

AUTOMATTIC  
FOR AGENCIES

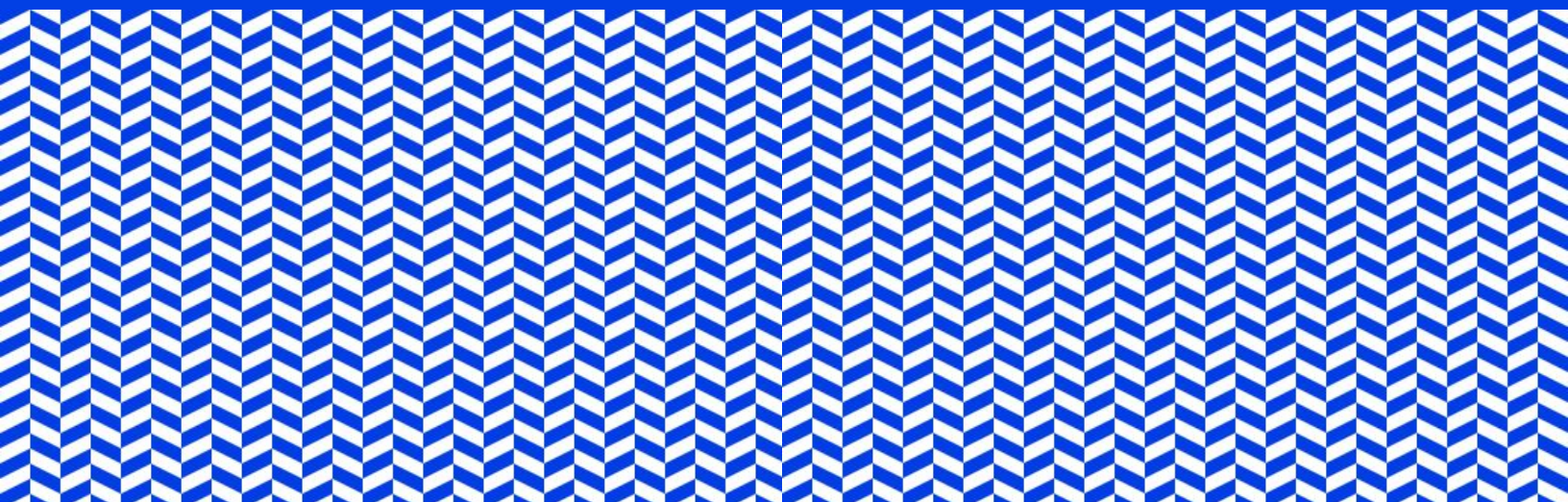


# Selling WordPress VIP to the Enterprise

An enterprise agency  
partner playbook

Created by  
Automatic for Agencies

February 2026



# Contents

## 00

- Executive summary
- How to use this playbook
- Why now
- Messaging architecture

## 01

How enterprises buy platforms

## 02

The web's new operating model

## 03

The positioning story

## 04

Qualification framework

## 05

Enterprise proof (proof registry)

## 06

How VIP strengthens your agency

## 07

Selling in the room

## 08

The strategic edge: from SEO to AI-driven discovery

## 09

Co-selling and the Automatic for Agencies partnership

## 10

Implementation reality

## 11

Tier selection framework

## 12

Appendix: Quick-use tools



# Executive Summary

Enterprise platform decisions are not feature decisions. They are risk decisions. Agencies operating in enterprise environments are accountable not only for delivery, but for exposure, governance alignment, and long-term defensibility. A platform that fails security review, cannot scale under load, or creates architectural lock-in does more than create rework. It erodes trust.

This playbook is built for agencies operating at that level:

- Global and regional systems integrators embedded in major accounts
- Large digital and marketing agencies serving multi-stakeholder enterprises
- WordPress agencies running complex multisite and multi-team programs

If your clients require procurement approval, security review, and executive sign-off before a platform decision moves forward, this guide is for you.



# How to use this playbook

- **If you have ten minutes:** Read Sections 03 (positioning), 04 (qualification), and 07 (selling in the room).
- **If you're preparing for security or procurement review:** Read Sections 05 (proof registry) and 10 (implementation reality).
- **If you're selecting the right VIP tier:** Go to Section 11.
- **If you're building a strategic narrative about AI and discovery:** Use Section 08, then pull the talk track in Section 07.

This document is designed to move from context to positioning to execution. If you read it in order, it builds a case. If you jump sections, it works as a reference.

## Why now?



### What has changed

- Discovery is shifting as AI-generated answers reduce click-through for some queries.
- Governance requirements are expanding, and security review is happening earlier in evaluations.
- Enterprise teams are under pressure to ship faster without increasing operational risk.



### What it means for enterprise buyers

Platforms are being evaluated less on feature checklists and more on exposure, governance readiness, and long-term fit.



### What it means for your agency

Clients need a platform that stands up to security and compliance review, supports modern workflows, and keeps total cost of ownership defensible without limiting architectural choices.

# Messaging architecture

## Core positioning

WordPress VIP is the open and intelligent content experience platform built for enterprise outcomes.

## Three pillars

1

### Security and scale

A managed platform designed to stand up to security review and high-traffic events.

2

### Content workflows

Editorial velocity, analytics integration, and AI-assisted workflows where they create real leverage.

3

### Open architecture

Multisite, headless, and hybrid options with a broad ecosystem and integration flexibility.



## Proof anchors

SEC-01 FedRAMP Moderate ATO, SOC 2 Type I, GovRAMP, TX-RAMP

ECON-01 Forrester TEI: 415% ROI over three years

PERF-01 New York Post election: 22B requests, 100% uptime, 143ms

# How enterprises buy platforms

In enterprise environments, infrastructure decisions are judged through exposure, compliance, resilience, and long-term adaptability. The stakes are real. A recommendation that goes wrong has professional consequences.

## Key takeaways

# 1

Frame enterprise evaluation correctly

# 2

Align to multi-stakeholder decision dynamics

# 3

Position on exposure and governance rather than features



## Enterprise platform decision-making

Enterprise buyers invest to reduce risk and improve performance. They look for compliance confidence, faster time to market that does not increase operational exposure, and measurable business impact. Every platform decision runs through those filters.

Unlike midmarket deals, enterprise decisions rarely sit with one person. They move across a group with different concerns:

- The CMO looks at velocity.
- The CTO looks at architecture and technical debt.
- The CISO looks at controls and auditability.
- Procurement and legal examine commercial and regulatory exposure.
- Executive sponsors focus on measurable outcomes and long-term flexibility.

Deals slow down when those perspectives pull in different directions. They move forward when the platform reduces risk for all of them.



## Risk profile and stakeholder complexity

If a platform fails a security review, goes down during a major campaign, or creates lock-in that limits future strategy, the impact goes well beyond inconvenience. It affects reputation, revenue, and internal credibility. That reality shapes buying behavior. Enterprises favor resilience over feature depth because stability protects careers and business outcomes.

- Procurement is part of the operating model.
- Security review shapes the evaluation from day one.



## Platform choices and client trust

For agencies, platform recommendations directly affect the durability of the client relationship. Escalation paths, roadmap transparency, operational maturity, and track record carry weight. Enterprise platform decisions are decisions about exposure, trust, and long-term viability. And with time, these criteria are becoming more pronounced.

# The web's new operating model

This section explains the structural forces reshaping enterprise platform decisions. It is the context behind the positioning that follows.

## Key takeaways

1

AI is reshaping both discovery and execution.

2

Governance is tightening, and security review can determine viability early.

3

Structured content and open integration patterns are becoming strategic.

Enterprise buying behavior is changing because the web itself is changing. Three structural shifts are reshaping platform decisions: how discovery works, how governance is enforced, and how content functions inside modern systems. This is the context behind the positioning that follows.



## AI is changing distribution and execution

### AI-mediated discovery

For decades, digital visibility meant ranking in search so people could click through to a page. That loop is breaking. AI systems now generate direct answers inside search environments ([Search Engine Land](#)). When summaries appear at the top of results, fewer users click through. Many tasks end inside the interface ([Pew Research](#)).

Brands still produce the content. But discovery is shifting from “visit the site” to “extract the answer.”

At the same time, AI systems ingest large volumes of content while returning limited referral traffic. Organizations built on attention feel this first, but the pattern applies more broadly. Distribution is becoming machine-mediated. The shift does not stop at discovery.

AI systems are moving from answering questions to completing tasks (Forrester). Agents can research, retrieve structured data, and interact with digital systems through APIs. A website is no longer just a destination for humans. It is part of a broader capability layer that machines can access.

Infrastructure now determines whether content is machine-readable, reusable, and accessible through stable interfaces. It determines whether AI systems can interact with your environment reliably. What used to feel like backend plumbing now shapes distribution, control, and authority.

This changes the role of infrastructure. Infrastructure decisions made today will influence whether content is:

- Discoverable in AI-mediated environments
- Structured for reuse and integration
- Accessible through stable APIs
- Governed in a way that maintains authority and trust



## Governance tightening

Compliance requirements continue to expand. Enterprise buyers expect alignment with frameworks such as FedRAMP Moderate ATO, SOC 2, GDPR, and regional data residency standards. Security review often determines whether a platform proceeds at all. For agencies, recommending a platform that fails security or compliance review damages credibility. Security posture is not a bonus. It is table stakes.

Procurement and governance requirements are built into enterprise buying. They shape evaluations from the beginning and influence who is even allowed in the room.



## Content is a strategic asset

Content is one of the most valuable assets an organization owns. It compounds over time and drives brand authority, search visibility, demand generation, and customer education. But in an AI-influenced environment, content must be more than published output ([Semrush](#)).

Content needs structure. It needs governance and clear attribution. It needs to be designed for reuse across systems and informed by performance data. The shift is subtle but important. Content is no longer just about presentation. It is long-term intellectual property that moves across channels, interfaces, and machine environments. That raises the bar for the platform that manages it. Content deserves the same operational discipline as financial systems or proprietary data.

### These dynamics reinforce each other

These pressures compound. Together, they are redefining how enterprise platforms are evaluated.

1. AI increases the value of structured, machine-readable content.
2. Governance increases scrutiny on infrastructure and controls.
3. Infrastructure determines how reliably content moves across human and machine environments.

This is the environment in which WordPress VIP must be positioned.

Section 03 translates these shifts into language you can use in the room, grounding the conversation in risk reduction, operational resilience, and architectural flexibility.

# The positioning story

This is the practical section. It gives you language you can use in the room, tuned to the audience and the moment.

## Key takeaways

1

Lead with enterprise outcomes, then connect to WordPress VIP.

2

Use the right script for the room (60-second, executive, technical).

3

Avoid early feature comparison and vague AI claims.

By this point, the context is clear. Enterprise buyers are thinking about exposure, governance, and long-term control. This section translates that reality into language you can use in the room.

Lead with outcomes. Adjust to the audience. Stay concrete.

## What to lead with in early conversations

Start with the enterprise outcome. Then connect it to WordPress VIP.

Position the platform as an open content experience platform built for enterprise demands. Emphasize open architecture and managed cloud infrastructure that stand up to security review and scale requirements. Reference proof where appropriate ([SEC-01](#), [PERF-01](#)).

Keep the conversation anchored in risk reduction, operational resilience, and long-term fit. That sets evaluation criteria early and keeps you out of feature comparisons. When AI comes up, ground it in infrastructure readiness. Talk about structured content, API access, analytics integration, and AI-assisted workflows. If the conversation turns strategic, use the framing in Section 08.



## The 60-second script

Use this in elevator conversations, opening remarks, or when someone asks “why WordPress VIP?”

*WordPress VIP is the open and intelligent content experience platform built for enterprise outcomes. It brings the flexibility and ecosystem of WordPress into a fully managed, enterprise-grade environment designed for scale, security review, and performance. It's used by organizations including the White House, News Corp, and Salesforce. VIP combines managed infrastructure, enterprise-grade controls, and modern development workflows with the flexibility to support single-stack, headless, or hybrid architectures from one platform. The result is faster time to market, lower total cost of ownership, and infrastructure designed to scale with enterprise demands. (Proof: [SEC-01](#), [ECON-01](#), [PERF-01](#).)*

## The executive room version

Use this in C-suite presentations, board-level conversations, or when you need to anchor the decision in business outcomes.

*Your content is one of your most valuable strategic assets. The question is whether your infrastructure protects that asset, makes it discoverable, and allows your teams to operate at the speed your business requires. WordPress VIP reduces platform risk through managed infrastructure and embedded controls. It lowers operational overhead compared to many legacy proprietary CMS platforms and supports AI-assisted workflows that position content for evolving discovery models. [Forrester's independent Total Economic Impact™](#) study reported 415% ROI over three years for a composite customer. (Proof: [ECON-01](#).)*

## The technical audience version

Use this with CTOs, engineering leads, and architects who care about stack decisions.

*WordPress VIP is a fully managed, containerized cloud platform with autoscaling infrastructure and global content delivery. It supports single-stack implementations as well as headless and hybrid builds using modern JavaScript frameworks and REST or GraphQL APIs. Developer workflows integrate with GitHub and CI/CD pipelines. Observability tools such as New Relic APM support performance monitoring. The platform includes infrastructure-level protections, logging and auditing capabilities, and governance controls aligned with enterprise compliance expectations. (Proof: [SEC-01](#), [PERF-01](#).)*

## What not to say

- **Avoid leading with “WordPress.”** Enterprise buyers carry assumptions about WordPress from the self-hosted, open source ecosystem. Lead with the business outcome or the enterprise capability. Let the WordPress part follow.
- **Avoid feature comparisons in the first conversation.** Enterprise buyers care about risk, outcomes, and credibility. Feature lists feel transactional. Save them for the evaluation phase.
- **Avoid “WordPress for enterprise.”** This positions VIP as a workaround for WordPress limitations. The framing should be: an enterprise content experience platform that happens to be built on the world’s most widely adopted content framework.
- **Avoid overpromising on AI.** The AI capabilities are real and substantial. But framing everything as “AI-powered” sounds like hype. Be specific: MCP server support, Parse.ly AI Data Agent (available as a cross-sell), Jetpack AI for content workflows. Let the specifics do the work.

## Summary

Strong positioning improves win rates. It does not create qualification. Enterprise pursuits require time, technical depth, stakeholder alignment, and executive access. Not every opportunity justifies that investment.

The next step is determining whether the account is strategically aligned, financially viable, and structurally ready for an enterprise platform decision.

Section 04 provides the qualification framework to make that call early.



# Qualification framework

Enterprise sales cycles are long, complex, and resource-intensive. This framework protects your time and ours by identifying which opportunities merit pursuit and which are unlikely to convert.

## Key takeaways

1

Qualify for fit, urgency, and sponsorship before investing heavily.

2

Look for triggers that force change (replatforming, governance, cost, incidents).

3

If qualified, use Section 11 to select the right tier.

## Ideal customer profile

Look for alignment across these dimensions.

Dimension	Indicators
Industry	Media, financial services, healthcare, government, higher education, retail, SaaS/technology
Company size	\$500M+ annual revenue companies, federal or state agencies, major nonprofits.
Traffic volume	1M+ monthly unique visitors (flexibility for high-value or strategic accounts)
Current pain	Legacy CMS (Drupal, AEM, Sitecore), security/compliance gaps, slow content velocity, high TCO
Architecture needs	Multisite, multi-geography, headless or hybrid, content APIs, AI integration requirements
Buying process	Multi-stakeholder (CMO, CTO, CISO), formal procurement, security review required



**Note:** These are active targeting thresholds. They are not hard cutoffs. If the account fits on other dimensions (compliance complexity, traffic, architecture needs, expansion potential), engage your Automatic for Agencies partner manager to qualify.

## Trigger events

The strongest opportunities emerge when something forces change.



Look for these signals:



**Replatforming.** End-of-life software, discontinued vendor support, rising licensing costs, or architecture that can't support headless delivery or structured content initiatives.



**Compliance pressure.** New regulatory requirements, failed security audits, heightened governance scrutiny, or expanded data-residency obligations.



**Global expansion.** Entry into new markets requiring multilingual infrastructure, regional hosting considerations, and governance controls.



**Performance incidents.** Downtime during high-visibility events, traffic spikes that expose scalability limits, or performance degradation affecting SEO and brand trust.



**Cost pressure.** Executive mandates to reduce total cost of ownership, especially when proprietary licensing materially impacts budgets.

## Disqualification signals

Walk away early when you see these:

- No budget authority and no path to executive sponsorship
- Budget locked into a multi-year contract with no realistic exit window
- Technical leadership firmly committed to a .NET or Java stack with no openness to architectural evolution
- A primarily transactional e-commerce use case with minimal content complexity (WooCommerce may be the more appropriate motion)
- Traffic under 100K monthly unique visitors with no growth trajectory, regulatory requirement, or strategic expansion plan
- A decision timeline exceeding 18 months without a defined executive sponsor



If the account qualifies, move forward intentionally. Use Section 11 to select the appropriate tier.

Once qualified, proof becomes the accelerant. Section 05 centralizes the evidence you will rely on throughout the cycle.

# Enterprise proof

This section is the single source of truth for claims and supporting evidence. Reference proof by label in other sections instead of restating it.

Consistency reduces friction in procurement and keeps messaging aligned across stakeholders.

## Key takeaways

### 1

Use proof by label to keep conversations consistent and non-repetitive.

### 2

Anchor early credibility with [SEC-01](#), [ECON-01](#), and [PERF-01](#).

### 3

Pull additional proof blocks based on stakeholder needs.

This section centralizes canonical claims so your agency and the WordPress VIP team can stay consistent across stakeholders, avoid rework in procurement, and reuse proof cleanly in decks, emails, and executive meetings.

## Proof selector: start with the right anchor

Match proof to accountability. Start with the proof that reflects what the stakeholder owns. Add supporting material only if needed.

Stakeholder	Primary proof anchors
CISO	<a href="#">SEC-01</a> + SLA-01 + Implementation controls (Section 10)
CFO / Procurement	<a href="#">ECON-01</a> + cost-of-staying questions
CTO	<a href="#">PERF-01</a> + technical script (Section 03) + implementation model
CMO	<a href="#">ECON-01</a> + relevant case studies + workflow outcomes
Editorial	Case studies + workflow stability + managed environment

## Proof registry

### **SEC-01: Security and compliance alignment (canonical language)**

WordPress VIP holds a FedRAMP Moderate ATO and aligns with SOC 2 Type I.

#### **Certification details**

- **FedRAMP Moderate ATO**: Authorization to Operate (ATO) at the Moderate level for U.S. federal agencies
- **SOC 2 Type 1**: Independent attestation aligned to AICPA Trust Services Criteria for Security and Availability
- **GDPR aligned**: Designed to support EU data protection requirements
- **SSAE 18 SOC 1**: Controls relevant to financial reporting, available via documentation
- **GovRAMP Authorized**: Cloud security and risk assessment that applies to state and local agencies across the U.S.
- **TX-RAMP Certified**: Texas-specific requirements for technology providers serving state and local entities



### **ECON-01: Forrester TEI (canonical language)**

**Forrester's Total Economic Impact™ study** of a composite WordPress VIP customer reported 415% ROI over three years.

#### **Supporting metrics:**

- **\$3.48M** total three-year impact
- **\$527K** security-related savings
- **50%** reduction in build time for new sites
- **Up to 60%** cost savings versus legacy CMS platforms

## Proof registry, cont'd.

### **PERF-01**: New York Post election performance

During the November 2024 U.S. election (November 4–6):

- **22B** requests handled
- **100% uptime**, including during DDoS attacks
- **143 ms** average response time
- **82%** traffic surge absorbed without degradation



### **SLA-01**: SLA canon

- **Standard:** 99.95% uptime SLA; 24-hour non-urgent response time; 60-minute urgent response time
- **Enhanced:** 99.99% uptime SLA; 12-hour non-urgent response time; 30-minute urgent response time; disaster recovery failover included
- **Signature:** 99.99% uptime SLA; four-hour non-urgent response time; 15-minute urgent response time; Technical Account Manager; Slack and P2 communications

## More case studies



### Capgemini: From Drupal to WordPress VIP

Capgemini migrated a 38-site Drupal network to WordPress VIP and rebuilt its platform architecture around a modern, block-based CMS. The migration enabled:

- 1,400+ new users on the platform, with the CMS team expanding from five webmasters to 70 users
- 20,000+ pages published in 10+ languages across 38 sites, with global content syndication and geolocation
- Shared publishing workflows that reduced manual coordination and accelerated submission timelines
- Greater internal capacity to optimize content and generate leads across properties



### ADWEEK: 100% Super Bowl Uptime

ADWEEK migrated to WordPress VIP to support its Super Bowl coverage.

During the 2025 Super Bowl:

- 100% uptime with zero 500 errors
- 82% year-over-year increase in pageviews
- 55% increase in visitors
- 24% increase in time on site
- 548% increase in video views

**Zoë Ruderman, ADWEEK's Chief Content Officer:** "I want my teams to be focused on creating the best content possible, and a lot of it on Super Bowl week, and making sure as many people see it as possible."



### Her Campus Media: Growth with VIP & Parse.ly

After migrating to WordPress VIP and standardizing on [Parse.ly](#) (available as a cross-sell):

- 120% year-over-year increase in organic search pageviews
- 90% reduction in engineering overhead
- A block-based editorial experience aligned with contributor expectations

**Lievens, Her Campus leadership:** "WordPress helps my team punch above their weight. We take a plugin that does 90% of what we need and just handle the other 10% custom to us."



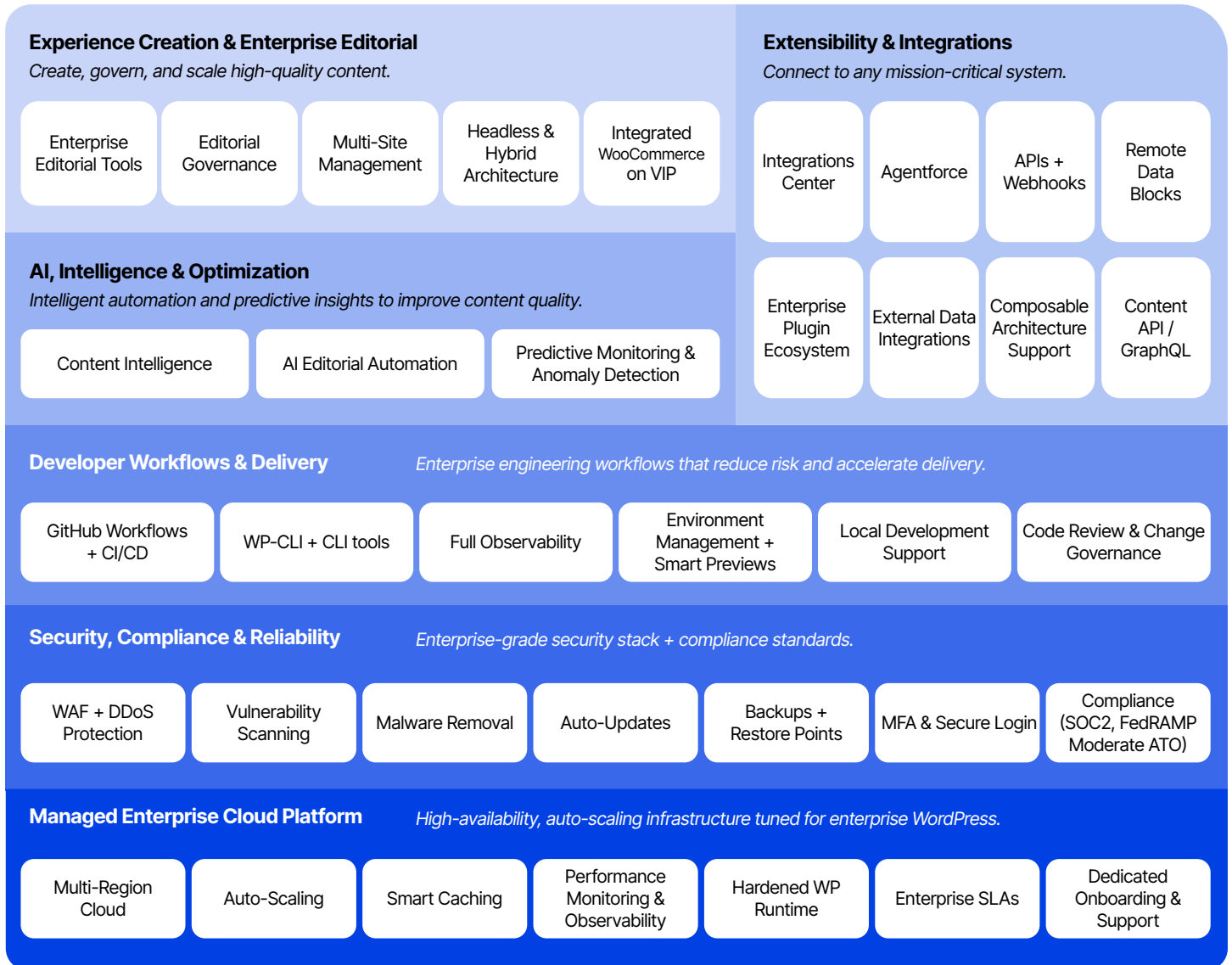
### VentureBeat: Performance & Stability at Scale

After migrating to WordPress VIP:

- Site response time reduced to approximately one-tenth of its previous level
- Eight million monthly uniques and 18 million pageviews served with consistent uptime
- Performance and security issues, including SSL and version upgrades, managed within the platform

**Steve Tidwell, Director of Technology, VentureBeat:** "Once the freshly optimized site launched on WordPress VIP, the performance and uptime issues were quickly a thing of the past. Editors can now run their workflows with confidence."

# W VIP Architecture snapshot



- **Platform infrastructure:** Fully containerized, Docker/Kubernetes, purpose-built hardware, auto-scaling, zero-downtime deployments.
- **Performance:** Built-in CDN with 28 edge locations, Nginx cache at the edge, multi-layer caching (object, page, query), Persistent Memcached for stateful applications, enterprise search via Elasticsearch.
- **Security:** DDoS protection, vulnerability scanning (Nessus), annual penetration testing, automated security patching, containerized databases and file systems, read-only file systems, encrypted hourly backups retained for 30 days.
- **Developer tooling:** Automated deployments via GitHub (with GitLab and Bitbucket integration), VIP CLI, automated code scanning (PHPCS), local development environment, staging environments, New Relic APM with browser monitoring and synthetics.

# How VIP strengthens your agency

WordPress VIP is not just a platform decision. It changes how your agency delivers work, protects margin, and expands accounts.

Proof wins confidence. Agency economics win commitment. This section connects platform capability to what agency leaders care about: predictable delivery, less surprise labor, and clean paths to grow the relationship.

## Key takeaways

1

WordPress VIP's licensing and infrastructure model is often more cost-efficient than legacy proprietary platforms. (Proof: [ECON-01](#).)

2

Managed stability reduces surprise labor and protects margin.

3

Open architecture expands accounts without forcing a stack reset.



## Margin impact

WordPress VIP's licensing and infrastructure model is often more cost-efficient than legacy proprietary platforms (Proof: [ECON-01](#)). Lower platform overhead improves margins on fixed-price engagements and reduces exposure when scopes shift. As the maintenance burden drops, more retained revenue stays retained.

Build cycles are often shorter than legacy enterprise CMS implementations. Pre-vetted plugins, a mature ecosystem, and broad developer familiarity reduce the need for custom infrastructure work. That lowers delivery risk and makes pricing easier to hold.

The WordPress ecosystem also gives you access to a large global talent pool. Hiring and scaling is typically easier than sourcing specialized AEM or Sitecore developers, which protects margin over time.





## Operational stability

VIP runs as a managed enterprise platform. Core updates, infrastructure scaling, and security patching are handled in the managed environment. That moves engineering time away from platform maintenance and toward paid work.

Managed stability also reduces surprise labor. Surprise labor erodes margin.



## Reduced infrastructure burden

With VIP, your team is not managing servers, orchestrating scaling events, or coordinating platform maintenance. Autoscaling absorbs traffic spikes. Backups, logging, and security monitoring are part of the managed environment.

That operational complexity no longer sits on your P&L. Your team spends more time on strategic work clients will pay for.



## Enterprise credibility shift

Recommending a platform trusted by large enterprises and public institutions changes the tone of the sales conversation. It signals maturity in governance and performance under load. (Proof: [SEC-01](#), [PERF-01](#).)

In enterprise sales, credibility reduces friction.



## Expansion mechanics

- Multisite: Large portfolios can run from a shared codebase with localized customization.
- Headless and hybrid: Evolve architecture without replatforming.
- APIs and integrations: Integrate with DAM, CDP, commerce, personalization, and analytics systems already in place.
- Tier evolution: As exposure grows, support models evolve. Use Section 11 to select a tier based on risk.

# Selling in the room

Field-ready material for live sales conversations. Use what fits the moment.

## Key takeaways

### 1

Map stakeholders to their decision lens and use proof labels.

### 2

Ask discovery questions that reveal exposure, governance, and urgency.

### 3

Use a short AI readiness talk track that points to Section 08.

Sections 03–06 establish the story, the fit, the proof, and the agency upside. This section is about execution: running meetings, aligning stakeholders, handling objections, and keeping momentum.

**Common enterprise dynamic:** The CMO wants speed, the CTO wants architectural flexibility, and the CISO wants assurance. Deals stall when those priorities are argued in isolation. They move when the agency frames the platform decision as risk-managed velocity, then uses the same proof in every room. (Proof: [SEC-01](#), [ECON-01](#), [PERF-01](#).)

## Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder	Primary concern	What they need to hear	Key proof point
CMO	Current performance, time to market, ROI	Teams report materially faster publishing velocity when infrastructure constraints are removed.	Her Campus: 120% organic growth; 110% paid subscriber increase
CTO	Architecture, scalability, developer experience	Flexible architecture (headless/hybrid), GitHub CI/CD, Node.js hosting, massive talent pool.	100% uptime during 2024 election; 22B requests at 143ms
CISO	Security certifications, compliance, vulnerability management	FedRAMP Moderate ATO; continuous scanning, penetration testing, encrypted backups.	\$527K three-year security savings (Forrester TEI)
CFO / Procurement	Total cost of ownership, contract terms, ROI	60% savings vs. AEM/Sitecore; Monthly unique visitor (MUV)-based pricing; no hidden fees.	415% ROI, \$3.48M three-year impact ( <a href="#">Forrester TEI</a> )
Editorial	Usability, workflow, content velocity	Gutenberg block editor, Jetpack AI for drafting and tone, Parse.ly in-editor insights (Parse.ly available as a cross-sell alongside VIP).	1200% more content creators; 15 min saved per article

## Agency plays: field-tested motions

### Agency play 1: Create urgency without pressure

- **Trigger:** The client is evaluating but nothing is forcing a change.
- **Move:** Quantify cost of staying.
- **Talk track:**
  - "What is the business impact of one hour of downtime during a peak moment?"
  - Anchor in exposure and long-term fit.
- **Proof to use:** [ECON-01](#) + [PERF-01](#).
- **Next step:** Executive working session on total cost of ownership.

### Agency play 2: Run a two-meeting security pre-brief

- **Trigger:** Security review is inevitable.
- **Move:** Hold two meetings before procurement:
  - **1. Architecture and certification overview**
  - **2. SLA and incident model deep dive**
- **Talk track:** "We want security comfortable before procurement formalizes requirements."
- **Proof to use:** [SEC-01](#) + [SLA-01](#).
- **Next step:** Share documentation package and schedule follow-up.

### Agency play 3: Position phased rollout to reduce migration risk

- **Trigger:** The client fears disruption.
- **Move:** Propose phased migration (high-value property first).
- **Talk track:**
  - "We reduce exposure by sequencing migration rather than shifting everything at once."
- **Proof to use:** Case studies + Section 10 (implementation reality).
- **Next step:** Executive working session on total cost of ownership.

### Agency play 4: Land one property, expand to multisite

- **Trigger:** Large portfolio, hesitant initial commitment.
- **Move:** Start with one flagship property; demonstrate performance and governance; expand.
- **Proof to use:** PERF-01 + multisite expansion capability.
- **Next step:** Identify the next two expansion candidates during your first QBR.



## Discovery questions

### For CMO / Marketing leadership

- What are your top content and digital experience goals for the next 12–18 months?
- How do you measure content performance and ROI today?
- Where does publishing slow down, and what does that cost you?
- How are governance and approvals handled today?
- How are you thinking about AI in your content strategy?

### For CTO / Engineering Leadership

- What are the biggest constraints with your current CMS?
- How much engineering time goes to maintenance versus building new capability?
- What architecture do you need in two to three years (single-stack, headless, hybrid)?
- Which integrations are non-negotiable?
- What's your tolerance for downtime during peak events?

### For CISO / Security Leadership

- Which compliance frameworks or regulatory requirements are non-negotiable for your organization?
- How are vulnerability management and patching handled across your web platform today?
- What are your expectations for incident response and recovery in the event of a security issue?
- What data residency or data sovereignty requirements do you need to meet?
- How do you manage third-party audits, and how often are they conducted?



## Objection handling

### **“WordPress isn’t secure enough for enterprise.”**

*WordPress VIP holds a FedRAMP Moderate ATO and is the only WordPress platform approved for US government use. SOC 2 Type I certified. Trusted by the White House, Federal Reserve, and NASA. The platform includes DDoS protection, vulnerability scanning, penetration testing, automated security patching, containerized architecture, and encrypted backups. Forrester shows \$527K in three-year security savings.*

### **“Open source means lack of support.”**

*WordPress VIP is a fully managed enterprise platform with 24/7 developer-to-developer support, a 99.99% uptime SLA, and Technical Account Management at the Signature tier. Signature SLAs include a four-hour response time for urgent issues. Customer retention exceeds 98%. You retain full ownership of your code and content, with no vendor lock-in.*



### **“We need personalization WordPress can’t provide.”**

*VIP takes a composable approach. Integrate with Adobe Target, Optimizely, Dynamic Yield, or any best-of-breed personalization tool. Parse.ly (available to VIP customers as a separate analytics product) provides audience segmentation, content recommendations API, and conversion tracking. The open platform supports custom personalization logic and integrates with your CDP or CRM. Reference: Salesforce, WeddingWire, Bloomberg.*

### **“Headless is too complex with WordPress.”**

*VIP includes Node.js hosting in the same infrastructure. Block Data API delivers content as pure JSON. Quickstart templates for Next.js and Gatsby include content preview, Gutenberg blocks, and auth. News Corp runs headless, hybrid, and single-stack architectures across regions, all from one dashboard.*

### **“We’re already invested in our current CMS.”**

*Consider the cost of staying: slower velocity, higher maintenance overhead, limited AI capabilities, expensive licensing. VIP Migration Services have supported hundreds of enterprise migrations from Drupal, Adobe, Sitecore, and proprietary platforms with 98%+ success rate. News Corp migrated from multiple proprietary CMSs. Nielsen migrated from Drupal. Cox Automotive left Adobe. All report faster velocity, lower cost, and happier teams. Forrester shows 415% ROI over three years.*

## Framing comparisons vs. Closed DXPs

Dimension	Wordpress VIP	Adobe AEM	Sitecore	Proprietary CMS
Flexibility	Open core, 55K+ plugins, massive ecosystem	Vendor lock-in, limited extensibility	Vendor lock-in, expensive customization	Built for one publisher's needs
AI	MCP servers, Jetpack AI, Parse.ly AI Data Agent (cross-sell)	Limited proprietary AI functionality	Limited add-on modules	Minimal
TCO	60% savings on licensing/ infrastructure	High licensing, complex pricing	High licensing, module costs	Lower licensing, limited innovation
Time to market	50% faster build time	Slow, complex implementations	Requires specialized expertise	Faster initially, slower over time
Talent	740 groups in 109 countries	Niche, expensive specialists	Niche, expensive specialists	Limited to vendor resources
Security	FedRAMP Moderate ATO, SOC 2 Type I	Strong but expensive	Strong but expensive	Varies widely

### AI readiness talk track

AI is changing how content is discovered, summarized, and cited. The practical implication is simple: content needs stronger structure, governance, and reliable delivery so it can perform in AI-mediated discovery without increasing risk. WordPress VIP supports that direction through structured content patterns, workflow enablement, and open integration that fits enterprise stacks.

For executive framing and a 12–24 month operating plan, use Section 08.



# The strategic edge: from SEO to AI-driven discovery

This section is the forward-looking framing for executives. It is conceptual, but short, and immediately actionable.

## Key takeaways

### 1

Discovery is shifting from clicks to answers and citations.

### 2

Structured content and governance become competitive advantages.

### 3

Agencies should operationalize this into a 12–24 month plan.



## What's changing in discovery

For decades, visibility meant optimizing for search engines so humans could find your pages. AI changes the loop.

- **SEO asks:** "How do we rank first?"
- **GEO asks:** "How do we become the answer?"

The difference shows up in what you build. Ranking rewards pages. AI selection rewards structure, clarity, and signals of authority.



## Structured content as a competitive advantage

AI systems prioritize content that is semantically structured and machine-readable, with clear signals of authority ([Forbes](#)). That requires:

- Consistent schema and structured fields
- Clear attribution and governance
- Reliable APIs and delivery patterns
- Content designed for extraction, reuse, and measurement



## What this means for your clients in the next 12–24 months

This is where your agency can turn strategy into an operating plan:

- **Make content more extractable:** standardize content models, metadata, and schema patterns.
- **Strengthen governance:** approvals, audit trails, and publishing discipline that stand up to enterprise review.
- **Invest in API-ready delivery:** ensure content can be used across experiences and channels without replatforming.
- **Measure outcomes:** build feedback loops with analytics so teams learn what performs and why.
- **Avoid hype:** treat AI as a distribution shift and workflow accelerant, not a replacement for strategy.

Treat AI as a distribution shift and a workflow accelerant. Keep the plan grounded in what teams can actually implement.



## How to frame this without overpromising

The direction is clear, but timelines and mechanics are still evolving. Frame it this way: AI is changing how content is discovered, and infrastructure choices made now will determine visibility and flexibility over the next two to three years.

- **Avoid:** “AI will replace search.”
- **Use:** “AI is changing discovery, and content infrastructure needs to be ready.”



# Co-selling and the Automattic for Agencies partnership

Enterprise outcomes improve when you and VIP operate as one coordinated team from the beginning of the sales cycle.

## Key takeaways

1

Engage VIP early to shape criteria before procurement freezes it.

2

Align on qualification, stakeholders, and narrative before going wide.

3

Run a shared expansion plan after launch.



## Roles in enterprise co-selling

Ownership may shift based on account dynamics and VIP resourcing. Use this as a default framework and align early with your Partner Manager.

Agency leads	WordPress VIP leads	Shared ownership
Application architecture	Certification and compliance context	Discovery and stakeholder mapping
Services roadmap	Platform architecture validation	Narrative and positioning
Marketing technology stack architecture	SLA and support model explanation	Executive relationship management
Digital strategy	Procurement documentation support	Account plan
		Executive meeting strategy
		Migration sequencing
		Expansion roadmap



## Engage VIP early

Enterprise narratives solidify quickly. Bringing VIP into discovery, stakeholder discussions, and architecture reviews early helps shape evaluation criteria before procurement defines it. It also gives technical and security stakeholders time to build familiarity. (Proof: [SEC-01](#), [SLA-01](#).)

Your [Automatic for Agencies](#) partner manager coordinates alignment across sales, product, and engineering resources behind your account strategy.



## Presenting a unified narrative

Align internally before external positioning:

- **You lead:** strategic vision, creative direction, services roadmap, executive relationships
- **VIP leads:** platform architecture, certification context, and technical credibility

Your client should experience one coordinated strategy.



## Shared qualification

Before you invest deeply, align on:

- Account context and current CMS stack
- Stakeholder map and decision process
- Timeline and urgency drivers
- Architectural requirements and expansion potential

Together, decide whether to advance now or continue building the relationship until conditions are stronger.



## Expanding the account deliberately

Winning the deal is just the beginning. Quarterly business reviews bring agency, VIP, and client stakeholders together to assess account health, performance against KPIs, and upcoming opportunities.

- **We surface risks early:** budget cuts, leadership changes, competitive threats.
- **We identify growth together:** new business units ready to adopt, additional use cases, tier upgrades as traffic grows.

# Implementation reality

Migration conversations slow down when uncertainty takes over. This section sets expectations with clear processes.

## Key takeaways

1

Engage VIP early to shape criteria before procurement freezes it.

2

Align on qualification, stakeholders, and narrative before going wide.

3

Run a shared expansion plan after launch.

## Migration support

WordPress VIP provides migration and launch services designed to move sites onto the platform with structure and oversight.

WordPress-to-WordPress migrations can move quickly, with defined steps for transfer, validation, and launch coordination.

Platform migrations from Drupal, Adobe Experience Manager, Sitecore, or proprietary systems follow a structured plan that typically includes content and database transfer, redirect strategy, QA, and go-live oversight.

Your agency leads the strategic layer of the transition, including information architecture, design evolution, and content strategy. VIP supports migration mechanics and platform readiness.



## Migration risk register

Risk	Mitigation	Where covered
Stakeholder misalignment	Early discovery + architecture alignment	Section 03 + Section 04
Security review delay	Pre-brief model	Section 07 (Agency play 2)
Scope creep	Defined migration phases + change control + clear acceptance criteria	Section 11
Downtime at launch	Launch readiness checklist + traffic rehearsal + zero-downtime deployments	Section 10

## Developer workflows

Application code is hosted in GitHub and deployed through branch-based workflows. Pull requests are scanned against VIP coding standards using PHPCS. VIP CLI supports application management with an audit trail. Local development environments mirror production closely, and staging environments support structured testing.

Deployments are zero-downtime, with existing containers remaining active until new containers are healthy.



## What changes operationally

### What your team stops doing

- Managing servers
- Patching WordPress core
- Coordinating maintenance windows
- Managing CDN configuration
- Running infrastructure security scans and mitigations at the platform layer

### What your team continues doing

- Writing application code
- Building themes and plugins
- Running editorial workflows and content operations
- Developing integrations

### What's new

- VIP Dashboard for application management
- Access to launch support, upgrade assurance, architectural consulting, performance services, and content consulting



## Timeline expectations

Timelines vary based on content volume, integration complexity, compliance requirements, and stakeholder alignment. Discovery determines the final timeline. Clear scope and stakeholder alignment reduce variability.



# Tier selection framework

Tier recommendations should reflect business exposure rather than feature preference. The guiding question is the financial and operational impact of downtime or failure.

## Key takeaways

1

Choose tiers based on exposure, not preference.

2

Use compliance needs and support expectations to refine the decision.

3

Keep SLA language consistent and procurement-ready. (Proof: [SLA-01.](#))

## Risk-based decision tree

### Step one: Exposure

What is the business impact of one hour of downtime? Low exposure may fit Standard. High exposure points to Enhanced or Signature.

### Step two: Compliance

If FedRAMP Moderate ATO is required, that typically points to Enhanced or Signature. (Proof: [SEC-01.](#))

### Step three: Support expectations

If the client expects a Technical Account Manager and direct communication channels, that's Signature. If developer-to-developer support with debugging assistance is sufficient, Enhanced can fit. If ticket-based support covers the use case, Standard is appropriate. (Proof: [SLA-01.](#))





## When Standard is enough

Standard is a strong starting point for many enterprise marketing and content properties:

- Moderate, predictable traffic
- Common enterprise governance needs
- 99.95% uptime SLA; 24-hour non-urgent response; 60-minute urgent response (Proof: [SLA-01](#).)



## When to recommend Enhanced

Enhanced fits when the business cannot afford downtime:

- Higher-traffic properties or higher exposure
- 99.99% uptime SLA; faster response times; disaster recovery failover (Proof: [SLA-01](#))



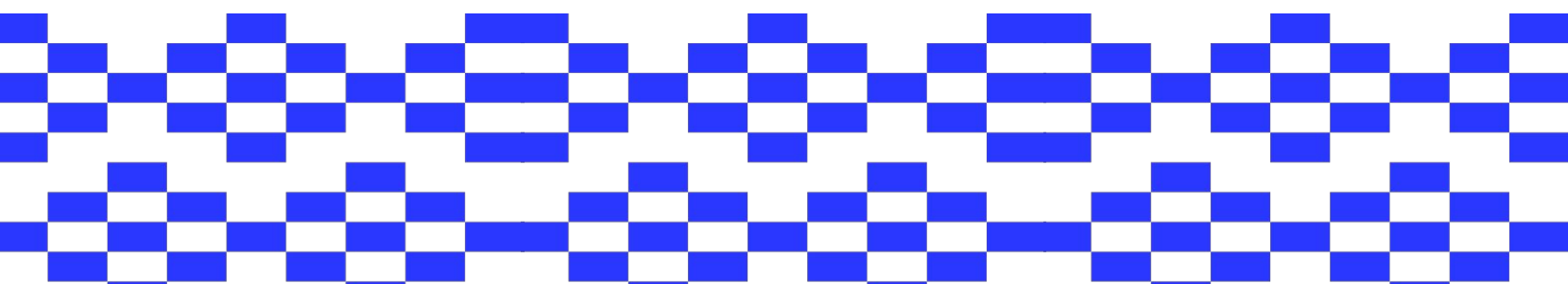
## When to recommend Signature

Signature fits when the relationship requires the highest touch:

- High-exposure, mission-critical properties
- Technical Account Manager and direct communication channels
- 99.99% uptime SLA; four-hour non-urgent response; 15-minute urgent response (Proof: [SLA-01](#))

## How to explain price in enterprise terms

Anchor in total cost of ownership. Frame value around licensing efficiency, reduced engineering lift, faster time to launch, talent economics, and fewer security and reliability incidents over time. (Proof: [ECON-01](#))



# Appendix: Quick-use tools

The following tools are designed to be printed, shared in Slack, or pulled up on a phone during a live conversation.

## Qualification checklist

Check each item. If you can't check at least five, the opportunity may not be qualified for VIP engagement.

Status	Criterion
<input type="checkbox"/>	Client is enterprise or near-enterprise (Fortune 500, government, major media)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traffic exceeds 1M MUV or account is strategically high-value
<input type="checkbox"/>	Current CMS is creating pain (security, velocity, cost, scalability)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change is being driven by a specific trigger (replatforming, compliance, expansion)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget authority exists and timeline is within 12 months
<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple stakeholders are involved (CMO, CTO, CISO, procurement)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture requirements align with VIP (single-stack, headless, hybrid)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear path to account expansion (additional sites, business units, geographies)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Executive sponsor identified



## Objection response quick reference

Objection	Response
"WordPress isn't secure"	FedRAMP Moderate ATO, SOC 2 Type I. Trusted by White House, Federal Reserve, Bloomberg. \$527K three-year security savings (Forrester).
"Open source = no support"	24/7 dev-to-dev support, 99.99% uptime SLA, TAM at Signature. 98%+ retention. No vendor lock-in.
"No personalization"	Composable approach: Adobe Target, Optimizely, Dynamic Yield. Parse.ly segmentation and recommendations API (available as a cross-sell alongside VIP).
"Headless too complex"	Change is being driven by a specific trigger (replatforming, compliance, expansion)
"Already invested in AEM/Sitecore"	60% TCO savings. 50% faster builds. Migration Services. 98%+ success rate. 415% ROI (Forrester).
"Why not Arc XP?"	Arc was built for WaPo's needs. 43% vs <1% of the web. Vox abandoned Chorus for VIP. AI-native with MCP support.

## Case study summary

<a href="#">Capgemini</a>	Migrated from Drupal, 38 sites, 10+ languages	1,400+ new users, 20K+ pages, 5 to 70 CMS users
<a href="#">New York Post</a>	2024 US Election coverage	22B requests, 100% uptime, 143ms, 82% traffic surge
<a href="#">Her Campus Media</a>	Organic growth strategy	120% organic search increase, 90% engineering overhead reduction
<a href="#">News Corp</a>	Global multi-property standardization	WSJ, NY Post, Times of London on VIP. 40x faster publishing
<a href="#">Salesforce</a>	Content marketing across 5 business units	Chose VIP over Adobe AEM
<a href="#">Pew Research Center</a>	Rebuilt their digital foundation from the ground up with VIP	Production time dropped from weeks to minutes, lower cost per click

## Enterprise conversation cheat sheet

<b>Opening (set the frame)</b>	"We're bringing you a unified solution, strategic services combined with an enterprise platform that reduces risk and accelerates time to value."
<b>When they ask about security</b>	"VIP holds a FedRAMP Moderate ATO. It's the platform the White House runs on. SOC 2 Type I. Forrester shows \$527K in security savings over three years."
<b>When they ask about cost</b>	"Forty-three percent of the web runs on WordPress. The talent pool is massive, the licensing is simple, and Forrester's independent analysis shows 415% ROI. Typical customers save 60% on licensing and infrastructure versus AEM or Sitecore."
<b>When they ask about AI</b>	"VIP supports MCP servers for AI agent interaction. Parse.ly (available as cross-sell) AI Data Agent lets teams ask analytics questions in natural language. Jetpack AI handles drafting, summarization, and tone. The platform is architecturally ready for AI-mediated discovery."
<b>When they ask about scale</b>	"During the 2024 US election, VIP handled 22 billion requests in 36 hours with 143ms response time and zero downtime. News Corp runs global properties across multiple architectures from one dashboard."
<b>When they hesitate on migration</b>	"The risk of staying on a platform that doesn't meet your requirements is higher than the risk of a well-supported migration. VIP has migrated hundreds of enterprise sites. 98%+ success rate."

### Core positioning script

Print this. Have it ready.

*WordPress VIP is the open and intelligent content experience platform built for enterprise outcomes. It powers 43% of the web. It holds a FedRAMP Moderate ATO, GovRAMP authorization, and is SOC 2 Type I certified. It's trusted by the White House, News Corp, Bloomberg, Salesforce, and Meta. The platform delivers AI-native workflows, enterprise-grade security, and the flexibility to run any architecture from one managed environment. Forrester's independent analysis shows 415% ROI over three years. Our partnership means your clients get strategic services from an agency that knows their business, combined with a platform built for where the enterprise web is heading.*

## First enterprise call plan (60 minutes)

### Agenda

1. Business objectives (10 min)
2. Exposure and governance assessment (15 min)
3. Architecture direction (15 min)
4. AI and discovery strategy (10 min)
5. Next steps and stakeholder map (10 min)

**Script to use:** 60-second positioning (Section 03).

**Discovery questions:** Section 07.

**Proof anchors to bring:** SEC-01, ECON-01, PERF-01.

**Exit criteria:** confirmed trigger, stakeholder map, security review path, and a scheduled technical validation session with WordPress VIP.

### Core positioning script

Print this. Have it ready.

*WordPress VIP is the open and intelligent content experience platform built for enterprise outcomes. It powers 43% of the web. It's FedRAMP Moderate ATO, SOC 2 Type I compliant, GovRAMP authorized, and TX-RAMP certified. It's trusted by the White House, News Corp, Bloomberg, Salesforce, and Meta. The platform delivers AI-native workflows, enterprise-grade security, and the flexibility to run any architecture from one managed environment. Forrester's independent analysis shows 415% ROI over three years. Our partnership means your clients get strategic services from an agency that knows their business, combined with a platform built for where the enterprise web is heading.*