The SEO Proposal Checklist

How do you evaluate an SEO proposal? Check whether it was written for your company or could have gone to anyone. A proposal worth signing names the searches and pages it will work on, says how you'll check the result in your own Search Console, and leaves your accounts with you.

Give every row an owner and a due date, and work the stages in order. Each item is explained in the full guide at byalkali.com/resources/seo-proposal-checklist/

01 Before you ask for proposals

A little homework on your side makes every proposal comparable.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DUE
☐	List the processes, product lines, industries and service areas you most want to be found for.		
☐	Confirm your company owns Search Console and analytics, and who holds the owner role.		
☐	Count last year's quote requests by source.		
☐	Send every agency the same short brief.		

02 What the proposal must show

A missing item becomes a written question. For an audit-first proposal, the searches and pages come later: check it gives a date for them.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DUE
☐	A diagnosis that names specific pages or findings, or what the audit will produce and by when.		
☐	The searches it will target, with a reason for each.		
☐	The pages it will create or change, each tied to a search.		
☐	A written list of what's out of scope.		
☐	A baseline taken before work starts, from your own accounts.		
☐	Success measured in Search Console clicks and impressions on the planned pages.		
☐	How search results tie to quote requests.		
☐	Named work with dates for the first three months.		
☐	The team by role, and who writes the pages.		

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DUE
☐	How your experts supply and approve technical detail.		
☐	What the monthly report contains, including the next decision.		
☐	Which existing pages it will rework.		

03 Red flags: none of these

Any one of the first three is reason enough to set the proposal aside.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DUE
☐	No promised ranking or position.		
☐	No special relationship with Google, priority submission or Google-approved tool.		
☐	No secret or unexplained methods.		
☐	No link schemes, no offer to submit your site to thousands of search engines, and no requirement to link to the agency.		
☐	No success measure based only on a third-party score.		

04 Terms to read before signing

The contract decides more than the proposal does.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DUE
☐	Search Console and analytics stay in your company's accounts, the agency added as a user.		
☐	Commitment length and notice period are written down, and you know the notice date.		
☐	What you keep if you leave: pages, content, reports and access.		

Alkali builds websites for established B2B companies. byalkali.com

Checked against Google Search Central's guidance on hiring an SEO and the Search Console help documentation, and Alkali's first-hand experience scoping SEO for B2B companies, November 2026.