

You deserve a better kettle!

21 July 2026 · ai, testing, excellence, value-add

My kettle has more business sense than many consultancies. How? It has a tiny filter on the spout that catches the limescale before it joins my cup of tea, turning a relaxing cuppa into a crunchy liquid milk drink. In business speak, my kettle has what the Thomson Reuters Value Chain Assessment would describe as “Delivery Excellence” or “systems that catch failures before they reach clients”.

For many consultancies, and for too long, more mistakes, & more bugs have meant more headcount. More billable hours / days etc. At best many just didn't focus on quality, at worst many hoped it would be “worked on in the next invoice”.

But the mood is changing. Customers believe much of the raw ‘coding’ can be handled by Claude or some other (usually cheaper) AI model. They are also aware of the likelihood that your consultants are using a coding agent, making them question: what value did you add?

Some legacy consultancies are still pushing large teams, for 100's of days. knowing that getting in is the hard part. Growing an unskilled team building a low-quality product is easy. Not working yet? running late? Why not have some more engineers & testers... Hey and maybe you need some business analysts, because we'd really love to own your business process on a time and materials basis.

Back to my esteemed kettle. Morphy Richards (the manufacturer) knows their kettle doesn't just have to give me what I asked for but keep me protected from the side-effects.

Claude or Open code can write some code for you. But it can't work with you and your team to isolate the value you want to keep and protect you from the problems it brings, the bugs the missing features etc. Like many juniors & interns, it has no filter, it's not customer ready.

Why can't Claude do this as well? Because it's giving you it's prediction of what you might want, based on the work of other people, in other companies, in different jurisdictions, in the past, who were just trying something out on GitHub.

Its output looks like your app, but it's really a guess at what your app looks like based on someone else's app, squinted at from afar. That's where small consultancies can help. We don't want a 100 x person & 2+ x year contract, we couldn't staff it even if we wanted to.

(The truth is the big global systems integration consultancy also doesn't have the staff, but I digress)

A small team can target advice & help where it's needed. Bringing skills and experience from across a multitude of industries. We can help you maintain that “Delivery Excellence”. The

value your customer wants, is not the code, it's excellence & that doesn't come at the push of a button.

If you want help making your software excellent rather than agentic slop that only "looks" the part, get in touch.