How to Outsource to Vietnam: A Step-by-Step Guide for Foreign Companies

To outsource to Vietnam, define exactly what you want done, shortlist vendors, test two of them with a small paid pilot, then sign a contract that protects your IP and scale up. The process takes roughly four to ten weeks from first search to a running pilot, and most mistakes come from skipping the first or last steps.

Step 1: Define the work and the outcome

Write a one- to two-page brief: the task, deliverables, quality standard, deadlines, budget range, and the systems the vendor will touch. Decide whether you need a **fixed-price project**, a **dedicated team**, or an **ongoing service** such as customer support or bookkeeping.

Step 2: Check Vietnam fits the job

Vietnam is strong in software engineering, QA, technical support, data work, and manufacturing in electronics, footwear, furniture, and apparel. It is a more careful choice for high-volume English voice support, where the Philippines is stronger, and for scarce senior specialist skills, where the talent pool is thinner. Vietnam's English is rated moderate (64th of 123), so test communication early.

Step 3: Find vendors

Combine three sources:

- A Vietnam-focused directory such as Outsource2Vietnam.com, which links to each vendor's own site so you can contact them directly.
- Referrals from peers who already outsource there.
- Trade events, chambers of commerce and government trade offices, including the annual Vietnam International Sourcing Expo for manufacturing.

Step 4: Shortlist and brief

Cut your long list to six. Send each the same brief and the same questions. Compare how quickly and how specifically they reply: the best vendors ask sharp questions back.

Step 5: Verify

Check legal registration, ask for two references you can call, and confirm relevant certifications. For software, ask who will be on your team and request a call with them. For manufacturing, order samples and arrange a factory audit, in person or through a third party.

Step 6: Run a paid pilot

Two to four weeks of real work, with one or two vendors, paid at normal rates. Judge quality, communication, how they handle a surprise change, and whether the first invoice matches the quote.

Step 7: Sign a contract that protects you

- **IP assignment:** all work product belongs to you from creation.
- **Confidentiality:** an NDA covering staff and subcontractors.
- **Data protection:** terms consistent with Vietnam's Personal Data Protection Law, effective since January 2026.
- **Dispute resolution:** specify arbitration. Vietnam has been a party to the New York Convention since 1995, and foreign parties commonly choose a regional center such as SIAC, ICC, HKIAC, or VIAC in Vietnam.
- **Payment terms:** milestone payments tied to accepted deliverables.
- **Exit terms:** handover of code, files and knowledge if you leave.

Have a lawyer familiar with Vietnamese law review it.

Step 8: Manage the relationship

- Agree on a weekly rhythm and one named contact on each side.
- Use shared tools for tickets, documents and code, and keep decisions in writing.
- Plan around time zones. Vietnam is UTC+7 with no daylight saving time, so overlap is excellent with Singapore, Japan, Korea, and Australia, and workable for the UK and Europe in the afternoon.
- Visit at least once. Face-to-face time pays back quickly.
- Budget for wage inflation: regional minimum wages rose 7.2% on average in January 2026.

Common mistakes

- Choosing on the lowest hourly rate rather than total cost.
- Skipping the pilot.
- Vague scope, which leads to disputes over what "done" means.
- Not meeting the people who will actually do the work.
- Sharing sensitive data before the contract and security terms are in place.

Start your search at **Outsource2Vietnam.com**, where you can browse Vietnamese vendors by sector and contact them directly.