

QUESTION	ANSWER	NOTES
Is our data good enough?	If your data is poor quality, siloed, sparse, out-of-date or otherwise less-than-stellar, making an investment in AI may be premature. AI doesn't fix data problems, it only enhances them. Additionally, AI can actually exacerbate data problems if you run poor data, then make important business decisions based on the results drawn from its faulty input.	
What is our use case that we are looking for AI to solve?	Just like any technology, define your use cases before approaching vendors and you'll have better luck finding a partner that meets your needs.  For example: One vendor may excel at predictive customer journeys, customer touch sequence optimization and marketing/media mix modeling and optimization, while another may be more effective at developing customer buy/churn or lifetime value predictive models. Knowing which use cases are important to your business will help direct your vendor search.	
Can we solve this problem without AI?	As you define your use cases, ask yourself if you can solve the problem via traditional programming—and if the answer is “yes,” go that route to avoid the need to deploy and maintain an expensive AI solution.	
What are the AI system's ongoing data requirements after deployment?	AI solutions are not like traditional software programs; most will need to be continually fed data so that machine learning can continue. Ensure you understand your AI's ongoing data collection needs before making an investment. If a potential vendor tells you that you won't need to do anything after the system is set up, walk away—that simply isn't true.	
What algorithms does the vendor use to power their AI?	Machine learning—which is a simple way of achieving AI—has a number of different algorithms, be they supervised learning (including decision trees, naive Bayes classification and ensemble methods) or unsupervised learning (including clustering algorithms and independent component analysis). What matters most here is that 1, the vendor has a specific algorithm that they're using and 2, they are willing to speak openly and plainly about it, answering your questions until you're satisfied.	
Can we give the program a demo with our own data?	Seeing the AI software work with the vendor's data is one thing, but giving it a test drive with one of your own datasets is something completely different. Inquire if the vendor will allow you to see the program in action using a large dataset from your own marketing operations to get a true sense of the software's capabilities and performance.	
How will the vendor's solution integrate with my martech stack? (And can the vendor prove it?)	Any AI solution you choose should ostensibly enhance your existing marketing efforts, not derail them. That's why it's so important to ask about integration rather than assume it will work. If your new AI software doesn't integrate seamlessly with your CRM, your marketing automation platform and your other marketing tools, your huge investment will still end up with a net loss.  Ask specific questions about how integration works and don't be afraid to request contact info for reference clients so you can get the inside scoop on how the AI platform and the software play together in the real world.	