



TRANSITIONING A CLINICAL TRIALS CLIENT FROM CONTRACTOR-LED DELIVERY TO A PERMANENT SOFTWARE ENGINEERING DIVISION

Delivered 17 of 32 strategic hires so far to build a scalable Irish hub. We've seamlessly replaced eleven contract resources while simultaneously restructuring their engineering organisation into smaller, high-performing software development pods.

AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGES

- Managing the phased roll-off of 32 contract resources across a 6-month timeline.
- Ensuring permanent hires were secured and ready to start before contractor exits.
- Hiring senior, niche talent (Lead Developers, Senior Developers, Senior Scrum Masters & Senior Product Owners) in a competitive Irish market.
- Maintaining delivery velocity and product quality during organisational change.

WINS

- So far, we've delivered 17 strategic hires within the first phase - tracking one month ahead of the agreed roadmap.
- Achieved a 92% offer acceptance rate across senior engineering, product and agile leadership hires.
- Maintained exceptional hiring precision with industry-leading conversion ratios.
- We have become the trusted recruitment partner who will resume the rest of the hiring process in 2027.

OBJECTIVE

Our client builds software that enables clinical trials to run more efficiently, securely and compliantly. Due to growth and cost strategy, they made the decision to transition away from a heavy contractor model and build a permanent Irish engineering hub. They required 32 permanent hires across senior engineering, product and agile leadership.

Our client needed to ensure every contractor rolling off over 6 months was replaced by a permanent hire ready to take over responsibilities without disruption. They wanted to use these hires to restructure the software development function into smaller, cross-functional pods consisting of engineering, product and delivery leadership. Beyond technical capability, personality fit and leadership influence were critical. These hires needed to elevate standards, embed Agile best practices, and help define a scalable engineering culture for the future.

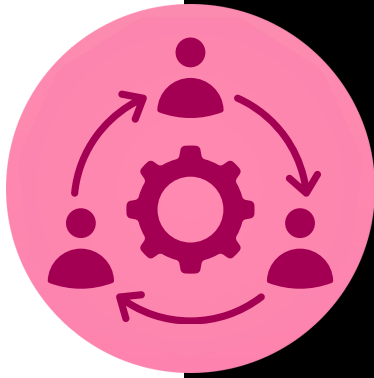
SOLUTION

We began with a strategic workforce planning consultation, mapping contractor end dates against hiring timelines. Together, we built a phased hiring roadmap with clear monthly targets and defined pod structures.

We assigned a dedicated delivery team within our Software Development practice to this project. Each recruiter specialises by function (Engineering, Product, Agile Delivery), ensuring deep market mapping and targeted headhunting.

Our approach included:

- Full salary benchmarking and competitor analysis across the Dublin tech market.
- Proactive headhunting of senior SaaS and product-focused engineering talent.
- Structured screening calls focused on technical depth, stakeholder management and pod-based Agile experience.
- Cultural and leadership assessment to ensure hires could influence change during the transition away from contractors.
- Weekly progress reporting with pipeline transparency and ratio tracking.



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SOLUTION

Rather than sending volume, we focused on precision. So far, our CV to 2nd round interview ratio of 2:1 demonstrates that every shortlist was highly curated and aligned with the client's technical and organisational goals.

We also supported offer management and candidate engagement closely, contributing to a 92% offer acceptance rate so far — particularly impressive at the senior level in a competitive Irish market.

RESULTS

#1 Key result

To date, we've successfully replaced just over one-third of the contractor workforce (17 of 32 roles) one month ahead of schedule, significantly reducing delivery risk and giving leadership confidence in the transition to a permanent model.

#2 Key result

As it stands, our recruitment efficiency has been consistently high across all senior hires:

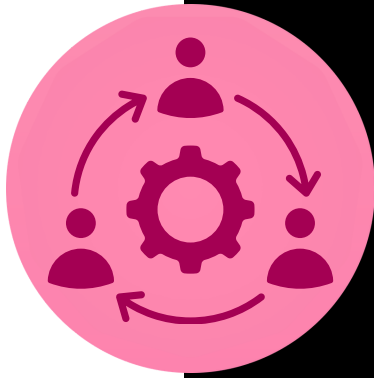
- CV to 2nd round interview ratio: 2:1
- CV to offer ratio: 3.3:1
- CV to placement ratio: 3.6:1
- Offer acceptance rate: 92%

These metrics demonstrate a tightly controlled, quality-first hiring process - ensuring minimal wasted interview time and maximum hiring certainty.

#3 Key result

Beyond filling roles, we have helped reshape the client's engineering structure. The permanent hires are now forming smaller, cross-functional development pods, creating stronger ownership, improved collaboration, and a more scalable delivery model.

Our performance has elevated the partnership from supplier to strategic talent advisor, positioning us at the center of their continued growth in Ireland.



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CLIENT FEEDBACK

"Hi Michael,

I wanted to take a moment to share some feedback on GemPool.

First, Cathal was an outstanding partner throughout the process. He and the extended team, Tanisha, Sean, and Premika, consistently delivered strong candidates in a timely manner, provided thorough candidate overviews, and were responsive every step of the way. They kept the momentum moving forward and exceeded our hiring timelines. Beyond their recruiting expertise, they were simply great partners to us. They took the time to understand our roles, business, culture, and people. They also represented Advarra exceptionally well in the market and quickly became a trusted extension of our team. Whether they were interacting with candidates, hiring managers, or interviewers, they handled every interaction with professionalism, positivity, and thoughtfulness.

Cathal McAliskey and Team, thank you for your support over the last few months. It's been a pleasure partnering with you, and I know I speak for both the business and HR team when I say we truly appreciate everything you've done to support us in building our Product & Technology org. Thank you and best wishes for continued hiring success!"

-Senior Director, Talent Acquisition