A guide to choosing a QA outsourcing partner · 2026

From the scope you commission to supplier comparison and test asset handover

A practical IXC resource for adoption decisions and delivery

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Using this resource

Give shortlisted suppliers the same scope, compare their answers and supporting documents, and set your commissioning terms.

Product owners, engineering leads, and buyers preparing to outsource QA

Contents

01 Define what you hand over in one sentence 3

02 Get proposals against the same scope 4

03 Ask who reviews the results 5

04 Check automation through to the next failure 6

05 Compare staffing and handover terms together 7

06 Close unconfirmed conditions before scoring 8

How to complete and reuse it

Read the criteria in this PDF, then fill the blank fields with your actual conditions and anything still unconfirmed. The Excel file for the same practice area has a worksheet for each resource. Keep the worked examples separate from real customer cases and confirmed quotes.

With attribution, you may quote and adapt this material for internal review and your own work. The latest files are at www.ixc.co.kr/en/assets.

Define what you hand over in one sentence

A quote request starts from the problem to solve, not the number of people needed. First establish whether decision criteria are missing, there are too few people to execute, or repeated verification takes too long. Where several problems overlap, request each job and its deliverables separately.

Current problem	Work to request	Results to receive
Release criteria differ by team	Assessment and process design	Verification priorities and verdict criteria
Not enough testers	Dedicated execution and defect management	Scenario results and residual risk
Regression runs keep repeating	Automation build and operation	Executable assets and a failure analysis procedure

> **Worked example**
>
> Ahead of a payments overhaul release, the internal team takes on developer testing. The external team is asked for regression runs on the purchase and cancellation flows, defect reporting, and compiling the basis for the release decision. Building automation is out of scope this time.

Commissioning brief

Item	Our team's conditions	Preparation owner
Product and release schedule		
Problem to solve and work to hand over		
Work the internal team keeps		
Existing documents and test assets		

If candidates describe different work from the same brief, align the job definition before quoting. Performance and load testing, security checks, and requirements recovery need different preparation, so note separately whether each applies.

Get proposals against the same scope

Scope can be compared only when counts and names are written together. Next to a figure such as three critical flows, write which flows they are, and link each flow to the platforms it will be checked on. Do not assume up front that every scenario must run on every device.

Scope item	What candidates must answer	Supporting documents to check
Builds and product areas in scope	Version and area boundaries	Build identifiers and target list
Flows, scenarios, and environments	Priorities and coverage per combination	Verification scope table
Retests	Scope of fix verification and regression checks	Rounds included and their targets
Exclusions and changes	Reasons for exclusion and how changes are reviewed	Change request and approval records

Shared verification scope table

Critical flow	Environment and combination	Result to check	In or out of scope
Worked example: purchase cancellation	Mobile web / agreed browsers	Cancellation status and amount are reflected in the order	In scope

When the release date is close, order the flows starting with those where failure has the greatest impact. When data changes or a new build arrives, record which existing results must be checked again. For a time-and-materials contract, compare the procedure for setting next week's priorities as well as the initial scope.

Ask who reviews the results

Running tests, reviewing defects, writing up the basis for the release decision, and approving the release are separate roles. Even when one person holds several, keep them distinct in the documents. Rather than the supplier's job titles, confirm who actually reads the results and the backup route when that person is unavailable.

Question to ask	Supporting documents to request	What to review
Do you also report items you could not verify?	Scenario result sheet	BLOCKED and NOT RUN marked separately
What is the basis for a release hold?	Sample report with personal data removed	Open defects, unverified scope, and conditions for re-assessment
Who reviews results?	Role chart and review procedure	Separate authoring, review, and approval roles

Roles and reporting agreement

Task	Owner	Reviewer and approver	Cadence and contact path
Test execution			
Defect severity review			
Writing up the release decision basis			
Release approval			

> **Separate verdicts from execution results**
>
> Scenarios are recorded as PASS / FAIL / BLOCKED / NOT RUN. Decisions are recorded in the release memo as READY / READY WITH CONDITIONS / HOLD. Adding up the passes does not by itself settle the release verdict.

Check automation through to the next failure

An automation proposal must state who handles which failures after the initial build. The results of the next run are usable only if product defects, test environment issues, data conflicts, and script changes can be told apart.

Item to check	Explanation to request	Materials to review
Run conditions	Timing of deploy-triggered, scheduled, and manual runs	Pipeline and run commands
Data and accounts	How to prepare, isolate, and clean up	Test data procedure
Flaky results	Classification of recurring failures and a recovery owner	Failure analysis records
Maintenance and handover	Scope of change handling and repository ownership	Maintenance tasks and handover list

Automation operations check sheet

Target flow	Run timing	Failure analysis owner	Assets to hand over
Worked example: order creation	Every release candidate build	QA classifies, then assigns a development owner	Scripts, configuration, and data preparation procedure

Also ask which layer each check will run at: web, mobile, or API. Flows whose screens change often or that repeat rarely can stay under manual verification. Tool names such as Playwright, Selenium, and Appium do not by themselves explain how the automation will be maintained.

Compare staffing and handover terms together

Onsite or remote is decided by environment access, data handling, where the physical devices are, and collaboration hours. In a contract where headcount changes, confirm the lead who will carry product context and defect history forward. After the engagement ends, the internal team must still be able to run the same assets.

Operating condition	What to agree	How to confirm
Access and collaboration	Accounts, internal network, collaboration hours, and urgent contact	Actual access tested before kickoff
Changes in team size	Heavy regression windows, a fixed lead, and backup owners	Staffing plan by phase
Handover and close	Source files, repositories, how to run, and follow-up questions	An internal owner runs it and confirms

Close and handover checklist

Asset to hand over	Storage location, format	Receiving owner	Run and check result
Test cases and defect register			
Automation scripts and run configuration			
Verdict criteria and report source files			
Data preparation and follow-up question procedures			

Receiving documents is not the same as completing handover. Open the repository, run the tests, and record any access failures or missing items. IXC works remotely by default, also provides onsite work, and continues answering follow-up questions for 4 weeks after handing over the test assets and ways of working.

Close unconfirmed conditions before scoring

Move each candidate's answers into the same table, then separate scope differences, missing supporting documents, and points for further discussion. Leave any item without an answer as unconfirmed. Do not treat mandatory conditions as met just because a proposal has arrived.

Supplier comparison table

Comparison axis	Candidate and answer	Supporting documents and status	Additional questions
Work handed over and scope			
Verdict basis and reviewer			
How automation is run			
Onsite or remote, and staffing changes			
Asset handover and follow-up questions			
Price and change terms			

Worked example

Candidate A included execution and defect reporting, but the scope of automation handover is unconfirmed. Candidate B's proposal went as far as building automation. Request a revised quote with the shared scope set to execution and reporting, plus a separate quote for automation, then compare.

- Record status as Confirmed / Needs supplementing / Unconfirmed / Not applicable.
- In the selection record, write the reason for the choice, the remaining conditions, and the owner and date for confirming them.
- Send the commissioning brief and the critical flow list ahead of a consultation. Separate the items whose scope is settled from those that still need discussion.

Publication and use

Based on your product and release schedule, critical flows, and how work is split with your internal team, we propose the verification scope and how a dedicated team will operate.

IXC Corp.

CEO Nam Kichul | Business registration no. 109-86-56732
4F 408, Chuncheon ICT Venture Center
7 Huseok-ro 462beon-gil, Chuncheon-si, Gangwon-do, Republic of Korea
+82-33-242-0210 | info@ixc.co.kr

www.ixc.co.kr

www.ixc.co.kr/en/services/qa-outsourcing

www.ixc.co.kr/en/assets/qa-outsourcing-guide

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