Kalima



How to evaluate a transcription tool for your company.

A buyer's checklist

25 questions for procurement, IT security, data protection, the works council and the business unit. To pass on and tick off, with Kalima's answers.

As of
24 November 2026

Scope
25 questions in five chapters

Published by
ByteHawk GmbH, Düsseldorf

At a glance

Five groups review a transcription tool before it is rolled out. Each has its own chapter.

Contents

1 Procurement 3
2 IT security 4
3 Data protection 5
4 Works council 6
5 Business unit 7
6 Limits and documents 8
Contact 9

How to use it

Hand out
Give each group its chapter before you talk to vendors. That way the questions are on the table while the choice is still open.

Ask
The questions fit any tool. Tick what a vendor can show, not just promise.

Test
Check recognition with your own conversations. A demo only shows what the vendor wants to show.

Key

☐	To tick off during your review
Kalima	Kalima's answer, as of 24 November 2026
Enterprise	Enterprise plan only

1 Procurement

Contract, trial, seats and the way out.

Five questions

Tick what the vendor can show.

- [ ] **Is there a contract with invoicing?** Enterprise

  A credit card does not fit every purchasing process.

  Kalima Enterprise from 10 seats on an annual contract. Invoice paid by bank transfer with your PO number, payment term usually 30 days, in euros, Swiss francs or US dollars.

- [ ] **Can you test before signing?**

  A trial with real conversations says more than any demo.

  Kalima You can test Team yourself for 7 days, with up to 5 people and no payment details. For Enterprise, a time-limited pilot is available on request.

- [ ] **Who takes a seat?**

  Paying for people who only read drives up cost.

  Kalima Viewers and suspended accounts take no seat. On Enterprise, extra seats are billed quarterly and fewer seats apply from the end of the term.

- [ ] **How do you get out again?**

  Without a defined exit, your data is tied to the vendor.

  Kalima At the end of the contract you choose deletion or return. Members export their recordings themselves, and anything nobody can export we hand over once on an owner's instruction. We confirm deletion in writing on request.

- [ ] **Where is the vendor based?**

  Governing law, jurisdiction and a point of contact.

  Kalima ByteHawk GmbH, Fährstraße 217, 40221 Düsseldorf, Germany, registered at the Düsseldorf local court under HRB 114451.

2 IT security

Sign-in, user management, audit trail and encryption.

Five questions

Tick what the vendor can show.

- [ ] **Is there single sign-on?** Enterprise

  Sign-in through the company's identity provider instead of separate passwords.

  Kalima SAML 2.0 or OpenID Connect, set up by your admin in the Kalima Console and enforced if you wish. Owners keep an emergency access.

- [ ] **Do accounts follow your directory?** Enterprise

  Leavers must lose access without a ticket.

  Kalima SCIM 2.0: your identity provider creates, changes and suspends accounts. Groups become teams.

- [ ] **Two-factor sign-in and IP allowlists?**

  Protects accounts outside SSO and the admins.

  Kalima Two-factor is always required for owners, admins and console roles and can be required for all members. IP allowlists apply to the console or to console and app (Enterprise).

- [ ] **Is there an audit log?**

  Who changed what and when, and what was set before?

  Kalima Every change to the company is recorded, including changes made by Kalima. Entries cannot be edited or deleted. Stored for 13 months, visible for 90 days on Team and 365 days on Enterprise, exported as CSV or JSON. On Enterprise also streamed to an HTTPS webhook or Splunk.

- [ ] **How is data encrypted?**

  Audio and text are the most sensitive data in the tool.

  Kalima TLS for every connection. Audio is encrypted on the device, stored with AES-256-GCM and separate keys per recording. Transcripts and summaries are stored encrypted in the database.

3 Data protection

Location, contract, AI and deletion.

Five questions

Tick what the vendor can show.

- [ ] **Where is data processed?**
  Server location and data flows shape the review.
  Kalima Servers in Germany with netcup and Hetzner, in ISO 27001 certified data centres. Speech recognition and AI run in data centres in the EU.

- [ ] **Is there a data processing agreement?**
  Required under Art. 28 GDPR.
  Kalima Public at meetkalima.com/avv, part of the terms and valid without a signature. The list of subprocessors is available after sign-in. We announce changes to owners 14 days ahead, and you can object.

- [ ] **Is content used to train AI?**
  Conversations must not flow into third-party models.
  Kalima No. AI requests only go to endpoints in the EU that store nothing.

- [ ] **Can you set retention periods?**
  Data without a purpose has to go.
  Kalima Automatic deletion after 30, 90, 180 or 365 days, or only the audio if you prefer. Deleted items stay in the trash for 30 days, backups are overwritten at most 7 days later. With zero data retention, deleted items are gone within a minute (Enterprise).

- [ ] **Can deletion be paused?** Enterprise
  Litigation or an audit can require data to stay.
  Kalima Legal hold for the whole company, for named people or for single projects.

4 Works council

What the tool shows about employees, and what it does not.

Five questions

Tick what the vendor can show.

- [ ] **Can admins see content?**
  Whoever administers should not read along.
  Kalima The Kalima Console never shows the title or content of a recording, and never who made it. Admins read only what is shared with them, and a team's workspace only as a member of that team. Joining is recorded in the audit log.

- [ ] **Can usage be measured per person?**
  This is the core of co-determination.
  Kalima No. Usage appears only by team and only from five people. There are no talk-time shares, speaking times or rankings.

- [ ] **What stays private?**
  Employees should decide what they share.
  Kalima Recordings a person does not share and does not put in a team's workspace are not visible to admins.

- [ ] **Can you set rules for the whole company?**
  A works agreement needs something that enforces it technically.
  Kalima Yes: which AI features, exports and connections to other services are allowed, plus a notice every person confirms before recording. Everyone can see the rules in the app, and every change is in the audit log.

- [ ] **Is there an overview for the works council?**
  The works council needs facts, not marketing.
  Kalima A printable sheet in the console: what admins see, who sees it and how long it is kept, for example the sign-in history for 90 days.

Background

Co-determination in Germany

A tool that records conversations needs the works council's agreement as soon as it is capable of monitoring performance or behaviour (section 87(1) no. 6 of the Works Constitution Act). Intent does not matter. The questions above show how much material for monitoring a tool offers in the first place.

5 Business unit

Recording, recognition, summaries and hand-off.

Five questions

Tick what the vendor can show.

- [ ] **Does a bot join the call?**
  An outside participant is distracting and often needs approval first.
  Kalima No. Kalima records on the device of the person who wants the transcript.

- [ ] **Are technical terms recognised?**
  Product names and abbreviations are the most common errors.
  Kalima A vocabulary for the company and one per team, each with up to 200 terms. People can add their own terms for a single recording.

- [ ] **Do summaries fit your conversations?**
  A sales call needs a different structure than a steering committee.
  Kalima Company summary templates with sections and instructions, as a default for the company and per team.

- [ ] **How do results reach your systems?**
  A transcript that stays in the tool is of little use.
  Kalima Export as SRT and VTT or as Markdown for AI tools. Through the API also as plain text and JSON. Webhooks report finished summaries. The company decides which formats are allowed.

- [ ] **Can you test with real conversations?**
  Only your own conversations show how good recognition is.
  Kalima Yes, in the 7-day Team trial or in an Enterprise pilot.

6 Limits and documents

What Kalima does not do, and what you get for your review.

What Kalima does not do

So you know before you choose, not after.

No guaranteed availability
The contract contains no guaranteed uptime and no guaranteed response times. The current service status is at status.meetkalima.com.

No e-invoices
Kalima does not issue invoices in ZUGFeRD or XRechnung format.

Kalima manages the keys
Keys from your own key management service are not possible.

Not every subprocessor is in the EU
Some are US companies, covered by standard contractual clauses.

Documents

Data processing	Agreement with technical and organisational measures, public at meetkalima.com/avv
Subprocessors	With processing location, after sign-in and in the console
Works council sheet	Printable from the console
Security questions	security@meetkalima.com

Which plan

Team	2 to 25 seats, booked online. Console, audit log, company rules, retention periods, vocabulary, summary templates, webhooks and the works council sheet.
Enterprise	From 10 seats on an annual contract. Adds single sign-on, SCIM, IP allowlists, audit streaming, legal hold and zero data retention.

Any questions about your choice?

Whatever this list leaves open, we will settle with you. For Enterprise, we set up a time-limited pilot on request.

Contact		
	Book a conversation	meetkalima.com/contact
	Kalima for companies	meetkalima.com/enterprise
	Security questions	security@meetkalima.com

Kalima is a product of ByteHawk GmbH, Fährstraße 217, 40221 Düsseldorf, Germany. This list describes the state as of 24 November 2026. It is online at meetkalima.com/blog/transcription-buyers-checklist.



Kalima