THE
ANATOMY
OF A DATA CENTER

Getting a first-hand look at the facilities that will house your systems or your data and applications can be an important part of the vendor selection process. But unless you ask the right questions, it's easy to miss some of the most important details.
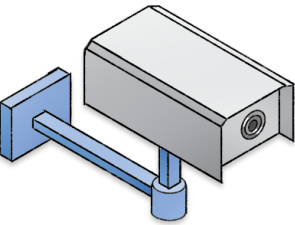
Here are 14 features to look for in an enterprise-class data center:

1 Building Structure

Every region has its share of natural disasters: hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tornados, and more. The structure of the facility should be reinforced to withstand the worst mother nature can throw at it.
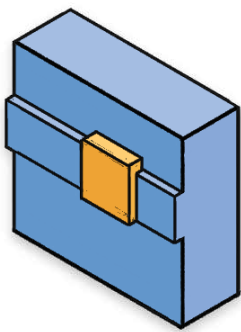
2 Physical Security

Controlling physical access to your resources is a vital component of IT security. Look for access protocols such as controlled access to sensitive areas of the building, use of two-factor authentication, biometrics and video surveillance for every point of ingress and egress (doors and windows).
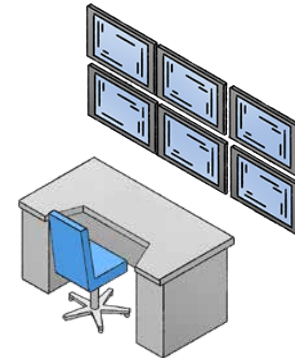
3 Climate Control & Cooling

Data center equipment is sensitive to heat, humidity, and static electricity. Your data center should be equipped with redundant environmental systems to enable continuous operations.

4 Building Management Systems

Data center operators utilize building management systems to give them a bird's-eye view into the health of the facility: HVAC, power loads, voltage levels, emergency power systems including UPS, generators and more.
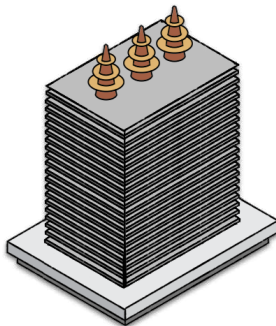
5 On-site Operations Center

While touring the facility, remember to ask about on-site operations monitoring. These systems provide data center operators with 24x7x365 visibility into elements such as security threats and critical infrastructure performance.

6 Main Power Systems

Server cabinets should be powered by diverse and redundant power sources to reduce the chance of a power outage affecting availability.
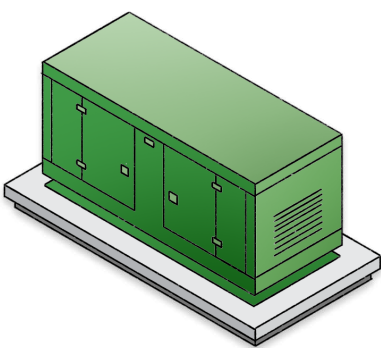
7 Power Distribution Units (PDUs)

The PDUs used in a modern data center do far more than deliver power. They can also monitor power consumption and track voltage fluctuations that signal potential equipment issues.

8 UPS Systems

Even a short-term drop or spike in power can affect availability, damage equipment, and cause data loss. UPS systems are your first line of defense. For high availability needs, look for redundant UPS systems.

9 Backup Generators

Backup generators should provide continuous power to run the data center during utility power outage events. Data centers should also store additional fuel on site for extended generator runtime.

10 Carrier-Neutral Networking

Facilities offering multiple carriers for connectivity provide for high availability, choice, low latency and better disaster recovery.
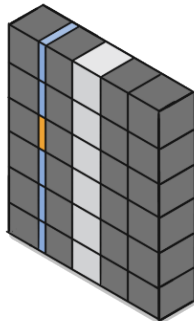
11 Customizable Space Management

Thanks to high-density power and cooling options, you can operate a lot of IT equipment in a small space. Look for space options that are customizable to your needs with tight security controls.
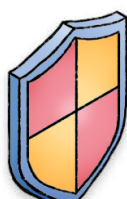
12 Multitenant Cloud Pod

A multitenant cloud pod is space in a data center with dedicated cloud computing architecture that allows customers to share cloud computing resources, while still being isolated from the other tenants. This is a self-sufficient, highly secure infrastructure within the data center.

13 Business Continuity Workspace

In the event of a disaster, your employees may need a safe place to work. Business continuity workspace gives them a place to "set up shop" during the recovery process. We have sites that can accommodate up to 800 people.

14 Compliance Certifications

Look for certifications that show the data center has been independently audited for compliance with privacy and security best practices such as SSAE 18 SOC 2, HIPAA, and PCI. If you don't see what you're looking for, ask.

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About TierPoint

A leading national provider of hybrid IT solutions, TierPoint helps organizations drive performance and manage risk. No U.S. provider comes close to matching TierPoint's unique combination of thousands of clients; more than 40 edge-capable data centers and 10 multitenant cloud pods coast to coast; and a comprehensive portfolio of cloud solutions, colocation, disaster recovery, security and other managed IT services. With white-glove customer service, TierPoint professionals customize and manage agile solutions that address each client's unique needs.