FREE CALCULATOR · HIRING · 2026

# Hire or outsource?

*Run the first-year math before you post the job.*

**Why this matters:** software developers in the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario area earn a median of $133,270 a year (BLS 2025 wage data via O*NET). But salary isn't the cost. In June 2026, wages were 70% of private employers' total compensation costs and benefits the other 30% (BLS). Then come recruiting, equipment and ramp-up.

**How to use this:** fill in column A for hiring and column B for a defined project on page 2, using your own numbers. Page 3 tells you which result to trust and when hiring is the right call anyway.



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## COLUMN A Hire in-house: first-year cost

| LINE | $ |
|---|---|
| **Annual salary**<br>Your offer | |
| **Benefits and payroll costs**<br>Salary × 0.43 if you use the BLS 70/30 split (adjust to your actual benefits) | |
| **Recruiting**<br>Job ads, recruiter fees, your interview time | |
| **Equipment and software**<br>Laptop, devices to test on, licenses | |
| **Ramp-up**<br>Months before full speed × monthly salary | |
| **Roles one developer can't cover**<br>Design, QA, DevOps you'll still pay for | |
| **A. Year-one total** | |

## COLUMN B Outsource a defined project: first-year cost

| LINE | $ |
|---|---|
| **Project quote (written scope)**<br>Get 2–3 quotes on the same scope | |
| **Change buffer**<br>Your own buffer for changes after you start | |
| **Maintenance, year one**<br>15–25% of the build cost is a common rule in industry guides | |
| **Your management time**<br>Hours per week × your hourly value × 52 | |
| **Store fees**<br>$99/yr Apple + $25 once Google Play | |
| **Hosting and services**<br>12 × monthly estimate | |
| **B. Year-one total** | |

Example: $133,270 salary × 0.43 ≈ $57,300 in benefits, so ≈ $190,600 before recruiting, equipment and ramp-up.

DECIDE

## Which number to trust

- ✓ **Hire** when the app is the business, the work never stops, and someone on your team can manage and review technical work.
- ✓ **Outsource** when you're building a first version to test an idea, the scope is clear, or you need design, QA and releases you can't staff yet.
- ✓ **Both** often works: a team builds version one, then you hire once the product proves itself.

PAY DATA

## Software developer pay, annual (BLS 2025 via O*NET)

| PERCENTILE | INLAND EMPIRE | CALIFORNIA |
|---|---|---|
| 10th (entry) | $85,090 | $105,060 |
| 25th | $101,780 | $136,990 |
| Median | $133,270 | $174,410 |
| 75th | $163,610 | $216,670 |
| 90th (senior) | $205,760 | $272,670 |


### Want a team for version one?

Global McLien Software Solutions builds iOS, Android and cross-platform apps for Inland Empire businesses. Focused MVPs typically start at $10K–$15K. Book a free 30-minute call and we'll compare both routes with your numbers.

globalmcliensoftwaresolutions.com/contact


**Sources:** O*NET local wages for Software Developers 15-1252, BLS 2025 wage data (onetonline.org/link/localwages/15-1252.00?st=CA). BLS, Compensation costs for private industry workers averaged $46.89 per hour worked in June 2026 (bls.gov/opub/ted, Sept 17, 2026). Zoho, App development cost in 2026 (maintenance rule of thumb).

Planning estimates, not quotes. Your benefits, taxes and insurance change the real number. General information, not financial advice.