specific organisational constraints – we recognise that every organisation is different and there is no “one size to fit all”.

We tend not to offer classroom-based training as our consultants are happy to share their knowledge throughout a project. They take responsibility for helping individual client team members adopt new practices and ways of working.

Ongoing support

Our operational philosophy is “you build it, you run it”. The delivery team responsible for the development of a live service usually also takes responsibility for its operation. We have found that development teams which support their own products are motivated to deliver higher quality, more robust and maintainable code.

When a service is live with real users, we expect the delivery team to provide 2nd line (infrastructure, in conjunction with hosting support agreements) and 3rd line (applications) support during business hours. We can agree on an appropriate model for 24/7 on-call coverage if required - see our G-Cloud On-Call Support offering for details. We typically establish an on-call rota with delivery team members assigned weekly.

Our experience is that digital services are never really finished and that it is important to retain some level of investment to allow the addition of new features as the needs of customers (both internal and external) change. Our design of the end-to-end service can include establishing Service Level Agreements for ongoing service evolution and operational support (ensuring agreed levels of service availability).

User support

We provide an engagement manager on all G-Cloud engagements with responsibility for ensuring clients objectives are met and for addressing any issues with service delivery. Our engagement managers act as an escalation point and can be reached via phone or email to respond to issues beyond the control of the team providing the service. Engagement management is included within our service pricing.

When a service is live with real users, we expect the delivery team to provide 2nd-line (infrastructure, in conjunction with hosting support agreements) and 3rd-line (applications) support during business hours, within the agreed service cost. We can agree on an appropriate model for 24/7 on-call coverage if required - see our G-Cloud On-Call Support offering for details. We typically establish an on-call rota with delivery team members assigned weekly.

Social Value, the Environment and CSR

Our values and ethos extend beyond our organisation and people, and we take our corporate social responsibility seriously. We are committed to working with all our clients to share our knowledge and learnings, and contribute to their CSR goals, e.g. we will facilitate discussions with their designated digital sustainability leads, to collaborate on environmental policy goals, discuss current practices for greening software and agree enhancements aligned with industry policies, like the Greening Government Strategy.

We willingly collaborate closely with our clients, other suppliers, competitors and the wider ecosystem to discuss, share and test innovative environmental and social value ideas and initiatives, to improve sustainable practices and create added value throughout any contract.

We will follow our proven social value methodologies for any G-Cloud 15 contract, aligned with the UK's Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, PPN002 (PA2023) and the Social Value Model, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to actively create additional opportunities to develop, measure and improve social value for our client and their entire supply chain. In a recent [Government Transformation Magazine interview](#), Mike Potter, ex-UK Gov CDO recalled his HMRC experience partnering with us for transformative results. *"We didn't just buy their capability - we bought their culture,"* he said. *"Cultural alignment is key. When you pick partners who share your values and ways of working, you find areas of mutual advantage."*

We review, update and publish our Carbon Reduction Plan, Modern Slavery and EDI statements annually, are a Disability Confident employer, a member of the Business Disability Forum and a participant in the Government Digital Sustainability Alliance (GDSA). Our commitment to providing a fulfilling workplace for everyone is reflected in Glassdoor's Best Places to Work in the UK, voted for by our staff, ranking us 4th in 2024, 2nd in 2025.

We complete the [EcoVadis](#) assessment tool, which evaluates performance across four dimensions: Environment, Labour and Human Rights, Ethics and Sustainable Procurement. We complete the assessment, create an improvement plan and review and update it annually. We willingly share the results with clients and use their feedback and learnings to influence our improvement plans.

Examples of other social value initiatives for clients include:

HMRC Joint Value Initiatives: we work closely with HMRC to organise and fund JVs, e.g.:

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- [School visits](#) to encourage children to pursue STEM careers & find future data engineers,
- Data Engineering Academy - supporting HMRC to onboard and upskill new starters and develop their technical expertise through bootcamps and placements on EE projects,
- Hosting the [Women in Tech & Leadership Conference 2025](#) in collaboration with HMRC's Women in Tech Network.

Hace: We co-funded a [project](#) to develop an AI-based data analysis tool to objectively quantify a company's Child Labour performance.

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF): We staffed a pro bono project to build the [Malaria Anticipation Project \(MAP\)](#), deployed in Lankien, South Sudan and being planned for Anka, Nigeria.

John Lewis: We shifted to lower-footprint GCP cloud data centres in Switzerland to meet JL's environmental sustainability goals.

Government: We are an active member of the Government Digital Sustainability Alliance ([See more details here](#)) and are actively working with Defra to implement exemplar projects such as:

- Implementing Green coding Standards ([See Version 1 Github](#)) in our teams working with Defra to help support learnings for wider Government.
- Working with Defra and our partner [Heata](#) to develop an innovative decentralised cloud compute project. The aim is to reduce the carbon footprint of cloud workloads by 80% and heat farmers' domestic water tanks to save them money.