

Should you build it, or buy it?

A decision framework for revenue leaders — from the webinar "Build vs. Buy: Why Smart Teams Still Get This Wrong"

Simple, Build. Complex, Buy.

The whole framework, six words. Everything below is how to tell which one you're looking at.

STEP 1 • THE COMPLEXITY TEST — ASK THESE FOUR QUESTIONS

1 Does this run on data you already trust — or are you building the pipeline *and* the tool at the same time?

2 Will someone need to maintain this after go-live?

3 Does getting this wrong cost you a forecast, a rep, or a deal?

4 Will this pull ops off their real job for a quarter or more?

Scoring: a "building both at once" on Q1, or a yes on any of Q2–Q4, pushes you toward **buy**.

STEP 2 • THE QUICK READ

Build In-House

- A simple dashboard or internal report
- One owner
- Low stakes if it's wrong

Think: scheduling tools, e-signature, form builders — one person feels the pain, one person fixes it.

Buy

- Anything touching quota, forecast, or comp
- Trust and adoption across the team is the whole game
- High cost of being wrong

Think: ERP, enterprise CRM, forecasting, comp engines — anything sitting on system-of-record data.

WHY COMPLEX BUILDS FAIL

AI doesn't replace expertise — it amplifies whoever's driving. A complex build without institutional knowledge leans on borrowed data and outside experience instead of the depth that only comes from doing the work every day.

THE NUMBERS

80%+ of AI projects fail to deliver business value. ~95% of generative AI pilots show no measurable return. Purchased capability reaches deployment roughly 2× as often as in-house builds.

RAND Corporation (2024) · MIT Project NANDA, State of AI in Business (2025)

THE MONDAY TEST

Before you approve the next build: does it touch quota, forecast, or comp? If yes, buy it.

The test takes four questions. The decision takes longer.

Everything we didn't have room for here.

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