

App Developers and Consultants Offering Tremendous Expertise and Experience in Version 1.0



Mikka Olsson
Co-founder
EBBEX

CEOCFO: Mr. Olsson, what was the vision when EBBEX started?

Mr. Olsson: In the early days of Mobile App Development, it was the all the rage and the wild west. Everyone wanted a Mobile App with such urgency that they would rush into a development project without a plan. When we started there were so many new and “green” players sprouting up to attempt to meet market demand. What we saw was that it was primarily focused around just the development, and that there was a lack of true understanding by the development team of actual business objectives and the end user’s quality of experience. What we found is that we had clients that had come to us that would try to build these solutions, but once they received these products they realized that they did not always meet their objectives. We set out to correct this market trend by taking an extremely upfront and consultative approach before writing a single line of code. It is kind of like laying bricks before you have the blueprint. What we did was break down the process into three phases. We did this to make sure that we could meet both timelines and budgets of the corporations’ objectives. The first phase that we got through is more of an architectural phase. It is probably the most extensive part of the whole process. We will spend a great deal of time not just understand the products that they hope to build, but what they want their products to do.

CEOCFO: How do you assess what a company really wants and needs?

Mr. Olsson: Most companies understand pain points and look for ways to solve the problems that they have. When mobile exploded they saw opportunities to advance their products and services with mobile. The problem is that they were so focused on just going mobile, that they lost the intricate and delicate connection between their product and a mobile deployment. It became fairly apparent what questions they typically forget ask or consider. It has a great deal to do with what they are trying to solve or improve. Since they were catering to a fairly new demographic, which were mobile users, most of them lacked understanding on how to serve that demographic and how to solve it. We come in with a wealth of knowledge and experience of a mobile user and the mobile landscape and can easily identify the gaps that a company is missing or glazing over.

CEOCFO: Do most of your competitors follow this approach or just the forward thinking companies?

Mr. Olsson: Most of our competitors today follow this approach. It did not take long to learn that we could not just start laying bricks. All of the successful mobile development companies out there understand this first phase of the projects. Since mobile has been around long enough now, and enough articles and research has been done, many of the companies now have far more understanding for the importance of this upfront business and project approach.

CEOCFO: Is there a common thread among the companies that are turning to you?

Mr. Olsson: The common thread among our clients is where the C-levels are involved. It is no longer where just the product manager or specific department is involved. What we see mostly is where the VP or C-level are personally involved in developing something for the company. That is where our strength is, because our background is 20 years in the executive level business, so we understand how that world operates, as well as the development world. Where we can build that bridge is where we provide the most value. What we have found is that the more a company cares about their mobile experience, the higher level executive that is deployed on it. And in general, the more value that is placed on it, as with anything, the better depth of thinking and resultant product that is created.

CEOCFO: Your website has a pricing structure prominently displayed. Why was that important for you?

Mr. Olsson: When we are selling our approach, there is an automatic assumption that we are extremely expensive, which is not necessarily true. The process that we have developed is very proven. Our track record is well above 95% on time and on budget, compared to a market landscape where scope creep is rampant. That takes a great deal of discipline and a very strong process. On top of that, initially we started out with our developers sitting here in the US, in our office, but

over time we found that the strongest team that we have is in our office in India, which is a significant cost difference. Therefore, we have been able to combine the best of both, where we have all of the architectural and consultative approach US based and all of our development in our office in India. We want to make sure that we communicate that we are not going to be surprising people with these very expensive budgets.

CEOCFO: *What do you understand about creating a great app that others may not?*

Mr. Olsson: Baby steps! The number one mistake is that most people want to build too much too soon. An app is a product like anything else, and everything evolves. Any product that we use today has improved over time, for example the iPhone. You could never have delivered the iPhone that we have today in its initial version. You start somewhere and then build on it, and that is one of the most important things that we have to convince our clients. What that approach has done for us is build credibility over time and leads to clients staying with you for a longer period of time, because it is a trust factor. There have been clients that we have turned down because they wanted to build too much too soon.

CEOCFO: *You offer monthly analytics and maintenance packages. Is that typical and do many companies take advantage of the ongoing relationship or do they return for different apps over time?*

Mr. Olsson: Our clients do return to us for more app development over time. The maintenance and analytics packages are fairly simple. Many times, our clients have technical resources in house, where we will set everything up for them, and they will manage it themselves. We are not really looking to make money on an ongoing, monthly basis. We are building the 1.0 from nothing to something. Once they are established, we often work with them in finding ways that they can manage and run it themselves. We feel that is the best approach for our clients, because over time they will have a better understand the evolvement of their product. That first build is the most challenging, and that is what we can do, and were we bring the most value.

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CEOCFO: *Your website indicates that you are an obsessive company. What does that mean day-to-day?*

Mr. Olsson: We care more. That’s why we win. It is like the devil in the details. We stress and assess every feature, every work flow, every thought and emotion that a user of this app could have. If you were to build a house and put all of the architectural drawing together, once you are building, you will realize how many decisions were not made in the architectural phase. If you make those during the stage of building, there are many things that you cannot do, because you did not think it through. Therefore, the ability to catch as many of those unknowns during the architectural phase is difficult. That leads for you to have to keep kicking the tires, even though you think that you are done designing what you think that you are building. That takes a great deal of tenacity and staying on it long enough, until you have flushed out everything. Most clients want to sign off before we want to sign off. That is where the obsession comes from.

CEOCFO: *What might be different a year from now for EBBEX?*

Mr. Olsson: We have such a tremendous depth of understanding for how to build these 1.0 versions, and we see that our work is moving more and more into that first phase, which is consultative. This is where we end up strategizing well beyond the app itself, as companies come in, mostly at the VP or C-level, and will tell us the direction they are moving in. Then we end up having a great deal of conversation that is non-app related. Therefore, that is the direction that we are moving towards. In some cases we have clients that we never even built an app for. They just wanted our expertise in the whole architectural and strategic phase of it, so I see us doing more and more of that as we go forward.

CEOCFO: *Why choose EBBEX?*

Mr. Olsson: If you really care about building an app that is going to last that will provide value for years to come and you are truly serious about this sector of mobile, then you are going to have a hard time finding someone that is going to stay as close to that objective as we are. We will not engage in any business unless we truly believe that we can add value. We have turned down a great number of clients, so it is deeply important for us who we choose to work with, as much as who our clients choose to work with. We have other clients through other vendors, because it has been a better fit, as it is such a complex and difficult process that is you go into it just to close a deal, it is going to be painful.

For more information visit: ebbex.com

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