



CATHA PRACTICAL AI FOR CONSTRUCTION LIBRARY

Buying Construction AI Without Getting Burned

The Construction AI Procurement and Vendor Selection Guide

Guide 11

Practical AI for Construction. Responsible. Outcome-driven.

Catha Construction Services | 2026 Edition

How to Use This Guide

AI procurement requires more diligence than a conventional software demo because model behavior, data handling, operating cost and vendor dependencies can change over time.

Evaluate AI vendors against the realities of contractor systems and workflows, not demonstrations. Require clarity on integrations, data rights, customer/project isolation, pricing, logging, model dependence, support, exportability and exit plans.

Best use

Use the scorecard before procurement approval and repeat key checks at renewal.

Vendor Due-Diligence Areas

Area	Core question	Score 0-5
Business fit	Which exact workflow and measurable outcome does the product support?	
Evidence	Can the vendor show production performance, not only a scripted demo?	
Data use	Is customer data retained, used for training or shared with subprocessors?	
Security	Identity, encryption, access control, audit logs, certifications	
Model dependency	Which models/providers are used and can they change without notice?	
Integration	APIs, connectors, export, rate limits, reliability	
Control	Human approvals, permissions, limits, logging, rollback	
Economics	Seat fees, usage fees, implementation, support, overages	
Portability	Can data, prompts, configs and logs be exported?	
Support	SLA, incident response, named support, change notifications	

20 Questions to Ask Before Signing

1. What problem do your best customers actually solve with this?
2. What is not included in the advertised price?
3. Which model providers are used?
4. Can we select or change models?

5. How is our data retained?
6. Is our data used to train any model?
7. Where is data processed/stored?
8. What subprocessors are involved?
9. What audit logs are available?
10. Can permissions be set by role/action?
11. How are secrets/credentials handled?
12. What happens during a model outage?
13. How do you prevent duplicate actions?
14. What are typical exception rates?
15. How do you evaluate new releases?
16. Can we export our data/configuration?
17. What is the termination process?
18. What implementation work is required from us?
19. What skills must we retain internally?
20. Provide a 3-year total cost estimate at our expected usage.

Vendor Scorecard

Category	Weight	Score 1-5	Weighted
Business fit			
Evidence			
Data use			
Security			
Model dependency			
Integration			
Control			
Economics			
Portability			
Support			

Procurement rule

Do not buy the demo. Buy the operating behavior, control model, contract, economics and exit path.

Construction Applications

Test the product against your own construction use case. Do not accept generic productivity claims as ROI evidence.