

Thriving in the age of AI

A playbook for unlocking growth
for B2B software companies

LAUNCHPAD



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This is a practical guide for Founders, CEOs, CTOs, Heads of Product, and investors of B2B SaaS companies, to help them thrive in an AI-driven future.

It explores key themes such as moving beyond full-stack development, transforming products to deliver outcomes, unlocking new opportunities with AI, breaking through innovation gridlock, expanding offerings, and ultimately using market disruption as a catalyst for growth.

Escape the squeeze

Mid-sized B2B software companies are being squeezed out of their markets, often by the agility of AI startups or the heavy AI investments of tech giants.

Technical debt is crippling innovation – cited by 91% of CTOs as their biggest challenge¹ – while AI disruption threatens to commoditize traditional SaaS features.

Microsoft's Satya Nadella warns of AI potentially "collapsing" traditional SaaS business applications, while AI-native startups offer "superior solutions at lower prices."²

With so much disruption, it's hard to find a clear path ahead to evolve your company.

Key challenges facing established B2B software companies:

- Growing competition from AI-native startups
- Buyers slowing down software purchases while they explore AI and building their own agents
- Buyer desire for fewer vendors for point solutions
- Pressure to integrate AI capabilities meaningfully
- Technical debt limiting innovation speed
- Customer expectations for automated outcomes
- Need for new pricing and delivery models

The only way forward is to embrace AI, new business models, and growth strategies with a new mindset.

Don't get stuck in the full-stack mindset

In the past, CTOs of B2B software companies often prided themselves on “full-stack development,” building complex systems from the ground up. But today, building everything in-house is often a constraint, not an asset.

Too many teams spend precious months engineering features that are essential, but don't set you apart. Authentication, payment processing, messaging, analytics – spending your best talent and time on undifferentiated tech problems means delaying the delivery of actual customer value for your target Ideal Customer Profile (ICP).

As Amazon's Jeff Bezos famously noted, there is “nothing quite so useless as doing with great efficiency what should not be done at all.”

The new mindset for B2B software leaders should be outcome-focused development: invest your resources where they drive the greatest impact for customers with your unique value, and leverage existing solutions for the rest.



It's time to focus on the innovation that delivers value the fastest, and leverage an ecosystem of platforms.

Price for outcomes, not features

AI is creating a fundamental shift in customer expectations, from providing features that help them, to completing the work predictably. In turn, this demands a shift in how you deliver and monetize value.

Goodbye per-seat pricing

Leading companies have already made this transition. For example, the innovative fintech Quavo created an offering to handle credit card disputes, which is sold to financial services organizations on an outcome basis. As a result, their clients can easily see how much they save per dispute. And the company itself has [leveraged its success to secure \\$300 million in further investment](#).

To transform your own business model, start by identifying the core metrics that matter to your customers.

Key criteria for outcome based pricing success:

- Clear, measurable outcomes tied to software impact, ideally within your control or where you have a high confidence
- Customer trust and access to performance data
- Cross-functional alignment between sales, product, and success teams
- Longer-term relationships with co-defined success metrics
- Often combined with a base fee or usage minimum to mitigate vendor risk
- Clarity of costs (COGS) for executing the end-to-end process to deliver the outcome

Ask yourself:

● Is it time saved? ● Revenue generated? ● Costs reduced?

These become your new pricing anchors.

Think beyond surface-level AI

While everyone talks about AI, few established B2B software companies are harnessing it effectively. The opportunity lies in meaningful work orchestration that goes beyond surface-level features.

Every repetitive task in your users' workflow is an opportunity for AI and agentic workflow.



conversations
handled per month

Consider Klarna's AI customer service assistant. In one month, it handled 2.3 million conversations – matching the work and satisfaction scores of 700 human agents. This shows how it's possible for software to not just support work, but perform it.

Similar opportunities abound

Imagine AI-powered mortgage applications that replace email chains with conversational experiences to collect information. Or marketing software that autonomously nurtures leads with personalized communications before handing off to humans.

Your data advantage

Unlike startups, you have years of customer relationships, data, and domain expertise. This positions you to create specialized AI solutions that deliver powerful outcomes competitors can't easily replicate.

Start with clear use cases where AI can deliver immediate value and demonstrate how you will put clients on a path toward achieving their dream outcomes. Choose focused new features or complementary new products leveraging a platform to create them 10x faster and cheaper than previously possible.

Break through the innovation gridlock

Technical debt and development bottlenecks are crippling innovation for many established B2B software companies. So how do you break free?

Modern AI-powered low-code development and managed run-time platforms can handle much of the expected basic but expensive-to-develop capabilities, plus simplify complex agentic workflow orchestration, from integration to autonomous agentic workflows. This elevates your team to focus on building game changing capabilities and differentiated value proposition, for customers.

Take these practical steps forward

Start by auditing your development process. Which features are truly unique to your product, and which could be handled by existing platforms or services?

Be honest. Be brutal. For example, a beautiful UI library or a custom-built analytics dashboard might feel proprietary, but if it doesn't directly contribute to your value proposition, consider it undifferentiated.

Look for opportunities to replace custom-built components with enterprise-grade services that reduce maintenance burden while improving reliability.



>5x

Companies using this approach often see **>5x faster development times³**, more nimble development and significantly reduced drag of technical debt.

Expand your product universe

Long-term success of your software business (in terms of enterprise valuation, ability to raise capital, generate profits, or prepare for a highly valued exit) means finding ways to deliver more value to existing customers while capturing new ones. And that means not just adding features, but opening new revenue streams and markets.

Rather than simply enhancing your current offering, look for adjacent problems you could solve. Your existing customers already trust you – what else could you help them achieve? This might mean new modules, complementary products, or even entirely new solutions built on your core expertise.

A great case in point

For example, a B2B software company in the marketing space started with a blog and email automation tool, then expanded to offer a social media scheduling add-on and a market-leading CRM. It was a brilliant growth play that not only lifted revenue with existing customers, but also drove massive client acquisition.

Read the full story [here](#) on HubSpot.

Warning signs you're thinking too small:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| ● All features target existing use cases | ● Revenue growth slowing from current customers |
| ● Competitors expanding into adjacent markets | ● Customer requests for functionality you don't plan to build |

Think beyond traditional SaaS

The future of B2B software isn't just software-as-a-service, but service-as-software – actively performing the work rather than just providing tools to support it.

This means building intelligence into every layer of your application, creating systems that can:

- Make decisions autonomously
- Complete complex workflows predictably
- Learn from patterns
- Adapt to changing conditions

The platform advantage

Leverage your existing client relationships and knowledge of their unique challenges to accelerate AI adoption. Platforms like [Launchpad.io](https://launchpad.io) help increase win rates, retain hard-won customers, and expand revenue per customer. Focusing limited resources on major new capabilities drives continuous impact and value.

Explore the Launchpad platform

Launchpad is a modern AI-powered low code platform from Pegasystems designed for rapid, scalable software development, providing built-in security, observability, compliance, and multitenancy.

Try it out now, using a few text prompts

Within minutes, you'll see an application preview with UI, dashboards, integrations, conversational AI, and APIs. Then easily estimate costs for executing the end-to-end workflows and outcomes.

Case in point: Fielo's move to 50% faster development

Fielo's incentive program platform is impressive, serving global brands like Google and Audi. But they reached an impasse.

How could they accelerate innovation without rebuilding their entire infrastructure?

“Not every company can or should build everything in-house,” advises CEO Sanjay Agarwal. “Evaluate carefully if internal development truly differentiates your product – or if it’s merely a costly distraction. Launchpad enables rapid growth without sacrificing quality or control.”

Challenges:

- Platform constraints limiting flexibility
- Tech debt slowing development
- Rising development costs
- Specialized talent shortage

Fielo abandoned their full stack development project to modernize their tech debt and shifted fully to [Launchpad](#), with immediate results. It accelerated Fielo's innovation cycle and feature delivery while improving cost efficiency across both development and operations. The platform's model-driven design increased team confidence and freed resources to focus on innovation rather than excessive code and infrastructure.

Results:

- >50% reduction in development timelines
- Enhanced confidence through platform guardrails
- Lower costs across development and operations
- Freed internal resources to focus on innovation

For growing or stalled B2B software companies seeking speed, scalability, and cost-efficiency beyond traditional platform limitations, Fielo's experience demonstrates how the right platform can accelerate innovation and market reach.

Checklist for transforming how you build your software business

Of course, every company is different. But this checklist does give you a proven path for the journey ahead.

- Audit retention & expansion metrics
- Identify complementary product opportunities
- Evaluate positioning: point solution vs. platform
- Focus vision on outcomes, not features
- Leverage AI to do work, not just track
- Eliminate undifferentiated full-stack effort
- Accelerate development with Launchpad
- Think bigger in roadmap & value strategy

Checklist in [further](#) detail.

Your path forward

The B2B software companies that will flourish in the coming years are those that innovate boldly and stay relentlessly value-focused. By applying the strategies in this playbook, you can break out of growth plateaus, delight your customers, and future-proof your business in the era of AI.

Key recommendations:

**Move beyond
traditional SaaS
thinking**

**Transform your
business model
for outcomes**

**Leverage AI
meaningfully,
not superficially**

**Break through
development
gridlock**

**Expand
your product
universe**

**Build a
true service
platform**

**Execute
with purpose
and speed**

The exciting next step: See what's possible for you

Outline your current product, challenges, and goals with us and we'll establish where Launchpad can help you deliver the greatest impact.

Or why not start seeing what you can do right now

Try Launchpad Explore – our free account with full access to GenAI Blueprint that lets you design and prototype in minutes, not months.

Sources

¹ [Intelligent CIO](#)

² [Windows Central](#)

³ [Pega figures, reported by Launchpad users](#)

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