



*Custom Teams.
Custom Software.*

C A S E S T U D Y

MISSION PATHWAYS

Mission Pathways:

Mission Pathways was a brand new startup company seeking to support churches as they build their congregations through group evangelization discipleship experiences. It was founded by a group of leaders in the church management software space that saw a unique unmet need. Churches seeking to create group evangelization experiences lacked the necessary tools that would help them organize faith-based events and guide individuals on their faith journey. Mission Pathways wanted to fill that gap by creating a new software platform, specifically designed to meet the needs of these churches and parishes.

About EC Group:

EC Group is a company with over two decades of experience in assembling custom software teams. We specialize in assembling teams with expertise in a wide range of technologies and industries.

The Challenge:

As a startup, Mission Pathways was tight on funds and needed a long term solution, but hiring in-house was difficult. The hiring market and process for software developers is often extremely volatile. Hiring an in-house team of developers is also a costly endeavor that Mission Pathways was potentially facing. Additionally, retention rate amongst in-house software developers has declined over the past few years. Mission Pathways was actively searching for a long-term solution that could fit their specific needs. These were significant challenges that Mission Pathways sought to address when creating their software.

Solution:

Mission Pathways valued the approach of [Menlo Innovations](#) for designing and developing new products as well as their pair programming method. They were drawn to Menlo Innovations to design a compelling user experience and build an MVP that they could demo and use to gain early traction. Mission Pathways initially began their work with Menlo Innovations and then transitioned to a hybrid working relationship with both Menlo and EC Group pairing and eventually working with EC Group only.

Summary:

Menlo Innovations was given a budget of 10,000 hours to begin product design, product development, and to successfully onboard and transition the project to a self-sustaining offshore team. Menlo High-Tech Anthropologists® paired in with members of their product team, teaching them how to conduct user discovery, balance business and user objectives, and the process of iterative design.

They started the process by studying end users in their native environment. By watching volunteers in churches enter data and work with existing features in other software, they were able to narrow in on a more targeted feature set and create detailed screen mockups. The software developers were then able to estimate the effort necessary for the features designed, and the client could narrow in on their MVP accordingly.

The Menlo developer pairs began the process by building a base set of software capabilities. This established a starting point for new team members in terms of both the key functionality of the system as well as the system architecture. After establishing a baseline set of code, and having a fully defined development process underway, Mission Pathways began the process of hiring staff in India.

The Mission Pathways team founders had previously worked with EC Group over a 10 year period and experienced how a long term relationship could work. In order to maximize investment dollars they approached EC Group to build a team that could work in the same fashion as Menlo.

Every few weeks, a new team member at EC Group was hired. This new team member would remotely pair with a Menlo software developer, in the same manner as all of the Menlo software developers pair with each other. One of the Menlo team members would simultaneously rotate off the project (and into another client's team). Menlo's standard process has all software developers change partners in order to build capacity and ensure the code is maintainable. This was done for EC Group's team members as well. This provided EC Group team members the opportunity to build many relationships, and to learn skills from multiple teammates.

As the new EC Group team members were successfully integrated into the team, and had developed an understanding of the processes, a new team member was hired. In this way, each new team member had the opportunity to join into a fully formed team that was functioning at a high level. Thereby setting their standards for expected behavior and performance very high early in their participation in the program.

As the team transitioned to be fully based in India, except for the client's US based managers and product designers, the eventual handover was a non-event as it had happened slowly over time.

Result:

The end result was a rock solid product that successfully meets users needs. Processes were set up such that the team was efficient at creating new features for their growing user base. Mission Pathways extended their runway of investment capital without sacrificing the quality of their product.

The plan worked and they were acquired by a large firm (OSV) that integrated their product into their suite of products. This acquisition was made possible through the partnership of Menlo and EC Group and software integration was simplified due to the firm technology foundation.