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iGaming Software: Build vs Buy

Strategic playbook for smarter tech decisions
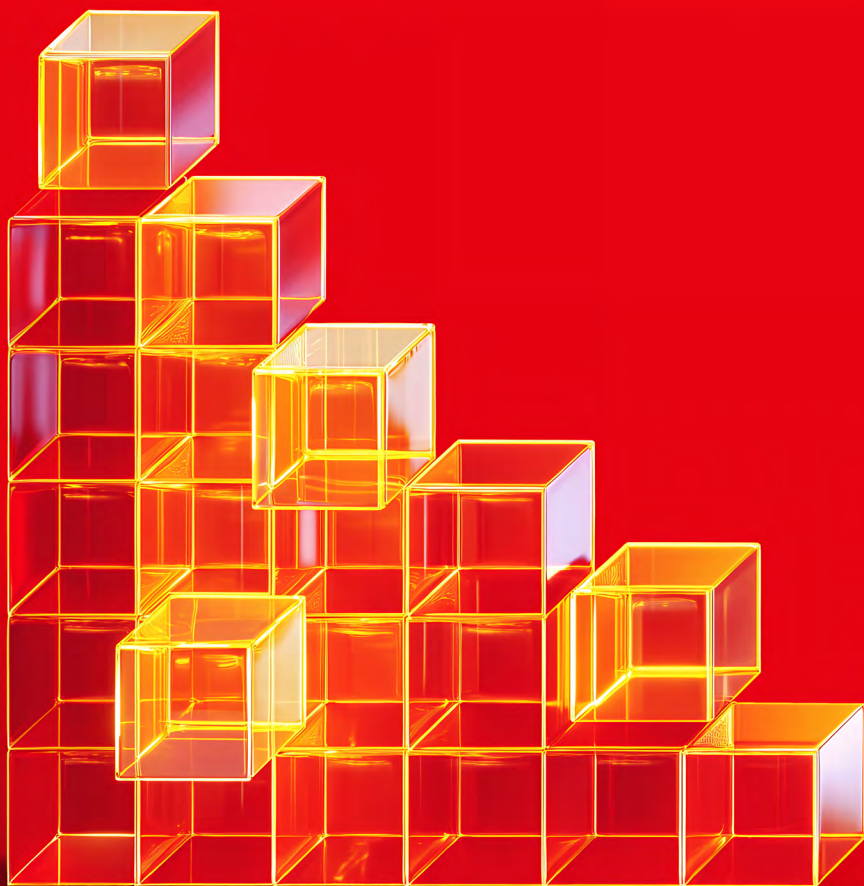
Contents

Executive Summary

More than a technical framework, an iGaming platform dictates how efficiently payments move, content updates, and players engage. If the system is rigid, growth slows. If compliance is an afterthought, expansion turns into a liability. If technology doesn't align with business strategy, costs rise while the competitive edge erodes.

At the core of this decision is a fundamental question: build or buy? Some companies invest in proprietary technology, others choose an out-of-the-box platform. Both paths can work – but not for everyone, and not in every scenario.

This playbook explores the key factors in iGaming platform development, highlighting important considerations for casino and sportsbook operations:

‣ The long-term impact of this decision and what's truly at stake
‣ The real costs, risks, and development timelines of Build vs Buy
‣ Technology considerations
‣ How different approaches affect control, scalability, and operational efficiency

A decision of this scale requires more than a simple list of pros and cons. It demands a clear look at business priorities, market realities, and the technological backbone that will define what's possible in the years ahead. Let's break it down.
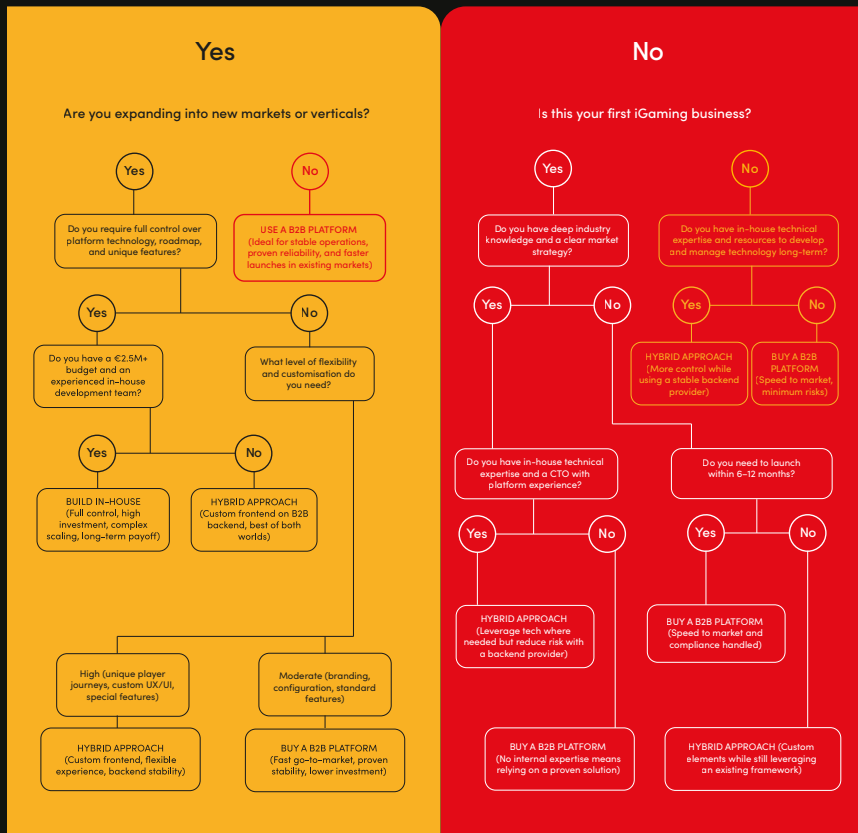
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TL;DR

- Building from scratch fits operators with big budgets and unique needs, but it's time-intensive and demanding.
- In-house development requires continuous scaling and architectural revisions. As operational volumes increase, platforms often undergo multiple iterations – from MVP to enterprise-grade systems – significantly raising total lifecycle costs.
- Licensing a B2B solution speeds up market entry, offloads compliance burdens, and includes critical features out of the box.
- Building costs start from €2.5m and can reach €5m+; B2B solutions begin at €500k annually, with optional revenue share models adding 10–25% of GGR or NGR.
- Compliance is ongoing. B2B vendors handle regular updates, saving you big legal fees and headaches.
- Hybrid approaches combine a vendor's backend with your custom frontend – ideal if you want a signature brand feel without the technical strain.
- Checklist: Before choosing, always compare budgets, tech stacks, compliance track record, feature set, and overall costs.
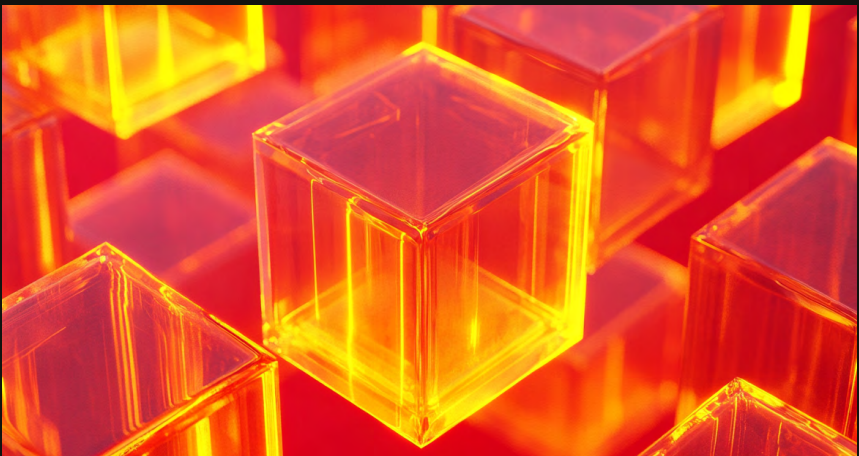
How to Navigate Software Decision

This decision tree offers initial guidance to help match your business needs with the right tech model. While it is not a comprehensive analysis, it is a useful starting point, supported by the insights in this playbook.

Do you already have an iGaming business?

Yes

Are you expanding into new markets or verticals?

Yes
No

Do you require full control over platform technology, roadmap, and unique features?

USE A B2B PLATFORM
(Ideal for stable operations, proven reliability, and faster launches in existing markets)

Yes
No

Do you have a €2.5M+ budget and an experienced in-house development team?

What level of flexibility and customisation do you need?

Yes
No

BUILD IN-HOUSE
(Full control, high investment, complex scaling, long-term payoff)

HYBRID APPROACH
(Custom frontend on B2B backend, best of both worlds)

High (unique player journeys, custom UX/UI, special features)

Moderate (branding, configuration, standard features)

HYBRID APPROACH
(Custom frontend, flexible experience, backend stability)

BUY A B2B PLATFORM
(Fast go-to-market, proven stability, lower investment)

No

Is this your first iGaming business?

Yes
No

Do you have deep industry knowledge and a clear market strategy?

Do you have in-house technical expertise and resources to develop and manage technology long-term?

Yes
No
Yes
No

HYBRID APPROACH
(More control while using a stable backend provider)

BUY A B2B PLATFORM
(Speed to market, minimum risks)

Do you have in-house technical expertise and a CTO with platform experience?

Do you need to launch within 6–12 months?

Yes
No
Yes
No

HYBRID APPROACH
(Leverage tech where needed but reduce risk with a backend provider)

BUY A B2B PLATFORM
(Speed to market and compliance handled)

BUY A B2B PLATFORM
(No internal expertise means relying on a proven solution)

HYBRID APPROACH (Custom elements while still leveraging an existing framework)

Final Check: Are you prepared for the operational and compliance burden of an in-house platform?

YES: Only viable if you have strong development, legal, compliance, and security teams.

NO: Buy a ready-made software platform (the most efficient choice for most operators).

> "

Selecting the right iGaming technology hinges on how well it marries compliance, scalability, and brand identity. Industry examples consistently show that when infrastructure is stable and easily adaptable, it paves the way for creative innovation, strategic expansion, and, ultimately, a more memorable and profitable player journey.
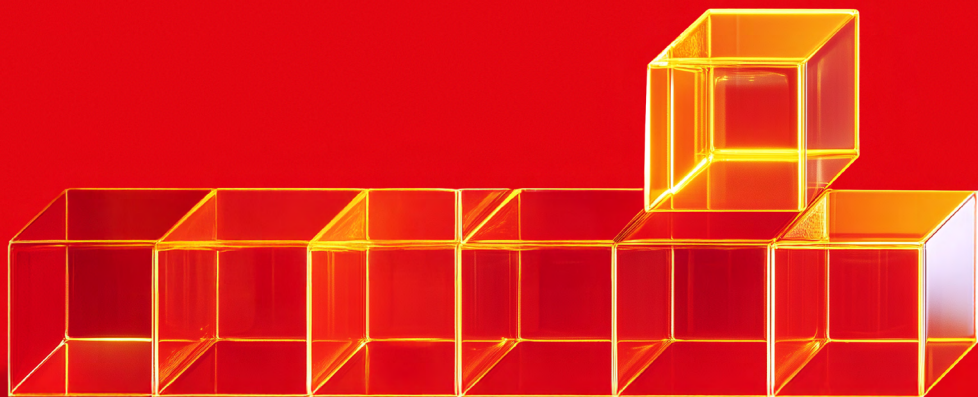
Sergey Kastukevich

Deputy CTO at SOFTSWISS

Custom Code vs Ready-Made

How to Pick Your Winning Tech

Custom Code vs. Ready-Made: How to Pick Your Winning Tech

Choosing between building a custom platform or adopting a B2B solution is more than a technical call – it's a decision that defines how an iGaming business operates. It impacts every team: legal navigates compliance, marketing adapts to platform limitations and builds retention strategies, operations scale across markets.

It shapes cost structure, risk exposure, product agility, and ultimately, how fast the business reaches profitability. This is a decision that sets the foundation for growth – or creates long-term constraints.

Both routes have their perks and perils.

Custom development allows full control over every aspect, from feature development to infrastructure. But control comes at a price: higher costs, longer development timelines, and the responsibility of maintaining security, compliance, and continuous system improvements.

In contrast, licensing a solution from a vendor offers faster deployment and lower upfront expenses. However, it also means working with an existing system, which may come with limitations in customisation and scalability.

How to assess this choice strategically? Below are the key factors that define whether building or buying software aligns with the business goals, resources, and long-term vision.

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Custom Code vs. Ready-Made: How to Pick Your Winning Tech

Budget & Cash Flow

- **Build:** Higher upfront investment, potentially reaching over €1 million, with ongoing costs for human resources, infrastructure, and development.
- **Hidden cost:** even with an MVP, an unoptimised platform can lead to lost revenue due to bugs, security vulnerabilities, slow market adaptation, and operational inefficiencies – such as delayed feature rollouts, poor UX, or unstable integrations with payment providers and game studios.
- **Buy:** Lower starting costs, freeing capital for licensing, marketing, and growth. Costs shift from CAPEX (one-time investment) to OPEX (ongoing expenses) via licensing or revenue share (10-25% GGR).
- **Hidden cost:** some B2B software providers charge for custom integrations, premium features, or compliance updates, increasing long-term expenses.

Technical Know-How

- **Build:** Requires internal expertise across platform development, integrations, game or odds engines, and compliance.
- **Buy:** Provides access to a complete technical stack, developed and maintained by a team with domain-specific knowledge and experience.

Time to Market

- **Build:** Generally around 24 months for a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) for both online casinos and sportsbooks.
- **Buy:** With an experienced provider and established processes, the launch can happen within a few weeks.

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Custom Code vs. Ready-Made: How to Pick Your Winning Tech

For reference, the fastest sportsbook launch with the SOFTSWISS Sportsbook was completed in just about 4 weeks. The Casino Platform team also migrated a brand with over 1 million players in a month.

Regulatory Complexities

- **Build:** The operator takes full responsibility for staying compliant, both legally and technically. This includes tracking changes across jurisdictions and quickly adapting the platform to meet evolving requirements, often without external support.
- **Buy:** The provider maintains core compliance and updates the platform in line with major regulatory changes. Region-specific adjustments can also be discussed and implemented based on the operator's priorities.
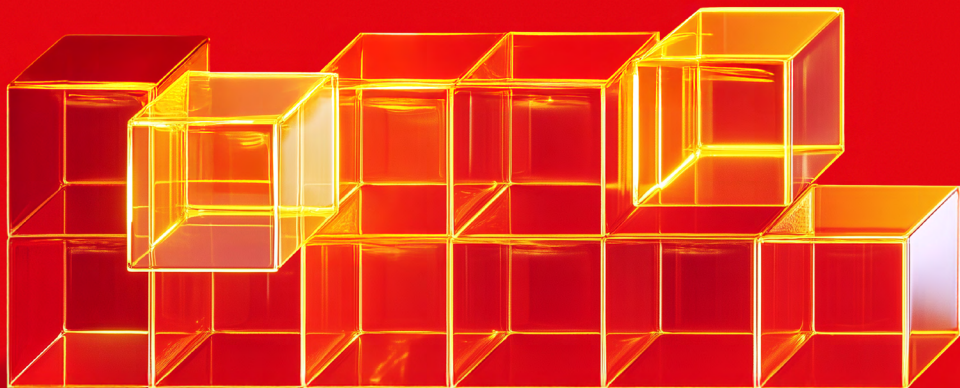
Risk vs. Control

- **Build:** Full control comes with higher responsibility for stability, scaling, and support – including handling incidents and updates internally.
- **Buy:** Technical risks are shared with the provider, but flexibility may be limited depending on the solution and agreement.

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Developing Your Own Platform

Costs & Challenges

Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Whether the goal is to launch an online casino, a sportsbook, or both, the foundation of an in-house platform is largely the same. It requires a robust technical architecture, a skilled development team, and sufficient time to design, build, and test all core features.

Let's take a closer look at the essentials:

Core Team Roles and Responsibilities

- **Product Manager** – Shapes the overall vision, features, and roadmap.
- **Lead Architect** – Ensures the platform's scalability and technical soundness.
- **Frontend & Backend Developer** – Creates user interfaces and builds the system logic for payments, game integrations, odds management, and more.
- **QA Engineer** – Tests every update, ensuring stable releases and quick bug fixes.
- **Support & Operation** – Oversees daily tasks, solves player issues, and maintains smooth operations.
- **Risk Management Expert** – Oversees odds balancing (in a sportsbook), analyses fraud or suspicious activity, and minimises operator exposure.
- **Legal Expert** – Ensures the platform remains compliant with gambling regulations across multiple jurisdictions, handle licensing, and manage ongoing legal updates.

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

According to Anna Loiko, SOFTSWISS Casino Platform Product Manager, these are the recommended team roles according to each step of the process:

MVP Team

- ‣ Product Manager
- ‣ Tech Lead / Lead Architect
- ‣ Backend, Frontend & QA Developers – approximately 10 people
- ‣ DevOps Engineer
- ‣ Security & Compliance Engineer
- ‣ Game & Payment Integration Engineer

- ● **Average team size:** 10-15 professionals

Strong Mid-Sized iGaming Team

- ‣ Head of Product/Product Manager
- ‣ UX/UI Designer
- ‣ Tech Lead / Lead Architect
- ‣ Backend Developers, Frontend & QA Developers approximately 20 people
- ‣ Game & Payment Integration Engineer
- ‣ QA Lead
- ‣ Security Engineer
- ‣ DevOps Engineer
- ‣ Database Engineer (DBA)
- ‣ Business Analyst

- ● **Average team size:** around 30 professionals

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Timeframe for a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)

A timeframe of 12–18 months is a typical starting point for building an in-house casino or sportsbook platform. This includes core architecture, wallet, basic back office, and a limited feature set, enough to support an MVP.

However, real timelines often stretch to 24 months or more. Several factors contribute to this:

- Expanding to multiple markets requires adaptation to local regulatory frameworks and certification processes
- Supporting a wide selection of game providers demands careful API orchestration and QA across devices
- Integrating live data feeds for sports events adds complexity around latency, uptime, and vendor contracts

In practice, many teams also underestimate the effort required for internal tools – CRM, risk management, segmentation, and reporting – which are critical for a functioning operation, but often left for later stages. are critical for a functioning operation, but often left for later stages.

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Cost Breakdown

- **Development:**
  €2.5m – €4m for initial coding, design, and QA.
- **Infrastructure & Tech:**
  €30K – €40K monthly for hosting, with extra costs for peak traffic for future scaling.
- **Customisation & Security:**
  €45k+ for advanced features, plus €18k – €63k for gamification elements.
- **Regulatory & Compliance:**
  €200k+ per jurisdiction annually; €180k – €300k more for legal updates.
- **Maintenance & Updates:**
  €68k – €90k per month, plus €90k+ yearly for ongoing support.
- **Marketing & User Acquisition:**
 €90k+ for launch promotions; €20k – €50k for testin and optimisation.

Likely Total Investment

- **Casino Platform:**
  €2.5m – €4m upfront, and €925k – €2m per subsequent year for maintenance, updates, infrastructure and compliance.
- **Sportsbook:**
  €3m – 5m upfront, including odds engine, data feeds, real-time trading tools, and integrations – €1.5m – €2.5m per subsequent year for data licensing, scaling infrastructure, 24/7 support, and product development.

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

According to SOFTSWISS technology and product executives, building a new online gaming platform involves a range of expenses that can quickly add up. These figures offer a high-level overview of the costs you should anticipate when planning a custom casino or sportsbook solution, covering everything from coding and infrastructure to compliance, maintenance, and marketing.

Please note: these figures are indicative only. They are not a financial offer or a business plan, but rather a high-level reference to help frame the potential costs of launching an iGaming platform. Actual budgets will vary significantly depending on project scope, jurisdiction, and market specifics, and should always be backed by tailored research.

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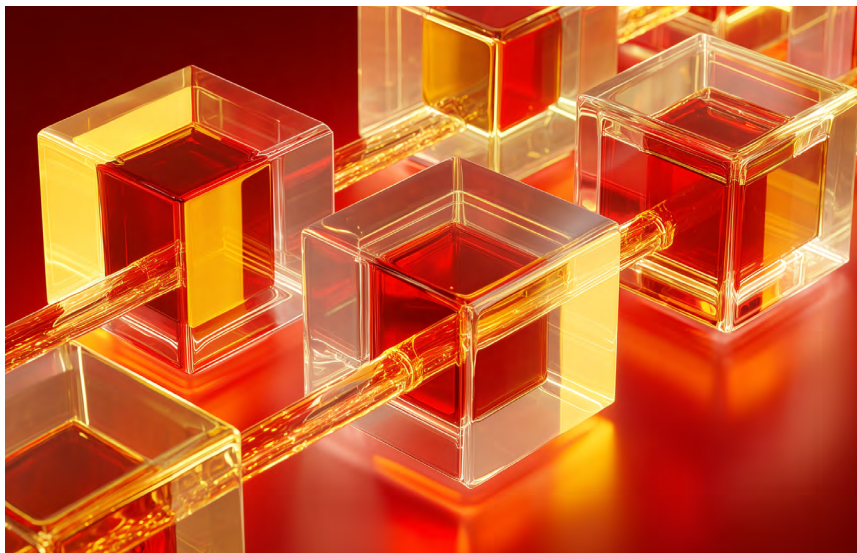
Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Salary & Cost Index by Region

Besides the previous, any iGaming software developer and operator will also have to take into consideration the salaries of the teams. Labour costs vary hugely worldwide. Here's a simplified formula to gauge the expenses:

Number of Employees × Average Monthly Salary × Number of Months

Example:
10 specialists at €7k/month for 12 months = €840k total.

For more accurate and context-specific figures, refer to the Appendix, where detailed salary tables are provided by region and role. Each table includes links to the original data sources.

If you're aiming for the most up-to-date information, it's recommended to follow those links and check the latest numbers directly. Once you have identified the relevant values, you can apply them in the formula above to calculate the projected payroll.

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Role	North America	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Latin America	APAC	Africa
Tech Lead / Lead Architect	~€12.4K	~€8.8K	~€3.45K	~€2.88K	~€8.9K	~€4.5K
Backend Developer	~€9.3K	~€5.3K	~€3.4K	~€1.2K	~€4.4K	~€170
Frontend Developer	~€8.7K	~€5K	~€2.8K	~€0.9K	~€3.4K	~€134
QA Developer	~€7.2K	~€4.8K	~€3.4K	~€1.2K	~€2.6K	~€1.18K
DevOps Engineer	~€10K	~€5.7K	~€3.45K	~€1.4K	~€0.83–€6.29K	~€2.76K
Security & Compliance Engineer	~€11.95K	~€6.33K	~€2.64K	~€1.76K	~€1–€6.5K	~€2.3K
Game & Payment Integration Engineer	~€9.9K	~€7.3K	~€1.6K	~€1.4K	~€0.9–€3.9K	~€1.8K

Estimated Monthly Salaries in Euros (€/month)

Note: These figures are broad estimates and do not factor in taxes, benefits, or bonuses. For consistency, all amounts are presented in Euro. Values in other currencies were converted using approximate exchange rates (and annual-to-monthly calculations).

For readers seeking deeper insights on salary details, role-specific overviews, and further data points, our Appendix provides an extended resource list. There, you'll find direct links to each source we've referenced. This information may help you plan your project budgets and staffing needs more accurately.

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Other Vital Components

Creating a top-tier iGaming brand goes beyond casino and sports betting modules.

You might also need:

Affiliate Systems:
Beyond mere affiliate performance tracking, these act as a marketing admin panel, allowing you to onboard affiliates, set up campaigns, and monitor performance in real time.

They typically include detailed dashboards for both affiliates and operators to view metrics, track conversions, and optimise promotional strategies. Advanced systems can also automate payment distribution, detect fraudulent traffic, and even integrate with your CRM and bonus tools.

Estimate cost: €1 – €2.5k per month

Customer Experience Platforms (CXP):
Modern CXPs enable operators to tailor promotions, handle user queries, and keep players engaged across multiple channels. Some solutions offer AI-driven personalisation so online casinos and sportsbooks can serve custom offers based on a player's gaming history or spending patterns. CXPs also centralise user data, helping the operational teams create targeted campaigns, send automated messages (for example, birthday bonuses), and manage inbound support requests under one roof.

Estimate cost: from around €240 per month

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Payment Integrations:
Covering local and global methods, from e-wallets to crypto solutions, these integrations are crucial for expanding your player base.

A strong payment infrastructure typically includes multiple payment service providers to give players convenient ways to deposit or withdraw funds. Handling payouts efficiently can improve trust and retention, but it also involves complex security protocols, anti-fraud measures, and ongoing reconciliation processes.

Estimate cost: many providers don't charge a base subscription per month, but per-transaction fees may vary per currency, country, and overall transaction volume.

Each extra module demands added investment or ongoing costs – more development, more testing, more time spent. It's easy to see how costs multiply once everything is up and running.

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Developing Your Own Platform – Costs & Challenges

Team, Time, and Tech: The True Investment in In-House Development

Is it Worth it?
Building an iGaming platform from scratch offers deep customisation, but the process can be complicated and expensive, with a lot of variables to keep in mind:

Team Size & Skillsets
Hiring experienced developers and specialists in both casino and sportsbook functionalities can be challenging and expensive. Strong DevOps expertise is needed to handle spikes in traffic and ensure reliability.

Time to Market
Reaching MVP can take up to two years, and that is if the team already has iGaming experience. Delays can occur with complicated features such as live betting or multi-provider game integrations.

Technological Complexity
Real-time sports data requires stable feeds and robust risk management tools. Casino platforms need reliable game aggregation and round-the-clock uptime. The more components the business requires, the bigger the workload becomes.

Ongoing Maintenance
After launch, the technical team must continuously update software, fix bugs, and add new features to attract players. This demands significant long-term ongoing investment.

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Adopting B2B Solution

Cost–Effective Strategy
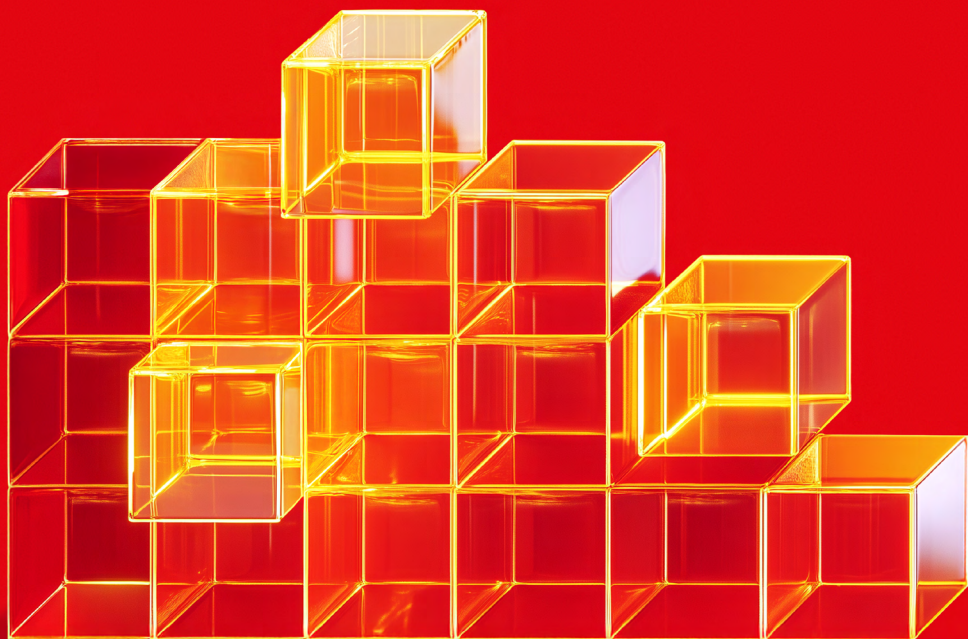
Adopting a B2B Solution – a Cost-Effective Strategy

So, we arrive at the second path – and arguably the one most commonly chosen in the online gambling industry today. Not every operator has the time, resources, or appetite to build a platform from scratch, especially when speed to market and regulatory clarity are key priorities. That's why licensing a ready-made iGaming solution has become a standard practice.

It's important to understand that 'ready-made' doesn't mean one-size-fits-all. These platforms come in different formats, ranging from basic APIs to full-service operational setups. But in recent years, the turnkey model has become particularly prominent.

In a turnkey setup, the tech vendor delivers the entire technology stack pre-configured and tested, including the platform, games, payment systems, and integrations. The operator is then left to handle the operations: player management, marketing, licensing and compliance, among other day-to-day aspects.

This setup allows operators to launch relatively quickly without compromising operational control, but also comes with its own demands, primarily around team structure, player acquisition, and brand positioning.

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Adopting a B2B Solution – a Cost-Effective Strategy

Team Core Roles and Responsibilities

▸ Project Coordinator – Manages all communication with the software provider, plans your launch.
▸ Marketing & CRM Team – Creates and runs affiliate and other marketing campaigns, attracts new players, and keeps existing ones happy.
▸ Support & Operations Team – Tackles player queries and VIP needs (could be outsourced to the tech vendor)

● **Average team size:** 5 to 20 professionals

Timeframe for MVP

It will take up to 6 months if you go for a turnkey solution.

Key Costs

▸ **Setup Costs:** €23k – €46k
▸ **Monthly Fees for updates and support:** €9k – €28k
▸ **Data Feeds Annual Costs:** €9k – €28k
▸ **24/7 tech support, software updates, and anti-fraud tools:** included
▸ **Built-in analytics, automation, and bonus optimisation:** included
▸ **Compliance:** built-in legal frameworks can save you €90k – €180k each year.

Total Estimated Cost: €500k – €1m in the first year; around €500k + 10% – 25% of GGR or NGR (according to the chosen Revenue Sharing Model) per subsequent year.

Adopting a B2B Solution – a Cost-Effective Strategy

Beyond the Basics

Operational Support

What a ready-made platform can absorb beyond the tech stack

In practice, platform choice extends far beyond software architecture. For many operators, it's also about which parts of the operational infrastructure can be delegated – and how effectively.

Player Operations
Support doesn't end with the product interface. Some providers manage player-facing tasks at scale – from first-line support and complaint handling to VIP communication and retention assistance.
Centralising this layer reduces staffing pressure, shortens response cycles, and helps maintain consistent service quality across languages and regions. For newer brands or lean teams, this creates stability without overextending internal resources.

Fraud & Risk Monitoring
In-house fraud teams require time, tooling, and ongoing learning. Outsourced models offered by experienced providers often rely on risk engines already calibrated across multiple brands and geographies. Alerts and decision rules are informed not by a single data stream, but by aggregated operational exposure. This not only increases detection accuracy but also cuts the adaptation curve when entering new markets or traffic channels.

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Adopting a B2B Solution – a Cost-Effective Strategy

Consultative Layer

While regulatory responsibility stays with the operator, experienced providers often offer structured input on licensing pathways, jurisdiction-specific onboarding, and technical compliance design. Access to this institutional knowledge helps avoid procedural errors and reduces time spent on discovery.

Ongoing Improvements

Working within a platform ecosystem often means earlier access to tested features, market rollouts, or partner integrations. Roadmaps tend to reflect aggregated operator needs – not individual feature requests – which increases velocity where it matters: payment updates, UX tools, and back-office automation.

Selecting Right Vendor

Checklist
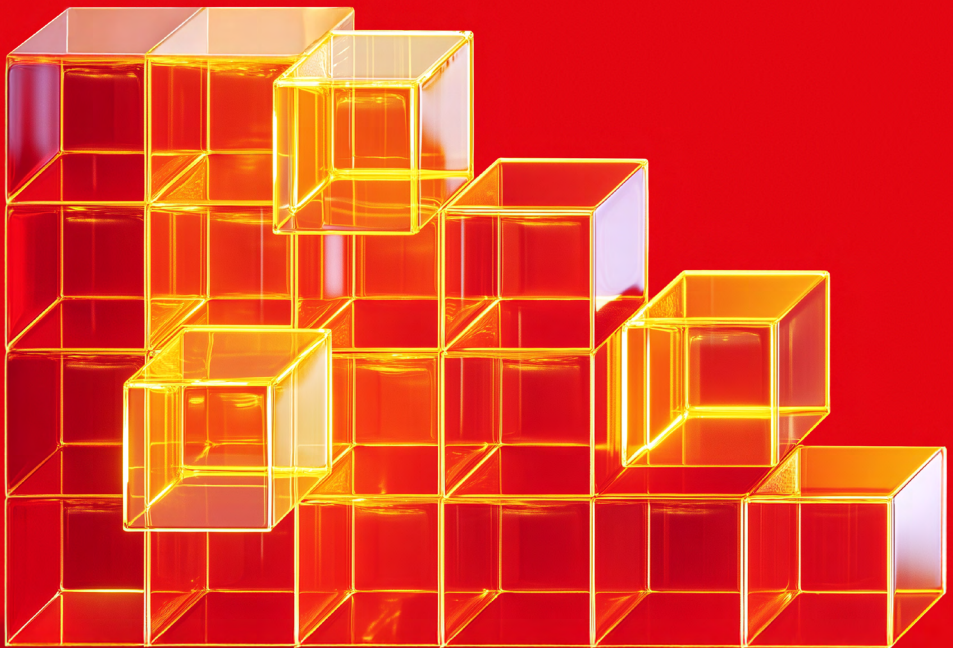
Selecting the Right Vendor – a Checklist

Picking the right B2B partner can influence everything from your daily workflow to your ultimate revenue.

So, before you sign on the dotted line, here's a quick vendor selection checklist to guide you toward a confident decision:

Tech & Scalability

- [ ] How well does the platform handle spikes in traffic? How many transactions can it handle per second/minute at peak times?
- [ ] Are there auto-scaling or load-balancing features to cope with sudden surges?
- [ ] Is hosting managed in-house or through third-party providers?
- [ ] Is it dedicated or shared server hosting? Who holds accountability for uptime?
- [ ] Which core features come out of the box (CRM, payments, bonus tools, etc.)?
- [ ] Can the platform be easily expanded with extra functionality or custom modules?

Compliance & Licensing

- [ ] Which markets is the platform already operating in (technically and procedurally)?
- [ ] How quickly are platform components adjusted to meet new or changing legal standards (KYC procedures, AML logs, responsible gaming triggers)?
- [ ] Does the provider engage in co-scaling into new markets based on partner interest?
- [ ] Does the vendor offer in-house expertise or partnerships for navigating legal updates?

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Selecting the Right Vendor – a Checklist

Integration

- [ ] Is the API stable, versioned, and well-documented – and is integration support part of the SLA?
- [ ] How smoothly does the platform integrate with external systems (e.g. CXPs, affiliate systems, payment gateways, analytics)?
- [ ] What are the costs of additional or on-demand integrations?

Support & Maintenance

- [ ] What type of business and/or player support is available?
- [ ] Are software updates and bug fixes included in the contract or billed separately?
- [ ] Is an account manager available during regular working hours, or is their time billed separately?

Security & Risk

- [ ] Which security measures does the platform use (for example, encryption, OAuth, DDoS protection)?
- [ ] Is there any built-in anti-fraud or risk management component?
- [ ] Who has access to the player database?

Pricing & Terms

- [ ] Is the cost structure based on a flat sum, revenue share, or a hybrid model?
- [ ] Are there additional fees (setup, customisation, migration) that need to be taken into consideration?
- [ ] Does the pricing structure evolve with growth (for example, player volume, GGR, new markets, server load)?

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Selecting the Right Vendor – a Checklist

Roadmap & Innovation

☐ Which security measures does the platform use (e.g., encryption, DDoS protection)?

☐ Is there any built-in anti-fraud or risk management component?

Reputation & Operational Proof

☐ Can the vendor show references or testimonials from current operators?

☐ What is the track record for uptime, deployment frequency, and incident response?

Understanding what the provider owns, what they share, and what they expect the operator to handle reveals more than specs. It defines what kind of business relationship is actually being offered – and whether it's the right fit for the operational and strategic trajectory of the brand.

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Expert Insights
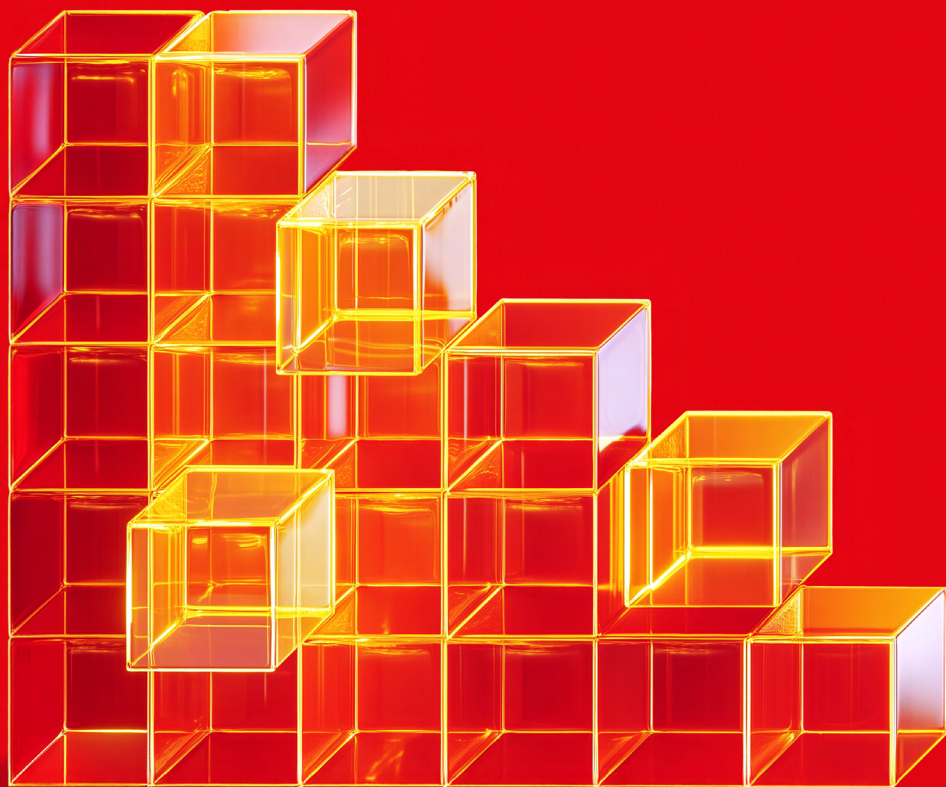
Industry Advice

Expert Insights & Industry Advice

Lessons From the Field

Our most recent interviews with industry insiders paint a vivid picture of how operators tackle everything from launching a brand to scaling across multiple jurisdictions. Time after time, the same hurdles – compliance, traffic acquisition, and cost overruns – show up, underscoring the importance of thorough planning.

Some new brands invest heavily in development but fail to attract steady player traffic. Knowing where your players come from – and how to convert them into loyal users – is an essential part of the process.

Without a deep understanding of player behaviour, marketing channels and affiliate strategies, operators risk low conversion rates and wasted advertising spending.

Regulatory requirements can shift fast, and staying on top of compliance can feel like a second full-time job. But if you neglect it, you risk huge fines or losing your licence altogether.

Another point that was heavily highlighted was the budget. Even when you have enough for an MVP (which can already exceed €1 million, as previously stated), ongoing updates are mandatory if you want to keep up with the competition. Finally, after the initial launch, scaling up to multiple markets or adding advanced features can break an underprepared system.

Pro Tip: A bulletproof plan that aligns your business goals, compliance needs, and growth strategies can make the difference between an iGaming brand that struggles and one that thrives.

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Expert Insights & Industry Advice

Insider Advice for Building – or Buying – Your iGaming Platform

When deciding between an in-house build or a B2B solution, it helps to consider the perspectives of those with direct experience in both approaches.

Here are some key pieces of wisdom shared by top experts in the field – seasoned operators and platform providers alike – when questioned about the Build or Buy Dilemma:

Start with clear goals
Before making any technical decisions, pin down your business objectives. Are you aiming for rapid market entry, or do you have the time and resources to develop a unique product over two or more years? Understanding your core goals upfront ensures the tech choice aligns with the brand vision.

Estimate total costs, not just development
Many newcomers budget for development alone, forgetting ongoing expenses like adding new games and game providers, marketing, legal updates, and infrastructure. B2B experts often stress the importance of a holistic budget that accounts for scaling and day-to-day operations.

Assess your team's strengths
In-house development demands experienced developers, risk managers, and legal experts. If you're missing any crucial skill sets, factor in the time and cost to recruit or train up. Alternatively, a B2B solution can fill those gaps.

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Expert Insights & Industry Advice

Consider the complexity of compliance
Regulations shift frequently, and each market has unique requirements. If you plan to enter multiple jurisdictions, verify that the choice – custom or B2B – can adapt quickly. Seasoned operators highlight how B2B partners often have dedicated compliance teams to keep them up to date.

Realistic timelines matter
Building from scratch can easily exceed two years if you aim for a robust sportsbook or casino platform. B2B providers, meanwhile, can launch you in weeks or months. Choose a timeline that fits the market goals, promotional calendar, and revenue targets.

Forecast revenue-sharing impacts
If you pick a B2B model with a revenue share, run projections for how that scales over time. Some operators prefer the certainty of a flat monthly fee, while others prefer a percentage arrangement in exchange for lower upfront costs.

Sustainable growth over quick wins
Experts caution against rushing to market without adequate player acquisition or retention strategies. Even if an operator manages to launch swiftly, they need a long-term plan for player engagement, cross-selling, and geographic expansion.

Plan for continual growth
Whether built or bought, the tech platform will require updates. That could mean refining your user experience, adding new sports or casino content, or tweaking bonus features. Savvy operators allocate a portion of revenue to ongoing development and experimentation. This amount tends to be significantly lower when working with a reputable B2B partner.

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Weigh Customisation vs. Complexity

Yes, an in-house platform offers total control, but does every operator need to reinvent every feature from scratch? A flexible B2B solution like SOFTSWISS can often cover around 80% of core requirements outof the box, allowing teams to focus on strategic customisations that drive differentiation. And often, at a significantly lower cost.

> *Building an in-house platform guarantees total control, yet the cost and complexity of re-creating every core feature can stall innovation. Choosing a reliable B2B solution provides essential functionality from day one, letting teams concentrate on brand positioning, player experience, and strategic growth.*
>
> **Denis Romanovskiy**
> Deputy CTO at SOFTSWISS

Think Out of the Box – and Beyond the Core

While much of the focus falls on product, budget, and team capacity when making a platform decision, there's also an operational layer worth considering.

One recurring advantage of buying a ready-made software platform mentioned in industry discussions is the cost savings on essential external services like content delivery networks or email providers. Many providers negotiate enterprise-level discounts on behalf of their clients, passing on lower rates that individual operators might not secure on their own.

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This often translates into tangible savings and simplified management across areas like:

Cloudflare and DDoS
Acting as both a CDN and a security layer, Cloudflare helps optimise global content delivery and defend against malicious traffic – both essential in iGaming.
When offered through a B2B partner, these services are typically pre-integrated and covered under collective infrastructure agreements, reducing setup costs and simplifying technical ownership.

Game Aggregation
This will remove the stress of setting individual deals with every studio because the B2B partner has already negotiated bundled prices with all the top brands any iGaming site needs.
Rather than juggling multiple contracts and compliance agreements, the team gains a diverse range of slots, table games, and live dealer options, all through one integration and for the best price.

Built-In Affiliate, Communication, and Analytics Solutions
Many B2B providers also bundle affiliate marketing, communication, and analytics tools right out of the box. This significantly cuts costs since operators don't need separate licences, monthly fees or integrations for each service. Besides, it eliminates the headache of dealing with multiple support teams.

Pro Tip: Infrastructure-level savings often become visible later – when scaling, expanding markets, or dealing with downtime risks. Leveraging collective agreements through a platform provider can help avoid unplanned spend and reduce long-term operational strain.

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Build vs Buy – Overview

	Building Your Own	Licensing a B2B Solution
Upfront Costs	• Casino Platform: €2.5m–€4m • Sportsbook: €3m–€5m • Covers development • (coding, design, QA), initial infrastructure, and compliance	• Setup: ~€23k–€46k • First-year total: €500k–€1m • Includes tech stack, support, and basic compliance
Time to Market	• Typically 12–18 months for an MVP • Can stretch to 24+ months when dealing with multiple features and jurisdictions	• Around 6+ months for a turnkey setup • Faster launch with pre-configured modules and integrations
Team Requirements	• 10–30 professionals (Product Manager, Developers, QA, Compliance, etc.) • Skilled devs for frontend/backend, plus DevOps, risk, and legal experts	• 5–20 professionals (Project Coordinator, Marketing, Support) • Core tech handled by the B2B provider
Ongoing Maintenance	• ~€68k–€90k per month for updates, plus €90k+ yearly for ongoing support • Must continuously patch, expand, and maintain infrastructure	• ~€9k–€28k in monthly fees • Vendor manages software updates, anti-fraud tools, and tech support
Compliance & Regulatory	• €200k+ per jurisdiction annually • €180k–€300k for ongoing legal updates (KYC, AML, licensing) • Must manage multi-market certifications internally	• Built-in legal frameworks can cut compliance costs by €90k–€180k • Provider often handles software-level regulatory updates
Flexibility & Customisation	• Complete control over features and roadmap • Potentially high costs/ time for each new customisation	• ~80% of core features covered out of the box • Enables strategic customisation without full overhead

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Build vs Buy – Overview

	Building Your Own	Licensing a B2B Solution
Scalability & Future Growth	• High scalability if architected well • More complex to expand into new markets or handle peak loads	• Scalable solutions managed by vendor • Faster expansion with established integrations and data feeds
Risk & Complexity	• **High:** building from scratch can lead to delays, budget overruns, or technical debt	• **Lower:** proven technology, vendor expertise, shared risk in updates and feature improvements
Long-Term Costs	• Casino Platform: €2.5m–€4m upfront; €925k–€1.2m–€2m per year for maintenance, updates, infrastructure, and compliance • Sportsbook: €3M–€5M upfront; €1.5m–€2.5m per year for data licensing, 24/7 support, and product development • Excludes scaling to new markets	• ~€500k+ annually • Additional 10–25% of GGR or NGR if a revenue-sharing model is chosen

These figures are based on input from SOFTSWISS experts and broader market research. They are intended for general guidance only. Actual costs may vary depending on project scope, regional regulations, licensing requirements, technology choices, and operational goals. For a more accurate estimate, we recommend conducting tailored analysis or speaking directly with our team.

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Final Takeaways

Making Informed Decision
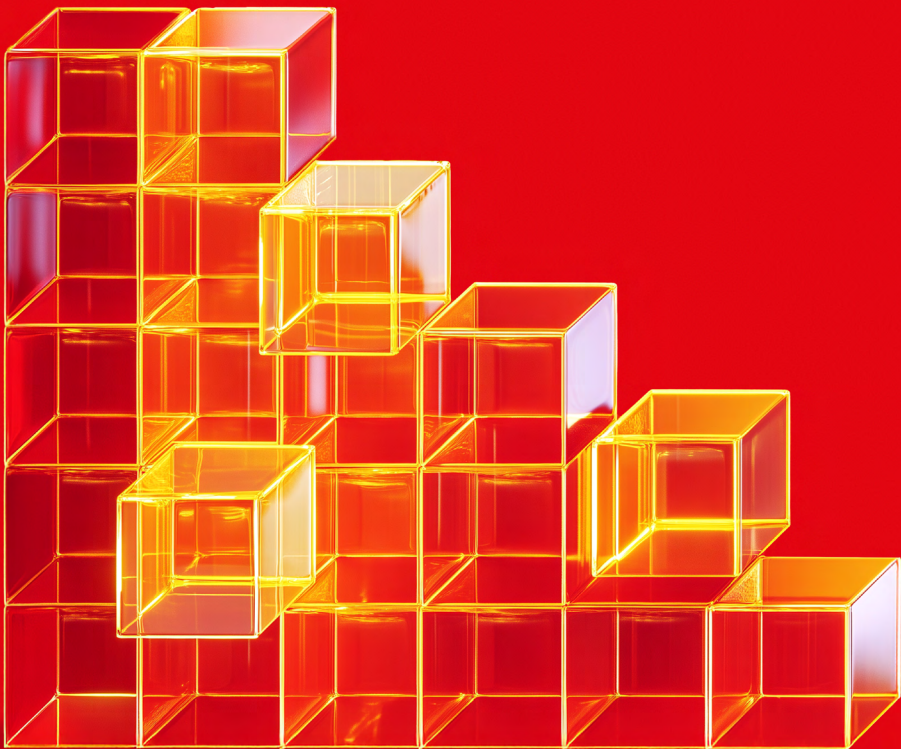
Final Takeaways – Making an Informed Decision

Choose Wisely

The build-or-buy question isn't new – and it's unlikely to disappear as the iGaming trade evolves.The core tension stays the same: how to grow without compromising control, and how to move fast without losing clarity.

This playbook didn't aim to offer the one right answer – because it rarely lives in absolutes. Instead, it tried to unpack the decision – to show where the pressure points usually are, what tends to be overlooked, and what often matters more than it seems at first.

Some choices are about speed, others about flexibility. But most, at their core, are about focus: where to direct it, what to build around, and what to let go of.

> *Both models – building and buying – come with long-term implications. From what we see in the industry, the most sustainable setups are those where the core infrastructure doesn't compete for attention with strategic priorities.*
>
> *When foundational layers are predictable and tested, it's easier to focus energy where differentiation truly happens – in the product, in the experience, in the market.*
>
> **Vitali Matsukevich**
> Chief Commercial Officer at SOFTSWISS

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Final Takeaways – Making an Informed Decision

If something resonated, raised questions, or didn't quite sit right – we'd genuinely like to know.

You can rate this guide and leave feedback through the quick form. It takes just a minute, and your input helps us make future editions sharper, more relevant, and more useful to teams like yours.

Leave feedback

This isn't goodbye – keep an eye on your inbox. We will be sharing a few sharp, complementary reads soon – focused, practical, and built for decision makers.

Thanks for being here!

Got the report but not through the landing page? Didn't receive the follow-up emails?

If you downloaded the report from somewhere else, you might've missed the exclusive insights we share by email.

No worries, just send us a quick note at **reports@softswiss.com**, and we'll make sure you're added to the list.

Yes, I'd like to receive the insights

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Product Portfolio

Explore the SOFTSWISS product portfolio and strengthen your iGaming brand with a winning technology partner.

	GAME AGGREGATOR	iGaming content hub with 30,000+ games available via an API integration
	SPORTSBOOK	Next-gen sports betting software plattorm with focus on gamification
	CASINO PLATFORM	Full-service modular iGaming software platform to manage online casino operations
	AFFILKA	Affiliate management software for results-driven partner program launch
	JACKPOT AGGREGATOR	Revolutionary jackpot management software for player acquisition and retention
	LOTO SOFTWARE	Lottery management software for diverse betting and player engagement
	MANAGED SERVICES	6 in-house support teams for operational support - player care, anti-fraud, content, and more

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About SOFTSWISS

Launched

2009

Location

Development centres in Malta, Georgia, and Poland

Brand Values

- ‣ Expertise
- ‣ Service
- ‣ Security
- ‣ Innovation

Contact Us

order@softswiss.com
www.softswiss.com

Client Care

SOFTSWISS clients get the best software tools for running an online gaming business. The success of our clients is our success

Brand Mission

Changing the iGaming industry through tech innovation

SiGMA Europe 2024
Best Platform Provider

GA Awards 2024
Crypto Company of the Year

GGA 2024
Platform Provider of the Year

EGR B2B Awards 2023
Aggregator Platform

EGR B2B Awards 2024
Best Affiliate Software Supplier

MiGEA
Best Customer service Support

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Feedback

Do you want to contribute?

At SOFTSWISS, we hope this guide has shed some light on the key considerations for choosing between building a custom iGaming platform or licensing a ready-made one.

Your feedback is incredibly valuable – let us know what resonated, what left you with questions, or what you'd like to explore in future guides. By sharing knowledge and ideas, we can continue shaping the iGaming industry together.

Get in touch at reports@softswiss.com

Contact us

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Appendix

Appendix

References and Source Links – Cheat Sheet

Here, you will find a comprehensive overview of the main roles and salary ranges referenced throughout this playbook. These tables provide region-by-region breakdowns, mentioning different countries for reference, aggregated from credible public resources.

The figures reflect median annual compensation, offering a more balanced view by smoothing out extremes like unusually high or low salaries. This provides a clearer picture of what's typical in the market.

The information is intended for reference only. Compensation levels vary depending on company, location, timing, and specific role details. Source links are included to help you explore further – feel free to copy and paste them into your browser to verify the latest data. For any critical decisions, we recommend checking current offers directly, as the market is always evolving.

Use these insights as a starting point to support your strategy, whether you're planning to build or buy your iGaming platform.

Tech Lead / Lead Architect

Region	Source	Key Finding
North America	Salary.com	~€149.2k/yr → ~€12.4k/mo
Western Europe	TechPays	~€105k/yr → €8.8k/mo
Eastern Europe	Glassdoor	~€41.4k/yr → €3.45k/mo
Latin America	Glassdoor	~€34.56k/yr → €2.88k/mo
APAC (Singapore)	Jooble Glassdoor	~€106.3k/yr → €8.9k/mo
Africa (South Africa)	Glassdoor	~€53.95k/yr → €4.5k/mo

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Backend Developer

Region	Source	Key Finding
North America	Talent.com	~€111.4k/yr → €9.3k/mo
Western Europe	Glassdoor	~€63.7k/yr → €5.3k/mo
Eastern Europe	Glassdoor	~€41.4k/yr → €3.4k/mo
Latin America	Glassdoor	~€14.4k/yr → €1.2k/mo
APAC (Singapore)	Glassdoor	~€53.1k/yr → €4.4k/mo
Africa (Nigeria)	Glassdoor	~€2k/yr → €170/mo

Frontend Developer

Region	Source	Key Finding
North America	Glassdoor	~€104.7k/yr → €8.7k/mo
Western Europe	Glassdoor	~€60k/yr → €5k/mo
Eastern Europe	Glassdoor	~€33.1k/yr → €2.8k/mo
Latin America	Glassdoor	~€10.8k/yr → €0.9k/mo
APAC (Singapore)	Glassdoor	~€40.8k/yr → €3.4k/mo
Africa (Nigeria)	Glassdoor	~€1.6k/yr → €134/mo

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QA Developer

Region	Source	Key Finding
North America	Glassdoor	~€86.2k/yr → €7.2k/mo
Western Europe	Glassdoor	~€58k/yr → €4.8k/mo
Eastern Europe	Glassdoor	~€41.4k/yr → €3.4k/mo
Latin America	Glassdoor	~€14.5k/yr → €1.2k/mo
APAC (Singapore)	Glassdoor	~€31.7k/yr → €2.6k/mo
Africa (South Africa)	Glassdoor	~€14.2k/yr → €1.18k/mo

DevOps Engineer

Region	Source	Key Finding
North America	Glassdoor	~€119.7k/yr → €10k/mo
Western Europe	Glassdoor	~€68k/yr → €5.7k/mo
Eastern Europe	Glassdoor	~€41.4k/yr → €3.45k/mo
Latin America	Glassdoor	~€16.2k/yr → €1.4k/mo
APAC	Glassdoor (India)	~ €9.9k/yr → €0.83k/mo
Africa (South Africa)	Glassdoor	~€33.1k/yr → €2.76k/mo

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Security & Compliance Engineer

Region	Source	Key Finding
North America	Talent.com	~€143.4k/yr → €11.95k/mo
Western Europe	Glassdoor	~€76k/yr → €6.33k/mo
Eastern Europe	Glassdoor	~€31.7k/yr → €2.64k/mo
Latin America	Glassdoor	~€21.1k/yr → €1.76k/mo
APAC (Singapore)	Glassdoor (India) Glassdoor (Singapore)	~€12.2k/yr → €1.0k/mo ~€77.6k/yr → €6.5k/mo
Africa (South Africa)	Glassdoor	~€27.6k/yr → €2.3k/mo

Game & Payment Integration Engineer

Region	Source	Key Finding
North America	Glassdoor	~€119.4k/yr → €9.9k/mo
Western Europe	Glassdoor	~€88k/yr → €7.3k/mo
Eastern Europe	Glassdoor	~€18.9k/yr → €1.6k/mo
Latin America	Glassdoor	~€17.0k/yr → €1.4k/mo
APAC (Singapore)	Glassdoor (India) Glassdoor (Singapore)	~€10.4k/yr → €0.9k/mo ~€46.5k/yr → €3.9k/mo
Africa (South Africa)	Glassdoor	~€21.8k/yr → €1.8k/mo

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iGaming Software: Build vs Buy

A strategic playbook for smarter tech decisions