

11 Questions
to ask

Before hiring a UX Agency

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BANSI MEHTA

UX Design Expert

Founder & CEO, Koru UX Design LLP  

Bansi Mehta is the Founder & CEO of [Koru Design LLP](#), with the experience of more than a decade in the field of User Experience. Collectively, her team provides exceptional UX for enterprise applications and complex systems, working with clients ranging from healthcare giants to boutique investment banks. She is a self-driven leader who is an inspiration to many whose lives she has touched through design. She believes that life is worth living when there is a meaningful contribution you make to people around you. What gives her fulfilment is when she, being in business, ultimately helps someone live a better life.

UX Design is her love and passion both. She gets thrilled every time a challenge comes her way where meaningful UX can turn around the way users interact and look at the product. Her passion drives her and it extends in her team at Koru.

Her passions outside UX design such as traveling, fine dining, reading and being around people is what breathes fresh air in her work.

Introduction

It doesn't matter how your customers choose to interact with your software – whether it's on their computer, tablet, smartphone, or even smartwatch – their experience while using it will influence whether they become a fan for life ... or quit in frustration, choosing instead to seek out a competing solution.

That's how important a delightful, rich, user experience is to the success of any app or website.

But not every UX design agency out there is capable of designing a user experience that dramatically improves the results and bottom-line of your company.

In fact, hiring the wrong agency can cost money, time and may cause you to lose your place or an opportunity within your market. That's why it's absolutely crucial you ask the right questions when seeking out a UX design agency.

So, to help you discover whether they're the best fit for you and your needs, here are some questions you need to ask before agreeing to work together.

11 Questions to ask before hiring a UX Agency



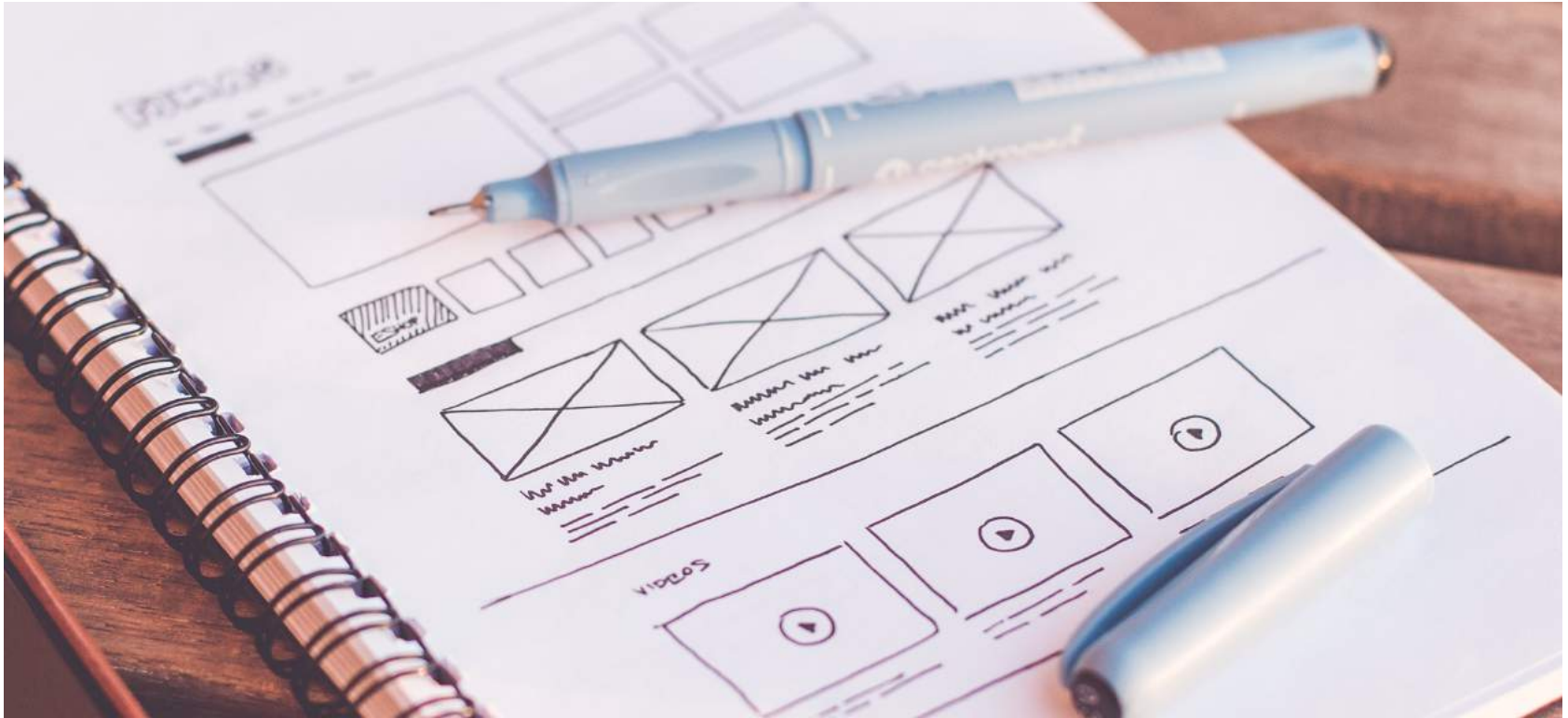
1. What planning and strategy exercises will be required to get us started?

When planning to work with an agency, it's important to find out what will be required to get things started on the right foot, quickly and smoothly.

This is where we explore what solution would be the best fit for your business, your goals and what your users want to achieve.

While the planning and strategy exercises vary depending on the nature of the project, they often involve:

- An interview with stakeholders
- Brainstorming sessions
- Establishing workflows, user stories and an ecosystem map
- Defining Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Heuristic analysis, prototyping, and more



This helps lay the groundwork for everything that will follow and ultimately, the successful completion of your project.

If you notice that the agency doesn't need any of this to get started, or doesn't do a thorough job, this is a red flag. In that case, you may want to keep looking, because without laying the foundations and doing the necessary research, positive results are doubtful.

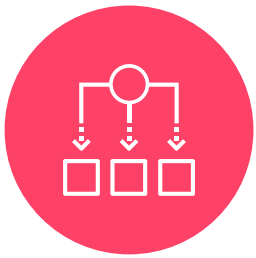


2. How would we be able to measure overall progress considering the scale and timeline?

Before you agree to work with a **UX design agency**, it's important you have a way of measuring overall progress. It's important that there's an understanding of deliverables and dependencies and a timeline with target dates for each of them.

This spares you from wondering where things are at or waiting on deliverables without a clear turnaround time.

By having a clear picture of what everyone needs to do at each phase of the project, it makes it easy for both, your team and the agency to work together towards a successful outcome.



3. How would resources be allocated for the successful completion of a project or engagement?

To be able to meet deadlines and the demands of the project, it's important that there is a clear understanding upfront of the complex user flows in the project and an understanding of the overall effort required to get it into development.

This ensures everything is accounted for and all personnel and other resources that are needed get factored in from the start, thus preventing bottlenecks later.

For example, the initial phase of the project would require more UX/UI execution efforts with constant validation by the development team to ensure the end product has a simple, functional and effective design.

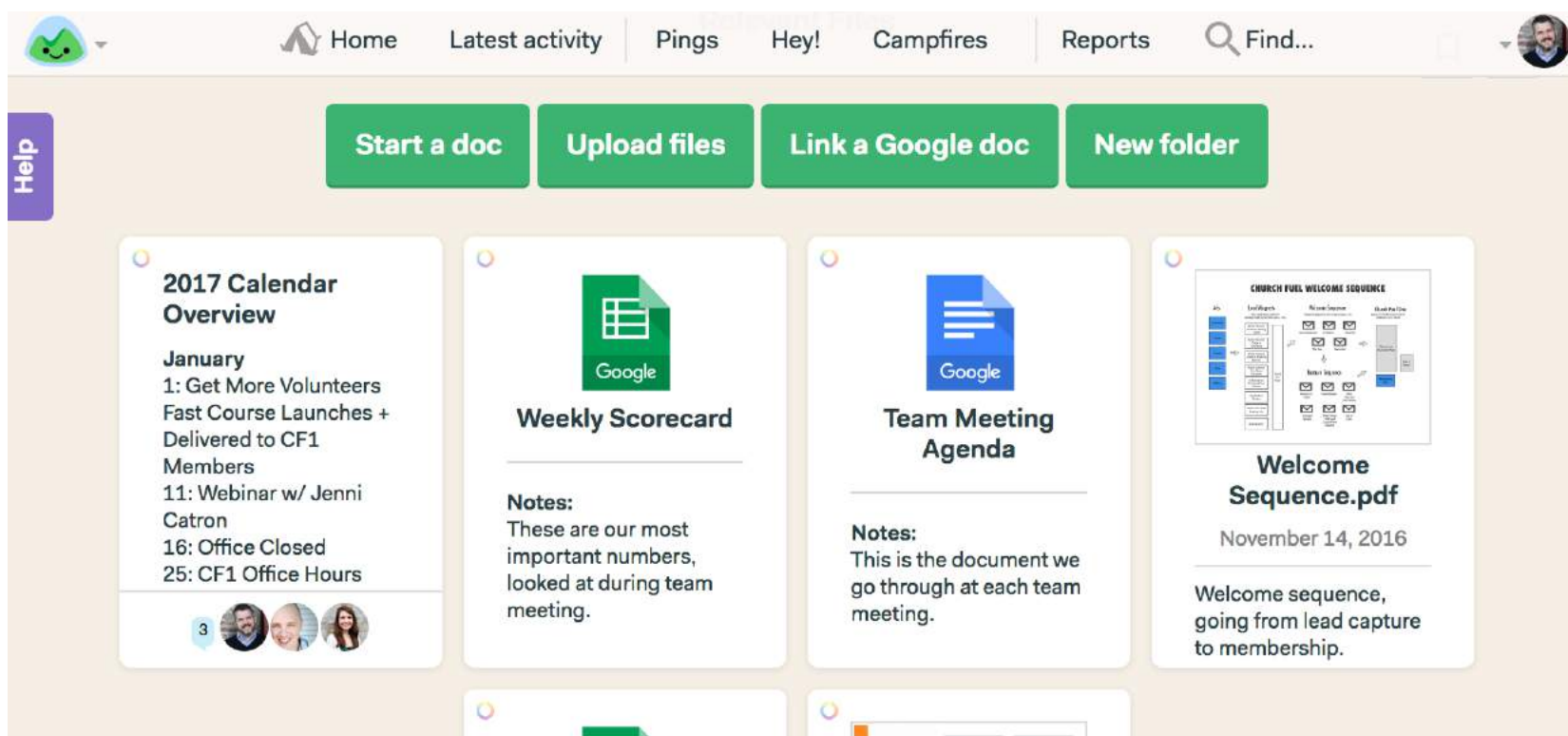
The poor allocation of resources leads to missed deadlines, reduced quality of work and other setbacks.



4. How do you manage client communication and collaboration?

Email is far from the best way to collaborate – it's slow and ineffective when working on a project.

For best results, a team will use project management tools like **Basecamp**, **Asana**, **Trello**, etc. These tools help teams work together through the development phases as seamlessly as possible.



Ideally, though, they can be slotted into your company's existing way of doing things. Adapting to your current systems, tools and processes makes for a streamlined collaboration.



5. What are your industries of expertise? Any prior experience with ours or a similar industry?

While it's not always essential to choose a UX design agency that already has experience and a deep understanding of your industry, it's worth keeping in mind that the learning curve to get them up to speed is often steep and costly.

For example, at Koru, we specialize in working with complex software and tech companies. We know these industries well and have an abundance of experience and success in it.

With that said, we avoid basing our work on hunches and assumptions, even if we've worked on countless similar projects. Taking so-called "shortcuts" like that more often than not lead to a subpar UX. Instead,

**We use real data to inform our decisions,
in turn crafting optimal experiences for the user.**

If you'd like to find out how we can help do this for your company's software, I invite you to get in touch for a Complimentary Project Evaluation. Click [here](#) or find out more at the end of this guide.



6. Could you share some case studies or examples from your portfolio that would relate to a similar problem-solving activity?

If you're making the investment, then it's only fair to expect that you can see some case studies or examples from their portfolio that relate to what you're trying to achieve.

If you have an existing app that's worn out or software built on age-old technology that needs constant and costly updates – ask to see examples of how they've successfully revamped the UX and UI of other software platforms.

If your software has features that take endless steps to complete and leave your users confused and frustrated – ask to see how they've optimized the flow and design of features in previous projects.

If all you have is an idea about a portal, web app or mobile app – ask to see how they've previously helped clients conceptualize an idea and turn it into a real application design.

This will give you confidence that they can deliver the results you've been searching for.



7. How can we define what's within and outside the scope of the project in terms of UX/UI or development expectations?

Nothing is more frustrating than not getting what you expected and having to pay more than anticipated to get a project completed.

That's why it's absolutely crucial to have a clear understanding of the project's scope right from the start. A Statement of Work (SoW) will define a finite scope for design and technology to be engaged, giving you clear expectations of pricing, turnaround times and what will be included and excluded from the project.

However, that's not to say a project's scope can't expand. If both you and the agency mutually agree, there may be a reason to expand the scope during development.

Statement of Work

[Company Name]
[Company Address]
[City, ST, ZIP Code]

Include with
LOGO

SOW #000 for Agreement to Perform Consulting Services to **[Client Name]**

Date: [Date]

Service Performed By:
[Company Name]
[Company Address]
[City, ST, ZIP Code]

Service Performed For:
[Client Name]
[Client Address]
[City, ST, ZIP Code]

1 Placeholder for your content that appears in the paragraph that you show. It will change to the default text when you click on the content. Information that appears in the document such as client name will be updated in all locations when you click on edit fields.

The text provided is sample SOW and Placeholder text for readability for your business.
Have to update this to match the real data just like the SOW that you see the example.

The Statement of Work (SOW) is issued pursuant to the Contract Services Master Agreement between **[Client Name]** ("Client") and **[Company Name]** ("Contractor"), effective **[Click to select date]** (the "Agreement"). This SOW is subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Agreement between the parties and is made a part thereof. Any terms or conditions defined herein shall have the meaning specified in the Agreement. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the terms of this SOW and the terms of the Agreement, the terms of the SOW shall govern and prevail.

The SOW # **[000]** (hereinafter called the "SOW"), effective as of **[Click to select date]**, is entered into by and between Contractor and Client, and is subject to the terms and conditions specified herein. The **[TabId]** to this SOW, if any, shall be deemed to be a part hereof. In the event of any inconsistency between the terms of the body of this SOW and the terms of the **[TabId]** herein, the terms of the body of this SOW shall prevail.

Period of Performance

The Services shall commence on **[Click to select date]**, and shall continue through **[Click to select date]**.

Engagement Resources

1 All names of resources and any type of description about them.

Statement of Work for [Client Name] - [Date]

On the other hand, in cases where the requirements are complex or large, instead of spending days defining the scope - beginning to end - an effective way would be to define major milestones and prepare a Scope of Work for one milestone at a time. See if the agency is comfortable working in an ongoing, progressive fashion.

Whatever the case, a clear SoW will ensure everyone is on the same page, working toward the same goals and that there are no surprises down the line.



8. How can you ensure your solution will technically align and scale with our existing system?

There are several ways to achieve this, including working closely with your development team.

The agency should be able to work with you to understand what deliverable would best suit your objectives and if need be, also provide assistance to smoothly integrate the front end with the back end.



9. What happens if we sign up and our competitor reaches out to you as well?

The last thing you want when working with a UX agency is for a competitor to come along and have the agency provide them with a similar, if not identical solution. After all, your unique UX is one of the things that will separate you from competitors, so this would only be bad for your business.

That's why it's so important to make sure your interests are protected here. To begin with, make use of instruments like mutual non-disclosure agreements (MNDAs) to protect your interests in such conflicts, as these can be legally validated.



10. What would be my degree of involvement through the course of the project?

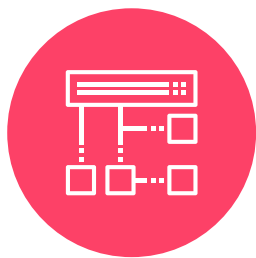
Going into a project, it's useful to know what will be required of you and your company in order for the agency to get your project completed.

This will vary on a case-by-case basis. For example, if Koru is working as an extension of your team, we will guide you regarding reporting structures and the nature of your involvement.

In some instances, that will mean tightly and seamlessly integrating with your existing team of developers. And in others, it may make more sense to have the agency work on a project separate from your team, where there would ideally be a single point of contact or project manager on your end.

The UX agency's job is to make your job as simple, stress-free and streamlined as possible. In practice, that means adapting to your systems and processes and limited communications to the people who need to be involved.

By making sure there is a narrow and effective channel for communication, instructions remain clear and free of confusion.



11. Could you outline flows in the project that should be taken up on priority to keep progress across design and development in sync?

Ever had an entire project held up over a single dependency? Not only are delays like this frustrating (and a waste of resources), but they can be quite costly too.

Often the hardest flows to develop should be tackled early because they are most likely to hold up the show if left until a later stage of development.

A quality UX agency will be able to help identify and anticipate these so they can be factored in appropriately, allowing the project to continue forward smoothly from start to finish.

5 Reasons You Should Start Working With KORU

1. We work as an extension of your team.

One of our key strengths is the ability to work seamlessly as an extension of an existing team. This means you can get your UX needs met without going to the trouble and expense of hiring a bigger team.

And for many companies, it doesn't make sense to have a permanent UX team on staff.

As you may have experienced in the past, a lot of agencies tend to be rather "stuck in their ways" and don't like to change or offer any flexibility with how they work.

At Koru, we make it a point of doing things your way. After all, if you have someone working as part of your team, you want to avoid extra work, hassles and frustration - the aim is to make things easier for you and your team.

2. We speak the language of UX Design Engineering and keep a finger on the pulse with the latest trends.

Let's face it, technology ages fast. And while keeping up with the latest practices and technology is ideal, it's not something most can do easily. Not only does it take an investment of time, but it also takes passion to stay excited about continually updating knowledge and improving skills.

A UX design agency that is "behind the times" and implementing dated strategies and solutions simply isn't going to produce an optimal user experience.

That's why our team prides itself on staying on the cutting edge of both, technology and design. This ensures we're up-to-date and capable of implementing the newest proven UX strategies and trends.

But, it's also worth mentioning that we know when the rules need to be broken.

As with technology, best practices become dated. And there's certainly no "one-size-fits-all" when it comes to UX. So, while best practices can be valuable, it's important you choose to work with an agency that is capable of adapting and custom-tailoring a solution to the unique needs of your software platform, your business and most importantly, your users.

3. We keep the user our priority and create data driven designs.

We're not the kind of agency that will do things just because it looks nice or seems like a good idea. Everything we do is backed by intense research and testing.

What that means for you is your new UX will see an (often dramatic) improvement in results because it's designed with your target user and their goals in mind.

On the other hand, having a user experience design based on hunches and assumptions is guaranteed to do little more than disappoint.

4. We are an agile and passionate team that looks beyond the obvious to win over challenges.

It's easy for UX designers to fall into patterns and to go for the easy, obvious solutions. But sticking to best practices each and every time doesn't produce desirable results - there are many cases where this is counter-productive.

Times like these are when you wish for a team that's passionate about creating new and effective solutions in a timely manner.

Having a UX team that takes the easy path and cuts corners is only going to hurt your business and the success of your software. Whereas, if you have a team capable of researching, designing and testing the perfect solution for a challenge - no matter how unique - you're almost guaranteed to get positive results.

We put ourselves out there in the real environment where the product is used and interpret feedback to find the real blockages and points of friction. This is just one way we can better determine the needs of the user and what they need in order to achieve their goals with your software.

5. We place a strong emphasis on quality assurance to ensure our solutions sync seamlessly.

To put it simply: If things don't work the way they should, there's going to be a negative impact on the user's experience.

That's why quality assurance is a critical part of any project we engage in. In fact, we have a dedicated and devoted team of QA analysts who scan through code and designs to ensure we deliver robust and functional systems. By identifying any issues ahead of launch, we're able to deliver a complete solution.

This is important because our clients come to us for solutions, not for a different set of problems to deal with. Thus, by ensuring our solutions sync seamlessly, you don't need to worry about problems, and your users are spared the otherwise inevitable frustrations.

What to do Next

If this sounds great to you and you'd like to explore working together – fantastic!

Here are just a few things we can help you achieve:

- Create a rich user experience for your product to get an edge over your competition
- Launch a new product in the market
- Establish a UX Design partner for your development-oriented firm
- Build a complex yet competitive product

And that's just a taste of what we can offer to improve your software or website UX.

But the best way to find out how we can help is to get in touch for a Complimentary Project Evaluation.

This is the perfect way to find out how we can help your company craft a memorable, enjoyable experience that keeps your users coming back for more... and raving about it to their friends.

In just 15 minutes we'll get clarity around what you need and you'll find out whether we can make it happen.

There's no obligation – the purpose of your Complimentary Project Evaluation is to see whether we're a good fit for your project. If it seems like a match, we'll propose a solution for you. If not, then you'll at least have some clarity around exactly what you need to do next.

So if you're ready to find out how we can deliver a beautiful and rich user experience for you, I invite you to reach out.

Free Project Evaluation

It's real simple to schedule your session - all you need to do is click the below button and fill out a form that will appear.

[Schedule your Session](#)



Koru is a specialized **Enterprise UX Design company** partnering with technology companies in B2B space to provide customized UX strategies and solutions. A passion-driven collaboration of 50+ professionals, Koru has delivered 250+ Enterprise UX projects collaborating with clientele in San Francisco, New York, Boston, New Jersey, Lakewood, London, Dubai, Melbourne, Singapore.