

How to buy building monitoring without buying a roadmap.

The gap between a polished demo and software that actually works is where public-sector budgets disappear. These nine questions tell you which one you're being sold — ask every vendor the same nine, and make them show you, not tell you.

— IS IT REAL? — MAKE THEM PROVE IT WORKS TODAY

01 **Show me, live and unedited, a real sensor reading triggering a real alert in Teams or email — today, on this call.**

Green flag — They share their screen and do it in minutes.

Red flag — “We'll arrange a bespoke demo,” or “that's on the roadmap.”

02 **From the kit arriving to my first automated alert, how many days?**

Green flag — Days, with a self-install starter kit.

Red flag — Weeks of onboarding and mandatory professional services.

03 **Does the system act on the data — route alerts, raise tickets — or just show me a dashboard?**

Green flag — They show a workflow firing end to end.

Red flag — It's a screen you still have to watch yourself.

— WILL IT FIT? — CHECK IT DOES YOUR JOB, NOT A GENERIC ONE

04 **Does it understand the standards I'm accountable for — BB101 CO₂, Awaab's Law dew point, MEES/EPC, HSG274 — out of the box?**

Green flag — The thresholds are pre-built and named.

Red flag — “You configure all of that yourself.”

05 **Can I see a live deployment and speak to a customer like me — not a case-study PDF?**

Green flag — A real reference, and a real screen to look at.

Red flag — Logos, slides, and “commercially confidential.”

06 **Can I run one building on a short paid trial and send it back if it doesn't auto-alert?**

Green flag — Yes, low commitment, proven on one site.

Red flag — Demos only; sign a multi-year contract first.

— COST AND RISK — FIND THE COSTS AND THE EXITS BEFORE YOU SIGN

07 **What's the exact price and timeline to connect this to my existing CAFM or helpdesk — included, or a separate line item?**

Green flag — Named connectors; fixed or zero integration cost.

Red flag — Vague “consultancy” or “implementation” fees.

08 **What do I actually pay over ten years — devices, platform, network, support — all in?**

Green flag — Clear line items; ongoing costs on the page.

Red flag — A headline price now, recurring costs glossed over.

09 **Who owns the data, can I export raw history, and what happens to my dashboards if I leave?**

Green flag — You own it; clean export; no lock-in.

Red flag — Data held hostage and a costly, painful exit.
