

Fractional Shopify Developer or In-House Hire

For Shopify owners pricing a hire against a retainer. Fill in your own numbers.

START HERE

Average your last 3 months of dev hours. Below **149 hours** a month at \$74 an hour, stay fractional unless two In-house answers are yes.

Signals for an in-house hire

Does a broken order form need a fix within the hour? **Yes: In-house**

Do you run a custom app, an ERP sync or a Hydrogen storefront? **Yes: In-house**

Has the backlog refilled every week for six months? **Yes: In-house**

Signals for fractional

Does most work arrive with a sale, a launch or a Shopify deadline? **Yes: Fractional**

Do you need CRO, speed, Liquid and tracking from one person? **Yes: Fractional**

The cost math

Median web developer salary (BLS, May 2025) **\$92,650**

Benefits on top of salary (BLS, June 2026) **43%**

All-in in-house cost a month **\$11,030**

Paid hours in a full-time month **173**

Break-even hours a month

At \$50 an hour **221**

At \$74 an hour, senior freelance **149**

At \$170 an hour, US agency **65**

Your rate: divide \$11,030 by what you pay an hour now.

Hire in-house only when your hours sit above break-even every month, or two or more In-house signals are yes.

Choose Fractional when

- Work comes in bursts
- Hours sit below break-even
- No one can review code

Choose In-house when

- Same-hour fixes matter
- You own custom software
- A steady six-month queue

Cost of being wrong with Fractional: slower response in a store emergency.

Cost of being wrong with In-house: about \$2,545 a week paid through quiet weeks.

Default: Fractional, with code in your GitHub and access on a collaborator account.

Not sure which side you sit on? kaspianfuad.com/contact

Kaspian Fuad, Shopify developer and CRO consultant. Rates published at kaspianfuad.com/engagements.

WD Electronics weekly retainer: added-to-cart up 28% on a 4-week rolling trend, flat traffic.