

Automation Partner Evaluation Scorecard

A Structured Framework for Choosing the Right Custom Automation Machine Builder

How to Use This Scorecard

Rate each automation partner on every criterion below using the point scale provided. Total each section, then sum all sections for a final score out of 100. Use the Notes column to record specific observations, questions asked, or red flags.

Evaluator Name: _____	Date: _____
Project / Application: _____	Competitor 1 Name: _____
Company / Facility: _____	Competitor 2 Name: _____

Evaluation Criterion	Steven Douglas Corp. (SDC)	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Notes / Observations
1. Engineering Depth (15 pts)	<i>Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)</i>			
In-house mechanical engineering	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Dedicated controls engineers	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Internal electrical panel design & build	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
In-house robotics & vision integration	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
AI / advanced technology capability	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Category Subtotal	/ 15	/ 15	/ 15	
2. Process Understanding (15 pts)	<i>Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)</i>			
Structured discovery / process evaluation	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Cycle time validation methodology	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Part variability & tolerance analysis	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Asks difficult questions early	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Builds to your process, not a template	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Category Subtotal	/ 15	/ 15	/ 15	

Evaluation Criterion	Steven Douglas Corp. (SDC)	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Notes / Observations
3. Controls Architecture (15 pts)	Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)			
Standardized PLC platform (/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Modular programming structure	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Clear HMI & fault diagnostics	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Data collection capability (OEE, downtime)	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
MES / ERP integration capability	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Category Subtotal	/ 15	/ 15	/ 15	
4. Robotics, Vision & AI (10 pts)	Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)			
Strategic use of robotics vs. fixed automation	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Vision system lighting design expertise	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
AI-based vs. rule-based inspection judgment	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
False reject reduction methodology	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Avoids unnecessary technology complexity	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Category Subtotal	/ 10	/ 10	/ 10	
5. Project Management (15 pts)	Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)			
Dedicated project manager assigned	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Defined milestones & schedule discipline	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Structured change order process	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Regular communication cadence	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Formal FAT / SAT procedures	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Category Subtotal	/ 15	/ 15	/ 15	
6. Build Quality & Facility (10 pts)	Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)			
Organized, clean assembly floor	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	

Evaluation Criterion	Steven Douglas Corp. (SDC)	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Notes / Observations
Clean, labeled electrical panel builds	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Structured documentation processes	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Strong safety culture visible on site	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Overall build discipline & professionalism	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Category Subtotal	/ 10	/ 10	/ 10	

7. Service & Long-Term Support (15 pts)		<i>Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)</i>		
Dedicated service team	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Response time commitment (SLA)	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Remote diagnostics capability	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Operator & maintenance training included	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Preventative maintenance guidance	/ 3	/ 3	/ 3	
Category Subtotal	/ 15	/ 15	/ 15	

8. Financial Stability & Longevity (10 pts)		<i>Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)</i>		
Years in business & track record	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Leadership stability & depth	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Repeat customer relationships	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Organizational depth (not just key people)	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Evidence of financial stability	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Category Subtotal	/ 10	/ 10	/ 10	

9. Cultural Fit & Communication (10 pts)		<i>Score each criterion below (use the max points shown)</i>		
Challenges unrealistic expectations	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Conservative / realistic cycle time quoting	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Clear, proactive communication style	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	

Evaluation Criterion	Steven Douglas Corp. (SDC)	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Notes / Observations
Transparency and candor	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Partnership vs. transaction mentality	/ 2	/ 2	/ 2	
Category Subtotal	/ 10	/ 10	/ 10	
TOTAL SCORE	/ 100	/ 100	/ 100	

Scoring Guide

Score	90–100	75–89	60–74	Below 60	Per Criterion
Meaning	Strong partner	Solid, some gaps	Caution — probe further	Significant risk — reconsider	0 = None Max = Excellent

Remember: Price is only one factor. Choose for engineering discipline, process depth, and long-term partnership — not lowest bid. Visit sdcautomation.com to learn more about Steven Douglas Corp. (SDC).