



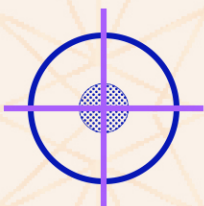
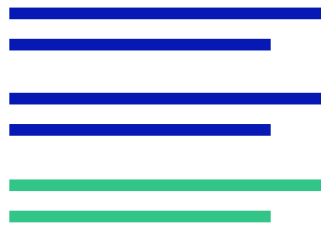
NICK LAIUPPA

MARKETING

The How to Make Sure You Don't Get Taken Advantage of by an Agency



Field Guide

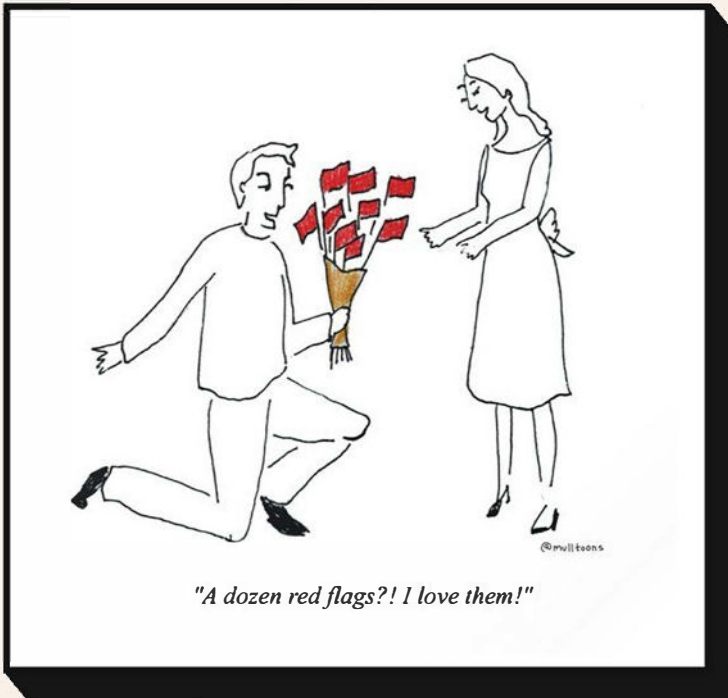




Agencies are notoriously shady to deal with. I know firsthand because I worked for 7 different agencies in my freelancing days. Of those seven agencies, four of them were shady. That's pretty much 60% of the lot! With this guide, you'll be able to quickly discern which agencies are looking to rip you off and which agencies are looking to serve you.

Red Flag Cheat Sheet

We'll expand on each of these points in the guide but here is a cheat sheet for you to print out and tape to your desk when hiring an agency.



If you hear an agency say something along these lines, hang on to your wallet.

- "We can't guarantee results because we can't make people buy."
- "We specialize in ..." then go on to list 15+ different marketing practices. You can't specialize in 15+ things. That's the definition of being a generalist, not a specialist.
- We're a full scope integrated marketing agency that partners with your business to drive results (or any other run of the mill general statement about how they help you grow)

If you're speaking with an agency that does these sorts of things, politely run in the opposite direction while checking to make sure you haven't been pickpocketed.

- They let you purchase their services online with no consultation first
- They speak in generalizations and don't offer any specific information or strategy about YOUR business
- They're stingy with their strategy and ideas for helping your specific business
- They only tell you yes, yes, yes, and they don't push back or offer constructive criticism on any of your requests or ideas
- They don't offer a guarantee
- They don't market THEMSELVES very well
- They pressure you to sign long term contracts
- They don't spend their own money on marketing or advertising
- They don't invest in coaching or training for their business or employees





I GUARANTEE IT

Ask for a guarantee

Agencies love to operate without guarantees and quite frankly, their customers accept it. It's one of the only industries that still do business this way. The only other business I can think of that won't guarantee anything are insurance companies, and we all know how shady they are.

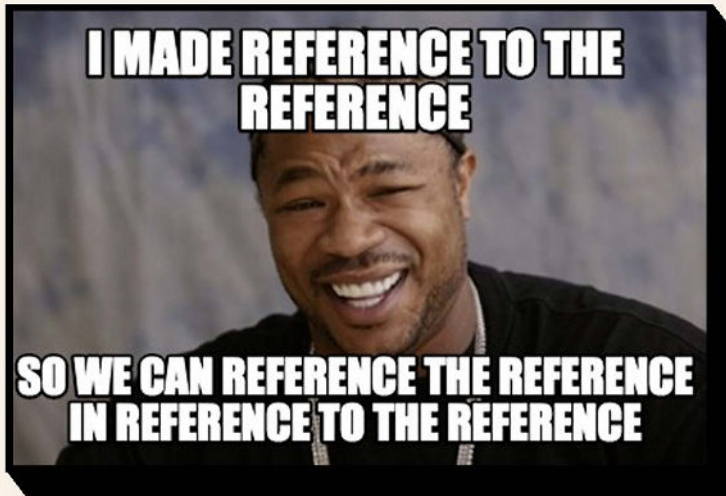
At the time of writing this, I'm currently fighting with my insurance company for covering the expenses associated with bringing our first child into the world. They told me our midwife was in-network, but when they got the bill they conveniently decided that she was actually out of network. Go figure.

In my freelancing days, none of the agencies I worked for had a guarantee. I actually used the same cringey line when I spoke with customers; "we can't guarantee people will buy, but we can get them to your site"

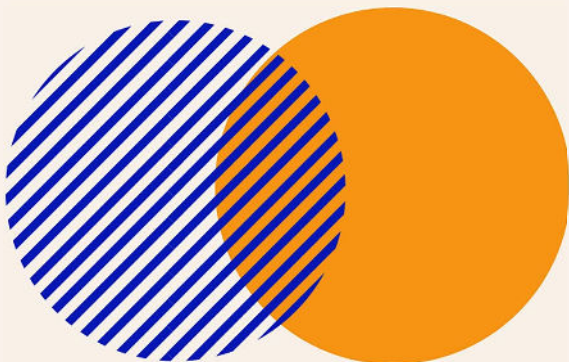
In effect, it's true. There are a lot of other factors that go into turning a prospect into a customer. A proper landing page, a killer offer, a no holds barred guarantee, good internal systems, and processes, just to name a few. So, for us to offer the guarantee that we do, "we'll increase your results within a necessary amount of time or we'll refund you", we need to make sure everything is properly put in place. That's why we spend the time on the front end to see if you're the right fit for us because our guarantee forces us to get you the results we said we would.



Ask for References



When you hire an employee, you ask for references. Why shouldn't you get the same level of security from the agency you hire? Ask them to give you a few references of their clients (bonus points if their clients are in your industry). If they're not willing to give you any info, then that might be cause for concern. If you get the references, simply give them a call and let them know you're interested in hiring the agency and you'd like to hear about their general experience with the agency so far. It doesn't need to take any more than 5 minutes of anyone's time.



Ask for Screenshots

Case studies are great, but they're pretty much a one-sided story. The agency can design them from the ground up to make sure they look as good as possible. There's nothing wrong with that, of course, but, I like to ask for screenshots. Screenshots don't lie. Tell them that they can blur or block out any sensitive information like account numbers or client names so they feel more comfortable sending them to you. Of course, you'll want to request screenshots that show the results they are getting for services that you are interested in (social media ads, search ads, SEO, etc.). I love it when clients ask for screenshots. It lets me know that they care which is a sign that they'll be responsive to our requests.



Don't Sign a Long Term Contract

"If agencies signed their work, their clients would get much better advertising"

David Ogilvy

Long-term agreements aren't necessarily a bad thing, but if you're being pressured to sign one on your first interaction with an agency then that might be a red flag. In most cases, an agency does need your commitment because a lot of work goes into marketing a brand new client. BUT, there is no reason an agency needs a year-long commitment from you right off the bat. We ask for a 3-month agreement, which in our experience is enough time to get everything up and running with enough time to start optimizing the campaigns. At the end of the 3 months, we will reevaluate our agreement and see if it still makes sense for us to keep working together.

Make Sure They're Generous with Their Strategy

In the Mad Men days, agencies gave the strategy and design away for free. How? They made all of their money by up charging on the advertising placements. In other words, they bought space in TIME magazine on your behalf for \$2,000 and charged you \$4,000.

At the dawn of the digital era, agencies shifted their model to selling their services and their strategy a la cart, while the client paid the ad network directly. This created a ton of generalist agencies that sold every marketing service under the sun because the more services they sold, the more money they could make.

Today, the actual execution of marketing and advertising has become commoditized. A quick search on a freelance site like UpWork will turn out thousands of web designers, google ads buyers, and social media managers, for example. So, What you're buying from an agency in the current era is their industry expertise and their strategy.

If an agency is unwilling to give you their ideas for marketing and advertising your specific business given your goals, then that is a red flag. In our opinion, an agency should be generous with its strategy since that is the main reason why you hire an agency in the first place. This is one of our core values and the reason why we don't allow prospects to purchase our services on our website. We first need to meet with a prospect so we can find out if and how we can get them the results that they are looking for. In that first meeting, we do about 20% of the talking which mostly consists of us asking you questions so we can formulate a marketing plan for your specific needs. At the end of the call, once we have enough information to formulate a plan, we'll share our strategy with you.

Find Out How they Market Themselves

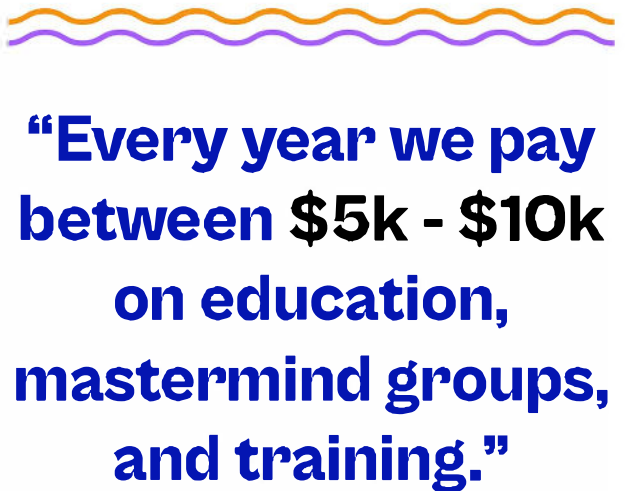
If anyone should be able to market themselves, it ought to be a marketing agency right? I mean, that's what they do for their clients daily. So, if an agency isn't doing a bang-up job of marketing themselves, what that tells their prospects and clients is "these things aren't important to us."

I'll be honest, we learned this through trial by fire. In our bootstrap days, we were simply too busy to do any sort of marketing for ourselves. We didn't even have a website for goodness sake! But, as we grew, we realized that we were not doing a good job of leading by example. So, we niched down and began to create valuable content so our prospects would realize "hey, they do know what they're talking about"! This guide is just one example of that content.



The screenshot shows a marketing offer for "The ONLY Source". At the top left, there are three blue wavy lines. Below them is a search icon followed by the text "The ONLY Source". Underneath that is the text "Teaching you How to Take Advantage of the Private School Boom". Below the text are five orange stars. At the bottom left is a green button with the text "Get the Insider Information". At the bottom right is a logo for "NICK LAIUPPA MARKETING".

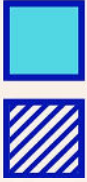
Find Out How They're Being Coached



"Every year we pay between \$5k - \$10k on education, mastermind groups, and training."

If I can attribute one thing to our agency's growth over the years I would have to pin it on education and coaching. By paying cold hard cash to be a part of a mastermind group of other high-level marketers and business owners we get access to people who will push and press us to think differently. Every year we pay between \$5k - \$10k on education, mastermind groups, and training. Money WELL spent.

Not only does that education help better our business and client experience, but it also better our client's results. Finding out how your prospective agency is being coached is a vital piece of the puzzle. Choosing an agency that does invest in education ensures that they will have access to the information that keeps them, and you, ahead of the curve.



This resource has exposed some of the marketing agencies' dirtiest secrets. Don't be caught off guard if you get some (or a lot of) push back when bringing this information up to the agencies that you're looking to hire.

I've worked for shady agencies. It doesn't feel good for anyone involved. That's why for us, it is of the utmost importance to be the opposite of shady. It's also the reason I put my name on the agency.

If you're currently looking for an agency we humbly ask for your consideration. You can get started with us by booking our initial meeting by clicking through to our website **nicklaiuppa.com**

Also, if this resource has been helpful to you, reach out on our social media or website and let us know!

(669) 257-2897
Happy hiring!
NICK LAIUPPA

