When you are choosing an ERP vendor, it is reasonable to ask where the people working on your project are based. The answer can affect communication, workshop times, implementation risk, support coverage and how your data is handled. Yet “Where is your team located?” can produce a vague answer such as “We have a global delivery model” or “You’ll have local support”. Neither tells you who will actually do the work.

A better approach is to ask about the **team location** of each role, the countries where your **support staffing** is based, and where your **implementation resources** will work from during each phase. Then ask for those arrangements to be documented in the proposal and contract.

This matters for any ERP project, including an implementation of Odoo. Open-source software gives you flexibility, but it also makes the capability and availability of your implementation partner especially important. Your project depends on the people who configure, integrate, migrate, test and support the system—not just on the software licence.

Why team location belongs in your selection criteria

Location is not a simple test of whether a provider is good or bad. Skilled teams work in many countries, and a well-managed distributed team can deliver excellent outcomes. The practical question is whether the proposed arrangement fits your business and whether you know what you are agreeing to.

For an Australian distributor or manufacturer, an implementation may involve warehouse walkthroughs, finance workshops, stocktake planning, integration testing and a carefully timed cutover. Some activities benefit from people who can be on site. Others can be completed effectively online. What matters is that the vendor explains who is responsible for each activity, when they are available, and how decisions and issues will be handled.

Support is just as practical. Ask yourself: **Who answers the phone on Monday at 9:07am?** If orders are not flowing, a warehouse cannot despatch, or payroll is due, you need to know whether a qualified person can respond during your working day—not just whether support is technically available somewhere in the world.

Ask about roles, not just the vendor’s office

A vendor may have an Australian office while some or all project work is completed elsewhere. The location of the account manager does not necessarily tell you where the functional consultants, developers or support staff are based. Ask for the location of the people doing the work, by role.

- **Project manager:** Where are they based, and what are their normal working hours?
- **Functional consultants:** Who will lead finance, inventory, manufacturing or sales workshops?
- **Developers and technical leads:** Where will custom development, integrations and code reviews take place?
- **Data migration specialists:** Who will extract, transform, validate and load your data?
- **Testers and trainers:** Where are they based, and will they work with your staff during Australian business hours?
- **Support team:** Which countries are represented in the first-line and escalation teams?

Ask whether these are named people or simply roles the vendor expects to fill later. If the team is not confirmed, request the proposed staffing plan and the date by which the vendor will identify the people assigned to your project.

Questions that get a specific answer

Use direct questions and ask the vendor to answer in writing. You are not trying to catch anyone out; you are clarifying how the engagement will work.

1. **“For each role in the proposed project team, which country will that person normally work from?”**
2. **“Which roles will be delivered by your employees, and which by subcontractors or other partner firms?”**
3. **“Will any project work move to another country after the contract is signed? If so, what notice and approval process applies?”**
4. **“What hours will the project team be available in Australian time, including during testing and cutover?”**
5. **“Which countries will provide first-line support and technical escalation after go-live?”**
6. **“Who owns the decision to change a team member, and how will we be told if someone is replaced?”**
7. **“Where will our production data, backups, logs and support copies be stored or accessed from?”**

If the vendor answers “local oversight” or “global capability”, ask for the delivery detail behind those phrases. For example: “Which person will run our inventory workshop, where will they work from, and what hours will they be available?” A clear vendor should be able to explain the arrangement without relying on a slogan.

Open-source ERP makes partner capability more important

With an open-source ERP such as Odoo, the software is only part of the decision. Your implementation partner may shape configuration, write or maintain custom modules, connect external systems, migrate historical data and guide future upgrades. Those choices can affect how easy the system is to operate and change later.

That does not mean every business needs an entirely local team. It does mean you should understand who is making technical and functional decisions, how knowledge is shared, and what happens if a key consultant leaves. Ask who will review custom code, where the code will be stored, how changes will be documented, and whether your staff will receive handover materials.

It can be useful to compare several types of provider: a local specialist, a larger consultancy or a partner using a distributed delivery team. Articles and industry coverage from sources such as iTWire can help inform your broader market research, but they cannot confirm who will staff your particular project. Likewise, when considering a provider such as WilldooIT, ask for details of the team proposed for your scope rather than assuming that a company name or local presence tells you the whole delivery model.

For any Odoo partner, ask to speak with people who have delivered projects similar to yours. A distributor with multiple warehouses has different operational needs from a small professional services business. A light manufacturer may need detailed production, costing and inventory experience. Check that the people with that experience are the people who will actually work on your implementation.

Understand the risks of hidden offshore work

Offshore delivery is not inherently a problem. Undisclosed delivery is. If the proposal implies that an Australian team will deliver the project, but key implementation resources are later assigned elsewhere

without discussion, you may face surprises in availability, communication, accountability or cost.

There can also be project risks when important work is split across teams without clear ownership. A local consultant may gather requirements, while a remote team configures the system. If decisions are not recorded and reviewed, your business can end up explaining the same process twice—or discovering late in testing that itwire.com a configuration does not match the agreed workflow.

For data migration, ask who will handle the source files and where they will be accessed from. For development, ask who can access your code repositories and environments. For support, ask whether tickets are handled by the same team that knows your implementation or passed between teams. The answers should describe actual responsibilities, not just a company-wide policy.

Put important commitments in writing. The contract, statement of work or service schedule can specify:

- the agreed roles and expected locations or countries of delivery;
- which subcontractors or partner firms may be used;
- the vendor's obligation to notify you of material staffing or location changes;
- your approval rights for changes that affect sensitive work or access to data;
- Australian-time availability for workshops, cutover and support; and
- how project knowledge, documentation and credentials are handed over.

Be proportionate. A change to an administrator's location may not need the same approval process as moving production support or development access to a new subcontractor. The important thing is that the change is visible and managed.



Separate team location from data sovereignty

Knowing where staff work from is not the same as knowing where your data is stored. A team can be based in Australia while your ERP hosting or backups are located elsewhere. Conversely, data may be hosted in Australia while authorised support personnel access it from another country.

Ask the vendor to distinguish between **data storage**, **backup storage** and **remote access**. Request the country or region for each, including production databases, file storage, backups, monitoring logs and any temporary copies used for troubleshooting or migration.

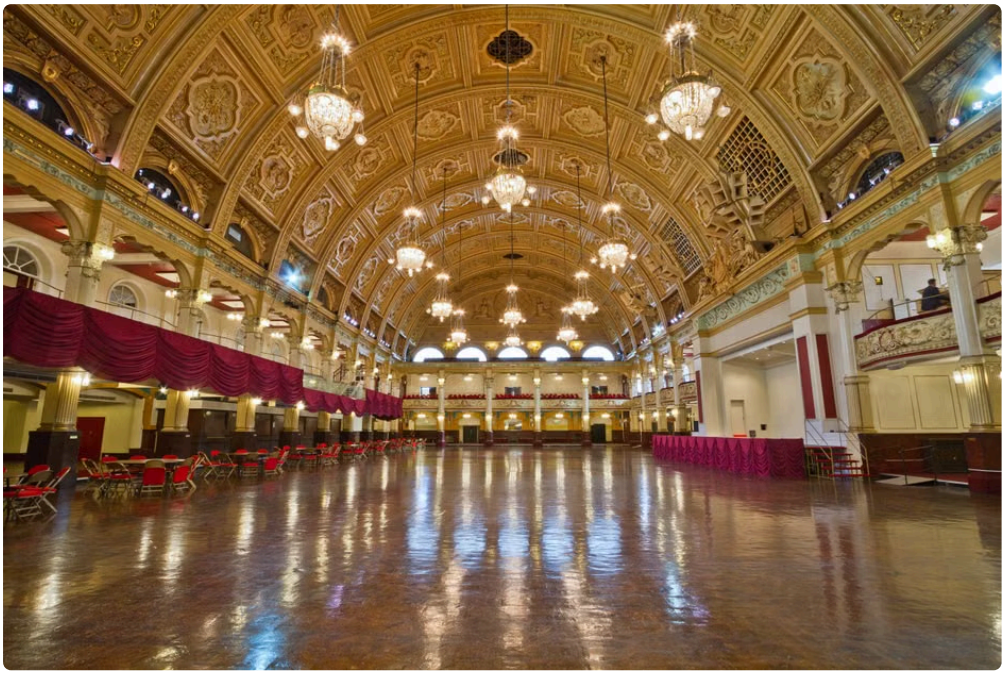
For Australian-hosted data, confirm what “hosted in Australia” means in practice. Does it cover backups as well as the live environment? Are disaster-recovery copies stored in Australia? Can support staff outside Australia access the system? How are access requests approved and logged? Ask for details relevant to your legal, contractual and internal security requirements, and have your own legal or security advisers review them where appropriate.

Area Question to ask What to record Project delivery Where will each role normally work from? Role, country, availability and named person where known Subcontracting Will another firm or country perform any work? Provider, responsibilities, notification and approval process Support Which countries handle tickets and escalations? Coverage hours, response process and escalation contact Data Where are production data, backups and logs stored? Hosting and backup regions, access controls and retention

Test the support model before you sign

Do not rely on a broad service-level statement alone. Ask how a real incident would be handled. If a stock receipt cannot be processed on a Monday morning, what number do you call? Who takes the initial details? Who can investigate the ERP configuration or integration? When will the issue be escalated to someone with the right skills?

Ask for the support hours in Australian time and confirm whether they include public holidays relevant to your business. Check whether the stated response time is a first acknowledgement or an actual resolution commitment. Ask how urgent incidents are classified and what happens if the normal contact is unavailable.



If possible, speak with a current customer whose operating model resembles yours. Ask how support worked during a busy period, a month-end close or a go-live. Find out whether the support team understood the customer’s processes and whether issues were resolved without repeatedly re-explaining the setup.

How to compare vendors fairly

Use the same questions for every shortlisted provider. That makes the answers easier to compare and keeps the discussion focused on your needs rather than on assumptions about a particular country. Score vendors on whether the delivery model is transparent, appropriately skilled, available at the right times and consistent with your data requirements.

Do not treat “onshore” as an automatic guarantee of quality, or “offshore” as an automatic warning sign. Look at the actual team, the work they will do, the handover between locations and the controls around data access. A nearby team with limited relevant experience may be a poorer fit than a distributed team with clear accountability and dependable Australian-hours support.

For high-risk milestones—such as payroll cutover, opening balances, warehouse go-live or production scheduling—ask who will be actively available, not merely “on the project”. Confirm the decision-maker, technical escalation path and contingency plan. A roster or named contact list is more useful than a promise that the vendor will “be there”.

A practical closing question

Before you choose a vendor, ask them to walk you through a normal project week and a bad Monday morning. Where are the functional consultant, developer and support lead? What time do they start? Who can make a decision? How does an urgent issue reach someone who can resolve it?

Then ask the question that matters operationally: **Who answers the phone on Monday at 9:07am?** The answer should identify a real support path, in Australian time, with a clear next step if the first person cannot help.

When you have clear answers about team location, support staffing countries, implementation resources and data hosting, you can compare vendors on evidence. You will know who is doing the work, where it is being done, how your information is protected and what help is available when the ERP is business-critical.