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# 8 Questions to Ask Before You Hire a Marketing Agency





# Your Marketing Needs

Many companies consider outsourcing some or all of their marketing needs. Research indicates that the average cost to hire a seasoned marketing executive is substantially higher than hiring a marketing agency, who can not only create strategy for you, but also plan and implement it.

As companies look to streamline business operations to focus on core competencies, the decision to hire a marketing agency has become a viable solution.

Here are eight important questions to ask before choosing an agency:

## 1. What is their track record?

Take the time to understand what the agency is good at. Most agencies will tell you they can handle all of your marketing needs, but before making a decision, consider the following:

- Has the agency dealt with other clients that are similar to your business/industry or size?
- Get references. Connect with a couple of their clients to see what their experience has been like and if they are satisfied with the marketing services being offered.



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## 2. Do you understand what you're paying for?

Business owners are not necessarily marketers or familiar with today's marketing jargon and because of this, owners can fall prey to signing agreements that have not been fully explained. For example, the term SEO is not just about key words on Google.

Before signing on the dotted line, your agency should book time to walk you through each and every line item so you understand the costs involved. It is your money, so ask them what results you will see and how many hours on each line item will be spent.

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### 3. Who, specifically, will be working on my account?

Understand exactly who you will be working with on a daily basis and who else will be working on your account. The agency owner who you met with is not always who is doing the work, so make sure to ask a few key questions including:

- How much access will you have to the most senior strategist?
- Who will be the key contact?
- How much will be passed off to a junior team member?
- Is the team virtual/freelance, or is there an office/employees?
- What is their availability in terms of evening and weekend access?

### 4. How often will you be speaking to them?

On-going communication is key to helping you understand the value your agency brings to the table. Your agency should be speaking to you or connecting with you or your key company contact on a daily basis.

They need to book regular meetings with you and your team to discuss updates/progress and recommendations.



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## 5. Do they have quality control measures in place?

Providing a quality service is crucial at an agency, particularly when dealing with design, writing and social media. Find out what your agencies best practices are:

- Does the owner review all material that is produced before going out?
- Will they be copied on every email?

Quality control measures improve productivity and efficiency and knowing that your agency adheres to a quality control process speaks volumes in terms of trust, accountability and transparency.

## 6. How long will it take to see results?

Be clear on what you want the results to be. Is it brand awareness, or increased engagement or lead generation? Be wary of agencies that overpromise results. Companies that deploy new marketing campaigns might see results in as little as three to four months, and sometimes it is instantly, but typically in B2B marketing predictable results can take up to 6 to 12 months.

As for promising leads, no agency can promise leads because we cannot predict how your audience will react to a marketing activity, let alone when they will buy it. An agency can promise results though, so be clear to ask them to clarify what results they will give you in what timeline.



## 7. Are they a virtual agency?

There are thousands of virtual marketing agencies out there and unless you want to come to their office, you may not know that they are working from their home office with no staff. How important is it to you and your team to have an agency with a bricks and mortar office space?

A virtual office raises several questions including:

- What level of accountability do they have?
- How do you get access to them?
- How is the work controlled and provided to you as a cohesive service?
- Do they have quality control processes?

Virtual offices may be cheaper as they usually do not have a high overhead, but what you could be losing in terms of integrity may not be worth it.

## 8. Do they write marketing plans?

Even if you have a marketing strategy, you still need to have a marketing plan that outlines exactly what activities, audience, frequency, outcomes, integration plan, content required, etc.

If your agency tells you they have a plan, you need to see it. You also need to understand the rationale for the approach and approve it before it is executed upon. Without a plan how can the tactics be successful?



# CreativeWorks Marketing: Your Strategic Partner

CreativeWorks Marketing is an award-winning agency that helps businesses understand their unique strengths and achieve their marketing goals. Our proven strategies maximize impact, reach, and effectiveness.

If your marketing efforts aren't delivering the results you expect, contact us via email, text, or call. You'll be glad you did.

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