



Toggl for Software Teams

A GUIDEBOOK FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT



HELLO!

Who Are We, and Why Are We Here?

Toggl wasn't always the quirky, sophisticated, loveable suite of software you see today (although we do like to think we've always been loveable, in all of our iterations!).

A LONG TIME AGO IN THE EARLY 2000S, in a faraway land called Estonia, our three co-founders were running a software consultancy.

Software consulting is a business with thin margins; every minute counts. With so many different clients and projects, our founders needed proof that their time was being accurately tracked and distributed.

They looked around. Time-trackers were either way too expensive, too lightweight, or completely unwieldy.

So this team of developers decided to spin up their own time-tracking tool.

They started showing it to clients to provide transparency into daily activities and progress. And a funny thing happened. Clients started asking, “Hey – can we use this, too?” That’s when the beta version of Toggl was born.

Toggl works so well for a team of software developers because it was built by them. It was never really meant to expand beyond internal use. That happened as a happy accident. Over the years, a lot has changed: features have been added, taken away, improved, discarded. Now that little internal side project is a company in its own right, with more than 80 people distributed across 35 countries.

But one thing remains the same: Toggl tracks time in a dead simple way, at lightning speed, *right now*. We know as developers, you don’t need complicated drilldowns or fancy extras.

For busy software teams, Toggl keeps the pace. We know you’ll consistently underestimate time spent at the end of a day or week with timesheets. We know because we’ve done it ourselves. And we know things change quickly for software teams, and that your time is better spent editing and testing code than tracking time and metrics. More on that later.

THIS GUIDE WILL SHOW YOU how Toggl can help software development teams. You’ll see case studies of how it’s worked in the past, and ideas to help you get the most out of it in the future.



INTRODUCTION

Why Toggl Works for Developers and Their Teams



TOGGL IS USED BY A RANGE OF TEAMS — creative, support, marketing, and more. But it works particularly well for developers. There are a few reasons for that:

- **Software teams need to show, not tell.** Because you operate in sprints and have multiple concurrent projects, the standard “weekly update email”

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doesn't provide enough information on the status of technical projects and workloads. Non-technical clients with long-term projects need to know what progress is being made – even when there isn't a new website or piece of software to demonstrate it.

- **Software teams are constantly in touch.** From design to development to support to marketing to clients and external stakeholders, software teams are constantly collaborating with other teams who need to know what you're up to.
- **Software teams are highly iterative.** Software teams go through constant change, and those changes trickle down to the rest of the company. When your time is allocated differently than you planned, you need to account for when and where you swerved off the planned path (and why).
- **Software teams use multiple tools, services, and automations every day.** From code to bug fixes to delivery, software teams are knee-deep in tools and automations. Toggl integrates the most commonly used tools, saving developers time and the effort that comes with switching between tens of tabs.

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“Toggl increased our profitability by at least 20%. We found out where the team was spending too much time on clients. Whether that was us being inefficient or over-serving or working too slowly, Toggl gave us the ability to re-strategize, find out what's wrong, and fix it.”

DAX KIMBROUGH

Business Consultant with Mister Sweat

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No two engineering teams are perfectly alike in size, hierarchy, or main focus. Your software team might be building a core product. Or maybe you support the infrastructure around a core product. Whatever your team's purpose is and set-up looks like, the following engineering wishlist probably covers your top priorities:

- Squash bugs faster
- Ship faster and more efficiently
- Write better, cleaner code
- Build more efficient development processes
- Avoid getting bogged down by administrative tasks
- Cut down on distractions
- Create automatic client accountability (aka, an immediate answer to the question, "What have you been doing with your time this week/month/quarter?")

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“With time-tracking reports, I can easily see how much time went into meetings and how much time went into actual implementation.”

SHANTANU RAJ

Frontend Developer at Toggl

Engineering teams use Toggl to understand where their time went. That translates into real results. They've seen:

- 95% of team members happier in their role because of transparency regarding time management
- 20 minutes a day on average saved on admin and tracking tasks
- 60% team growth in one year due to greater visibility into resource allocation
- An 85% increase in reporting and project management analysis
- A 20% increase in profitable development hours
- More extensive and accurate data about which projects and tasks are worked on
- Increased visibility and accountability to clients and the C-Suite

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CASE STUDIES

Toggl in Action

Some of our clients had never tracked their time before they started using Toggl. But now that they have data-supported insights into their costs and results, they can't imagine going back.

Teams can tell clients, with absolute certainty, that they're only paying for the work that's been done — and not a single hour more. Plus, clients can see how those hours have directly translated into business outcomes.

CASE STUDIES

How Fullstack Labs Used Toggl to Win New Business and Grow from Freelancers into a 70+-Person Software Consultancy

Fullstack Labs is a 70+ person software consultancy. They design and build software for other companies, in addition to help with staffing and team augmentation.

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“Toggl runs our whole business in terms of billing clients and generating revenue. Toggl gives us the opportunity to outcompete our rivals. When we pitch new business, we bring our Toggl reports and demonstrate the level of visibility we can provide.”

DAVID JACKSON
CEO, Fullstack Labs

Fullstack Labs has been using Toggl since Day One. But when the founders first formed the company, they were essentially freelancers with big dreams.

What has allowed them to grow so quickly into a full software consultancy with clients like Uber and other *Fortune 500* organizations?

Their time-tracking, and the transparency that results.

Most agencies in their industry bill by the day, week, or month. That's the highest level of visibility their clients can see. So while clients might see that a developer named John worked 40 hours, they won't know what he worked on, or whether he was out for two days on vacation.

Fullstack Labs was different.

Whenever they pitched new business, they brought Toggl reports with them. They could show what their developers were working on, and when, and for exactly how long.

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“The Toggl differential is an opportunity to outcompete others in our industry.”

DAVID JACKSON
CEO, Fullstack Labs

And outcompete they did. Fullstack has grown ten-fold in a few short years. And their clients get time reports every single day.

“Our clients are getting a description of every hour they’re billed for, while competitors are sending blind invoices with no task descriptions on a weekly or monthly basis.”

And they bill only for the time worked - if someone is out or on PTO, or only works six hours in a day - their clients won’t be billed for the extra time.

It’s that care and attention to detail that allowed them to win business with the likes of Uber and several *Fortune 500* companies. They’ve been able to hire organically, growing their time-tracking capabilities all the while.



Fullstack Labs and Web Development Project Management

“Today we have a robust and complex project management approach that incorporates Toggl with Jira. We run two-week sprints across all of our projects, and we run time-tracking around all of our development,” said Jackson.

They incorporate Toggl with Jira, folding time-tracking into each day of their two-week sprints. They assign stories to developers, plan work, and estimate how much time each story will take.

At the end of each sprint, they can look back and ask, “Did each person get everything done that they were supposed to?” They’ve been able to pinpoint blockers, and find quick solutions to particular problems.

Clients can see as much as they want to. With Fullstack’s internally-built bot, which integrates with Toggl, they pull reports every day and automatically send them to clients.

The bottom line?

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“It helps us win more business.”

DAVID JACKSON

CEO, Fullstack Labs

CASE STUDIES

Take 3angle Tech, a Romanian web development agency.

They work with remote clients around the globe. At first, they didn't bother to do much in the way of time tracking.

But over and over again, they realized they couldn't figure out how many hours were being spent on coding. That means they couldn't bill clients accurately. They also didn't know how many people to allocate for a project, or how long those projects would take.

When their clients asked where exactly the time was going, they could merely guess and give a rough estimate.

So they knew they needed to be tracking their time in order to have better forward projections and client transparency. But they didn't want to get bogged down in a bunch of time-tracking admin.



“The ‘simple’ task of tracking work and accurate billing involves a lot of micromanagement, sterile discussions, unnecessary stress, and human error, which we would prefer to avoid,” said Ionut-Cristian Paraschiv, cofounder of 3angle.

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“Our objective is to make the most of the time we spend on each project, and to make sure our customers know how they are spending their money.”

IONUT-CRISTIAN PARASCHIV

Cofounder, 3angle Tech

“Our objective is to make the most of the time we spend on each project, and to make sure our customers know how they spend their money,” Parschiv said.

Easier said than done.

They needed a solution that would:

- help them better understand where their time was going
- accurately budget for time needed at all stages of client projects
- allow them to bill clients accurately for the work that was done

That’s why they switched to Toggl. Toggl made it easy for the whole team to track their work. “From a web browser to mobile apps on our smartphones or tablets, we can see exactly how much time we spend doing real work and how many of our working hours are not optimally used,” Paraschiv said.

Now, they include Toggl data in every customer billing report. They share visual information from Toggl’s dashboard about the duration and cost of all project tasks and requested features. This feature allows clients to quickly see the cost of their ideas.

With Toggl, 3angle doesn’t have to sweat the small stuff. Within a few clicks, they can see things like an overview of the team’s work and how many development hours will be invoiced. That means they have more time to do what really matters—deliver value to their customers.

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“Our customers love the transparency that Toggl offers, and including Toggl reports with billing increases their trust, because they can see that they are paying only for work done.”

IONUT-CRISTIAN PARASCHIV

Co-Founder of 3angleTech

IN THEIR WORDS

Take It From Them...

We love our own case studies. But if you'd like to see another Toggl case study from a software development agency, written in their own words, check out [this write-up from Justin Gordon, CEO of ShakaCode](#). He'll take you through several step-by-step scenarios, report examples, and reasons why time-tracking is a huge business differentiator.



“The majority of our projects are billed per hour, so clear and regular communications regarding time spent on various tasks are critical to having good client relationships. Every week, I send my team and clients 3 reports that break down how time was spent. With these reports, our clients can assess the overall level of effort for various tasks and efficiency of ShakaCode development efforts. Beyond just tracking time to a task, we break the work up behind a task into more detailed ‘time entries’ that can provide color to what was done.”

JUSTIN GORDON

CEO, ShakaCode

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WE CAN FIX THAT

What Problem Are We Solving for Developers?

NOT TO GET ALL BUZZWORD-Y ON YOU, but it's important to stress one point: Toggl's internal software teams work on the principle of *iterative collaboration*. Our goal is to create a tool with specific features that make agile and flexible working as easy as possible.

One of those features is the Jira integration, which makes progress immediately viewable within your Toggl app. Here are a few other engineering use cases where Toggl helps your team work efficiently.

Bug Tracking

If you use a tool like Asana, for example, Toggl can log hours spent working on resolving a specific issue related to a specific bug tracked there. Also, the **Toggl Button**, available for Chrome and Firefox, puts a timer into popular online web tools like Jira, Asana, and Basecamp that enables time tracking. All your data will be synced to your Toggl account in real time.

Accountability to External Customers

For freelancers or managers who need data on development hours to support their invoicing, Toggl provides that. You can also schedule alerts to pop up when your projects hit 50%, 75%, or 100% of your time estimates so you'll know when you're nearing the red.

Budgeting

Toggl breaks down profits vs. labor costs with useful data visualization so you can see which projects and clients are profitable at a quick glance. Assign unique billable rates to each client and discover how profitable your projects are.

Inter-Organizational Collaboration and Insight

Create collaborative workspaces between your technical team and other technical or non-technical teams within your organization. Through these, enable communication and transparency from one part of your organization to another.

Data Collection

With over 100 integrations that put Toggl inside your favorite apps, Toggl streamlines your data into one place. Less navigating between pages means fewer distractions.

Future Projections

Technical managers estimate how long future projects will take based on previous time-tracking. Having time entries in one place provides an easy-to-read overview of time spent on prior projects, letting you confidently quote project prices to clients.

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“Each employee saves at least 15-20 minutes per day, while providing extensively more detailed and accurate data about which projects and tasks they worked on.”

STEPHEN WIERENGA

Owner, Perception Engineering

Past Activity Analysis

Toggl lets you easily filter your time-tracking data, showing you the information you need when you need it. All reports can be exported into Excel, CSV, or PDFs.

Staffing

Need to know when to hire or how to plan team allocation? Compare project progress to estimated time with the Project Dashboard. Spot problems early and immediately understand where your needs are with easy-to-read visual data.

Checking Project Status

Toggl can keep track of the status of several different projects concurrently and, through its Jira integration, help you decide what project to prioritize next. It can also give you an overview of how many development hours have been spent on something and approximately how many are left to spend.

Taking Care of Your Team

Developers' work is often done alone, under pressure, and for long stretches of time, making them especially at risk for burnout. But time tracking can help you identify patterns of burnout before one of your team members is teetering on the brink of collapse. Time tracking allows you to reassign work to under-utilized team members and make sure no one person is carrying too much weight.

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STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE

How Toggl Uses Toggl

Why and How We Rely
on our Own Tool



BECAUSE TOGGL IS A SAAS PRODUCT, we have a highly built-out software engineering operation that touches almost all Toggl teams. As all of these teams go about their days solving problems, coding, managing clients, and responding to bug requests, Toggl runs in the background. It's busy tracking billable hours and resources, without dragging the devs themselves into the weeds each time.

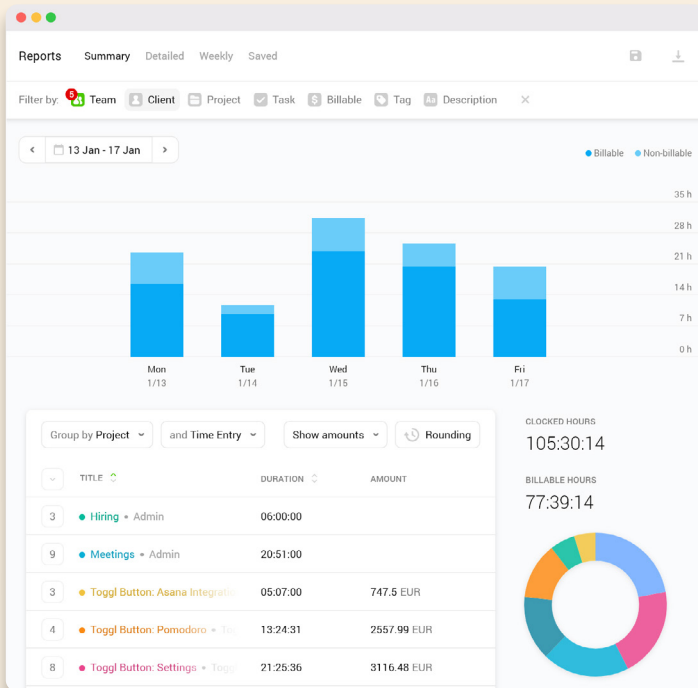
Let's walk through a few use cases of how internal teams use Toggl.



Front-End

The Front-End Team Wants to Understand Whether A Project Is Profitable

If our front-end team wants to know how much of their time was spent in meetings versus spent on actual implementation, they can look at a summary report, which allows them to get information at a glance. The team can easily see the meetings-versus-implementation breakdown, and can use the recorded time to calculate a billable hourly rate or use “time spent” as a metric to determine if something is worth their energy.



This report screen breaks down work by day and project, so you know how many development hours you've spent.

Product

The Product Team Wants to Tell a Client Whether the Workload Continues on the Trajectory They Estimated at the Start of the Project

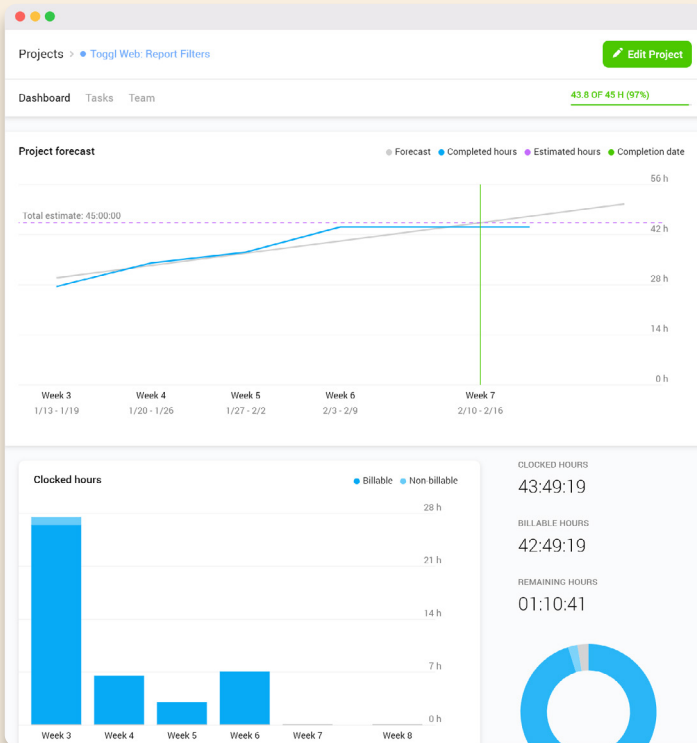
When the product team gets a new project, they look at historical data to answer questions like ‘How long will fixing this issue take?’ and ‘What issues are likely to delay estimates etc?’ They then give each issue a t-shirt size—an XS issue is very small; an XXL will take a large effort and dedicated team. And with the historical data behind them, they can be confident in those projected t-shirt sizes, which means accurate forecasting for clients and stakeholders.



Back-End

The Back-End Team Wants to Estimate When a Project Will Wrap Up

The back-end team would be lost without Project Dashboards, and specifically the forecasting functionality. They use it to project the end of a project based on available data for that project. If someone asks when a project will end, or when they'll have free time to start another project, they have an immediate answer.

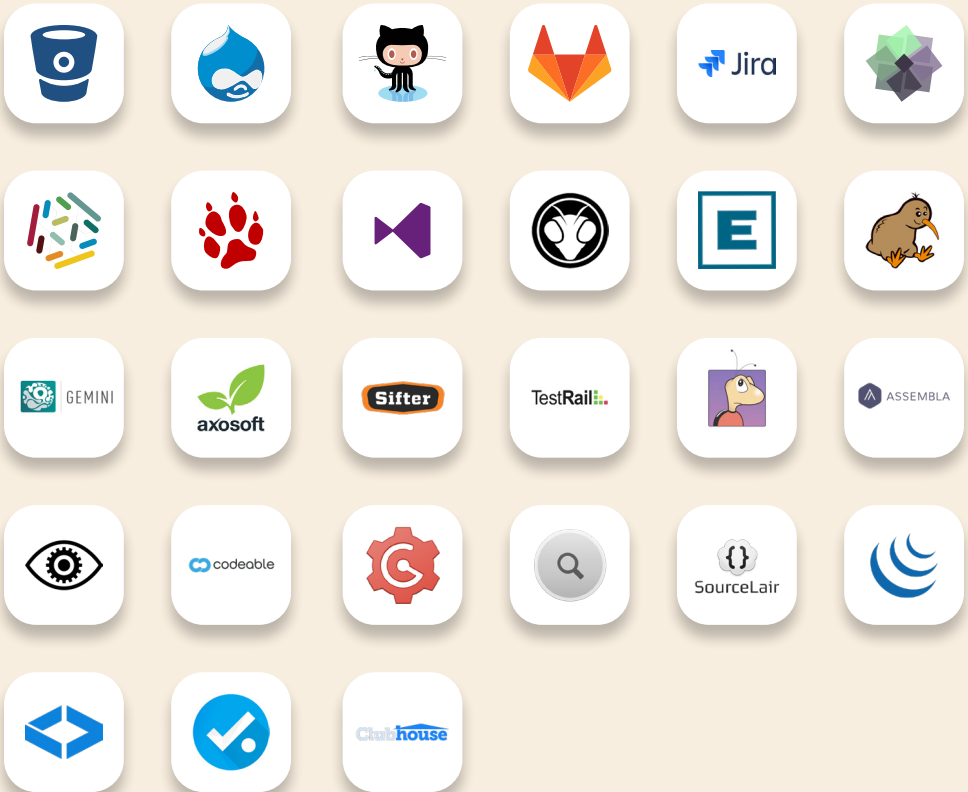


*This project is projected to end in **one hour and ten minutes**, based on the data.*

PAIRS WELL WITH...

Integrations

Some Toggl integrations we use for DevOps:





YOUR TURN

Over to You

Now you know how Toggl was developed, how Toggl is used by our team, and how other teams around the world use it, too.

If you have questions this guide hasn't answered, write us. And if you're interested in seeing more, [request a demo](#). We'd love to bring Toggl to you.

