

Is Your Monitoring Vendor Delivering?

A 20-Question Self-Audit for Wireless & Online Vibration Monitoring Programs

It takes 10 minutes. Answer honestly. You'll know whether your monitoring program is preventing failures or just producing dashboards.

How to score

For each question, circle one:

- **2 = Yes, and I can show proof**
- **1 = Partly, or "I think so"**
- **0 = No, or "I don't know"**

"I don't know" scores 0 on purpose. If you can't tell, the vendor isn't showing you.

Section A: Alarms & False Alarms

1. Do you know your **false or nuisance alarm rate over the last 90 days, and is it under 20%?**

☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

2. Is every alarm **reviewed by a human analyst before it reaches your team, with a stated severity and recommended action?** ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

3. Have alarm limits been **tuned to your machines (baseline, speed, load, process) instead of left at factory defaults?** ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Section B: Findings That Turn Into Work

4. Does each finding come with **specific, CMMS-ready text: asset, fault, severity, recommended action, and timeframe?** ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

5. Do you track the **percentage of findings converted to work orders, and is it above 60%?**

☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

6. Does the vendor **close the loop**? After a repair, do they confirm the fault is gone and record what was found? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Section C: Data Ownership & Access

7. Does your contract state in writing that **you own all raw data**: waveforms, spectra, trends, and reports? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

8. Can you **export raw data** (not just PDFs or screenshots) in an open format, at any time, at no extra cost? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

9. If you cancel tomorrow, do you **keep your sensors, history, and reports**, and could another analyst pick up where they left off? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Section D: Analyst Qualifications

10. Do you know the **name and certification level** (ISO 18436-2 Cat II or higher) of the analyst assigned to your site? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

11. Is the same analyst (or a small named team) on your account **month after month**, and do they know your process and machines? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

12. Can you **talk directly to the analyst** when you have a question about a finding, without going through a sales rep or ticket queue? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Section E: Response Times

13. Is there a **written response-time commitment** for critical alarms (for example, same business day), and is it being met? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

14. In your last critical event, did you get a **phone call or direct message** before the machine failed, not just an automated email? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Section F: Contract Terms

15. Can you **exit the contract** in 90 days or less without a large penalty or losing hardware you paid for? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

16. Are pricing, renewal increases, and sensor replacement or battery costs **clearly stated**, with no surprises at renewal? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Section G: Coverage & Uptime

17. Do you get a regular report on **sensor and gateway uptime** (percentage of assets reporting), and is it above 95%? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

18. Is your **most critical equipment** actually covered, based on a documented criticality ranking, not just whatever was easiest to instrument? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Section H: ROI Tracking

19. Does the vendor provide a **documented cost-avoidance or "saves" log**, with assumptions you agree with? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

20. Could you defend the program's **return on investment to your plant manager or finance team today** with real numbers? ☐ 2 ☐ 1 ☐ 0

Your Score

Section	Questions	Your points	Max
A. Alarms & False Alarms	1–3	_____	6
B. Findings to Work Orders	4–6	_____	6
C. Data Ownership & Access	7–9	_____	6
D. Analyst Qualifications	10–12	_____	6
E. Response Times	13–14	_____	4
F. Contract Terms	15–16	_____	4
G. Coverage & Uptime	17–18	_____	4
H. ROI Tracking	19–20	_____	4
Total		_____	40

Scoring Key

Score	Rating	What it means
34–40	Delivering	Your vendor is earning its fee. Keep tracking ROI and work order conversion so it stays that way.
24–33	Gaps to close	The program works in places, but you are probably paying for alarms that don't turn into action. Take your low-scoring sections to your next vendor review.
14–23	At risk	You have sensors and a dashboard, but not a reliability program. Expect missed failures, alarm fatigue, and a hard renewal conversation.
0–13	Not delivering	You may be paying for data you can't use, can't export, or can't defend. Get an independent review before you renew or expand.

Red-flag rule: Any **0** in **Section C (Data Ownership)** is a priority, whatever your total. If you don't control your data, you can't switch vendors, check their work, or protect your history.

What to do with your score

1. **Pick your two lowest sections.** Those are your agenda for the next vendor meeting.
 2. **Ask for evidence, not promises.** Request the alarm log, work order conversion data, and the data export, in writing.
 3. **Check the contract** before renewal: exit terms, data rights, and price increases.
 4. **Get a second opinion** if you scored under 24. It is much cheaper than a failed gearbox.
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Want an independent review?

RC&M: Reliability Coaching & Monitoring Eric Rindahl, CMRP | Vibration Analyst Cat II | USMC Veteran

Send me your completed score and I'll walk through it with you in a **free 30-minute call**. You'll get an honest read on where your program stands and what to fix first. I take **no commissions or referral fees from any monitoring vendor**, and your data always stays yours.

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