

App Development Quote Checklist

Twelve questions to ask before you accept a proposal, pay a deposit or commit to a full product build.

Use this before the sales call	Use this before you sign
Send the questions in advance and ask the supplier to answer them against the written proposal.	Write each answer down. Verbal reassurance is useful context; the agreement is what survives.

How to score each answer

0 - Red	Vague, avoided or left entirely with the supplier.
1 - Amber	A plausible answer, but important detail is still verbal or unmeasurable.
2 - Green	Specific, testable and written into the scope, acceptance criteria or agreement.

The goal is not a perfect score. It is to find where the risk sits before money moves.

Scope and learning

1. What business assumption does the first phase test?

A good answer names a behaviour to prove: sign up, complete the main task, pay, return or trust the process.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

2. What is the smallest complete user journey?

Ask for one journey from start to success. A component list such as 'login, dashboard, notifications' is not a journey.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

3. What is explicitly excluded?

Get the edges in writing: roles, platforms, integrations, reports, migration, admin tools, content, testing and launch support.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

4. What will be real, and what will be simulated?

Payments, matching, notifications, AI or back-office work may be simulated at first. The choice should be deliberate and explained.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

5. What can real users test before the full build is finished?

There should be an early point when evidence can change the plan. If users see nothing until launch day, risk stays alive throughout.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

6. Who owns the code, designs, accounts, domain and data?

The agreement should name every asset, say when ownership transfers, and keep important service accounts under your control.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

Ownership and delivery

7. Can another developer take over?

A usable handover includes the repository, configuration, deployment steps, data structure, design files, account access and a walkthrough.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

8. Which ongoing costs sit outside the quote?

List hosting, databases, email, SMS, maps, payments, app stores, analytics, AI, support and third-party licences.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

9. What counts as accepted work?

Milestones need observable acceptance criteria, a review window and a clear process for fixing defects.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

10. How are changes priced and approved?

The proposal should distinguish defects from changes and require your written approval before cost or timing changes.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

11. What happens if the timeline slips or the relationship ends?

Ask what you receive at each paid milestone, how notice works, and whether you keep access to everything already paid for.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

12. What would a smaller first engagement look like?

Ask for the narrowest phase that creates evidence: a clickable prototype, concierge test, one working journey or technical spike.

Score: 0 / 1 / 2 Notes: _____

Your decision sheet

Supplier: _____ Quote: _____ Date: _____

Question	0	1	2	Decision note
1. What business assumption does the first phase test?	0	0	0	
2. What is the smallest complete user journey?	0	0	0	
3. What is explicitly excluded?	0	0	0	
4. What will be real, and what will be simulated?	0	0	0	
5. What can real users test before the full build is finished?	0	0	0	
6. Who owns the code, designs, accounts, domain and data?	0	0	0	
7. Can another developer take over?	0	0	0	
8. Which ongoing costs sit outside the quote?	0	0	0	
9. What counts as accepted work?	0	0	0	
10. How are changes priced and approved?	0	0	0	
11. What happens if the timeline slips or the relationship ends?	0	0	0	
12. What would a smaller first engagement look like?	0	0	0	

0-11: Stop and clarify

Too much risk is undefined or sitting with you.

12-19: Proceed carefully

Resolve the amber answers and reduce the first phase.

20-24: Well structured

Still verify the contract, but the proposal has useful edges.

Want a neutral second opinion before you sign?

Book a 90-minute Flight Check at founderflight.ie - EUR 200

Commercial guidance only, not legal advice. Ask a solicitor to review material contracts, ownership terms and liabilities.