

Should You Build Custom Software?

Ten questions to ask before you build — or buy. A quick self-check for manufacturers and operations-heavy businesses weighing custom software against an off-the-shelf tool.

TICK EVERY BOX THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR BUSINESS

- ☐ **Is the process a competitive advantage?** If how you operate is part of why you win, off-the-shelf rarely fits it.
- ☐ **Are you drowning in manual work?** Spreadsheets, re-keying, copy-paste between systems — work software could remove.
- ☐ **Do your systems fail to talk to each other?** Same data living in three places, none of them agreeing.
- ☐ **Does off-the-shelf “almost” work?** If the gaps force costly workarounds, add-ons, or extra headcount.
- ☐ **Is manual effort blocking your growth?** Will the current approach survive your next stage of volume?
- ☐ **Are errors from manual steps costing you?** Wrong quotes, missed handoffs, or mistakes customers see.
- ☐ **Is tribal knowledge a single point of failure?** Does the process live in one person's head or inbox?
- ☐ **Do you need it to connect to ERP, CRM, or CAD?** Tight integration is where most off-the-shelf tools fall short.
- ☐ **Have you outgrown a packaged tool you already pay for?** Subscriptions you've bent your business around to make work.
- ☐ **Can you start small to de-risk it?** A short, fixed-scope assessment beats a big up-front commitment.

How to read your answers: The more boxes you tick — especially #1–4 — the stronger the case for custom software. If you ticked only one or two and your need is genuinely standard, a mature off-the-shelf product is usually the better, cheaper choice. A good partner will tell you when *not* to build.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 1

Free 20-Min Fit Call
 A quick, no-pressure call to see if it's a fit.
- 2

AI Opportunity Blueprint
 A focused session mapping scope, risks, and a practical path — with one scoped, costed Phase 1.
- 3

Phased Implementation
 We build Phase 1 around what creates value now, architected to grow.
- 4

Ongoing Support
 We support, improve, and evolve the system as you scale.



Book your free 20-minute Fit Call

Scan the code, or visit calendly.com/lfalconer-altoleap/20-minute-fit-call
 No pressure, no prep — just a quick conversation to see if we're the right fit.