

12 Questions to Ask Your Marketing Measurement Vendor

A due diligence framework for selecting an independent attribution partner

The measurement vendor you choose shapes every optimization decision your marketing team makes — and for programs that take 12 to 18 months to reach full effectiveness, a poor selection is expensive to unwind. These twelve questions are drawn from the structural, technical, and operational dimensions that separate vendors who answer to advertisers from those who answer to publishers, platforms, or private equity exit timelines. Bring them to any vendor conversation, including ours.

SECTION 1 — INDEPENDENCE & INTEGRITY

1. Is the vendor's revenue exclusively from advertisers — no publisher equity stakes, no paid media relationships, no publisher certification programs?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Vendors with publisher relationships face structural incentives to favor those partners in attribution outcomes. Ask for a written conflict-of-interest policy and ownership disclosure.

2. Is the methodology transparent and auditable — could you walk a CFO, a compliance team, or a board through the outputs and defend them?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Black-box models can't survive a budget review or a regulatory audit. The output should be explainable at the decision level, not just at the data science level.

SECTION 2 — MEASUREMENT CAPABILITY

3. Does the platform include linear TV, radio, and OOH as full attribution touchpoints — not just MMM inputs — so offline media participates directly in the consumer journey model?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Most MTA vendors exclude offline media from the attribution path entirely, treating TV as a modeling variable rather than a touchpoint. If your program includes TV, you need TV in the MTA path.

4. Does the vendor offer an integrated MTA + MMM + Unified Measurement suite — or will you need separate vendors for full measurement coverage?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Disconnected measurement programs produce conflicting budget signals. An integrated suite allows MTA and MMM to inform each other rather than contradict each other.

5. Does the vendor have a named, documented attribution methodology — not just a proprietary ML model you're expected to accept on faith?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: A named framework means the vendor can explain what channels are doing at a functional level — what builds consideration, what closes. It signals methodological discipline and makes results defensible.

SECTION 3 — PRIVACY & DATA COMPLIANCE

6. Is your campaign data architecturally isolated from other clients' data — guaranteed at the infrastructure level, not just contractually?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: In regulated verticals — financial services, pharma, healthcare — cross-client data exposure is both a compliance risk and a competitive intelligence risk. Ask how isolation is enforced in the pipeline, not just in the contract.

7. Is the platform cookieless by architecture — built without cookies from inception — or is it a post-deprecation retrofit?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Vendors who rebuilt for cookieless after deprecation carry structural technical debt. Architecture-native cookieless is more reliable as signal loss continues and signals the vendor was ahead of the problem.

SECTION 4 — PARTNERSHIP & OPERATIONS

8. Will your program be supported by human analysts alongside the platform — or is interpretation and optimization left entirely to your internal team?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Data doesn't optimize budgets — people using data do. Expert analytical coverage alongside the tool materially reduces internal resource burden and accelerates time to insight.

9. Can the vendor demonstrate scale appropriate to your program — in events processed, program tenure, and client retention — not just claimed capacity?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: A vendor who has never run a program at your event volume or budget level is taking on operational risk at your expense. Ask for a reference at comparable scale.

10. Is the vendor independently operated — no private equity ownership, no recent acquisition, no strategic pivot underway?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Attribution programs take 12–18 months to reach full effectiveness. A vendor who gets acquired, pivots to self-serve, or exits mid-program creates serious disruption. Ask about ownership structure directly.

SECTION 5 — VERTICAL & PROGRAM FIT

11. Does the vendor have documented, active experience in your specific vertical — including your industry's conversion patterns, channel mix, and compliance requirements?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Automotive, financial services, pharma, and D2C each have distinct measurement challenges. Generic attribution experience is not equivalent to vertical depth. Ask for vertical-specific methodology documentation.

12. Can the vendor provide references from programs comparable to yours in vertical, budget scale, and channel mix — not just their most favorable client stories?

Yes Partial No

Why it matters: Reference checks are most useful when the reference program looks like yours. A vendor who can't produce a comparable reference may have limited experience at your level.

Vendor Scorecard

Tally Yes / Partial / No for each vendor. A 'Partial' on independence or data isolation questions deserves additional scrutiny regardless of total score.

#	Dimension	Vendor A	Vendor B	Vendor C
1	Independent revenue — no publisher equity or paid media			
2	Auditable, defensible methodology			
3	TV / radio / OOH as full MTA touchpoints (not MMM-only)			
4	Integrated MTA + MMM + Unified Measurement suite			
5	Named, documented attribution methodology			
6	1:1 client data isolation — architectural, not contractual			
7	Cookieless by architecture (not post-deprecation retrofit)			
8	Human analysts alongside the platform			
9	Demonstrated scale at your program level			
10	Independently operated — no PE, no acquisition risk			
11	Documented experience in your vertical			
12	Comparable client references available			
TOTAL (12 possible) →				

How to read the result. A vendor scoring above 9/12 across all five sections operates with structural fit for your program. A vendor below 6/12 carries enough mismatch to warrant a different conversation. The middle range is where reference calls, methodology documentation review, and ownership-structure follow-up move the answer.

For a personalized version of this analysis — sized in your own revenue, channels, and current measurement approach — take the 90-second Fit Assessment at c3metrics.com/fit-assessment. Same reference principles applied to your specific program, one page out the other side, ready to share with a CFO or operating partner.