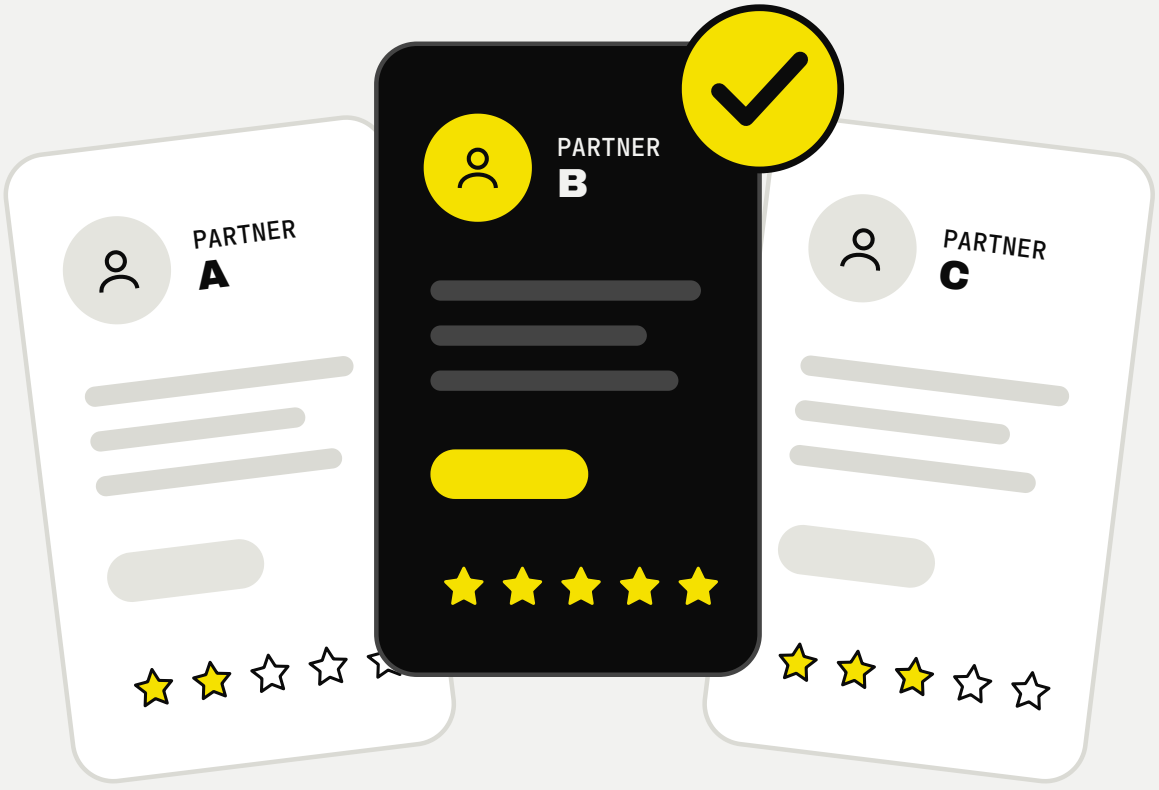
GUIDE + SCORECARD · 20 QUESTIONS · 8 RED FLAGS

CHOOSING A MARKETING PARTNER

The questions to ask before you sign with an agency or consultant, and the red flags to watch for.



HOW IT WORKS

ASK EVERY SHORTLISTED PARTNER THE SAME QUESTIONS.

Like-for-like answers make the differences obvious. Three steps, one decision.

STEP 01

Ask the same 20 questions

Every shortlisted partner, same order.

STEP 02

Watch for 8 red flags

Any one is a reason to dig deeper.

STEP 03

Score side by side

Weight what matters, then total.

MARK EACH ANSWER

Clear
Convincing and specific.

Vague
Needs chasing.

No answer
Couldn't say.

TIP

Vague answers to the commercials questions are the ones to chase.

FIVE AREAS · FOUR QUESTIONS EACH

01-04
Understanding your business

05-08
Strategy & approach

09-12
Results & reporting

13-16
Commercials & contract

17-20
Fit & references

QUESTIONS 01–08

BUSINESS & STRATEGY

Do they understand you, and do they have a plan?

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BUSINESS

01	What do you think our biggest growth constraint is, and how did you reach that view?	✓ ? ✗
02	Who have you worked with that looks like us, and what changed for them?	✓ ? ✗
03	Who would we actually work with day to day? Can we meet them?	✓ ? ✗
04	What will you need from us, and how much of our time?	✓ ? ✗

STRATEGY & APPROACH

05	What would you do in the first 90 days, and why in that order?	✓ ? ✗
06	What would you recommend we stop doing?	✓ ? ✗
07	How do you decide between channels, and when do you say no to one?	✓ ? ✗
08	How will your work connect to sales, not just marketing metrics?	✓ ? ✗

QUESTIONS 09–16

RESULTS & MONEY

What you'll get, what it costs, and who owns what.



RESULTS & REPORTING

09	What will you report on, how often, and to whom?	✓ ? ✗
10	What does success look like at 3, 6 and 12 months?	✓ ? ✗
11	Can you show a report you send to a current client (anonymised)?	✓ ? ✗
12	What happens if results aren't where we agreed they would be?	✓ ? ✗

COMMERCIALS & CONTRACT

13	What exactly is included in the fee, and what costs extra?	✓ ? ✗
14	Who owns the website, ad accounts, content and data if we part ways?	✓ ? ✗
15	What is the minimum term and notice period?	✓ ? ✗
16	Do you subcontract any of the work? To whom?	✓ ? ✗

QUESTIONS 17–20

FIT & REFERENCES

Would you enjoy working with them, and do clients agree?

FIT & REFERENCES

17	Can we speak to two current clients: one happy, one where things went wrong?	✓ ? ✗
18	How do you handle disagreement with a client?	✓ ? ✗
19	What kind of client is not a good fit for you?	✓ ? ✗
20	Why should we choose you over doing this in-house?	✓ ? ✗

BEFORE YOU SIGN

Make sure your business owns these

- **Website**
- **Domain**
- **Ad accounts**
- **Analytics**
- **Content**
- **Data**

YOUR TALLY

Partner A	Partner B	Partner C
✓ ___ ? ___ ✗ ___	✓ ___ ? ___ ✗ ___	✓ ___ ? ___ ✗ ___

RED FLAGS

EIGHT SIGNS TO WALK AWAY

Any one of these is worth a hard question.



Vague on results

Talks "awareness" and "engagement" but won't commit to measures tied to enquiries or revenue.

You don't own your assets

Ad accounts, domain, website or analytics registered in the agency's name.

Long lock-ins, short on detail

12+ month minimum terms with a loosely defined scope.

The pitch team disappears

Senior people win the work; juniors you never met deliver it.

Same plan for everyone

A proposal that could have been written for any business in any sector.

No questions about sales

They never ask how leads are handled once they arrive.

Reporting by screenshot

Vanity metrics with no link back to the goals you agreed.

Too keen to say yes

No pushback, no recommendations to stop doing anything.

COMPARISON SCORECARD

SCORE THEM SIDE BY SIDE

WEIGHT 1–3 × SCORE EACH PARTNER 1–5 = WEIGHTED TOTAL

CRITERIA	WEIGHT	A	B	C
Understands our business and buyers	1 2 3			
Clear, prioritised plan	1 2 3			
Links marketing to sales outcomes	1 2 3			
Relevant proof and references	1 2 3			
The team we'd work with is senior enough	1 2 3			
Transparent pricing and ownership	1 2 3			
Reporting we'd actually use	1 2 3			
Chemistry: we'd enjoy working with them	1 2 3			
WEIGHTED TOTAL				

NEXT STEP

WANT A SECOND PAIR OF EYES?

Shortlisting partners? Put us through these 20 questions on a free call. We'll answer every one straight, including whether we're the right fit.

BOOK A FREE 30-MIN CALL
wearenv.co.uk/contact

EMAIL US
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