

How to choose an Interior Plant Hire Company?

7 factors that should influence your decision

So your boss has asked you to get some plants for the office.....now you're thinking where do I start. If you have no background in Interior Plants it will be hard to rule companies in or out on their expertise, you will have to look at other factors outside of plant knowledge.

Here are the 7 important factors of what to look for in an Interior Plant Hire Company in timeline order;

1. Quality of website
2. Response time
3. Quality of the design
4. Quality of the quote presentation
5. Frequency of servicing
6. Contract T&C's
7. Pricing

Before you go through the below you need to think about the following

- What are we trying to achieve?
- Who are we getting plants for?
- What budget do we have?

1. Quality of Website

The website quality will give an indication of the professionalism you can expect from the Interior Plant Hire Company.

Pictures – Does the Interior Plant Hire Company have a number of high quality images of their own work from a number of different locations.? You want to see

that the Interior Plant Hire Company has clients and has a number of plants in the field. The quality of the photos will give an indication of whether the Interior Plant Hire Company has returned to the location and spent time to get the best images, this to me will show attention to detail and good customer service.

Fresh Content – Is the website up to date, for example when was their last blog or update on social media? A quality up to date site with regular posting on social media will show a professional Interior Plant Hire Company and that is more than a 1 man band who is looking to grow their business, in regards to social media there is an added comfort to you that there can be reputation damage to them if they do an ordinary job.

2. Response Time

You are offering them business they should make an effort to contact you.

If you have left a message in the contact us form, the Interior Plant Hire Company should get back to you as a minimum within the same day (where applicable) and this should be more than an automated response. The least you should receive is a phone call stating they are quote busy at the moment but will be in touch within a designated time.

The Interior Plant Hire Company to complete a planned and unique design will need to come on site and meet with you, if they are not willing to do this cut them. They should be able to get onto site within 72 working hours from initial contact.

3. Quality of the Design

Design takes time – How long did they spend on site? To do a space credit not only takes physical time on site it also takes asking a lot of questions to understand what you are trying to achieve whilst fitting into your brand and environmental factors, click here to see our design considerations.

Have they just put pots in a corner?

This is lazy design, there is a time and a place for a pot in a corner but is generally a last resort or you add flourishes to make it a feature rather than an afterthought such as; additional lighting, clustering of plants, feature pot/plant/underplanting, hanging pots to name a few.

Is it unique? Which of The Interior Plant Hire Companies came up with the most unique design and could they articulate why they were proposing their solutions?

Does it all tie in? In the end it all needs to work together. Does the design fit your

brief? It should be noted that more plants does not equal better design or value for money, each plant should have a reason for being there and be an integral part to the overall look and feel.

Finishes and Mulch - Ensure to ask each Interior Plant Hire Company how the pot and plant will be finished, there are a number of different options providing different looks, generally there are 4 options;

1. Pebbles
2. Bark
3. Soil from direct planting
4. Coco Fibre

What you want to ensure is that the pot is left without a mulch and that you can see the grow pots inside the pot, it looks unfinished and unprofessional.

The only time this is acceptable is if there is a huge number of plants into 1 pot and you cannot see into the pot.

4. Quality of the Quote Presentation

The first part of quality is the time it has taken to receive the Quote Presentation, anything longer than 48 hours should start ringing alarm bells.

This is not so much about how it looks but how easy is it to understand the information you've been given. Is there a clear explanation of where each plant is going to be or have they just put the number of pots and plants?

At each location have they given specific options for pots and plants or have they just grouped them together?

Remember you're the one that will be justifying your decision to your boss and your co-workers you want to know what you are receiving.

5. Frequency of Service

The optimum number of weeks between service is 3 weeks, any longer than this and you are just not receiving a great level of service. The difference between 3 weeks and 4 weeks between services is an additional 4 services a year.

To go more than 3 weeks can tend to place the plants under too much stress with overwatering at the beginning of the service to dehydration at the end of the cycle. If there is any unexpected deviations in the environment such as air conditioning going out there can be a significant deterioration in plants in a short time.

On the flipside if there is only a 1-2 week gap between service than there is more than likely a reduction in quality of service as the technician will be under pressure to get to a large number of jobs none in the industry as splash and dash. On a technical point, the plants should be sub irrigated weather by wicking or direct planting with a Mona tank which gives the best results for indoor plants, this system requires a 3 week service rotation.

6. Contract T&C's

Firstly there should not be an automated roll over period in your contract, check the details of all T&C's and ensure there is no clause that mentions anything about

the same terms and length. The contract should allow for a 3 month notice clause after the initial contract term.

There is one other sneaky clause that some companies use which ask for 3 months notice at the end of the initial contract term which means that your contract length is actually 3 months longer than what you signed off on.

Both of these clauses are unethical from Interior Plant Designs point and more than likely would not hold up in a court of law.

7. Pricing

Pricing is not the be all and end all. Look at your budget and how close each of the quotes came. If you kept your budget to yourself the first round of quotes and pricing is not too significant if all Interior Plant Hire Companies came in over the amount and if 1 or 2 came in below.

What you now need to do is discuss with each Interior Plant Hire Company your budget and how they would go about reaching that target. There is no point at this stage just going for the cheapest or the most plants, if you have not given them a budget they may have added plants in areas where they may not have knowing a budget.

After this second round of quoting you will need to come to a conclusion. If the cheapest option that meets budget and the number of plants you want does not give you confidence in the job they will provide how many plants are you will to reduce by to meet this number?

Scoring System

First you need to add a weighting to each of the factors out of 5, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. Work out what is most important to you and rank that the highest and the least important rank the lowest.

Next you need to score each of the Interior Plant Hire Companies out of 5 for each of the factors, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest score. Then multiply the score by the weighting for each factor and then add up the totals.

Factor	Score	Weighting	Total
1. Quality of Website			
2. Response Time			
3. Quality of Design			
4. Quality of Quote Presentation			
5. Frequency of Service			
6. Contract T&C's			
7. Price			
		Total	

Design considerations for indoor plants	Traffic Flow The frequency and direction that traffic moves through a space	Staff v's Client What are you trying to achieve and who is it for?	Room Colour What are the rooms main colours, pop colour and trims?	Floor Plan Ensuring every plant is getting maximum exposure
Screening Creating visual and sound barriers with plants	Shapes in room Do you continue with current shapes or create a pop with a different shape?	Type Of Company What type of company are you? Corporate, creative, industrial?	Privacy Can guests see employee screens?	Entrances First impressions count for staff and guests, spend time and money here
Room Use Spend money in places that are used every day no once a week	Echo We use plants to reduce an echo in a room	Line Of Sight When looking across or through the office what do people see?	Client Flight Path Where does the client walk to get to their meeting room and what do they see?	Patterns Whether it is symmetry, randomness, straight lines or curves there is always a pattern
Scale Work with it when you can, if you can't compete make it spectacular.	Budget Bang for buck, entrances, dining areas and client flight path everything else is a bonus	Lighting Light is a plants food, this will define what plants you can use	Seasons Although shade grown there is still seasonality for indoor plants, we provide the best in season	Space What are the physical limitations to the area?



DESIGN



DELIVER



MANAGE

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