

THE RETAINER BUYER'S CHECKLIST.

Ten questions to ask any agency. Including us.

Marketing retainers are bought on trust and regretted on detail. These ten questions surface the detail before you sign, not after. Take them into every pitch meeting. A good agency will enjoy answering them. A bad one will change the subject.

- ☐ **01** What exactly do I get each month, and who does the work?
Vague scope is where retainers go to die. You want named deliverables and named humans, not 'ongoing support'.
- ☐ **02** Will I talk to the people doing the work?
If your contact is an account manager who briefs someone you never meet, every instruction travels twice and arrives half right.
- ☐ **03** What does it cost, and what makes the price move?
If they can't tell you what triggers a price change, the answer is 'whenever we like'. Honest agencies publish starting points.
- ☐ **04** How long am I tied in, and what does leaving look like?
One month's notice means they plan to earn your loyalty. Twelve months means they plan to contract it.
- ☐ **05** Who owns the accounts, assets and data if we part ways?
Your ad accounts, your website, your content, your audiences. If any of it lives only in their systems, you're renting your own marketing.
- ☐ **06** What happens in month one, before anything is published?
The right answer involves strategy, access, and understanding your business. 'We'll start posting straight away' is a red flag dressed as enthusiasm.

- ☐ **07** How will you report, and which numbers actually matter?
Impressions and follower counts fill slides. Enquiries, sales and cost per enquiry fill order books. Ask which ones the report leads with.
- ☐ **08** What won't you do, and when would you say no to me?
An agency that agrees with everything is a supplier. One that pushes back, with reasons, is a partner. You're paying for judgement.
- ☐ **09** Can I see work like mine, and the results behind it?
Pretty portfolios are easy. Ask what actually changed for the client: enquiries, sales, growth from a standing start. An agency proud of outcomes shows numbers, not just screenshots.
- ☐ **10** What do you need from me for this to work?
The honest answer is: access, sign-off speed, and your knowledge of your customers. If they claim to need nothing from you, they're planning generic work.

OUR ANSWERS, IN WRITING, IN PUBLIC.

C&B Studio publishes its starting prices, works on one month's notice, and puts you directly in touch with the people doing the work. Build your own retainer in sixty seconds at candbstudio.co.uk/services, and bring this checklist to the call. We mean it.