

SIGNAL TO STRATEGY · SESSION 3

Defend the Call

Tie your decision to a number, build it, and set up the loop that learns after launch.

Heather Gawel · Momentum Product Co. · Wednesday, September 23, 2026

Three sessions, one system

Each session answered a different question about the same decision.

SESSION 1

Signal

What's really going on? We automated the reading and found the admin-handoff pattern nobody saw in any single source.

SESSION 2

Stress test

Does it hold up? We sorted the editor bet against the strategy and it didn't survive.

SESSION 3 · TODAY

Defend

Is it worth it, and is it working? A number, a build, a weekly check, and one page that defends the call.

Today closes the loop. The call you made gets a number, a build and a weekly check.

Today in six blocks

Two hands-on blocks. The live build is in the middle.

Time (ET)	What we do	The one idea
12:00	Open: where Launchpad landed	A decision that doesn't move a number is a hobby
12:05	Build your number (hands-on)	Pick the number your boss already watches
12:25	Live build	Idea to working thing to weekly check, in one go
12:43	Your exec one-pager (hands-on)	If it doesn't fit on one page, you're not ready
1:03	Capstone pitches	Say it out loud and defend it
1:25	Close	Set up your loop this week

Next week is Q&A. Bring whatever breaks when you try this on your own bet.

We killed the editor bet. The real problem is ownership.

Where Launchpad landed after the stress test.

WHAT WE KILLED

The editor bet

9 engineering weeks + 3 design weeks, \$190,000. It broke two February commitments and read idle flows as "hard to edit." Nobody had asked.

WHAT THE DATA SAID

8 of 11

lost or at-risk accounts had their admin change. Only 4 of 29 healthy ones did. Flows sat idle 86 days vs 18.

THE NEW BET

Who owns this now?

When the admin leaves, ask the new person to take ownership, and tell their customer success manager.

A decision that doesn't move a number is a hobby. Today we find the number this one moves.

The whole story in four lines

Keep this in your head for the rest of the hour.

- 1 **When the admin leaves, nobody takes over,** and the account cancels.
- 2 **We notice when it happens** and ask the new person to take ownership.
- 3 **That keeps customers from leaving,** which is the number the board watches.
- 4 **We check every week** and stop if it isn't working.

Four numbers, that's it: 8 of 11 · churn 14% → under 10% · 3 weeks vs 9 · the 1 in 4 stop line.

PART 1

Build your number

Pick the number your boss already watches.

Four questions turn a decision into a number

Answer them in order. The fourth one is the one people skip.

- 1 If this works, what will people do differently?** A behaviour you could see, not a feeling.
- 2 How would you count that?** Your early number. It moves in weeks.
- 3 What number does your boss or client already report?** PMF, retention, expansion, revenue, pricing or GTM.
- 4 What result would make you stop?** Write it down now, before anything ships.

No data yet? Write your best guess and how you'd start counting. A written guess beats a missing number.

Launchpad, answered

The early number moves in weeks. The boss number moves in quarters.

Question	Launchpad
What will people do differently?	When an admin leaves, someone new takes over the flows
How would you count it?	Flagged accounts where a new owner edits a flow within 30 days
What does the boss already report?	Logo churn: 14% today, board target under 10%
What would make you stop?	Fewer than 1 in 4 new admins edit a flow within 30 days

You need both numbers. The early one tells you this month. The boss one is what you get judged on.

The same bet can fail one kind of math and pass another

Launchpad: about \$63,000 to build, about \$82,100 of ARR in handoff accounts.

THE CFO'S MATH

First-year ARR

At a 30% save rate: \$24,600 back against \$63,000. Break-even needs 77% saved.

Doesn't clear.

LONGER HORIZON

Three-year value

$\$82,100 \times 3 = \$246,300$. Break-even at 26% saved, just over 1 in 4.

Clears if we keep more than 1 in 4.

WHAT THE BOARD COUNTS

Logos

Every account we keep is a customer the board counts. At 30%, that's 2 to 3 customers who stay.

Moves the board number directly.

Use your approver's math first. Switching to friendlier math is how you lose the room.

Hands-on: build your number

15 minutes. Prompt 1, then Prompt 2, from the working guide.

LANE A

Your bet + strategy doc

Run Prompt 1 on your live bet. Let it interview you. Then Prompt 2 with whatever cost numbers you have.

LANE B

Your bet + principles

A vision statement or principles counts. Use them as the "what we already committed to" in Prompt 2.

LANE C

Launchpad

Load the Session 3 pack. Run both prompts as the PM defending this call to the Launchpad exec team.

Hands off keyboards at 12:25. Keep your four-line summary. You'll paste it into your one-pager.

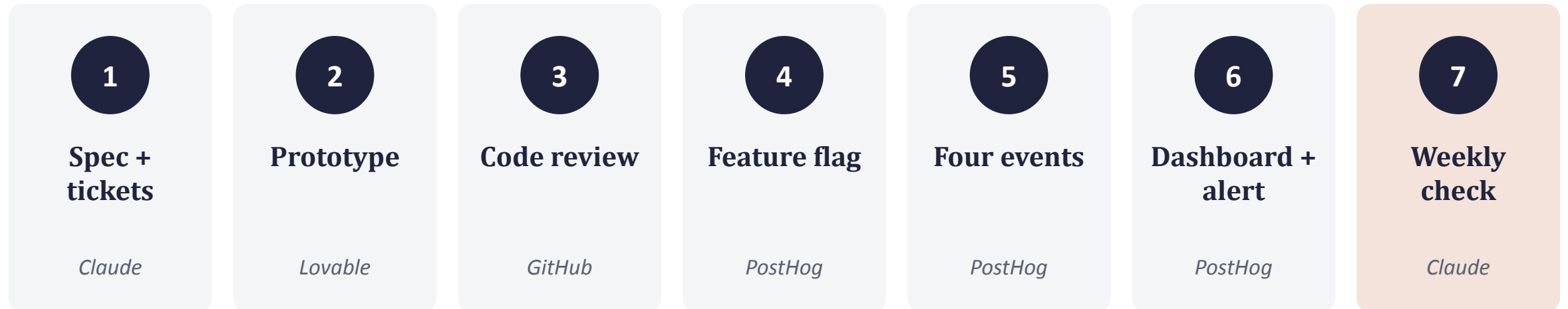
PART 2

The live build

Idea to working thing to weekly check, in one go.

From decided bet to a weekly check, in one sitting

The point isn't the tools. It's that this can be done this week.



Swap any tool for the one your team uses. The steps stay the same.

Write the stop rule first. The tools matter less than the line you draw before launch.

Four events, and what each gap tells you

Each event is a step in the story. The drops between them tell you what to fix.

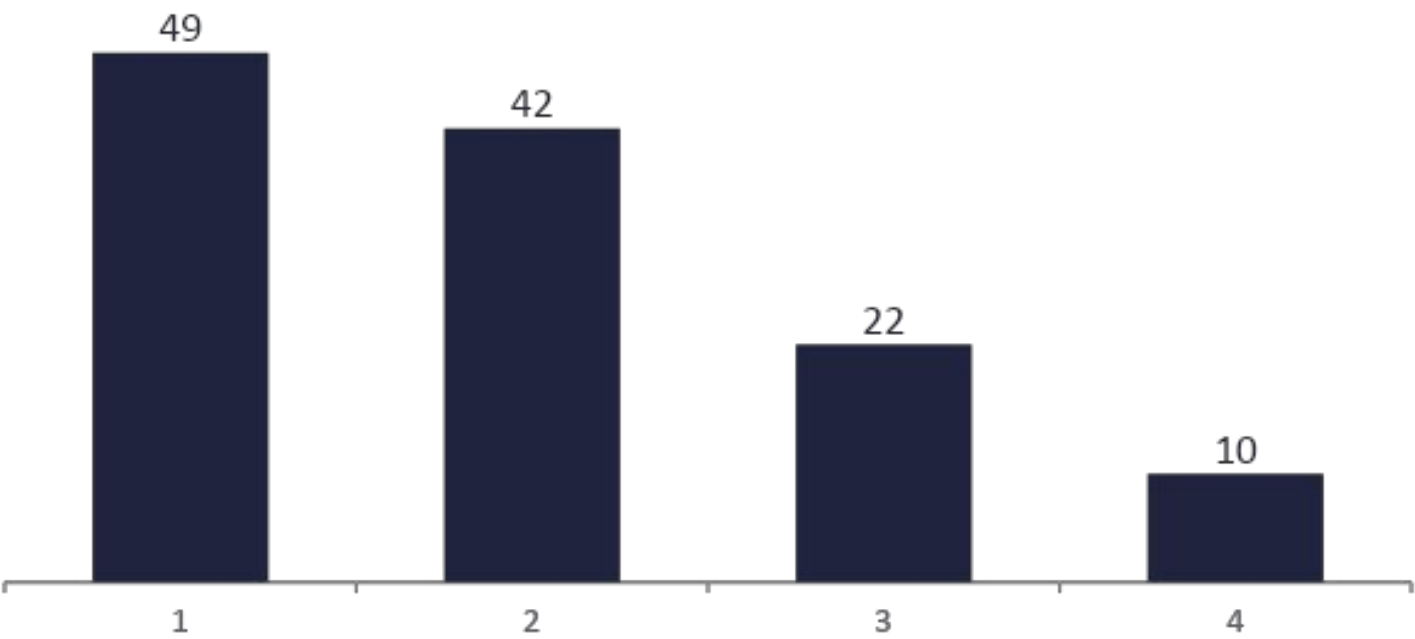
- 1 **admin_changed** the account is flagged
- 2 **ownership_prompt_shown** the new admin sees it
- 3 **ownership_accepted** "Yes, I own these"
- 4 **flow_edited_by_new_owner** the real proof

Where it drops	What it means
Flagged, not shown	A bug. Fix it
Shown, not accepted	They don't see it as their job. A person has to ask
Accepted, no edit	Maybe the flows really are hard to edit

Accepting is a click. Editing is the work. That's why the last event is the one we judge on.

Overall, 20% of new owners edited a flow. The line was 25%.

Six weeks of simulated data in PostHog. Unique accounts, 30-day window.



AGAINST THE STOP LINE

20.4%

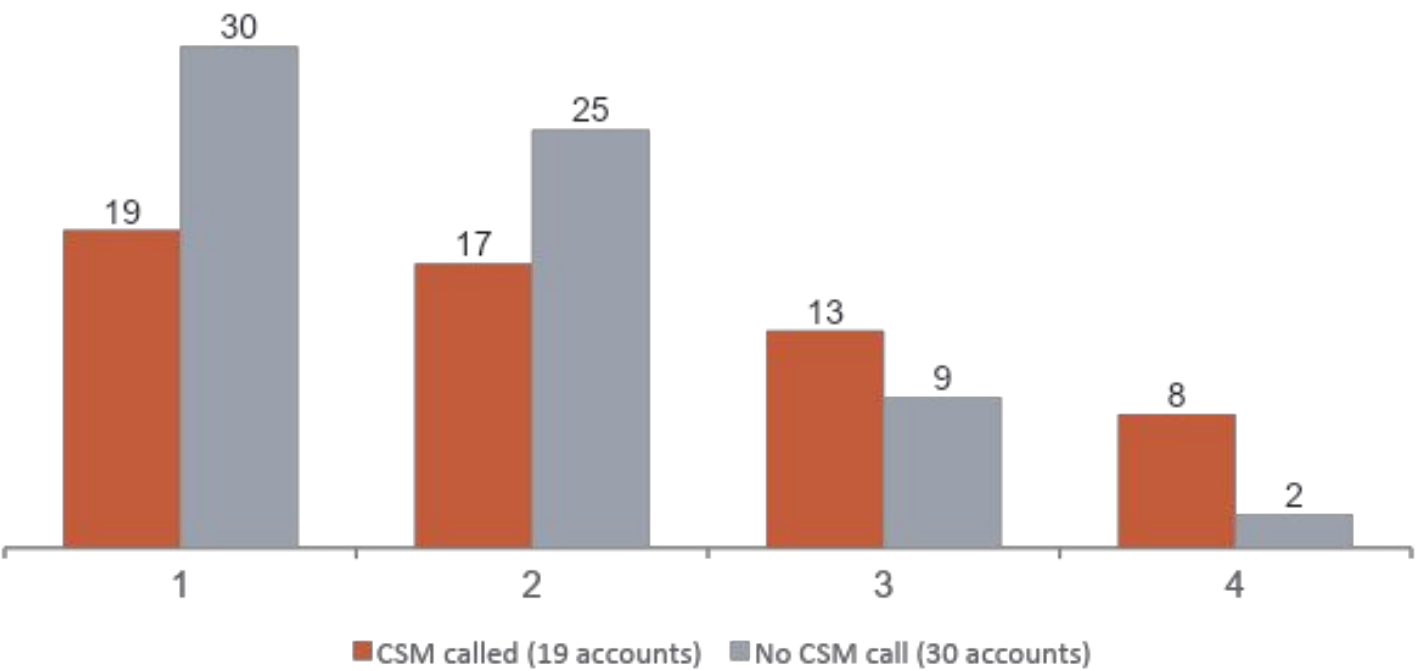
10 of 49 flagged accounts had a new owner edit a flow. The line was 1 in 4.

Biggest drop: shown → accepted, 42 to 22.

The stop rule fired. So before we stop, we look at the split.

When a person called, 42% took over. Without a call, 7%.

The same funnel, split by whether the customer success manager reached out.



42%

with a call (8 of 19)

7%

without one (2 of 30)

Small groups. A strong hint, not proof.

The loop didn't say kill it. It said change it. Make the CSM call part of every handoff.

Every Monday, Claude checks the numbers and says what to do

A scheduled task, plus a PostHog alert on the stop line. This is the learning loop.

- 1 Verdict:** Change course.
- 2 The number:** 49 → 42 → 22 → 10. 20.4%, under the 1 in 4 line.
- 3 Biggest drop:** shown → accepted. People don't see it as their job.
- 4 The split:** 42% with a CSM call (19 accounts), 7% without (30). Small groups.
- 5 Next move:** a CSM call on every handoff. Next week, the no-call group should shrink.

You wrote the rule before launch, so the weekly check can't talk itself into good news.

AI builds, tracks and watches. You make the call.

The Session 1 audit, showing up in real work.

Step	AI did	You did
Spec and tickets	Drafted them from the bet	Picked the stop rule, and what we're not building
Prototype	Built the banner and the events	Decided what the new admin needs to see
Tracking	Wired the events from a plain list	Chose which four steps prove it works
Dashboard	Built the funnel and the split	Asked for the split that tests the theory
Weekly check	Reads the numbers, suggests a move	Decides: keep going, change course or stop

Build, track, watch: hand them over. Pick the number, set the stop rule, make the call: keep them.

PART 3

The one-pager

If it doesn't fit on one page, you're not ready.

Seven parts, one page

This is the page that ties Sessions 1, 2 and 3 together.

1

The decision one sentence

2

The number it moves boss number + early number

3

Cost and return your approver's math first

4

What we're not doing the trade-off, named

5

The receipts claim · source · verdict

6

When we'd stop the rule, and where you are

7

The ask what, from whom, by when

Every claim needs a receipt. Confirms, contradicts, flatters or silent. The Session 2 verdicts, one more time.

The Launchpad one-pager

The worked example. It's in the pack; read it after you draft yours.

DECISION

Ship it, with a call

Ship "Who owns this now?" behind a flag, with a CSM call on every flagged account. Not building the editor.

NUMBER + RETURN

Logos first

Logo churn 14% → under 10%.
About \$63,000. Doesn't pay back in year one; does on three-year value if we keep more than 1 in 4.

STOP + RECEIPTS

Under the line, changed course

20% today vs the 1 in 4 line. The receipts: 8 of 11, 86 vs 18 days, and 42% vs 7%.

The ask: 3 engineering weeks + 1 design week in Q4, and a CSM call on every flagged account.

Hands-on: draft your one-pager

20 minutes. Prompt 9 to draft it, then Prompt 10 to find the weak spot.

- 1 Gather your inputs:** signal summary, stress test, four-line number, cost and return.
- 2 Run Prompt 9.** It writes seven sections and a receipts table, and marks what's missing.
- 3 Fill the [MISSING] gaps** yourself. Don't let the AI guess them.
- 4 Run Prompt 10.** It finds the weakest line and asks the three hardest questions.

Pitches start at 1:03. A rough page said out loud beats a perfect one nobody pitched.

PART 4

Capstone

Say it out loud and defend it.

How the pitches run

Around 7 minutes each. We push back the way your approver would.

3 MINUTES

You pitch

Your one-pager, out loud. Lead with the decision and the number.

2 MINUTES

We push back

As your approver, using the stakeholder views from Session 2.

2 MINUTES

Feedback

The number, the math, the stop rule, the receipts.

What we're listening for: Is it a number your approver already reports? · Is the math theirs? · Could a result actually stop it? · Does every claim have a receipt?

Bring one number. The one you most want your approver to remember.

The system you'll reuse on every call

Three questions, in order, every time.

Session	What it answers	What AI does	What you own
1. Signal	What's really going on?	Reads and sorts everything	Which signal matters
2. Stress test	Does it hold up?	Sorts evidence against your strategy, plays your stakeholders	The trade-off
3. Defend	Is it worth it, and is it working?	Builds, tracks, watches, drafts	The number, the stop rule, the call

This is what you walk out with: a defended, ROI-tied direction, and a loop that keeps learning after launch.

THIS WEEK

Set up your loop, then bring what breaks

- ☐ Answer the four questions for your real bet
- ☐ Cost and return in your approver's math
- ☐ 3 to 5 events written down
- ☐ A dashboard, or a CSV you check weekly
- ☐ A stop line with an alert or a reminder
- ☐ Your one-pager, pitched to one real person

Next week: Q&A. Everything is on the session page and in the Slack channel.