It can happen. It should not come as a surprise.

Australian businesses sometimes find, after signing an ERP contract, that implementation work or ongoing support will be delivered partly or entirely from another country. The arrangement may be perfectly workable. The problem is discovering it only after the contract is signed, when the project team, budget and expectations are already committed.



For a system such as Odoo, the partner's people and processes matter as much as the software. If you are assessing a proposal, ask who will configure the system, handle difficult issues and answer when your team needs help. In practical terms: **who answers the phone on Monday at 9:07am?**

Is offshore support itself a red flag?

No. Offshore delivery is not automatically poor delivery, and an Australian provider may have a capable, well-managed team overseas. A distributed model can offer broader skills or extend support hours. The important questions are whether it is disclosed, suitable for your business and backed by clear accountability.

What is concerning is a **hidden offshore handoff**: the proposal creates an expectation of local delivery, but the day-to-day work or support is later passed to people you were never told about. That gap https://itwire.com/guest-articles/guest-opinion/why-onshore-delivery-is-shaping-how-australian-smes-choose-erp can affect communication, security, project continuity and the speed of resolving issues.

Some buyers treat a local office or Australian sales contact as evidence that delivery is local. It isn't. A company can sell and manage a project from Australia while assigning configuration, development, testing or support to a team elsewhere. Ask about each activity, not just where the account manager sits.

Why delivery location belongs in your selection criteria

ERP implementation involves more than installing software. The partner needs to understand how your business operates: who approves purchases, how stock is received, what happens when a delivery is short,

and how finance closes the month. Here's a story that illustrates this perfectly: was shocked by the final bill.. A local team may find it easier to run workshops during your working day, visit a warehouse or factory, and resolve questions in real time.

That can be particularly valuable for distributors and light manufacturers, where decisions about inventory, replenishment, bills of materials and production processes have consequences on the floor. When a workflow has been misunderstood, it is better to find out during a workshop than after staff have been trained and transactions are live.



Onshore delivery is a selection factor, not a guarantee of quality. A local consultant can still be inexperienced, and a remote consultant can be excellent. Judge the actual people, their relevant experience and the way they will work with your team. Ask to meet the people who will lead workshops and own your support—not only the people presenting the proposal.

Look beyond the word “local”

Ask the provider to describe its delivery model in concrete terms. For example:

- Which people and roles will be based in Australia?
- Which implementation tasks, if any, will be performed offshore?
- Who will manage requirements, configuration, development, testing and training?
- Will offshore staff access your production system or business data?
- Who is accountable for quality, deadlines and rework?
- Will the named team stay involved after go-live?

“Global delivery model” is not an answer unless the provider explains what it means for your project.

Why the partner matters with open-source ERP

Here's what kills me: open-source software gives businesses flexibility, but it does not remove implementation risk. Odoo provides a broad platform; the configuration, extensions, integrations, data migration and operating procedures still need to fit your business. The partner helps turn software capabilities into a system your people can use reliably.

That makes partner selection especially important. A low initial price may not tell you how changes will be documented, who will maintain custom work, or what happens when an upgrade affects an integration. You need to understand the partner's approach to standard functionality, customisation and long-term maintenance—not just whether the software can be made to work in a demonstration.

Businesses may encounter providers such as WilldooIT while researching Odoo implementation options. As with any provider, assess the team and scope being offered for your specific project rather than relying on a name, a sales presentation or general claims about capability. Media coverage, including reporting by iTWire, can contribute context to your research, but it does not replace due diligence with the people who will actually deliver and support your system.

How hidden offshore work can increase implementation risk

ERP projects depend on shared understanding. If a consultant is not part of the discovery workshops, a requirement may be summarised second-hand. If an offshore developer receives a ticket without the business context, the result may technically meet the written request but fail to solve the real problem. More review cycles follow, and your subject-matter experts spend time explaining decisions again.

These issues are not inevitable in an offshore team. They are more likely when the handoff is poorly planned, roles are unclear or the client was not told it would happen. Common risks include:

- **Communication delays:** questions wait for a different working day or are relayed through several people.
- **Knowledge gaps:** the person who designed a workflow is no longer available when it needs changing.
- **Rework:** requirements lose nuance as they pass between the business, local project lead and remote delivery team.
- **Cutover pressure:** urgent data or process issues arise when the people needed to resolve them are unavailable.
- **Unclear ownership:** the local contact and offshore team each assume the other is responsible for fixing a problem.

The risk becomes more visible at go-live. A successful launch depends on rehearsed migration steps, clear decision-makers and fast issue triage. If your finance team is reconciling opening balances or warehouse staff cannot process receipts, waiting overnight for replies can be costly. The question is not whether every issue must be fixed instantly. It is whether the support arrangement is designed for the moments when delay matters.

"Support overnight replies" is not the same as support

Some businesses value follow-the-sun coverage. Others need an Australian contact who can understand an urgent issue during local business hours. Neither model is automatically better; they serve different needs. But a promise of "24/7 support" can be misleading unless the provider explains what is covered, who responds and how escalation works.

Ask for the service levels in writing. Clarify the difference between acknowledging a ticket and resolving it. Find out whether your priority-one incidents have a phone path, whether support is available on Australian public holidays, and how the provider handles an issue that affects payroll, shipping or month-end processing.

Also ask who owns the ticket from start to finish. A prompt acknowledgement followed by an overnight wait for the relevant specialist may not meet your operational needs. If your team expects local-hour assistance, make sure the contract defines that rather than relying on a sales conversation.

Data sovereignty: where is the data, and who can access it?

Data location is an important part of vendor due diligence, but it is only one part. “Australian-hosted data” should mean more than a server described as Australian. Ask where production data, backups, logs and test copies are stored, and whether that location can change. Confirm whether offshore staff, subcontractors or other third parties can access any of them.

Australian hosting does not, by itself, answer every question about data access, security, legal obligations or resilience. Nor does offshore access automatically mean data is hosted offshore. Separate these topics and document the answers that matter to your organisation.

Question What to clarify Where is the production environment hosted? Specify the country or region and whether it is included in the contract. Where are backups stored? Confirm backup locations, retention periods and recovery arrangements. Who can access data? Identify provider staff, subcontractors and support personnel, including their locations and access controls. What data is used for testing? Ask whether production data is copied to test environments and what protections apply. What happens at contract end? Agree how data is returned or deleted, including copies and backups, subject to applicable retention requirements.

Ask the provider to answer these questions in writing, and have your IT, security or privacy adviser review the responses where appropriate. Avoid relying on broad claims such as “enterprise-grade security” without specifics about access, hosting, backup and incident handling.

How to prevent post contract surprises

Do this before signing, while there is still room to compare providers and negotiate. Treat delivery location, team continuity and support hours as part of the solution—not as administrative details to sort out later.

1. **Request a named delivery plan.** List key roles, locations, responsibilities and expected involvement across discovery, build, testing, training and go-live.
2. **Meet the working team.** Ask to speak with the project manager, functional lead, technical lead and support contact who are expected to work on your account.
3. **Map support to business hours.** Define response and escalation arrangements in Australian local time, including urgent incidents and public holidays.
4. **Document subcontracting.** Require disclosure of subcontractors and offshore work, with a process for notifying you about material changes.
5. **Agree data terms.** Record hosting and backup locations, access arrangements, data handling responsibilities and exit processes.
6. **Check the transition to support.** Find out who receives project knowledge, what documentation is supplied and whether the implementation team remains available after go-live.

Consider asking the provider to walk through a realistic scenario: a warehouse cannot complete despatch on Monday morning, or an opening balance does not reconcile during cutover. Who takes the call, who diagnoses the issue, and when can that person act? The answer will tell you more than a generic support brochure.

When a disclosed offshore model can work well

A distributed team can work when responsibilities are explicit, communication is disciplined and local accountability is real. There should be named owners, shared project documentation, planned overlap with Australian working hours and a clear escalation path. Offshore specialists should have the context and access they need, with controls appropriate to the data and work involved.

Ask for evidence of how the model operates: how handovers are recorded, how code and configuration are reviewed, how decisions are documented, and how the team avoids losing knowledge when a consultant leaves. If possible, speak with a customer whose project used a similar arrangement and ask what happened during testing and after go-live.

The bottom line

Discovering offshore support only after signing is not unusual, but it is a preventable post-contract surprise. Offshore delivery may suit your business; an undisclosed handoff may not. For an Odoo implementation, assess the partner's actual team, delivery locations, support coverage and data practices with the same care you give the software scope and price.

Get the answers in writing before you commit. Then check that the contract matches what you were told. Most importantly, be able to name the person who will take responsibility when something urgent happens in your Australian working day. If that answer is vague, keep asking.