

SEO Key Questions to Ask Providers

Company

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How long have you been in this business? 2. How many clients have you sold? Lost, why? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. What size or types of clients fall into your “sweet spot”? 4. Do they have clients in your vertical? |
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Products/Services

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you offer the entire suite of services around the search arena (SEO, pay-per-click management, website design, consulting, social marketing, content delivery, etc.) or a subset? 2. Is your service based on the expertise of one or two key individuals whose attention I’ll only have for a short period? Or is it based on scalable systems and techniques independent of your subject-matter experts? 3. Which segment does your product better serve, enterprise-level business or small to mid-sized business? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Is Search Engine Optimization your primary business or a subset offered to support some other services? 5. What happens when I discontinue service with your company? Will I be able to manage SEO myself or will it be impossible for me to take over? Will my SEO ranking plummet? How do I retain the SEO content data? 6. What does “Web 2.0 services” mean to my business? (Don’t be afraid to ask. It’s one of those buzz phrases that everyone uses and no one agrees upon the meaning!) |
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Solution Features

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where is your competitive advantage? 2. What do you do to improve conversion rates? Do you use any third-party tools? 3. How can you demonstrate ROI for your efforts? 4. To what analytic packages have you integrated? 5. Do your services tend more towards statistical analyses that rely on the laws of big numbers or more of an agency approach, requiring new content creation at many levels? 6. With which search engines do you work with? Which do you recommend? Why? 7. Do you provide SEO services or a solution? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. How do you become expert enough to understand the nuances of my product positioning to get good search rankings? c. How many keywords/key phrases will you guarantee will reach the first page? Can I give you the ones I really care about? |
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If services:

- a. Who modifies my eCommerce site? Who writes the content?

If solution:

- a. What methods does your solution use to enable high SEO rankings?
- b. What guidance do you give to help me use your solution effectively?
- c. What reporting is available? Is it real-time, batch, ad hoc? Please provide a list of reports.

Pricing

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SEO pricing usually involves an upfront payment and monthly maintenance. Does that monthly maintenance decline as your efforts taper off? 2. How do you justify fees after the start-up effort? 3. Are you incented to get me to maximize clicks, not conversions? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Do you offer any pay-for-performance approaches? Cost per qualified lead? Cost per sale? |
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