

EPS MARKETPLACE

The External Services Landscape

Beyond utility bill management and sustainability consulting, organizations pursuing serious energy and carbon goals need access to the right tools and partners. This guide maps the five key categories of external services — what they do, when they matter, and what to look for before engaging.

Why external services matter

No single advisory firm or software platform covers everything. Real-time monitoring requires IoT hardware and data infrastructure. Energy procurement in deregulated markets requires commodity expertise. Carbon accounting requires platform integrations. The organizations that achieve the strongest outcomes combine internal expertise with a carefully selected set of external capabilities — and coordinate them effectively.

The challenge isn't finding tools. It's knowing which ones are worth your time, whether they'll actually work for your portfolio profile, and how to coordinate them without creating fragmented data silos.

The five service categories



Real-time monitoring & IoT

HIGH IMPACT

Interval data meters, submeters, and IoT sensors that provide consumption visibility between billing cycles. Enables demand charge management, equipment fault detection, and granular cost allocation — none of which are possible from monthly invoices alone.

Best for: Organizations with high demand charges, facilities with complex equipment profiles, and any site where a consumption anomaly would have material cost implications before the bill arrives.

Watch for: Hardware lock-in, data accessibility limitations, and platforms that don't integrate with your existing utility or sustainability data systems.



Energy procurement platforms

HIGH SAVINGS POTENTIAL

In deregulated electricity and natural gas markets, procurement platforms and brokers help organizations access competitive supply contracts, structure purchases against forward curves, and manage contract renewals across multiple accounts and utilities.

Best for: Organizations in deregulated states (TX, IL, PA, OH, NY, NJ, and others) spending \$500K+ annually on energy. Less applicable in fully regulated markets where utilities are the only supplier.

Watch for: Broker compensation structures that may not align with your interests, contract terms with unfavorable exit provisions, and advisors who default to fixed-price contracts without modeling indexed alternatives.



Carbon accounting & ESG platforms

REPORTING ESSENTIAL

Software platforms that aggregate emissions data, calculate Scope 1–3 footprints, and generate reports formatted for CDP, GRI, TCFD, and investor disclosure requirements. Leading platforms include Watershed, Measurabl, Persefoni, and Salesforce Net Zero Cloud.

Best for: Organizations with formal ESG disclosure obligations, investor reporting requirements, or Science Based Targets commitments. Essential for any public company subject to SEC climate disclosure rules.

Watch for: Platforms that rely on spend-based emissions estimates rather than actual consumption data — these produce highly inaccurate Scope 1 and 2 numbers. Your carbon accounting is only as credible as its data source.



Demand response & flexibility programs

REVENUE OPPORTUNITY

Demand response programs allow organizations to earn payments or bill credits by curtailing electricity use during grid stress events. Third-party aggregators — including companies like Enel X, Voltus, and CPower — manage enrollment and dispatch on your behalf.

Best for: Facilities with flexible load — manufacturing lines that can pause, HVAC systems with thermal mass, backup generators, or battery storage. Curtailment commitments must be operationally feasible.

Watch for: Aggregators who oversell program revenues without modeling your specific load profile. Performance obligations are real — non-performance penalties apply in some programs.



Implementation & project partners

EXECUTION LAYER

Engineering firms, controls contractors, lighting retrofit specialists, and commissioning agents who execute the capital projects that advisory work identifies. The quality of implementation partners directly determines whether projected savings are actually realized.

Best for: Any organization moving from identification to execution on energy efficiency or sustainability capital projects — LED retrofits, BAS upgrades, EV infrastructure, submetering installations.

Watch for: Partners who self-certify savings without independent measurement and verification, and contractors without experience on your specific building or process type.

Questions to ask before engaging any external provider

- How does your platform or service integrate with my existing utility data — and who owns the data?
- Can you show me verified results from a client with a portfolio similar to mine in size and sector?
- How is your compensation structured — and does it align your incentives with mine?
- What does the implementation process look like, and who is responsible for ongoing performance monitoring?
- What happens if the projected savings aren't achieved — is there any performance guarantee?

The coordination gap

The biggest risk in assembling a set of external services is fragmentation. A monitoring platform that doesn't feed into your carbon accounting system, a procurement contract that doesn't account for your demand response commitments, and an efficiency project that changes your baseline — all create data inconsistencies that undermine reporting accuracy. Coordination across services is as important as selecting the right ones.