Engagement both fixed-price and time-and-materials — the three ways of doing it

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The firm's method calculates the margin on a fixed price from time spent against price sold, and that of time-and-materials from the day rate against cost. It does not say how to read an engagement carrying both: that is the point that had not yet been defined.

The ways of doing it, put to the client

Way of doing it	What it brings	What it costs	Outcome
A single margin on the whole contract	One figure per client	A comfortable time-and-materials phase masks an overrunning fixed price	Set aside by the firm

Way of doing it	What it brings	What it costs	Outcome
Two separate margins, one per phase	Each mode reads for what it is	Twice as many lines as engagements	Set aside by the firm
Two margins per phase, and a contract margin consolidating them	**The client first, then where the result comes from**	One more column on the dashboard	**Recommended, then approved**

How often the case arises

Period	Engagements with two billing modes	Of which in the past quarter
The year's 38 engagements	**11**	**4**
Of which framework contracts	6	2

The figure is what turns a one-off decision into a rule: **11 engagements out of 38** are worth an entry in the margin method, and the firm decides it knowing the volume.

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