

# BUILD VS. BUY

## **A complete checklist to evaluate whether or not to build your own audience engagement solution**

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Engagement solutions are the foundation of any audience development strategy. When it comes to integrating these engagement solutions on your properties, it's important that they give you valuable audience data and accelerate your subscription revenue. To add even more complexity, there are already a lot of solutions to choose from.

Whether you choose to build or buy, make sure the solution is flexible and scalable to meet your needs now and in the future, as you continue to grow. (And trust us, you will. When you incorporate engagement solutions into your properties, we see a minimum of 69% growth in total interactions for our customers.)

So we developed the following checklist to help you assess what option is best for your organization.

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## Organizational assessment



- Y
- N

**Do you have the resources available to build the audience engagement functionality you need?**

Three to six months is how long it'll take a team of five working round-the-clock to create a high-quality, accessible, user-friendly and scalable initial build of your program.

- Y
- N

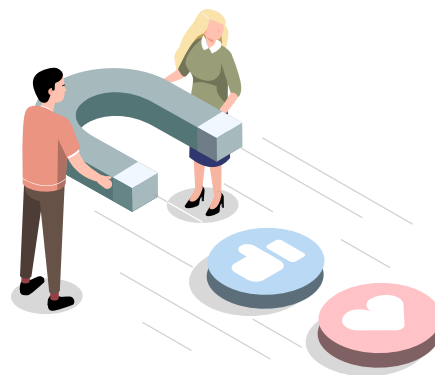
**Do you have the resources available to maintain the user experience and audience engagement functionality as your community grows?**

We believe in encouraging healthy communities that are created with the help of moderation. When engagement is moderated, we see engagement on site increase by a minimum of 69%.

- Y
- N

**Does your in-house talent have the experience to build a program like this?**

Many community engagement platforms have over seven years' of experience fine-tuning UX, user journeys and optimizing features.



## Long-term assessment

- Y
- N

**Do you have the resources available to foresee and adapt fast enough to constant change?**

It can take a team of five anywhere from two to 12 months to build, test and implement new product features that your users are asking for.

- Y
- N

**Will your organization be committed to providing the dedicated, ongoing resources and support required to ensure your audience development solution can continue to scale and grow?**

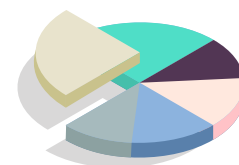
1,500 hours a year is typically how much time a highly skilled team needs to maintain a platform, for as long as you use the tools.



- Y
- N

**Do you have the resources available to analyze the data and bring valuable business insights to the organization?**

You're collecting a wide array of first-party data that can help accelerate your subscription conversion rates, don't let it go to waste!



## Budgetary assessment



- Y
- N

Are you prepared to funnel budgetary resources from other areas of the organization to fund the initial build of an engagement solution?  
An initial solution can range in price from \$75,000 to \$750,000, depending on the complexity and timeline you're working with.

- Y
- N

Do you have the budget or resources available to build all of the functionality you need or want for your site, with allowances built-in if the project goes over time or budget?



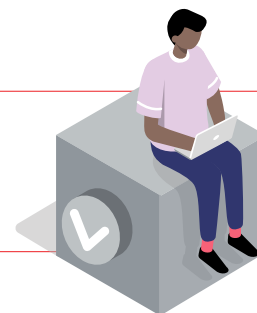
## Technical assessment

- Y
- N

Will a custom solution be scalable enough to accommodate the normal ebbs and flows of engagement?

- Y
- N

Will a custom solution have the capability to back up critical user-generated content?



- Y
- N

Can you put enforceable SLAs in place, with penalties if requirements are not met?

- Y
- N

Will you be able to access the first-party data from your custom community engagement tool to better segment and target new users?

- Y
- N

Do you have the resources available to support your tools once they're built?



- Y
- N

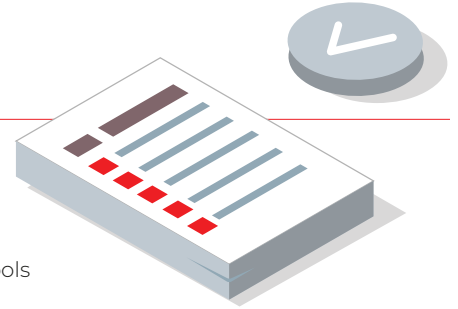
Will your custom solution follow web performance best practices, as well as local privacy and compliance requirements while constantly being optimized for best performance?

## Market assessment

- Y
- N

Is there a tool on the market currently that would satisfy 80% of the functionality you're looking to build?

If an existing tool can satisfy 80% of your needs, it's always better to buy. Then, find the right partner who will work with you to build out the right tools or guide you to where you need to go.



## Check your answers

If you checked “no” on most of the questions above, building a custom solution is probably not the best decision for you.

Need more information? Download our [white paper here](#) for an in-depth look at building vs. buying an audience engagement solution. You can also check out our blogs on the [13 questions you should ask any new technology provider](#) and [How to overcome the most common hurdles of buying a new tech solution](#).

If you're ready to take the next step in improving your audience development strategy, check out [viafoura.com](#) or request a demo.

