

Shopify CRO Retainer Buyer's Checklist

What it should cost, what should ship, and how to avoid overpaying. By Kaspian Fuad, Shopify CRO consultant.

What it costs

\$2,000 to \$10,000+ / month

The market range for a CRO retainer.

Price = rate x hours per week

The only two numbers that set it.

Solo: ~\$3,000 to \$4,000/mo

15 to 20 hrs at ~\$50/hr, no overhead.

Agency: ~\$5,000 to \$10,000/mo

Same output plus account managers.

The weekly loop (what you get)

Cross-source audit

Analytics, GA4, GSC, Clarity, Lighthouse.

Prioritized sprint

ICE-scored, highest impact first.

Shipped code, not a deck

Deployed changes every week.

Friday review

What moved, what is next.

Retainer vs audit vs project

One-off audit (\$500 to \$2,500)

Find the leaks, get a prioritized plan.

Fixed-scope project

A known, finite build.

Retainer

Compound many wins over time.

Low traffic? Project, not retainer

You cannot read a weekly signal.

Green flags

Rate and hours disclosed

You see exactly what you buy.

Weekly shipped code

Not a monthly report.

Real before/after numbers

From a store they actually ran.

One person finds and fixes

No hand-off tax.

Red flags

Flat fee, hours vague

Hidden markup or low output.

Strategy, no implementation

The most common overcharge.

Testimonials, no numbers

Selling activity, not results.

Guaranteed conversion rate

Nobody honest guarantees a number.

Ask before you sign

What is the hourly rate?

And how many hours per week?

What ships in week one?

Should be deployed, not planned.

Show me a funnel you moved

Real store, real numbers.

How do we measure it?

Which sources, what cadence.

The break-even math

Retainer ~\$3K to \$4K/mo

Recover a few \$K to break even.

Example: ~\$38K in 2 weeks

Incremental gross on flat traffic.

Compounds monthly

Each fix stacks on the funnel.

Low traffic breaks the math

Fixed scope is safer there.

Check your baseline first

Grade real-user CWV

kaspianfuad.com/tools/shopify-crx-grader

Read Clarity heatmaps

See where taps and scrolls die.

Pull your funnel rates

ATC, reached checkout, CVR.

Know it before the quote

So you know what you pay to fix.

What a good sprint ships

Cart / checkout fix

CLS and abandonment down.

Search that finds products

Site search drives outsized revenue.

Speed: LCP, INP, CLS

Under Google's Good thresholds.

SEO titles + schema

Turn rankings into clicks.

Bottom line

Price = rate x hours

Everything else is packaging.

Buy shipped code

Not slide decks.

Demand real numbers

Or walk away.

Free 30-min diagnostic

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