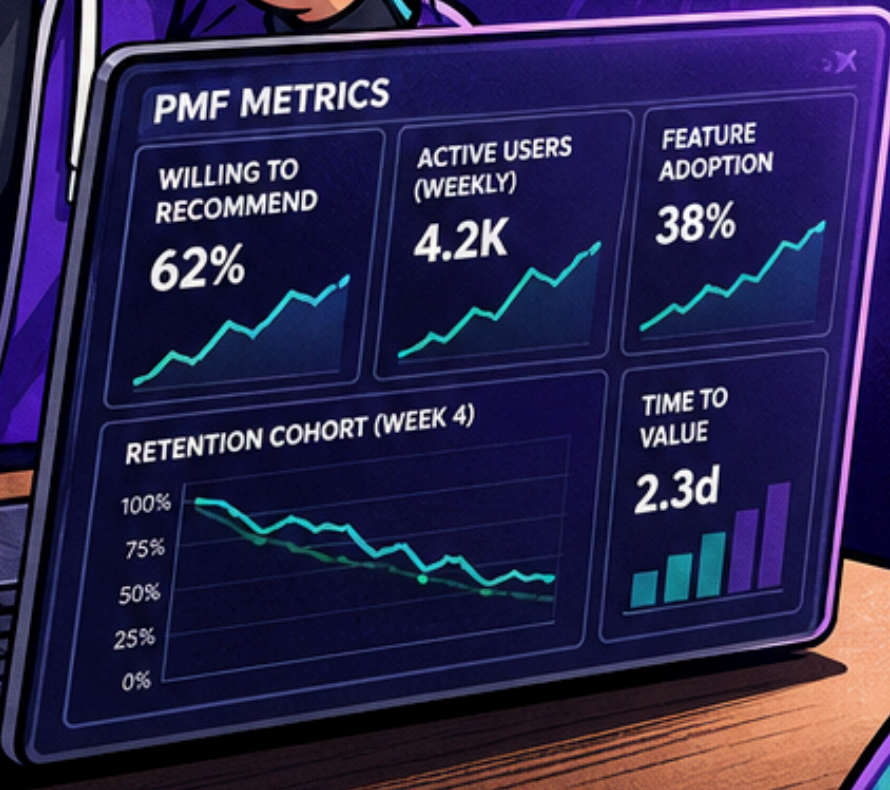


PRODUCT-MARKET FIT FOR ENGINEERS: MEASURE IT, DON'T DECLARE IT



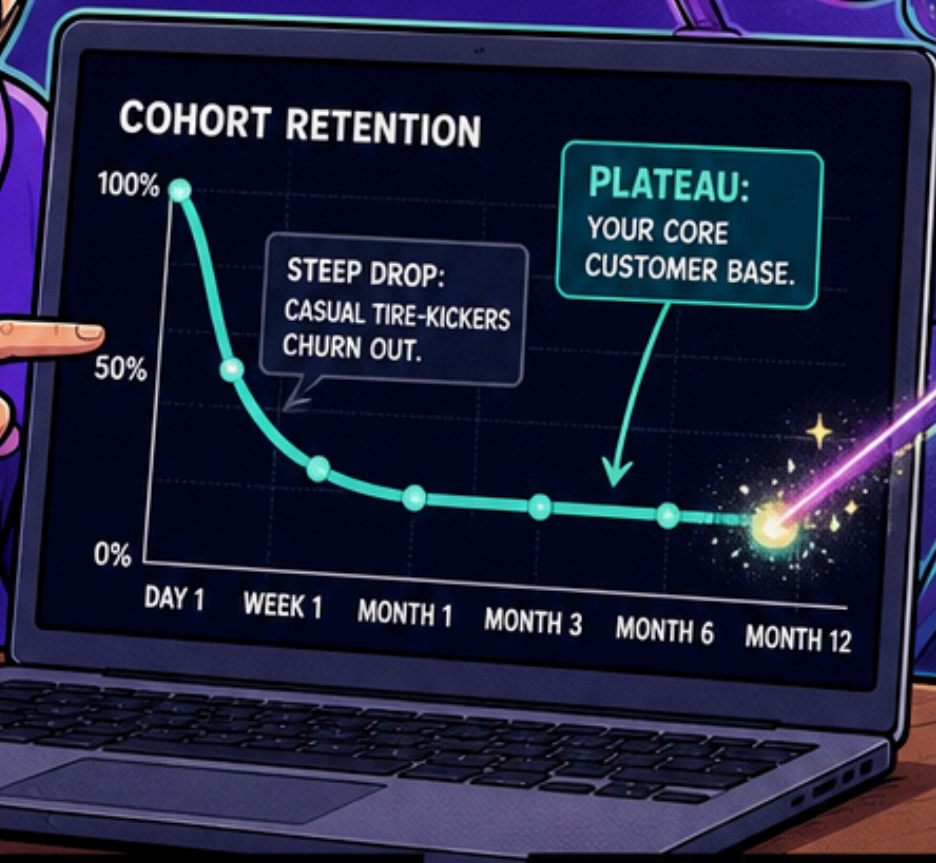
THE RETENTION CURVE

IS YOUR FIRST INSTRUMENT



THIS CURVE TELLS YOU EVERYTHING.

SEE HOW IT FLATTENS INTO A STABLE PLATEAU?



A FLATTENING CURVE MEANS SOME USERS FOUND LASTING VALUE.

A CURVE TO ZERO MEANS THE PRODUCT IS A NOVELTY.



DON'T SCALE INTO A LEAKY BUCKET.

IF THE CURVE DOESN'T FLATTEN, DO NOT SCALE. SCALING BEFORE RETENTION HAS STABILISED JUST ACCELERATES THE LEAKY BUCKET.

TO ACHIEVE PMF, YOUR RETENTION CURVE MUST FLATTEN OUT TO A NON-ZERO RETENTION RATE.

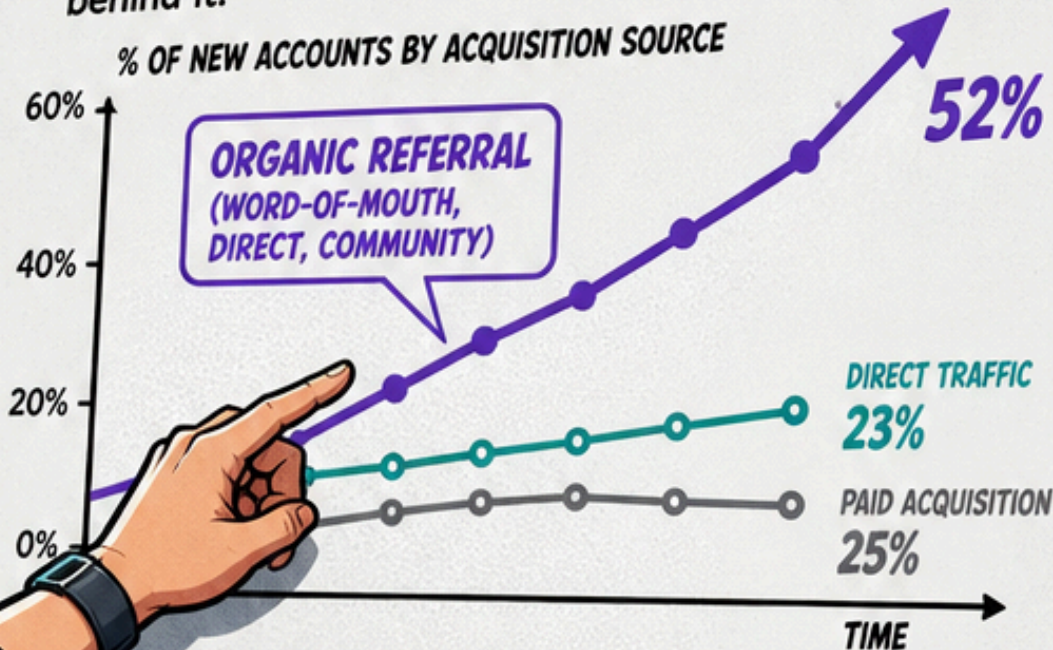
SUPRAMONO



METRIC
MAX

WATCH YOUR ORGANIC REFERRAL RATE CLIMB

Retention tells you whether users are staying. Organic referral rate tells you whether they believe in the product enough to put their reputation behind it.



This is a PMF signal most engineers underinstrument. It doesn't show up in your API logs. You have to track acquisition source at signup, then calculate what percentage of new accounts came from word-of-mouth, direct traffic, or community recommendations — with zero paid push.



Paid growth stops when the budget stops. Organic compounds. Word of mouth is the cleanest PMF signal.



As a rough directional heuristic — without a widely agreed standard — if the majority of new accounts are arriving via organic channels rather than paid acquisition, that suggests the product is generating genuine pull. Conversely, if fewer than 20–30% of new accounts arrive organically, you may be dependent on paid spend to mask weak pull. These are practitioner rules of thumb, not statistically validated thresholds.



Rising organic referral rate is also a leading indicator that your retention curve will flatten further. The two metrics tend to compound together: users who stay refer others, those referrals convert better because they came with social proof, and the cohort quality improves over time. Track both together.



READ YOUR SUPPORT TICKETS AS A PMF SIGNAL

THIS ONE'S SIMPLE TO INSTRUMENT AND ALMOST NOBODY DOES IT INTENTIONALLY.

? PRE-FIT PHASE: "HOW DO I?"
Your support queue is dominated by "how do I?" tickets. Users can't figure out basic workflows. They're trying to find the product's value and can't locate it.



★ POST-FIT PHASE: "CAN YOU ALSO?"
Support tickets shift from "How do I?" to "Can you also?" Users tell friends without prompting. That shift in ticket theme is a real PMF signal.



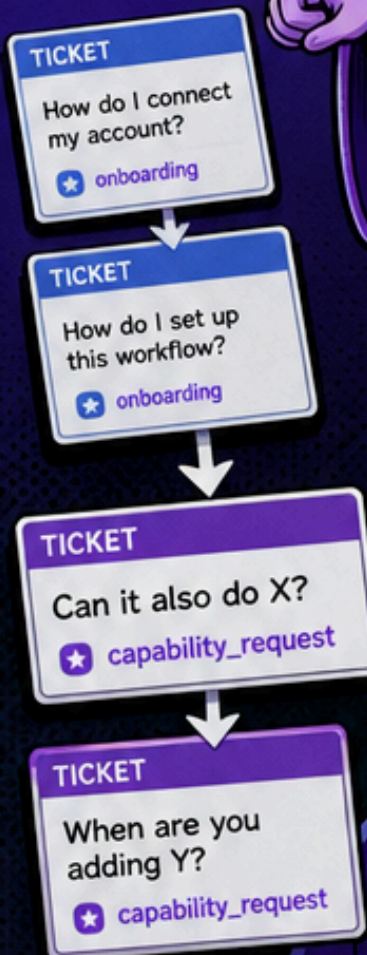
When tickets start asking "can it also do X?" or "when are you adding Y?", something has changed. Users have found the core value, embedded it in their workflow, and are now trying to pull more out of it. They've moved from evaluation mode to expansion mode.

SET UP A SIMPLE TAGGING TAXONOMY IN WHATEVER SUPPORT TOOL YOU USE.

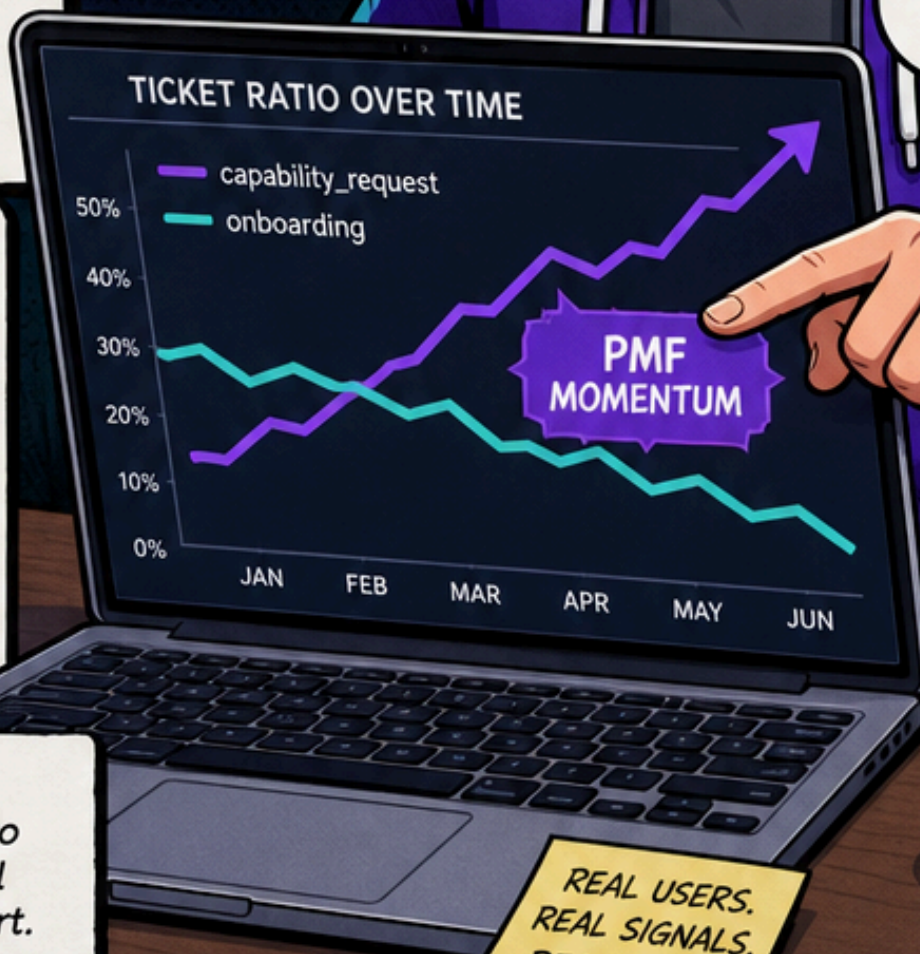
- ★ onboarding** Confusion, basic how-tos
- ★ capability_request** Can it also?
- 🐛 bug** Something isn't working
- 🔗 workflow_integration** I'm using it here and need it to connect with this



Track the ratio over time. A rising `capability_request` ratio relative to onboarding tickets is a directional PMF signal you can plot on a chart.



WATCH THAT SHIFT. IT MEANS THEY'VE FOUND THE VALUE.



RISING `CAPABILITY_REQUEST` RATIO = PMF MOMENTUM.

REAL USERS.
REAL SIGNALS.
REAL PMF.



TECHNICAL ELEGANCE IS NOT MARKET FIT

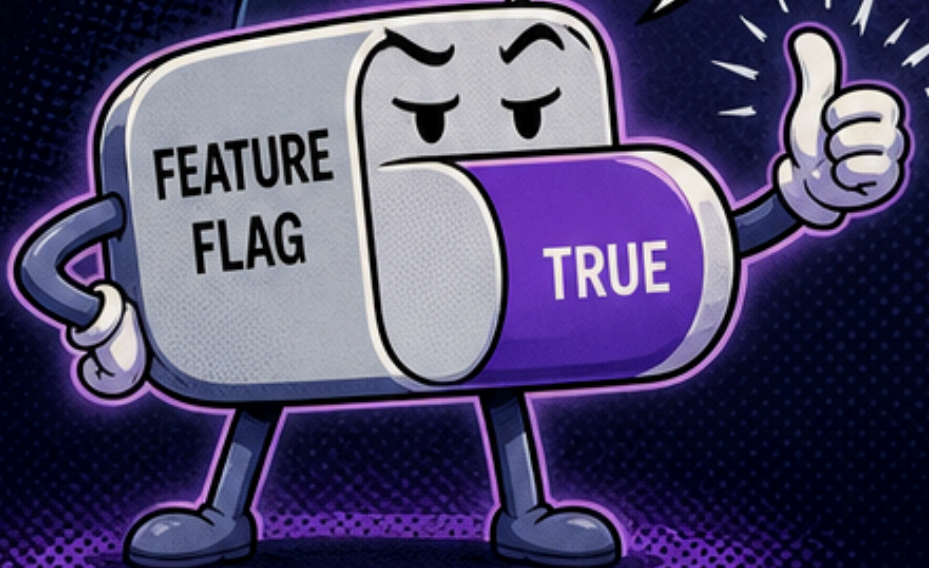
WHERE ARE
YOUR *USERS*?



```
1 class OrderService {
2   private final UserRepo userRepo;
3   private final PaymentGateway gateway;
4
5   public OrderResult placeOrder(OrderReq req) {
6     validate(req);
7     User user = userRepo.findById(req.userId());
8     PaymentResult payment = gateway.charge(req);
9     if (payment.isSuccessful()) {
10      return OrderResult.success();
11    } else {
12      return OrderResult.failure(payment.error());
13    }
14  }
15
16  @Test
17  void shouldPlaceOrderSuccessfully() {
18    OrderReq req = validOrderRequest();
19    when(gateway.charge(req)).thenReturn(successfulPaymentResult());
20    OrderResult result = service.placeOrder(req);
21    assertTrue(result.isSuccess());
22    verify(userRepo).findById(req.userId());
23    verify(gateway).charge(req);
24  }
25
26  Tests: 128 passed
27  Coverage: 94%
28  Build: SUCCESS
29  Response time: 42ms
30  API Docs: /swagger
```



SHIPPED IT.
TRUE.



CLEAN CODE DOESN'T CREATE DEPENDENCY.
WORKING ≠ NEEDED.
PMF IS *EARNED*, NOT DEPLOYED.

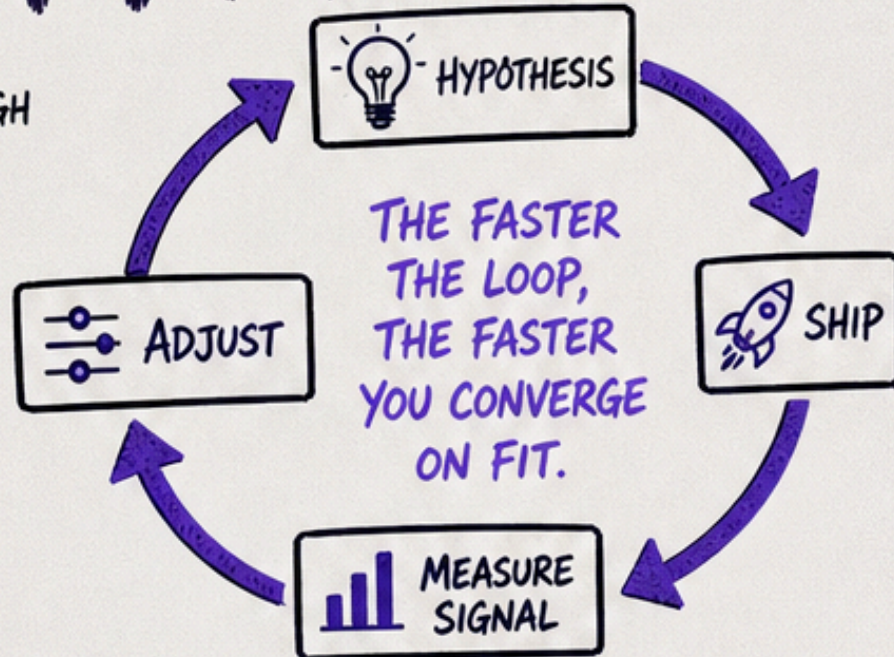


THE PMF THRESHOLD IS 40%: IF 40%+ OF USERS ARE VERY DISAPPOINTED, YOU'VE HIT PRODUCT-MARKET FIT.



ITERATION VELOCITY IS A PMF LEVER

PMF ISN'T FOUND THROUGH INSIGHT ALONE. IT'S FOUND THROUGH ITERATION CYCLES.



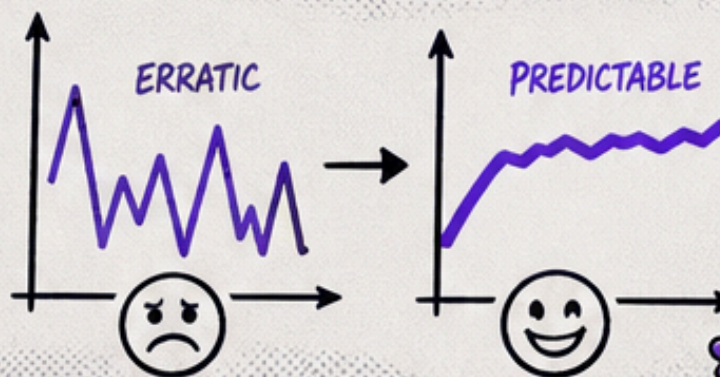
52 ITERATIONS PER YEAR
» 13 AT 4-WEEK CYCLES

1 WEEK PER CYCLE

SHORT FEEDBACK LOOPS REQUIRE THREE THINGS TO BE TRUE:

- 1** SMALL, SHIPPABLE UNITS OF WORK.
 - FEATURE FLAGS OVER FULL RELEASES.
 - PARTIAL ROLLOUTS OVER BIG-BANG LAUNCHES.
 - ONE BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PER CYCLE, NOT FIVE.
- 2** INSTRUMENTATION AT THE POINT OF VALUE.
 - CAN'T MEASURE SIGNAL YOU HAVEN'T BUILT INSTRUMENTATION FOR.
 - EVERY FEATURE NEEDS A SUCCESS METRIC DEFINED BEFORE IT SHIPS, NOT AFTER.
- 3** SIGNAL COLLECTION BUILT INTO THE PRODUCT.
 - SEAN ELLIS SURVEY TRIGGERED IN-APP AFTER A MEANINGFUL USAGE THRESHOLD.
 - SUPPORT TICKET TAGGING AUTOMATED.
 - RETENTION COHORTS UPDATE AUTOMATICALLY.
 - MANUAL SIGNAL COLLECTION CREATES LAG; LAG KILLS THE FEEDBACK LOOP.

BEFORE PMF, EVERYTHING IS ERRATIC. THAT INSTABILITY IS ITSELF A SIGNAL. WHEN YOUR METRICS START SHOWING **PREDICTABLE TRENDS** WEEK OVER WEEK - EVEN IF THEY'RE NOT YET AT THE THRESHOLDS YOU WANT - YOU'RE GETTING **CLOSER.**



STABLE METRICS. STRONG SIGNAL. CLOSER TO PMF.

What to INSTRUMENT, PRACTICALLY

MEASURE.
LEARN.
DEFEND
PMF.

FOLLOW
THE CURVE.
FIND THE
FIT.

ELLIS SCORE

42%



DAY-30
RETENTION RATE

34%



ORGANIC
ACQUISITION

58%



SUPPORT TICKET
THEME RATIO

2.1:1



COHORT RETENTION



WEEK ONE:

Set up cohort retention tracking in Mixpanel, Amplitude, or PostHog. Plot your first cohort chart. Note whether the curve flattens.



WEEK TWO:

Add acquisition source tracking at signup. Start calculating organic vs. paid breakdown weekly.



THIS MONTH:

Build a simple support ticket tagging taxonomy. Start the ratio tracking. Deploy the Sean Ellis survey in-app, triggered at meaningful usage.



ONGOING:

Run the Ellis survey quarterly with active users. Track all four metrics on a single dashboard: Ellis score, day-30 retention rate, organic acquisition %, and support ticket theme ratio. Review monthly.

“

PMF isn't something you declare. You don't find PMF once. You build it, then defend it as the market shifts. 11-76, 11-77.

Engineers who treat it as a **measurable system** — not a subjective feeling — find it faster, and they know when they're losing it before it's too late to respond.

The product you're building right now is either accumulating **fit signal** or it isn't. The good news: you can start measuring that today.



Want a venture engine that closes the loop from opportunity discovery through build through pipeline, so the signal you collect feeds the next iteration automatically? **Supramono** is built for exactly that.



Discover validated opportunities



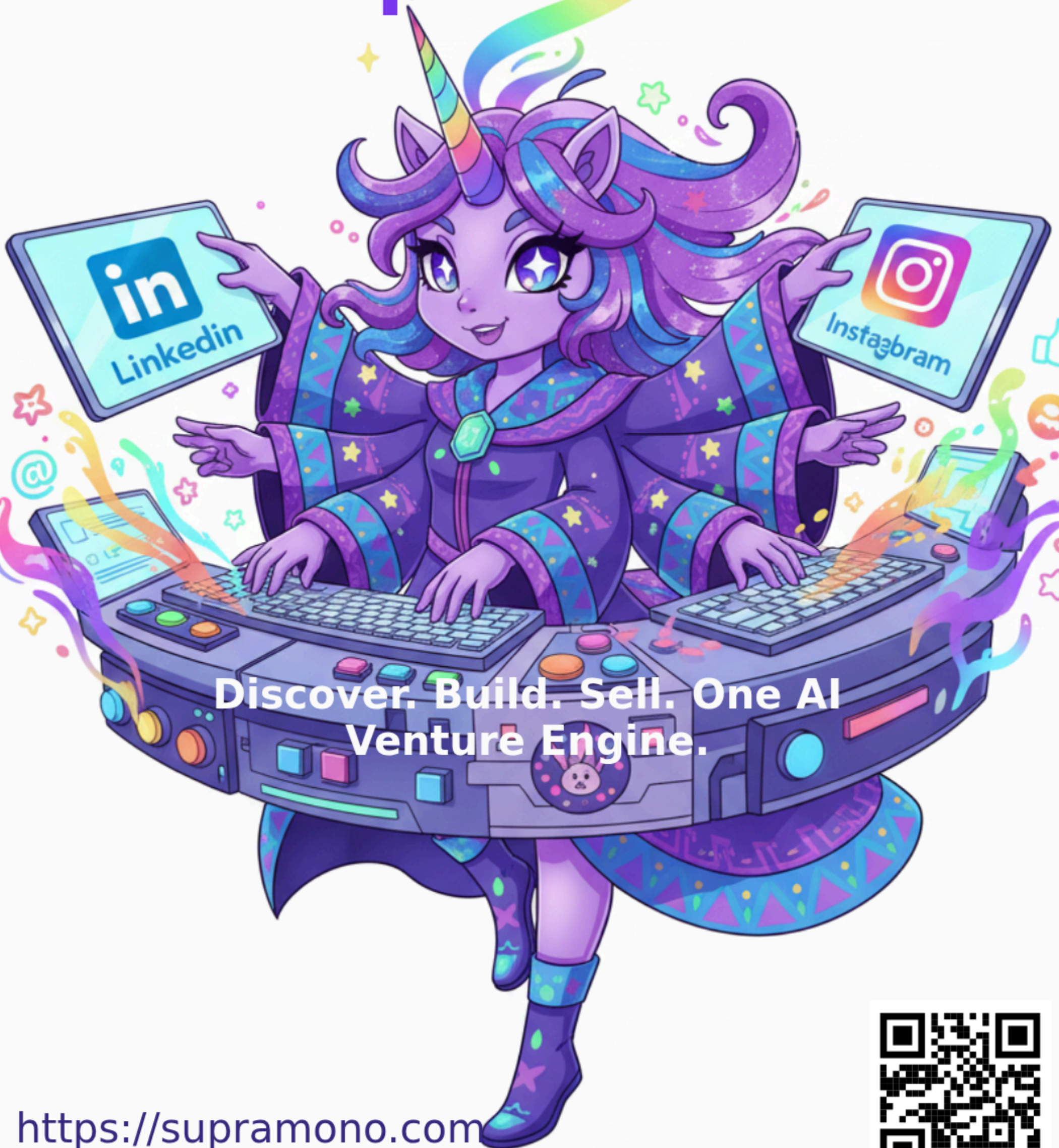
Ship production-ready products



Fill your sales pipeline

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Discover. Build. Sell. One AI
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