



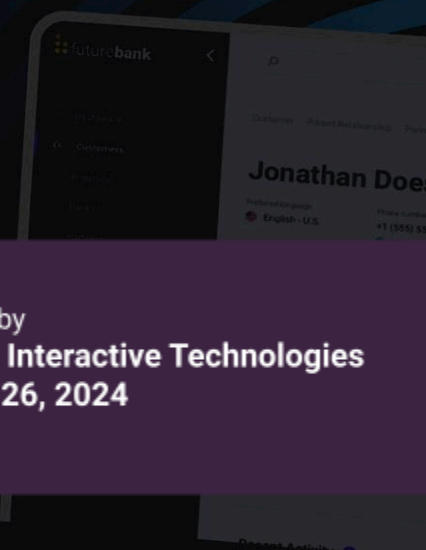
Innovate. Automate. Caffeinate.

...ern, custom card
... built just for you
Tailor your prepaid, debit or credit card program to
... needs and market demands. E6
makes it easy to adjust fees and pricing to exactly
how you want them, with the touch of a button.



Case Study
**Staff Augmentation for a
Multimillion Dollar Fintech
Company, Episode Six**

Prepared by
Caffeine Interactive Technologies
January 26, 2024



(512) 387-5793

info@caffeineinteractive.com | www.caffeineinteractive.com

Executive Summary

Episode Six (E6), a multimillion-dollar, investor-backed fintech company, was in a fast growth cycle but unable to launch front-end features as quickly as the back-end team was developing them. Their frustrations lead them to reach out to Caffeine Interactive to explore staff augmentation as a solution to help with a developer resource portal and their main payment application for banks and other fintechs.

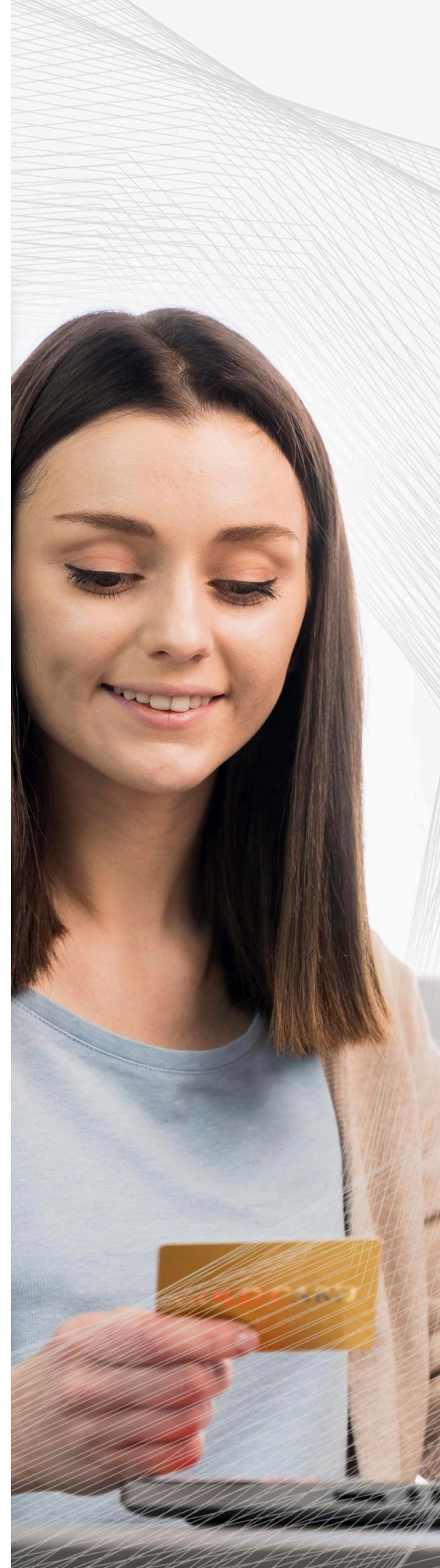
In this case study, Caffeine Interactive will explore how staff augmentation provides E6 the stability it needs to focus on growing its business. This is accomplished by our approach to staff augmentation, technology used, and processes put in place.

Introduction

Caffeine Interactive is a web and mobile application development company using a unique staffing model of a mix of US and offshore talent. Remote work has been its lifeblood since its inception in 2013.

Caffeine Interactive kicked off its first year of business with a staff augmentation project for a semiconductor company and realized immediately that a successful partnership needs clear communication, knowledge of the existing state of the project, the flexibility to work with client development processes, and an understanding of the product roadmap.

Staff augmentation is a growing segment of the software industry as tech companies are constantly hitting revenue expectations which in turn leads to expected growth cycles. It is easier to hire one partner with many developers than it is to spend time interviewing and hiring many developers with skills of unknown experience levels.



The Need for Staff Augmentation



Talent Acquisition

Finding and retaining skilled professionals can be challenging, especially in competitive industries or niche markets. As companies expand, they need to attract and retain top talent to sustain growth and innovation.

- Staff augmentation enables companies to access a diverse pool of specialized talent, including developers, designers, business analysts, and consultants, without the constraints of geographical boundaries or lengthy recruitment processes. This allows businesses to quickly scale their teams based on project requirements or emerging skill demands



Cost Management

Scaling a permanent workforce involves significant upfront and ongoing costs, including salaries, benefits, training, and infrastructure. Managing these costs while ensuring optimal resource allocation can be daunting for businesses, particularly during periods of rapid expansion or economic uncertainty.

- By leveraging staff augmentation services, companies can optimize their workforce costs by paying for specific skills or services on a temporary or project basis. This helps mitigate the financial risks associated with permanent hiring, such as salaries, benefits, and overhead expenses while ensuring access to the expertise needed to drive business initiatives forward.



Flexibility

Traditional hiring processes often lack the flexibility and agility required to respond swiftly to fluctuating market demands or project requirements. Companies may struggle

to adapt their workforce size and composition to dynamic business conditions, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities.

- Staff augmentation offers companies the flexibility to scale their workforce up or down in response to changing market dynamics, project timelines, or strategic priorities. Whether it's ramping up resources for a new product launch or downsizing after project completion, staff augmentation allows businesses to adapt their staffing levels with agility and precision.

Case Study: Project E6

Episode Six (E6), established in 2015, is an Austin, TX-based fintech company specializing in developing and providing financial technology solutions, particularly focusing on digital payments and financial services. Since its inception, E6 has raised over \$98 million in funding. Investors include HSBC, Mastercard, Avenir Growth Capital, SBI Investment, and Anthos Capital.^{1,2}

As E6 approaches its 10th anniversary the company's growth can be gauged by its significant product development. It started with a simple focus to develop a payment technology for the changing landscape. Its current focus is still the same but E6 has become 'hyper-configurable, hyperextensible, and available wherever [its] customers may be.'³ E6 currently has over 550 APIs and 100 plugins.¹

Those 550 APIs needed clear documentation that could be accessed by developers through a secure application. Caffeine Interactive was tasked with rescuing the existing developer resource portal and extending its capabilities and formatting.

As the developer resource portal project was winding down, E6 found themselves with a gap in their resources for the front-end development of their main payments application. Their backend team was strong and had built up new functionality but without a front-end team to expose that functionality through the user interface (UI), their payments app was stalled. In addition to a backlog of front-end UI work, an audit of the existing code revealed that refactoring was necessary to allow the app to grow, to be more efficient, to make it more maintainable, and to allow for more modular components.

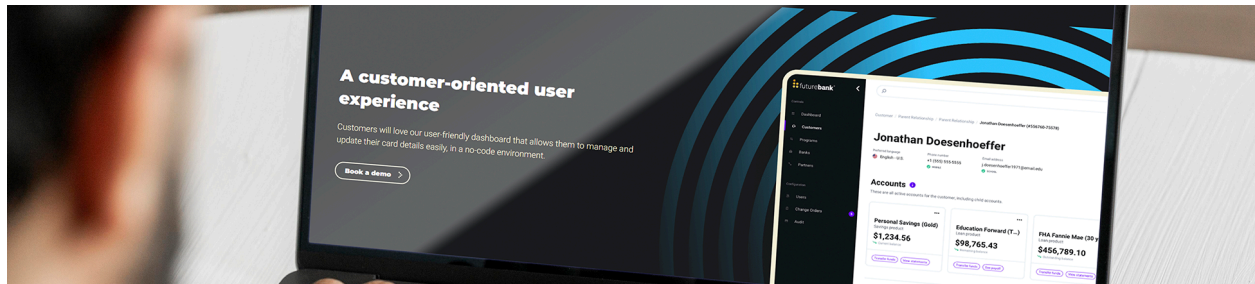
¹ <https://ffnews.com/companies/episode-six/>

² https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/episode-six/company_financials

³ <https://thefr.com/news/balancing-globalization-and-compliance-with-episode-six>

Caffeine Interactive was contracted to supply a team of developers to fill in as the front-end team to get the payments app back on track for planned releases. The project would start with refactoring and then transition to bug fixes, new features, and feature enhancements using a 2-week sprint schedule.

Caffeine Interactive's Approach to Staff Augmentation



Caffeine Interactive's unique approach to staff augmentation begins with a thorough understanding of the project's technology and a comprehensive audit to familiarize developers with the existing codebase. They prioritize communication and collaboration, conducting interviews and attending demos to grasp the current functionality state to ensure alignment. Its process involves matching technology needs with the right expertise, leveraging a combination of existing talent and strategic new hires tailored to the project's requirements. Throughout the engagement, they work closely to prioritize tasks effectively, ensuring that its efforts align with goals and expectations. This approach stands out from traditional methods by emphasizing proactive communication, targeted talent acquisition, and collaborative task prioritization, ultimately driving greater efficiency and alignment in project execution.

Development Process

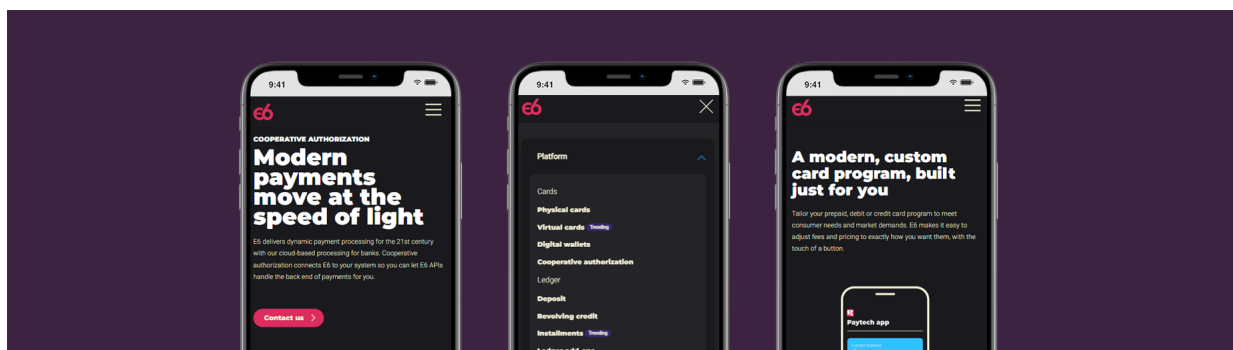


The development lifecycle for the E6 project follows a structured process that begins with the client providing a list of tickets for each sprint. These tickets are then assigned to developers who work on them and release them for internal quality assurance (QA) testing. Upon passing internal QA, the tickets are released to E6 for review, where they

assess both the code pull request (PR) and the functionality. If the code meets their standards, it is merged.

Throughout the project, Caffeine Interactive maintains regular communication with the client, scheduling weekly meetings to ensure alignment and address any concerns. While they are not directly involved in daily standups, they remain accessible via email and chat to address any immediate needs or queries the client may have, thereby ensuring transparency and collaboration throughout the development process.

Features, Technologies & Capabilities



Features

Example Features Caffeine Interactive implemented:

- Maintain the API documentation and custom theme.
- Manage translations for English, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish.
- Add loading states to network requests.
- Add error handling for network errors.
- Implement caching for metadata such as countries, phone numbers, languages, etc.
- Convert dates and times for multiple time zones.
- Apply custom theming with Material UI.
- Process payment transactions.
- Manage complex forms and validations.
- Implement role-based access control.
- Support multiple login methods, such as OAuth.
- Manage nested tables and complex drawers.
- Implement caching for images.
- Handle formatting for currencies, locales, metadata, etc.

Technologies

Example technologies used include:

- React,
- Material UI,
- Typescript,
- Redux
- Formik,
- Yup,
- Moment,
- React Query

Capabilities

Some example capabilities include:

- Material UI contributor
- Create end-to-end tests with Cypress and unit tests with React Testing Library
- Work with GraphQL and Apollo Federation
- Use microservices with Serverless and Typescript
- E2E testing

Results and Impact



Through its partnership with Caffeine Interactive, E6 was able to significantly amplify its development capacity, embracing staff augmentation as a strategic tool for fostering innovation and maintaining its competitive edge in the fintech space. This collaboration bolstered E6's project delivery capabilities and highlighted the transformative impact of staff augmentation on driving fintech advancements.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices



Key Takeaways from the Project

Agility through Flexible Staffing

The staff augmentation model proved the critical importance of scalable development teams, which allow for rapid adjustments in team size, and skill set to meet the evolving project demands efficiently.

Importance of Specialized Expertise

The staff augmentation model highlighted the value of having access to developers and QA professionals with specific skills in React and DevOps, which are crucial for tackling the need for accuracy and preciseness presented by fintech development projects.

Efficiency in Problem Resolution

The staff augmentation model emphasized a proactive and efficient approach to problem-solving, which was key in quickly addressing and resolving challenges to minimize disruptions and maintain project momentum.

Best Practices Developed During the Project

Dynamic Resource Allocation

Caffeine Interactive established the practice of dynamically adjusting team composition in response to changing project requirements, optimizing productivity and resource utilization.

Continuous Learning and Skill Development

The staff augmentation model underlined the need for continuous skill enhancement, particularly in emerging technologies relevant to fintech, to keep the team adept and innovative.

Streamlined Development Processes

The project led to Caffeine Interactive adopting a more streamlined development process and incorporating agile methodologies that significantly enhanced project efficiency and output quality.

Two-way Communication

A remote staff augmentation model demands constant communication through multiple channels. Those channels should be mutually agreed upon and should include a software development platform, email, and scheduled check-ins for updates and discussions. These channels help Caffeine Interactive maintain transparency, address issues promptly, and ensure everyone is aligned with the project goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the partnership between Episode Six (E6) and Caffeine Interactive underscores the power of strategic staff augmentation in driving innovation and maintaining competitiveness within the fintech industry. E6's journey exemplifies how staff augmentation serves as a catalyst for growth, enabling companies to scale development capacity and accelerate project delivery while maintaining high standards of quality and efficiency. By leveraging a unique approach to staff augmentation, characterized by clear communication, technology expertise, and collaborative processes, Caffeine Interactive empowered E6 to overcome development challenges and achieve transformative results.

Through this collaboration, E6 not only amplified its project delivery capabilities but also demonstrated the profound impact of strategic staff augmentation in driving fintech advancements. As the industry continues to evolve, the lessons learned and best practices established during this partnership serve as valuable insights for organizations seeking to leverage staff augmentation as a strategic tool for growth and innovation in the ever-changing landscape of fintech.

Innovate. Automate. Caffeinate.

Caffeine Interactive has references available upon request and would be pleased to explore your staff augmentation needs. NDAs are available if needed.

Let's innovate and automate together. Reach out to Dustin DeVries, Caffeine's CTO and co-founder for a free consultation to see how our team can complement your team.

	Schedule Now: https://go.oncehub.com/DustinDeVries30
	(512) 387-5793
	https://caffeineinteractive.com/contact/
	info@caffeineinteractive.com