



# THE AUTONOMOUS AGENCY VETTING Checklist

**Step-by-Step Guide**

Hiring the right technical partner is a critical decision. This checklist is your tool to separate true partners from simple vendors. For a deeper dive into the strategy behind each of these questions, our full blog post offers more context and analysis.

## **How to Use This Document**

The goal here isn't to get a "yes" or "no" for each question. The goal is to start a conversation. Pay close attention to how they answer. A great potential partner will be confident, transparent, and have clear processes. A weak one will be vague, defensive, or dismissive.

*Use the space provided to jot down notes on their responses.*

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### Section 1:

#### The Partnership & Philosophy

*(These are the big-picture questions that reveal their character and approach.)*

◆ **1. Who, exactly, will be building my product?**

**What you're looking for:** Direct introductions to the project lead and key team members. Transparency about who is in-house versus remote. A clear rejection of handing off work to a separate, unseen team after the sale.

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◆ **2. What happens when I change my mind or we need to pivot?**

**What you're looking for:** A defined, predictable process for handling changes (a "change order process"). Clear communication on how changes will affect budget and timeline before work begins.

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◆ **3. If we decide to part ways, what do I walk away with?**

**What you're looking for:** An immediate and clear "yes" to you owning everything. This means all source code, design files, assets, and full admin access to all accounts. No talk of proprietary platforms or licensing fees.

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## ◆ 4. What's our relationship like the month after my final payment is made?

**What you're looking for:** A specific plan. This should include a warranty or bug-fixing period (e.g., 30-60 days). Clear options for ongoing support or maintenance retainers. They shouldn't be seeing the launch as the finish line.

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## ◆ 5. Will you tell me if you think my idea or request is bad?

**What you're looking for:** Enthusiasm for this question. They should see themselves as a strategic partner who is paid to think, not just to code. Look for stories of when they've pushed back on a client for that client's own good.

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## Section 2

### The Process & Logistics

*(These are the day-to-day questions that reveal how organized and transparent they are.)*

## ◆ 6. How will we communicate, and what is the cadence?

**What you're looking for:** A predictable rhythm. This could be daily Slack check-ins, weekly demo calls, and monthly strategic reviews. You want a designated main point of contact who is empowered to get you answers.

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### ◆ 7. What project management tools do you use, and will I have access?

**What you're looking for:** A clear answer (e.g., Jira, Asana, Trello). The key is their willingness to give you "view" or even "comment" access. Transparency is a green flag; a "black box" process where you only see results is a red flag.

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### ◆ 8. How do you decide on the technology stack for this project?

**What you're looking for:** A business-first justification. They should explain why a certain technology is right for your goals (e.g., scalability, speed to market, talent availability), not just because it's new or what their team likes to use.

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### ◆ 9. What does your quality assurance (QA) and testing process look like?

**What you're looking for:** A dedicated process, not an afterthought. They should talk about different types of testing (automated, manual) and have clear roles for who is responsible for it. It shouldn't just be the developer testing their own work.

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◆ **10. How do you get up to speed with our business and our users?**

**What you're looking for:** A "discovery" or "immersion" phase. They should ask questions about your business model, your customers, and your definition of success before they talk about features.

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◆ **11. Can you share an example of how you handled an unexpected project delay?**

**What you're looking for:** A story that centers on proactive communication and shared problem-solving with the client. Blaming the client or making excuses is a bad sign. Taking ownership and presenting a clear plan is what a partner does.

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◆ **12. What kind of documentation will I receive when the project is complete?**

**What you're looking for:** A commitment to providing documentation that would allow another development team to take over the project if needed. This shows professionalism and a true transfer of ownership.

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### A Final Thought

A great partner won't just have answers to these questions, they'll be excited that you're asking them. It shows you're a serious client who values a true partnership, which is the only way we like to work.

If you appreciate this level of transparency and want to have a straightforward conversation about your project, we're an open book. You can schedule a no-pressure call with our team directly here:



**AUTONOMOUS**

We're an open book. [Let's talk.](#)

