

You are about to buy something you cannot inspect.

So here is the whole engagement, drawn to scale — what it costs,
how long it runs, and every point where you can walk away.

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You cannot check the code. You can check the deal.

These are the six questions we would ask on your behalf, with our own answers stated plainly beside them. If another team answers one differently and can explain why, that is a real answer too. What should worry you is a team that cannot answer at all.

01 **Who is actually writing the code?**

Agencies routinely sell you the senior people you meet and staff the work with juniors you never meet.

The people in the first call are the people who build it. We are a senior-only team, which is also why we are small and why we will tell you when we are full.

02 **What happens if I want to stop?**

A contract that only ends at delivery means you are paying for a plan you can no longer change.

You can stop at any stage boundary. Stages run two to four weeks and you approve each one before it starts.

03 **Who owns the code, and where does it live?**

Some shops keep the repository until final payment, or build on tooling only they can operate.

Your repository, your accounts, from the first commit. No proprietary framework you would have to pay us to maintain.

04 **What would make this estimate wrong?**

A quote with no stated assumptions is a number, not an estimate. Ask what it depends on.

We name the assumptions in writing and price per stage rather than per hour, so the incentive to work slowly is removed.

05 **What happens the first time it breaks at 3am?**

Most proposals cover building the thing and go quiet about operating it.

Monitoring and alerting are part of launch, not an upsell. You get a runbook written in plain language.

06 **Can you explain a technical trade-off so I understand it?**

If a vendor cannot make a decision legible to you now, they will not start once you are paying them.

This document is the test. So is the first call — bring something you have been told and do not understand.

Three services, in the order they happen.

These are not peer options to pick from. Discovery produces the scope, the build works against it, and operations keeps it running after everyone has gone home.

01 Discovery & Scoping

A paid, fixed-fee stage that turns an idea into a written scope and a price you can take to any team.

02 Product & Platform Development

The software itself — web applications and online stores, built to hold up in production.

— Web development — E-commerce — UI/UX design
— Search and performance

03 Launch & Operations

Getting it live and keeping it up — monitoring, backups, and a runbook written in plain language.

WHAT MOVES THE PRICE

We quote per stage, not per hour, so the incentive to work slowly is removed. Four things genuinely change what a stage costs. Nothing else should surprise you on an invoice.

How much is genuinely unknown

A well-understood problem is cheap to estimate. If we cannot tell you what something costs, it is because we do not yet know what it is — that is what Discovery is for.

How exact the design has to be

Building to a rough direction is faster than matching a pixel-precise comp. Neither is wrong; they cost differently and you should know which you are buying.

Integrations with systems we do not control

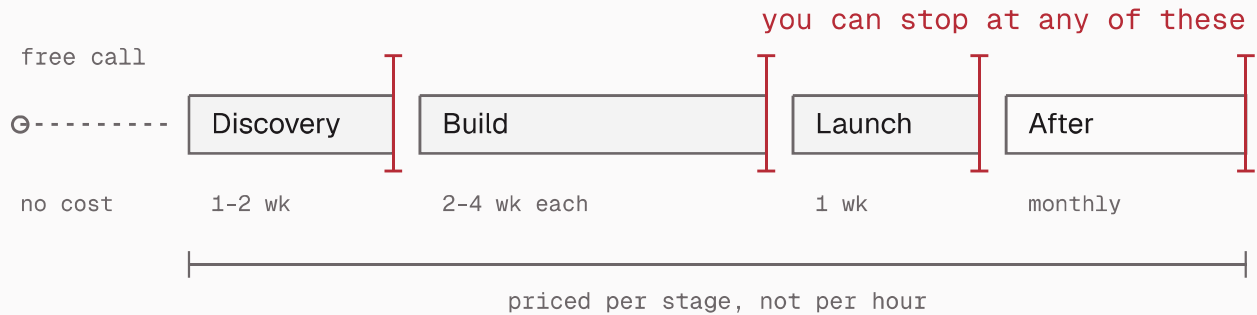
Connecting to a payment provider is predictable. Connecting to a twenty-year-old system with no documentation is not. We flag these before quoting.

Whether real users already depend on it

Changing software that people use right now costs more than building new, because the work includes not breaking what already works.

Four stages, and an exit at every boundary.

Drawn to scale below: stage width is proportional to duration, and the crimson marks every point where you can stop. The first call is free and comes before any of it.



01 Discovery

1-2 weeks

Paid, fixed fee

The paid stage that follows the free call, where a rough range becomes a fixed price. We ask questions until we can describe your business back to you, then write down what the software has to do and where the hard parts are.

You get: A written scope, a fixed price, and a plan you can take elsewhere.

02 Build

Varies by scope

Fixed price per stage

Work is split into stages of two to four weeks. Each ends with something running that you can use, not a status report. You approve and pay per stage, so you can stop after any of them without owing for work not done.

You get: Working software at the end of every stage, and the code in your account from day one.

03 Launch

1 week

Included in the final stage

We handle deployment, monitoring, and the unglamorous parts — backups, error alerts, the things that matter at 3am.

You get: A live system, monitoring that pages someone, and a runbook in plain language.

04 After

Monthly, cancel anytime

Fixed monthly, or hourly

Most clients keep us on a monthly retainer. Some take it in-house. Either way the handover is the same: documented code, no proprietary tooling, and no dependency on us that we engineered on purpose.

You get: A team that answers, or a clean exit. Your choice, not ours.

Three situations where you should hire someone else.

We would rather say this now than three weeks into a project.

- **You need forty people by next quarter.**

We are small on purpose and will stay that way. Scale like that needs a different kind of firm, and we would rather name one than pretend.

- **You want the cheapest quote.**

We are not it. The cheapest quote is rarely the cheapest project, but if price is the deciding factor you should buy on price and not on this document.

- **You need it live in three weeks with the scope already fixed.**

One of those has to move. We will tell you which one before you have paid us anything, not three weeks in.

Bring us the thing you have been told and do not understand.

The first conversation costs nothing. You will leave with a rough range, an honest read on whether we are the right team, and no obligation to go further.

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