

10 Questions to Ask Your Marketing Company BEFORE You Hire Them

There is no shortage of marketing companies to choose from, and many of them offer the same suite of services. Each sales process is also similar. You schedule a demo or a consultation with an engaging and energetic salesperson, they show you a lot of fancy graphics, tell you about their services and how they're different from the other five companies you've already talked to. Then they give you a proposal and ask for your decision on whether or not to move forward.

And while there's not necessarily anything wrong with that approach, many of these sales pitches don't answer all of the questions you need to be asking. However, it's okay to be curious and ask as many questions as you need in order to feel good about the investment you're about to make. With that in mind, here are 10 questions you should absolutely ask every marketing company you speak to.

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Do I get to keep my website?

Many marketing companies actually don't let you keep your website when you decide to terminate your relationship with them. Other companies who build websites on their own proprietary platform may hand over the keys when you leave, but your website will likely break or begin to perform differently when you move it to a new host. Make sure you understand what happens if you decide to end your relationship with your vendor

What results should I expect?

Always be on the same page with your marketing vendor when it comes to the results you expect (or what they promise). If a marketing company promises 100 leads every month, take it a step further and make sure that your definition of a lead aligns with theirs. After all, 100 unqualified leads isn't what you're paying them for.



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Can I see some examples of your work?

Most marketing companies will already have a portfolio and examples of their work, but see if they'll show you specific examples from their other clients in your same practice area to gauge their effectiveness in presenting your brand. Even more, ask for some of their most recent work to see how things stack up to what their portfolio contains.

Will my content be unique to my firm, or could other attorneys get the same thing?

Syndicated content doesn't accomplish much and, depending on your marketing goals, could do more harm than good. Shockingly enough, we've seen lawyer websites that were built by the same marketing company with the exact same web copy. Make sure what your marketing company creates is unique to you and your firm alone.



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What will my involvement/time commitment be?

Be careful of any company that tells you to sit back and relax and let them do all the work. As nice as it sounds, your marketing is more successful if you have a collaborative relationship with your vendor. They should get to know you and your firm. They should be able to mimic your tone and style. And they should engage with you on a regular basis to make sure you're both on the same page and up to speed on what's going on.

Do I pay extra for requesting changes to my website?

Watch out for this one! Many companies charge an hourly rate to make website changes. For example, one of our clients had her website with a different company. She requested a new page to be added, and they quoted her for four hours of work, which would cost over \$200! We logged into her website on her behalf and created the page in less than 15 minutes and didn't charge a dime for it. While larger changes that involve reworking code or redesigning entire page elements could incur additional costs, most simple, basic changes should be covered.



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Are there any extra fees not outlined in the contract?

We'll actually have other companies' backs on this one. Vendors who use third parties to execute their marketing services may incur additional costs that are passed along to you since they're managing the account on your behalf. These costs may vary based on several factors. (For example, MailChimp's monthly fee fluctuates based on how many email contacts you have.) Always be sure you understand any additional fees and whether or not you're paying your vendor or the third party app directly.

What is the term/contract length?

This may not be something you have to ask, but it is something you should carefully read over when you receive a proposal. Make sure you understand what the length of the term is, what your cancellation notice window is, and any other responsibilities you may have to uphold your end of the contract.



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How much experience do you have working with my industry?

Are you going to be working with a general marketing company with a portfolio that covers everything from restaurants to general contractors to lawyers? If so, that may mean that they don't specialize in your industry and may not be fully aware of how it works. Look for a vendor that has experience working with other businesses in your specific industry. After all, a marketing strategy for a white-collar professional will look very different from a strategy geared towards the restaurant industry.

Do you work well with other vendors?

While working with a one-stop shop for all of your marketing needs is certainly convenient, you'll see better results by having experts in various concentrations of marketing work together on your strategy. Unfortunately, some marketing companies don't play well with others. Make sure you set clear expectations if you'll have multiple vendors working with you and that everyone shares resources and makes each others' jobs easy.



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About the Author

Spotlight Branding is a leading marketing agency dedicated to marketing for law firms and other professional services by creating a content marketing strategy that actually works!

Spotlight Branding provides internet marketing services such as website design, blogging, email newsletters, social media, video, and more! What makes them unique is their focus on using the internet to build a brand and help businesses stay connected with their network rather than focusing on SEO services.



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