



THE BUYER'S CHECKLIST

Choosing Your App Developer

Twelve things to look out for before you sign with any app development agency — including the questions most founders don't think to ask.

- ✓ How to spot vendor lock-in before it traps you
- ✓ How to tell an in-house team from a reseller
- ✓ How to know if the price is right

The 12-point vendor checklist

Use this to evaluate Synergy Labs — or anyone else you're considering.

1 Define your project scope

- ☐ What are your app's core functionalities?
- ☐ What platforms do you need — iOS, Android, web?
- ☐ What is your budget and timeline?

2 Evaluate developer experience

- ☐ Review their portfolio and case studies.
- ☐ Check their experience with similar projects.
- ☐ Look for client testimonials and references.

3 Assess technical skills

- ☐ What technologies and programming languages do they use?
- ☐ Are they familiar with the latest development tools and frameworks?
- ☐ How do they handle app security and data privacy?

RED FLAG CHECK

4 Do they have a moat around you?

- ☐ Some companies build on **proprietary tech or hosting** that locks you in — you can't leave without rebuilding from scratch.
- ☐ Known examples: **Bubble.io**, **Builder.ai**, **Crowdbotics**, **AppyPie**.
- ☐ You want the freedom to move to your own in-house team whenever you outgrow the agency.

Ask them: "If I wanted to switch to my own team or another provider, how easy would that process be?"

5 Understand their development process

- ☐ What is their approach to project management?
- ☐ How do they handle communication and updates?
- ☐ How often will we meet for updates? **Weekly is the standard for good companies.**
- ☐ What is their process for testing and quality assurance?

6 Consider post-launch support

- ☐ What type of maintenance and support do they offer?
- ☐ How well will they handle updates and bug fixes?
- ☐ How many days of free maintenance do they provide?
- ☐ How do they define "maintenance"?
- ☐ What are their thoughts on scaling and future development?

7 Review contract terms

- ☐ What is the payment structure?
- ☐ Are there any additional costs or fees?
- ☐ What are the terms for intellectual property and ownership?

8 Evaluate cultural fit

- ☐ Do they align with your company's values and goals?
- ☐ How well do they understand your target audience?
- ☐ Are they responsive and easy to work with?

RED FLAG CHECK

9 Check their team — outsourced or in-house?

- ☐ Check their LinkedIn: how many employees do they have, and where are they located?
- ☐ Ask to speak with someone technical on their team — and to invite other team members to the call.
- ☐ Ask each team member how long they've been with the company.

10 Payment approach — T&M vs. fixed cost

Time & Materials

Flexible for changing requirements, but can lead to unpredictable costs.

Fixed Cost

Predictable budgeting and clear milestones if scope is well-defined; changes require formal revisions.

Our recommendation: if you have a clear vision and want predictable costs, a fixed-cost contract avoids surprises and simplifies budgeting.

11 Price — overcharging or undercharging?

- ☐ Compare prices across several companies — avoid both overpriced and suspiciously cheap.
- ☐ You don't want a \$5K company, but you also don't want to overspend on a \$500K one.
- ☐ Find the properly priced company in the middle.
- ☐ Get a second opinion from a tech expert in your network.

12 Make your decision

- ☐ Compare your top candidates against the criteria above.
- ☐ Weigh overall cost vs. value.
- ☐ Trust your instincts and choose the developer that best fits your needs.



About Synergy Labs

Synergy Labs is a boutique app development company headquartered in Miami, FL, helping small business owners, startup founders, and enterprise leaders bring custom applications to life.

30+

EXPERIENCED PROS

5M+

DOWNLOADS ON APPS WE'VE SHIPPED

8 wks

FASTEST TIME TO LAUNCH

Whether you're building for iOS, Android, or web, use this checklist to evaluate us — or any other vendor — and find the right fit for your business.

Start a conversation → synergylabs.co