



FREE GUIDE

# The Warehouse Project Checklist

5 Questions to Ask Before You Sign Anything

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Most warehouse projects go sideways for one reason:  
too many vendors, not enough accountability.

This guide gives you the exact questions to ask before you sign anything so you know who owns the outcome when things get hard.

**15,000+**

Projects Completed  
North America

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Years of Industry  
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On Staff

**800+**

Vetted  
Subcontractors

Trusted by Amazon, Coca-Cola, FedEx, DHL, and 15,000+ projects across North America

## WHY THIS MATTERS

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Warehouse projects are complex. Design, permitting, equipment sourcing, mechanical installation, electrical work, commissioning. Each phase has its own vendors, timelines, and risks.

When something goes wrong, and something always does, the first question is: who's responsible?

If you have three vendors pointing at each other, you have no one. You have a project that stalls, a budget that blows, and a team wondering what happened.

**The most expensive mistake in a warehouse project isn't the wrong equipment. It's the wrong accountability structure.**

The solution is simple in theory: one partner who owns the entire project from initial design through to operational readiness. One point of contact. One source of accountability.

In practice, finding that partner means asking the right questions before you sign anything. Here are the five that matter most.

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## THE 5 QUESTIONS

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### 01 Do you handle design, permitting, supply, installation, and commissioning under one contract?

#### Why it matters:

A true turnkey partner owns every phase. If your vendor handles installation but hands you off for permitting or electrical, you're managing coordination risk yourself. That's how timelines slip and budgets blow.

#### What good looks like:

Look for a partner who takes on design engineering, handles permitting with the municipality on your behalf, sources the equipment, manages mechanical and electrical installation, and commissions the system through to operational readiness. One contract. One point of contact throughout.

**Red flag:** Any answer that includes the phrase "we coordinate with your other vendors" is a red flag. Coordination is not accountability.

## 02 Who are your technicians, and are they your people or subcontractors you've never worked with before?

### Why it matters:

The quality of the installation depends entirely on the people doing the work. A firm that shows you impressive project photos but staffs your job with whoever is available that week is not the same as one with a dedicated, trained team.

### What good looks like:

Ask for specifics. How many technicians are on staff directly? What are their certifications? When subcontractors are used, how long have they been in your network and how are they vetted? A strong partner will answer this without hesitation.

**Red flag:** Vague answers about "our network of partners" with no specifics on vetting, training, or direct employment.

## 03 Can you handle everything from racking to automation to construction under one roof?

### Why it matters:

Your facility needs don't fit in one category. A racking project often surfaces the need for floor repairs, lighting upgrades, dock work, or sprinkler modifications. If your vendor can only do one thing, every adjacent need becomes a separate procurement.

### What good looks like:

Confirm they can handle the full scope: racking systems of all types, mezzanines, automation (VLMs, conveyors, ASRS, shuttle systems), general warehouse services, and construction and contracting work. The goal is to make one call and have one team handle the scope as it evolves.

**Red flag:** A "specialist" who is excellent at one thing but has no answer for the other work that will inevitably surface.

## 04 How do you handle delays, change orders, and problems on site?

### Why it matters:

Every project hits obstacles. The question is not whether problems will happen. It is who owns them when they do. A partner who manages problems is fundamentally different from a vendor who reports them back to you.

### What good looks like:

Ask for a specific example of a project that hit a problem and how they handled it. Strong partners have project managers on site daily, report proactively to clients and integrators, and absorb coordination challenges rather than escalating them. They install from multiple angles simultaneously to protect timelines.

**Red flag:** Any answer that defaults to change orders as the first response to a problem. Change orders happen, but they should not be the default mechanism for handling normal project complexity.

## 05 Who have you done this for, and can I talk to someone who will tell me the truth?

### Why it matters:

References close deals. They also protect you. A vendor with a strong track record in your industry will offer references without hesitation. A vendor who hedges, delays, or offers only curated testimonials is telling you something.

### What good looks like:

Ask for references in your specific vertical. Warehousing, distribution, food and beverage, 3PL, cold storage. Ask to speak with someone who had a project that hit a challenge, not just a smooth one. That conversation will tell you more than any brochure.

**Red flag:** References only from small projects when you're evaluating a large one. Or references that take weeks to materialize.

# Ready to talk about your warehouse project?

I connect businesses across Canada, the USA, and Mexico with MTLI Group of Companies, a Canadian-owned firm with 40+ years of experience delivering full turnkey warehouse solutions from design through to commissioning.

They have completed 15,000+ projects across North America for clients including Amazon, Coca-Cola, FedEx, DHL, Winners, and Fastfrate. They handle everything from racking and mezzanines to full automation systems and construction.

**One conversation. No obligation. Just an honest assessment of whether what they offer matches what you need.**

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This guide was prepared by Chris Errington. All facts and figures sourced directly from MTLI Group of Companies materials.  
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