

**1. PERSONS
NAME/COMPANY**

2. PRICING/RATES

Heads up

Crappy SEO agencies charge a fixed monthly rate because it allows them to do a few small tasks quickly. Make sure you ask what their hourly rate is, or how the fixed amount will be broken down into billable hours. In other words, you'll want to make sure you're not paying them to do 20 minutes work each month.

What's your pricing, how much do you charge?

What are your hourly rates?

How many hours per month do I get for that?

Will I receive itemised billing for the work done?

Be sure to calculate time spent on your site. If you're paying \$300 a month and they tell you that their hourly rate is \$100, then something's wrong. 3 hours a month means your SEO campaign is going to take forever.

3. GUARANTEES

Heads up

SEO guarantees are a scam. Beware of SEOs that claim to guarantee rankings, allege a "special relationship" with Google, or advertise a "priority submit" to Google. There is no priority submit for Google. In fact, the only way to submit a site to Google directly is through our Add URL page or by submitting a Sitemap and you can do this yourself at no cost whatsoever.

Anyone offering a guarantee is out to deceive you.

Can you guarantee results?

If they offer guarantees of any kind, avoid them.

4. POINT OF CONTACT

Heads up

Having a dedicated point of contact is crucial for any SEO campaign. Avoid anyone that doesn't want to engage, offer support, help or advise. SEO campaigns are always a joint effort. You'll want to know the person or agency you're working with is there for you.

Who will be my point of contact?

Will I have someone dedicated to assist me?

Can I call the office if I need assistance or have a question?

What's the most suitable channel? Email, phone?

How often can I get in touch?

5. CONTRACTS

Heads up

Signing a contract only favours the service provider – especially if they're lazy or not doing a good job. I would advise against entering into an agreement where its compulsory to sign a lock in contact.

Always work towards building a relationship first, and only then think about entering into any binding agreements. Otherwise the risk is far too high.

Do you use lock in contracts?

What if I want to cancel out, what happens? Can I?

Can I pause my campaign if I want to?

6. OFFPAGE OPTIMISATION

Heads up

Offpage optimisation is the process of course where you're working towards acquiring high quality links from external websites in an effort to improve search positioning. How this is done, greatly impacts the performance of your site. Avoid anyone offering low quality link building, or anyone offshoring it to overseas. Definitely avoid any of this crap

- Bookmarking
- Web 2.0 properties
- Blog commenting
- RSS feeds
- Profile links
- Spun articles
- Private networks

What will you be doing in terms of offpage optimisation?

Where will you be getting links?

Can you give me an example of some high quality links you've built for other clients?

Is the work done inhouse or do you have a team overseas?

7. CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE

Heads up

Measuring campaign performance is absolutely critical. A lot of shitty SEO agencies won't bother monitoring your sites performance, they'll just send you ranking reports which are pretty much meaningless on their own.

Your reports should clearly demonstrate that your site is making a return on investment. If it doesn't you're wasting your time.

How is performance of the campaign measured?

Will you be tracking customer enquiries and or sales?

Will I receive something that outlines conversions within my reports?

How will I know if I'm getting a positive ROI?

8. UPDATES

Heads up

Always ensure you're being kept up to date with what's going on, at least monthly. I provide all of my clients with an end of month strategy call where we go over –

- What works been done
- What work is coming up
- And of course answer any questions they might have

Always make sure they intend on communicating clearly with you about what's going on. Otherwise you'll be left in the dark.

How will I be kept up to date with what's going on?

How will I know what work is being completed?

How often will I hear from someone?

9. REPORTING**Heads up**

You'll want to get a bit of a look at their reports before you sign up, just to get some idea of what to expect. More importantly, you'll want to make sure you understand the information that they intend on providing.

Reporting should cover what work has been completed. Also, be sure to look for conversions in the reporting (as mentioned above)

What's included in your reports?

Can you send me an example?

Will it show what work has been completed for the month?

Will it show conversions? (customer enquiries or sales) - this is important

Will someone explain the reports to me if asked?