

Website Performance Key Questions to Ask Providers

Company

1. How long have you been in this business?
2. How many clients have you sold? How many clients have you lost, and why?
3. What clients fall into your “sweet spot”?
4. What peripheral services do you offer (e.g., eCommerce, accounting, custom development)?
5. How many hosting location centers do you have? Domestically? Globally?

Products/Services

1. Is your solution offered as perpetual licensed software or on-demand multi-tenant solution?
 - a. What are the client support requirements?
 - b. What is the process to add features you currently don’t have?
 - c. What redundancy and disaster recovery do you have in place?
2. What skills does my organization need to use your tools? What training do you provide? Can I make my own changes to the software?
3. What technical support services are available?
 - a. Are there human beings I can reach during reasonable hours (chat or phone) or do I have to wait over 24 hours for an email response or callback? Is your support team located in the US or abroad?
 - b. What is your SLA for support issues?
4. Do you have a support knowledge base, community forum, or applications that are shared by customers?

Features

1. Do you provide capacity testing solutions?
 - a. How many steps can be in each scenario?
 - b. Can scenarios navigate from non-secure to secure pages?
 - c. Do separate concurrent users maintain separate cookies?
 - d. Can different users add different products to the cart to prevent inventory run through? From Excel? How many scenarios can you run and support simultaneously?
 - e. What is the maximum number of concurrent users you can model in your capacity test?
 - f. What metrics or page load component times do you track under capacity tests?
 - g. What reports are available during and after a capacity test?
 - h. Do you provide network and server component test solutions? Which can you track and report?
 - i. Can your solution test point-to-point response times? For example, can they imitate a user in Des Moines, IA accessing a server in California?
 - j. Can your solution test network-hub-to-server response times?
 - k. What other software, systems and web applications can you track and report?
2. What tools does your solution provide for managing and monitoring tests? Real-time?
3. Does your solution provide visual reporting or a dashboard view of reports in progress?
4. Does your solution provide integration (imports/exports) capabilities? Can you provide a list of partners or solutions (web analytics, server, QOS logs) you have integrated with in the past?
5. Does your solution provide for monitoring site performance?
 - a. What timeframes are possible?
 - b. Can it run load test, single page load tests?
 - c. What reporting or escalation processes are available?

Pricing

1. Please describe your pricing model.
 - a. Do you charge for number of page views, users, assets, etc? If not, what metrics do you base your charges on? How are these metrics calculated and defined?
 - b. Different levels? Comparison matrix?
 - c. Why do I want to pay for upgrades?
 2. How do you charge for annual support? What about maintenance and professional services?
 3. Are there any hidden fees?
 - a. Initial implementation? Ongoing changes? New feature developments?
- How do you handle overages and campaign bursts?
Transaction costs?

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