

CDNs Key Questions to Ask Providers

Company

1. How long have you been in this business?
2. How many clients have you sold? How many have you lost, and why?
3. What size or types of clients fall into your “sweet spot”?
4. What peripheral or support services do you offer?
5. How many locations do you have? Domestically? Globally?

Products/Services

1. Do all tiers include maintenance and support?
2. How often are new features introduced? What if I need a feature you don't have?
3. What key features are included in your solution?
 - a. What features are currently missing? On your roadmap? Does management love?
4. What is your product's competitive advantage over other packages? Why?
 - a. Price? Dashboard? Ease of use? Flexibility? Don't say “all of the above”.
5. Do you provide a free site or strategic assessment? What does it include?
6. Do you offer a free trial? What's missing in the trial version?
7. Do you have a support knowledge base, community forum, or applications shared by customers?
8. What is your SLA for response times for hosted content? For support issues?
9. Do I need to export content in the event I need to change platforms? If so, how?
10. How do I ensure I own and control my content?
11. What security do you provide for my content?
12. What Other types of services do you offer?

Features

1. What is your network's competitive advantage over other CDNs? Price? Dashboard? Ease of use? Flexibility? Don't say “all of the above”.
2. Please describe your network. How many access points do you have in the US? Worldwide?
 - a. Is your network architecture traditional, P2P or Hybrid?
 - b. Do you utilize Edge servers as part of your CDN architecture?
 - c. Do you employ Dynamic Metatile Generation? Web Caching? HTML rewriting? Any casting?
 - d. Do you employ proximity sensing? Auto Server Availability? Instant user redirection? DNS Based request routing? Global load balancing? Connection Monitoring?
3. Please describe your server architecture.
4. Do you specialize in specific delivery of content (Media, Images, HTML Pages, Flash, Silverlight)?
5. Do you support DRM, licensing or digital media rights management services for audio and video?
6. Do you provide tools or technology to optimize media? Encoding, streaming and compression/acceleration?
7. How do you manage capacity?
 - a. What is your target capacity before you add additional capacity?
 - b. How do you accommodate and plan for seasonal or unplanned traffic spikes?
8. Please describe your reporting capabilities? Content delivered, times, locations, etc. Can you run ad hoc reports? Please provide a list of sample reports.
9. Please describe the tools that retailers have to manage their content, manually refresh their content, or configure content refreshes.
10. Do you provide tools to allow customers to identify areas of their site that they can optimize?
11. How often does your network refresh its content? Is it configurable by asset, by traffic, by time of day, etc.?
12. How do you automatically refresh content when content changes very frequently? Can the customer force refreshes or clear caches?
13. How do you handle and respond to site outages? What is your failover process?
14. Can you cache partial HTML pages? How?
15. Do you have approval processes in place to allow approval of content before going into the network?
16. Do you provide API's, FTP's or integrations with existing hosting, cloud and other 3rd party providers?

Pricing

1. Please describe your pricing model.
2. Do you charge for traffic served, fixed plus variable charges, set up fees, etc.?
3. Are there different levels?
4. Why do I want to pay to upgrade to the next level?
5. How do you price for overages, spikes and burst campaigns?
6. How do you charge for annual support? What about maintenance?
7. Are there any hidden fees (implementation, transaction costs, revenue sharing, Transfers)?
8. Please describe the typical length for your contract?
9. Do you have a ROI calculator or metrics calculator to determine my site(s) need a CDN?

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