

FREE GUIDE

The 8-Point VMS Buyer's Checklist.

The questions worth asking before you commit to any video management system (including ours). Built for teams modernising their surveillance.

Why this exists

A VMS is a 5–10 year decision that quietly shapes how every camera you own performs. Yet, most buyers don't know what separates a great platform from one they'll regret. This checklist gives you the framework to compare any vendor on the things that count, not just the things they choose to show you.

How to use it

Take it into every demo and sales call. Ask each vendor all seven questions and note how clearly they answer. A strong platform welcomes them; a weak one deflects. Score each one, tally the result, and you'll have an honest, like-for-like comparison instead of a gut feeling.

● ONE MORE THING

Buying through a system integrator? Forward this to them. It sharpens the brief and gets you a better-matched recommendation.

01 Is it open or will it lock you in?

Why it matters: A closed platform ties you to one vendor's cameras and pricing for the life of the system. Switching later means ripping out hardware you've already paid for.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Works with the cameras you already own, across many brands
- ✓ Supports open standards (ONVIF, PSIA, RTSP), not just its own
- ✓ No need to switch anything in order to adopt it

02 Where does your video data actually live?

Why it matters: Surveillance footage is among the most sensitive data you hold. Jurisdiction and compliance aren't paperwork, for banks, hospitals and public bodies they decide whether you can buy at all.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Clear answer on which jurisdiction governs your data
- ✓ Aligned with GDPR
- ✓ Not exposed to foreign access laws you can't control

03 Will it scale without starting over?

Why it matters: You'll add cameras, sites and locations over time. A platform that needs re-architecting every time you grow becomes a tax on your own success.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Unlimited servers and cameras managed as one system
- ✓ Sites in different locations, centrally controlled
- ✓ A track record of large, demanding real-world deployments

04 Can your team actually use it on day one?

Why it matters: Security is shift work with real turnover. If only one trained specialist can operate the system, every staff change is a gap, and in an incident, a confused operator costs you seconds you don't have.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ An interface a new hire can run with minimal training
- ✓ Training and certification available for your team
- ✓ Usable across every shift, not just by the expert

05 How reliable is it when something goes wrong?

Why it matters: Downtime means lost footage, and lost footage can mean a lost case, a failed audit, or a regulator's question you can't answer. The time you most need the system is exactly when most systems fail.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Automatic failover, RAID and redundant power
- ✓ Live view that keeps running even if a server goes down
- ✓ Proven uptime in environments where it can't fail (e.g. casinos, banks)

06 Does the AI reduce work — or just add noise?

Why it matters: Analytics that cry wolf get switched off. The goal isn't more alerts, it's the right ones, so your team can stop staring at monitors and start responding to what matters.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Accurate detection with few false positives
- ✓ The analytics you actually need (object, plate, face, forensic search)
- ✓ Find any past event in seconds, not hours

07 What's the true total cost of ownership?

Why it matters: The licence price is the part you can see. Storage, upgrades and recurring fees are where the real costs usually hide.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ Efficient storage that keeps long-term cost down
- ✓ Transparent licensing with no surprise recurring charges
- ✓ A clear total cost over 5+ years, not just year one

08 Who else should be in the room when you decide?

Why it matters: Security buys the VMS, but IT, operations and the floor live with it. Cameras are network devices now and the same video that catches an intruder also shows a blocked fire exit or a stalled line.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE:

- ✓ IT involved early: network, cybersecurity, access rights, integrations
- ✓ Operations, maintenance and occupational safety asked what they'd want to see
- ✓ The people who'll use it daily tested it before the decision, not after
- ✓ Privacy settled up front: GDPR, employee consultation, who can view what

Want to see how Mirasys answers all seven?

We built this checklist around the questions that genuinely matter, and yes, Mirasys is designed to answer all of them: open, scalable, simple to run, reliable enough for casinos, AI-driven, and built for a low total cost of ownership. But you can judge us yourself.

[Book a Mirasys Demo](#)