

A Buyer's Guide to Choosing and Deploying DCIM Software

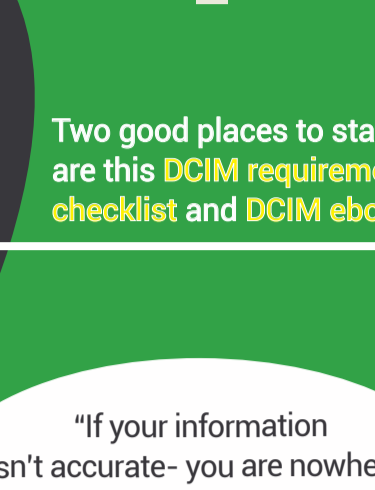
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1 Identify Your Underlying Data Center Needs

There are currently dozens of established DCIM vendors on the market.

First gather your own requirements and separate the "must-haves" from the "nice-to-haves" to get the solution that best fits your needs.



Two good places to start are this [DCIM requirements checklist](#) and [DCIM ebook](#).

Furthermore, you'll want to assess if any of the top 5 [data center challenges](#) apply to your unique situation and whether [DCIM best practices](#) are currently being followed.

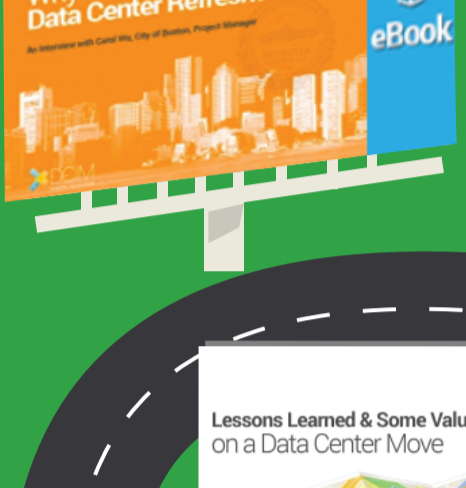


"If your information isn't accurate- you are nowhere."
-Keith Bott, Service Manager Equipment & Facilities, British Airways

Don't allow yourself to be influenced by the myriad of vendor promises.



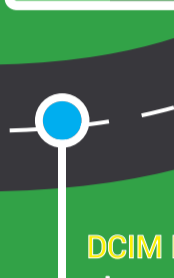
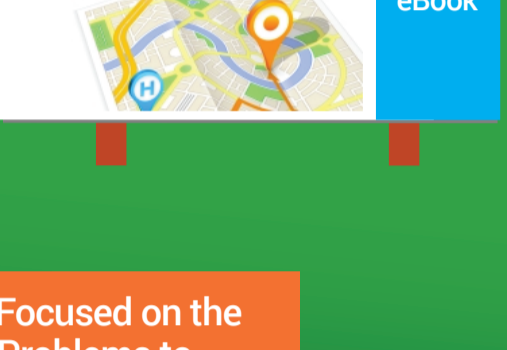
2 Learn as Much as You Can About DCIM



Alternatively you may wish to hear [DCIM lessons learned](#) from those who've gone ahead and deployed it, or hear from those who made DCIM the center of their [data center refresh](#).



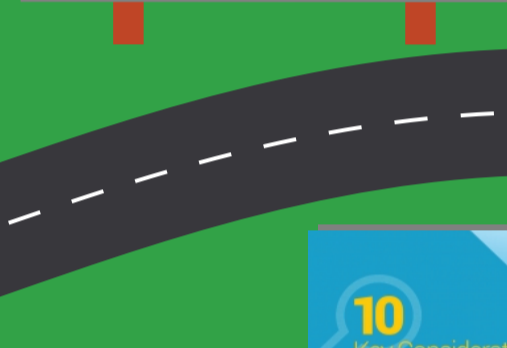
[DCIM Demystified](#) sheds some light on strengths and limitations of DCIM while this [DCIM video](#) can be shared with other project stakeholders so that they are able to understand [why DCIM is important](#).



3 Stay Focused on the Core Problems to be Solved

Avoid the temptation to tackle every single project and instead focus on solving your top one or two most critical problems.

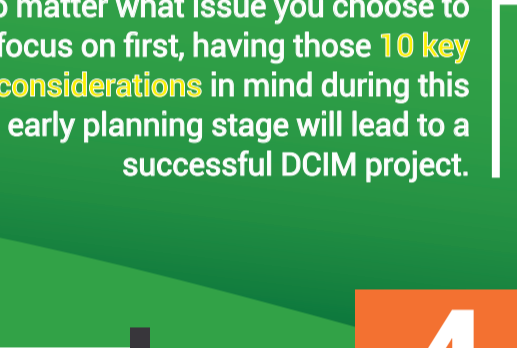
"We wanted a solution that didn't turn into "bloatware" in areas that we didn't really need"
-Micah Petty, Director, Regional Data Center Engineering, Comcast



Or focus on energy saving strategies that are easy to implement with DCIM including [graceful OS shutdown of servers](#) during non-working hours, or monitoring temperatures to [safely avoid overcooling your data center](#).



If for instance you're primarily interested in improving energy efficiency, look towards a DCIM tool that provides data center metrics like [PUE](#) or [DCeP](#) that will allow you to take corrective action.



No matter what issue you choose to focus on first, having those [10 key considerations](#) in mind during this early planning stage will lead to a successful DCIM project.

4 Figure Out How Soon You'll See A Return on Your Investment

Now it's time to get a good handle on how much your data center infrastructure management problems and pains are costing you.



One quick way to do this is to use a [DCIM ROI calculator](#) to get a personalized estimate based on your current footprint, operating costs, and other attributes.

It may also be useful to hear some real-world [DCIM insights](#) other organizations have attained following their deployments, and other [DCIM benefits](#) that were gained.



"Accurate asset records have given us a 50 percent gain in efficiency in terms of locating an asset's physical location within the data centers"
- Joe Keena, Manager of Data Center Operations, UF Health Shands



"We wanted to really ensure our success by selecting a tool that would be adopted and embraced and fully utilized."
- Micah Petty, Director, Regional Data Center Engineering, Comcast

5 Obtain Buy-In and a Budget From Your Organization

Now that you've identified your most critical problems, have a good sense of which ones you'll tackle first and when you'll see a return on your initial investment, it's time to get support from management and other key stakeholders in the project.

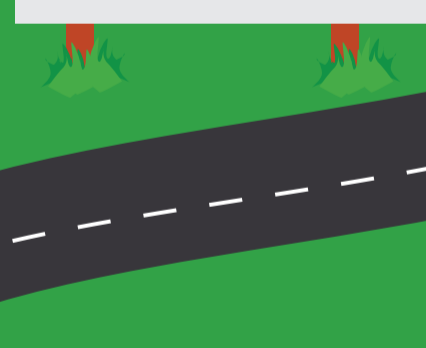
One of the best times to obtain a [budget](#) for a DCIM project is in conjunction with another major business related IT expense.



Before you approach your team, learn [how to justify a data center infrastructure management \(DCIM\) project](#) to management.

6 Meet with Vendors and Evaluate for the Best Fit Solution

"We compared Raritan's DCIM solution with other vendors and found that it had the interface we were looking for- It was just a good quality product"
-Kiel Anderson, Senior Lab Network Engineer, FS



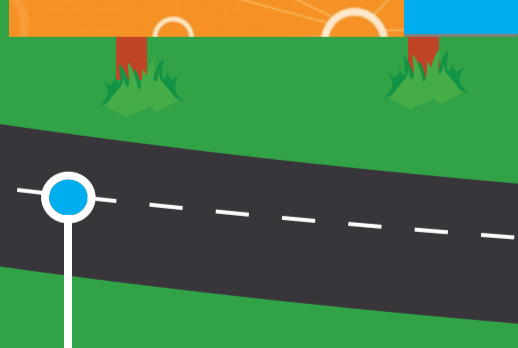
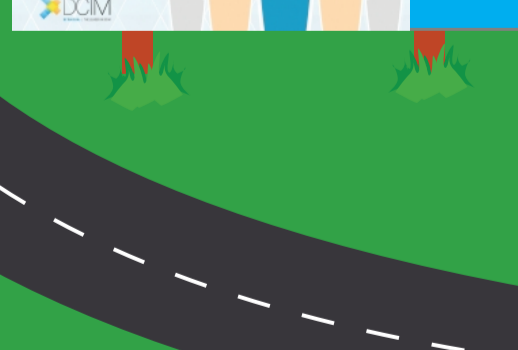
Once you have a clearly defined budget, it's time to reach out to vendors.

To start, keep in mind that [not all DCIM tools are created equally](#).

To select the right vendor for you, it is important to read [DCIM vendor assessments](#) and look for vendors with [DCIM industry recognition](#) or even [DCIM awards](#).

7 Deploy Your DCIM Solution and Embark on a New Journey

"We started with the Raritan training folks giving us hands-on training onsite with the dcTrack product. That was invaluable to us."
- Joe Keena, Manager of Data Center Operations, UF Health Shands



Congratulations, now you are ready to determine [who will own DCIM](#) and lead the effort.

Many vendors offer convenient features like [auto-discovery](#) and [manual data input](#) that not only make easier to rollout DCIM, but also ensure all of your data is accurate.

Keep in mind that your DCIM journey is just beginning. Becoming an energy and resource efficient center is a phased iterative process that allows you to tackle the most critical issues in a gradual approach that minimizes disruptions to day-to-day operations while providing a huge ROI in the long-term.

The Don't's

Don't buy bells and whistles

Don't be fooled by hidden expenses

Don't buy without first doing extensive research

Don't buy something untested and completely new to the industry

Don't buy based on changing technology or promises