



BusinessFulcrum
STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD!

**Which is best for you -
an ad hoc or retained
marketing service?**

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Which to choose – ad hoc or on a retainer?

It's tricky isn't it? Whilst taking someone on a retainer is more of a commitment it often means that you are benefitting from a reduced rate.

In order to help my clients with this issue I list for them some pros and cons so that they can make an informed decision. I hope this is helpful to you...

If you fall under one of the following categories, you should probably hire a marketing consultant on an ad hoc basis.

- You know exactly what you want.
- You don't need help with more than two or three items
- You don't need or want a lot of consultation and marketing help or copywriting on a regular basis.
- You do not need advice on tap

You may prefer to commission a marketing consultant via a monthly retainer if one or more applies:

- You have a lot of work that needs to be done.
- You have an ongoing need for copywriting and/or marketing consultation
- You need help with ongoing social media campaigns and enactment.
- You are in a highly competitive and fast moving arena and continually need to keep one step ahead
- You have many aspects to your business that need insightful integration
- You want to ensure your chosen consultant has time for you every month and stays on "your team" to build the relationship and increase their understanding of your company
- You prefer to know how much you will pay each month
- You are at the stage where employing someone seems like a good idea but you do not want to get involved in payroll, sickness/holiday pay or NI!

Frequently asked questions

What's normally included in retainer fees?

Simply put you pay for any time spent on your behalf. Like any professional, billable time includes face to face, phone or e-mail advice or doing research around your sector.

How do prices normally compare under each system?

Most consultants will give you a sliding discount which effectively means the more time you retain the lower the hourly rate.

For example at my minimum retainer period of 1 day per month for 3 months you will receive a 10% discount. By the time you reach 4 days per month for one year my fee is discounted by 30% **(If relevant please do ask for a full schedule of my retainer rates)**

At one point are retainer fees billed?

You're effectively booking out a set period of time in the month so fees are billed in advance.

How long is a retainer day?

This does vary, so do ask. Will you get charged for breaks? Will they actually be working 7 hours a day? (My days are 8 hours)

What happens if I don't use the hours?

Some consultants will shrug their shoulders. You booked their time and the fact that you delayed on signing off (for example) means you should still pay for the time booked.

I take a different approach and am willing to roll forward 100% of any unused hours by one month which gives you some leeway if a slow month is followed by a busy one. However, I will also nag you to keep some up the marketing momentum!

Is there generally a notice period?

Yes, and this may extend if you are committed to many days per month. To give you some idea if I am on a retainer in excess of 3 months I usually suggest a mutual termination provision of 30 days.

About Me

Whether you're considering ad hoc or retained support I may be able to help. Set up in 2003, Business Fulcrum is a Hampshire-based marketing consultancy which provides you with a cost effective outsourced marketing department.

My aim is:

- to help you clearly differentiate your company in terms of your target market
- to work collaboratively with you in terms of effective and engaging communication
- to help you enact marketing in a consistent and continual way as part of your day to day business

My philosophy is to be open and transparent with clients and I will provide an objective and expert view of how you may need to engage or re-engage with your target audience. My core values probably sum up my service most accurately, these are:

expert incise focused creative and quirky

These values have enabled me to work with literally hundreds of companies - either one to one or through training workshops; and I have been dubbed "the marketing consultants' marketing consultant"

How I work with new clients

I initially offer a two hour Marketing Healthcheck which gives us both the opportunity to look at your business from an all-round marketing perspective.

This is followed by a written report which is sent with a list of available marketing services which includes strategy, marketing communications and marketing mentoring.

You can then choose to work with me by retainer or on an ad hoc basis having decided which will work best for you.