

PROCUREMENT

AI Vendor Selection Checklist

20 critical questions to ask before signing any AI vendor contract

20 checklist items

How to use this checklist:

Work through each item in order. Check off completed tasks as you go. Items marked [!] are critical - do not skip them. Share this checklist with your team and assign owners to each section for accountability.

About GetServices.ai

GetServices.ai is the AI services marketplace connecting businesses with vetted AI experts, tools, and implementation support. Our resources are free to use and share. Visit getservices.ai to explore AI services.

AI Vendor Selection Checklist

Security & Compliance

- ☐ **!** Does the vendor hold SOC 2 Type II certification? Request the latest audit report.
- ☐ **!** Is data encrypted at rest (AES-256) and in transit (TLS 1.2+)?
- ☐ **!** Where is data stored geographically? Does this comply with your regulatory requirements

- ☐ **!** Does the vendor use your data to train their models? Get this in writing.
Note: Many vendors use customer data for model improvement by default - opt out explicitly.

- ☐ What is their data retention and deletion policy? Can you request full deletion?

Integration & Technical

- ☐ **!** Does the vendor provide a REST API or native connectors for your existing tech stack?
- ☐ **!** What is the documented uptime SLA? Is there financial compensation for downtime?
- ☐ Is there a sandbox/test environment available before production deployment?
- ☐ What are the rate limits and how do they scale with your usage?
- ☐ Is the vendor's infrastructure cloud-agnostic or locked to a single provider?

Pricing & Contract

- ☐ **!** Is pricing usage-based, seat-based, or flat? Model your expected cost at 2× and 5× current
- ☐ **!** What are the contract exit clauses? How much notice is required to cancel?
Note: Avoid contracts with auto-renewal and no cancellation window.
- ☐ Are there implementation fees, onboarding fees, or professional services costs beyond the license?

☐  What happens to your data if you cancel? How long do they retain it?

Support & Success

☐ What support tier is included? Is there a dedicated customer success manager?

☐  What is the average response time for P1 (critical) issues?

☐ Is there a documented onboarding process and training resources?

☐ Can you speak to 3 reference customers in your industry before signing?
Note: Ask references specifically about support quality and implementation challenges.

Vendor Viability

☐ ~~How long~~ How long has the vendor been operating? Have they raised institutional funding or are they

☐ What is their product roadmap for the next 12 months? Is it publicly committed?