

Planning a Data Center Decommissioning Project

What services do I need from a decommissioning vendor?

● DATA CENTER DECOMMISSIONING



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What Services Do I Need from a Decommissioning Vendor?

Project Needs Assessment (Self Evaluation)

Every data center decommissioning project is unique, and the requirements can vary widely. This checklist is designed to help you identify what matters most for your specific project. Once you've completed this self-evaluation, you can use your assessment to evaluate and score potential decommissioning vendors.

Instructions: For each capability, select whether it is "Must Have", "Nice to Have" or "Not Needed" for your specific decommissioning project.

Project and Account Management Needs

Capability needed from vendor	Must Have	Nice to Have	Not Needed
Detailed project plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to work during off-peak hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources to manage full scope	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work on-site without disrupting data center operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documented processes for working in your environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vendor references, proven track record for similar projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On-Site Decommissioning

Capabilities of vendor	Must Have	Nice to Have	Not Needed
Technical skills: derack, decommission, disassemble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove cabinets and racks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inventory reconciliation: list vs physical counts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Detailed audit: make/model/serial number, asset tag, parent/child relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pull electric/network cabling and dispose per plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
On-site data destruction capability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coordinate lease returns and erase storage media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare equipment for shipping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide packing materials and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data Destruction

Capability	Must Have	Nice to Have	Not Needed
Data destruction capabilities – shredding, punching, crushing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to manage different types of storage media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data destroyed to NIST 800-88 standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Erase data to enable reuse of storage media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reports provided – chain-of-custody, certificate of data destruction (CoDD)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indemnification guarantee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data destruction capacity aligned to your needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Inventory and Packing

Capability	Must Have	Nice to Have	Not Needed
Inventory list and reconciliation of all data center assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Packing materials supplied by vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Packing services provided by vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Transportation

Capability	Must Have	Nice to Have	Not Needed
Multiple transportation options for safety/security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chain of custody reporting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proof points to demonstrate secure and trackable logistics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Resale/Recycling

Capability	Must Have	Nice to Have	Not Needed
Test, grade, refurbish resalable hardware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parts recovery when whole-unit resale not possible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resell whole units	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resell parts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Select vendor with experience in selling legacy data center equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tracked redeployment to another company location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vendor certification (ISO 9001, 27001, 14001, 45001)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recycle e-waste (R2/WEEE/labex, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed sales reports, including hardware make, model and serial number	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial reporting – resale of assets and parts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificate of recycling (proof equipment handled in an environmentally compliant manner)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In addition to technical capabilities, you will want to evaluate the company reputation and stability of potential decommissioning vendors, including:

- Can they provide references of previous work completed?
- Do they have the resources to fully support your project?
- Are there Circular Centers certified to industry standards?
- Is there company financially stable and properly insured?
- Are their employees background checked?

How Do I Compare Different Decommissioning Vendors

Use the results from this checklist to clarify what you need from a decommissioning vendor. With your needs clearly defined, you can prioritize them and use the framework to evaluate and score potential decommissioning vendors.

About Sims Lifecycle Services (SLS)

In addition to on-site decommissioning and certified data destruction, SLS helps data centers repurpose, resell, and responsibly retire IT equipment - with zero data risk. Whether you manage a hyperscale, colocation, or enterprise data center, our global reach and compliant services ensure seamless, end-to-end support.

Partner with SLS to turn IT retirement into a sustainability success story. Maximize reuse, minimize landfill, and ensure responsible recycling - with one trusted partner. We simplify decommissioning and IT asset disposition (ITAD) so you can focus on what's next.