Multi-CDN Migration Checklist

Eight items to answer in writing before any multi-CDN cutover. Plus contract shapes and drill steps.

1 · The eight items

Item	Why it matters	What to ship
☐ **1. Steering layer named**	DNS, client-side static, or HLS / DASH Content Steering. The 2026 default is the third.	**Pick Content Steering for any new build. CTAs HLS spec + ETSI TS 103 998 for DASH.**
☐ **2. Failover threshold defined**	Single 5xx is too aggressive. Switch on a sustained signal: 3 consecutive bad segments or a moving average.	**Damped failover policy + minimum 5-minute dwell time on each pathway.**
☐ **3. Stickiness with an escape clause**	Bind sessions to initial CDN to avoid cache fragmentation; break the binding on sustained QoE collapse.	**Hard-switch trigger: long rebuffer or throughput collapse, per DASH-IF guidelines.**
☐ **4. Commits sized to baseline, not peak**	Sum of commits across CDNs should equal expected baseline traffic. Leave headroom for steering shifts.	**Renegotiate annually as traffic shape changes; do not over-commit.**
☐ **5. Overage clauses negotiated tight**	Overage 10-30% over commit is healthy; 100-200% is the badly-negotiated trap.	**Cap overage in writing; have a spike-routing policy that uses the lower-overage CDN.**
☐ **6. CMCD upstream wired**	Without CTA-5004 telemetry, the steering server is steering blind. With it, decisions are data-driven.	**Enable CMCD on every player; route telemetry into the steering server.**
☐ **7. Steering server resilient**	If the steering JSON endpoint dies, everybody crowds the default pathway. Single point of failure.	**Multi-region host; small TTL cache on a different CDN; monitored separately.**
☐ **8. Quarterly failover drill scheduled**	Untested failover is no failover. The first real outage is not the time to discover the bug.	**Per quarter: disable one pathway, time the recovery, measure QoE on the shift.**

2 · CDN contract shapes

Shape	How it bills	When it fits
Per-GB tiered	Total egress * per-GB rate by tier. Simple, predictable.	Baseline workloads with steady volume. Easy to model.
95th percentile	Drop top 5% of 5-min samples; bill highest remaining Mbps peak.	Workloads with one short spike per month; punishes sustained high throughput.
Commit + overage	Minimum monthly $ commitment at discount; usage above pays overage rate.	Enterprise default. The overage rate clause is the make-or-break term.
Hybrid	Mix of the above per region or per traffic class.	Most large multi-CDN contracts. Model each provider separately, not as a blended rate.

3 · Quarterly failover drill

Run this drill every quarter on staging, twice a year on production.

1. Pick one pathway. Announce the drill window to ops and content teams.
2. Disable the pathway at the steering server (set priority to zero).
3. Watch the steering manifest refresh; time first viewer migration.
4. Measure rebuffer rate and startup time on shifted sessions.
5. Confirm origin shield absorbed cache-miss burst without origin spike.
6. Re-enable the pathway; watch traffic rebalance per stickiness rules.
7. File the drill report: recovery time, QoE delta, any surprises.