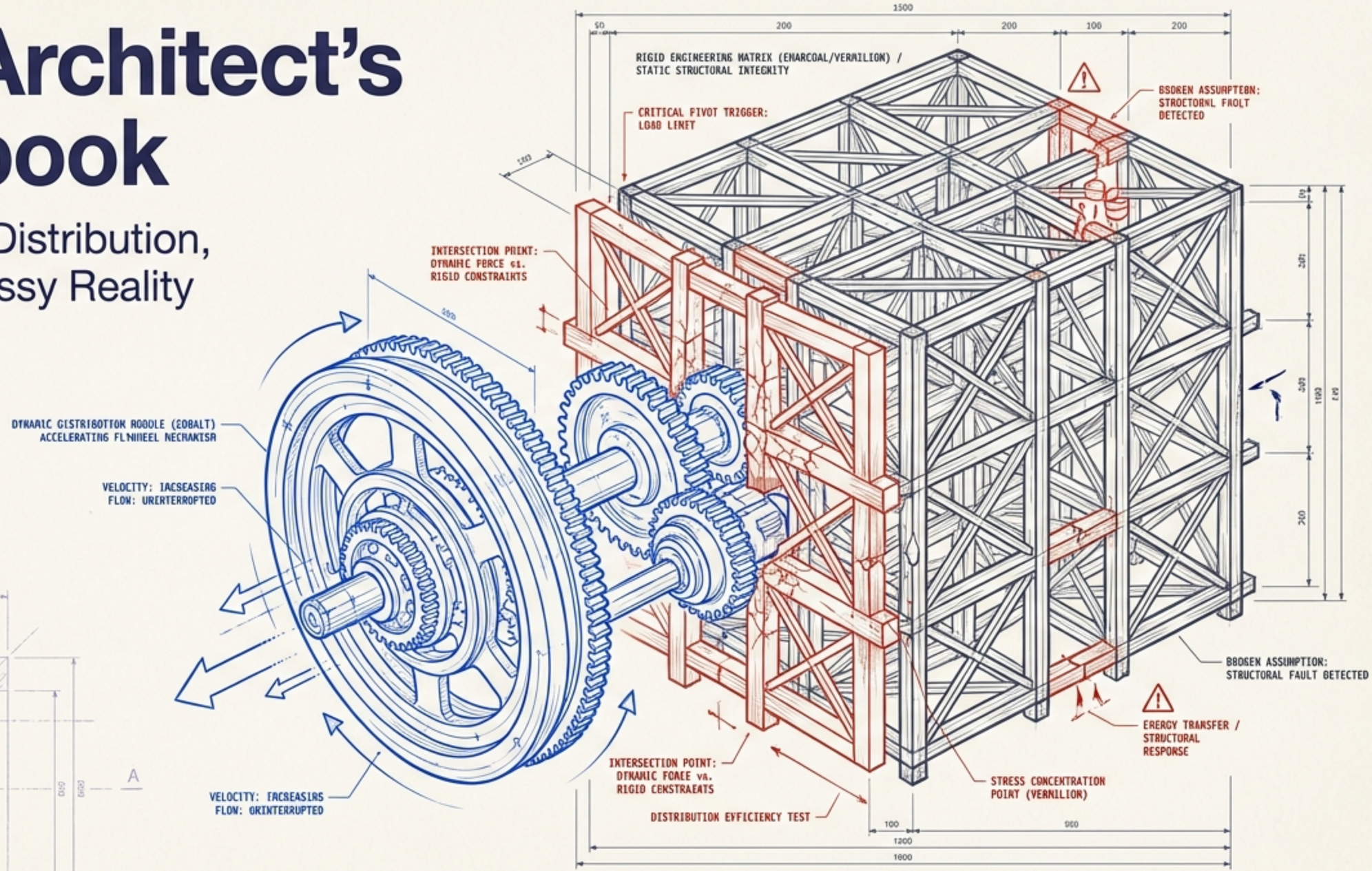
The Architect's Playbook

Decisions, Distribution, and the Messy Reality of Building



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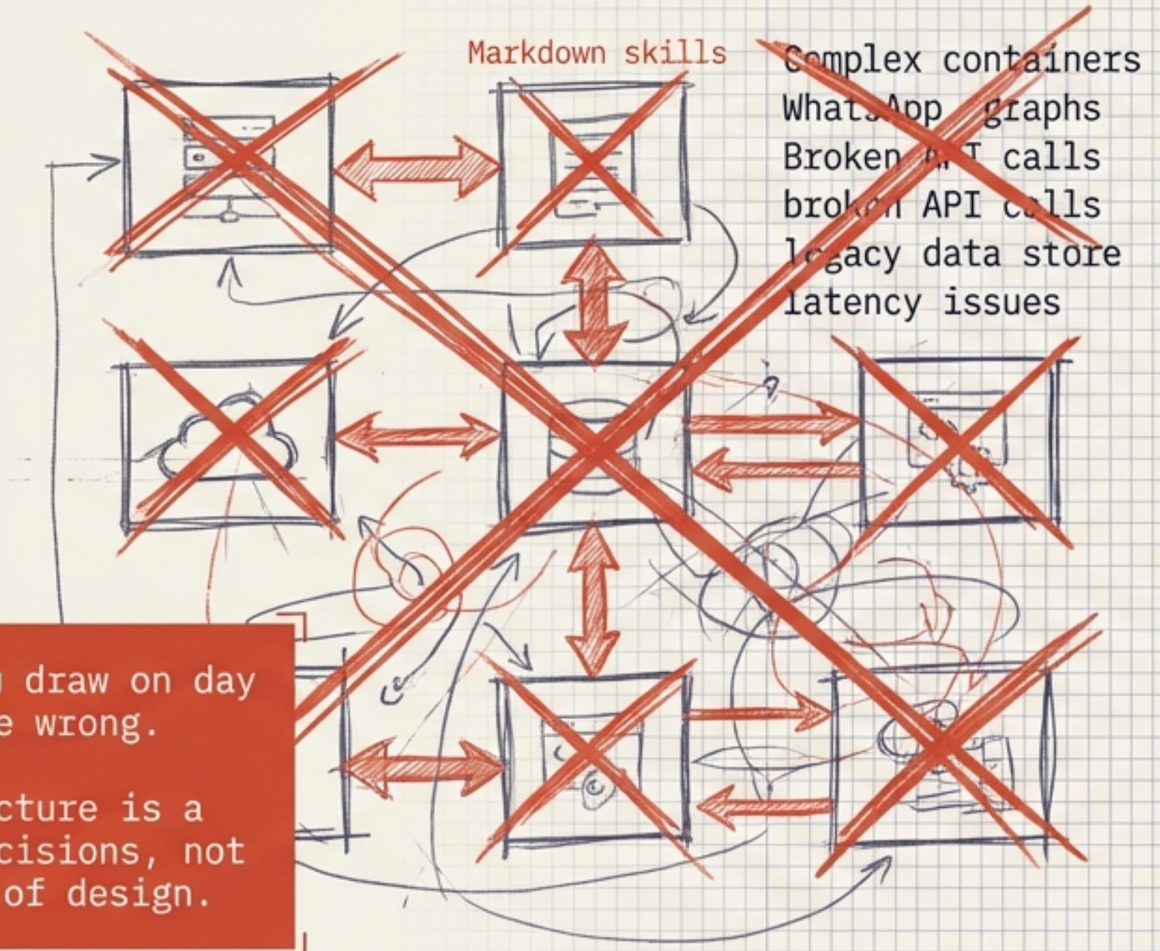
Plans Are Useless, Planning Is Indispensable

The Illusion

The Reality



The diagram you draw on day one will be wrong.

Good architecture is a sequence of decisions, not a single act of design.

The 6th Design: Clean, Obvious, Inevitable.

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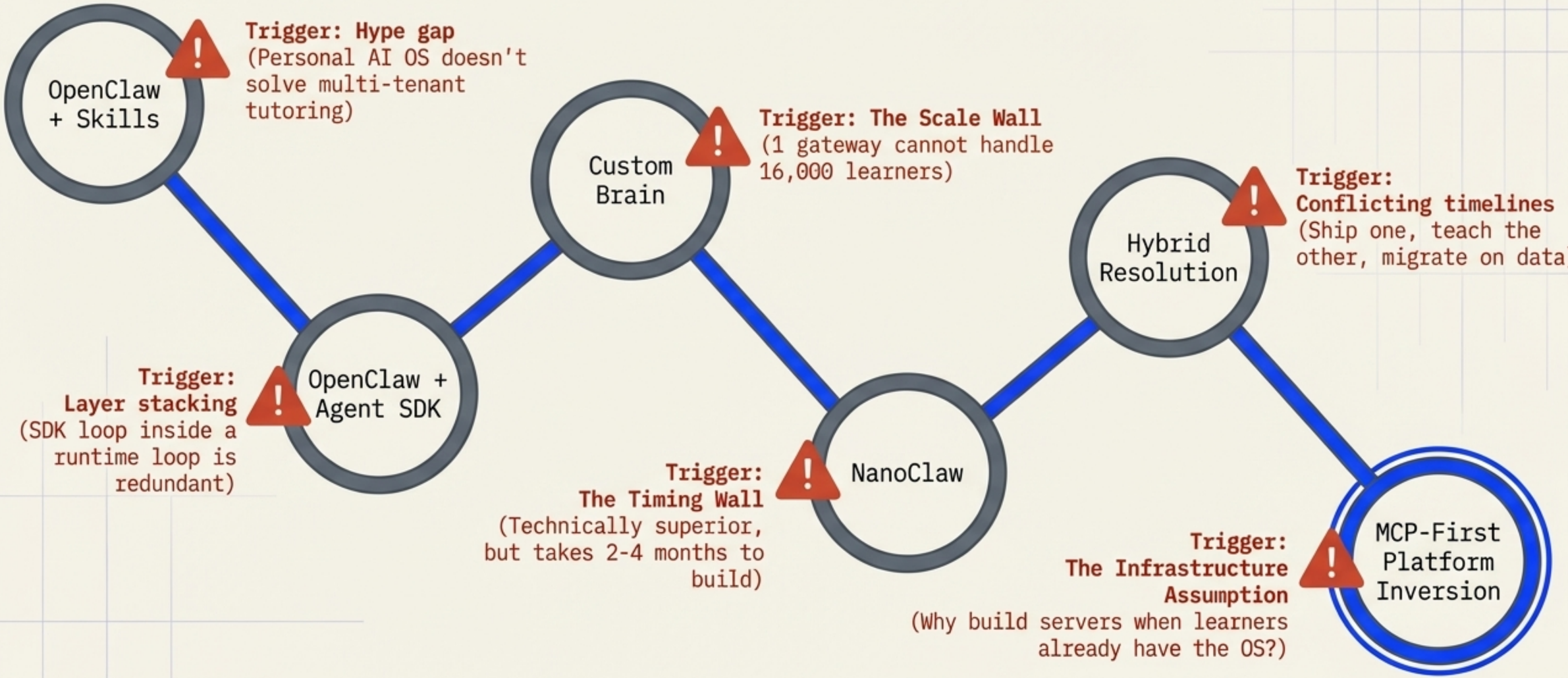
The 6-Pivot Journey from Idea to MCP-First



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Why Good Plans Break Under Load

Architecture	IP Protection	Simplicity	Scale Economics	Timeline
Arch 1 (Markdown Skill)	✗ (Fails IP: Exposed plain text)	✓	✓	✓
Arch 2 (Agent SDK)	✓	✗ (Fails Simplicity: Redundant loops)	✓	✓
Arch 3 (Custom Brain)	✓	✓	✗ (Fails Scale: 90% LLM cost)	✓
Arch 4 (NanoClaw)	✓	✓	✓	✗ (Fails Timeline: 2-4 months vs. weeks)

The 90/10 Economic Rule:
LLM calls consume 90% of costs; infrastructure is 10%. Optimizing the 10% (Arch 4) without fixing the 90% is solving the wrong problem.

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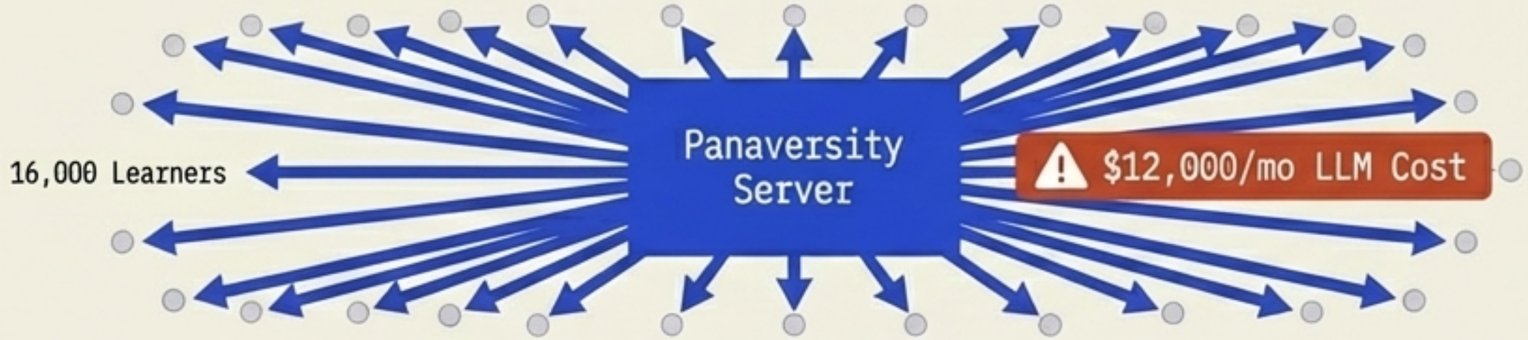
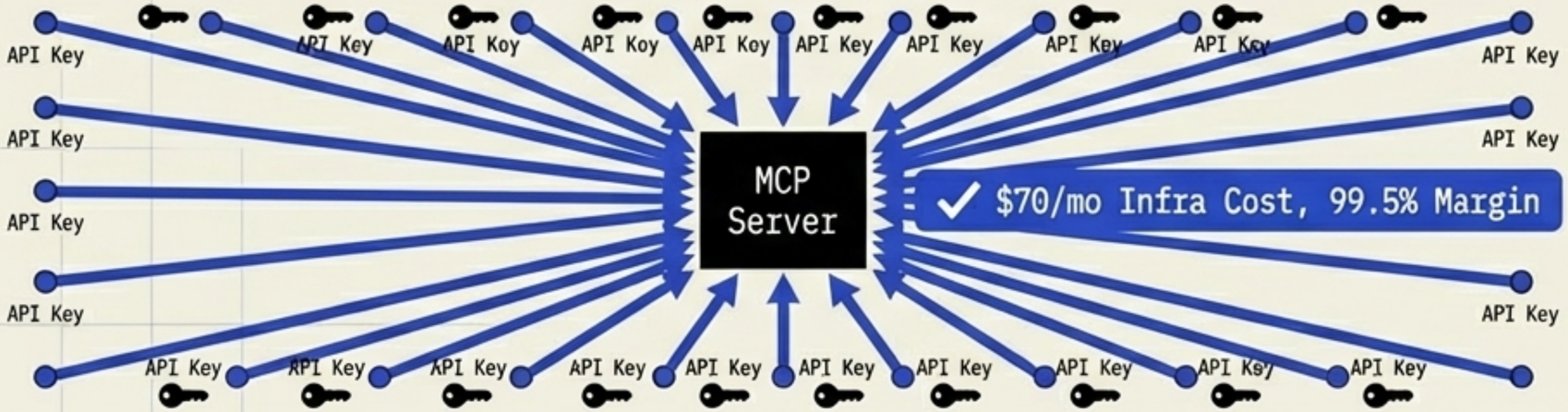
The Breakthrough: The Platform Inversion

We stopped asking which infrastructure to build, and asked if we needed to build it. The learner's machine IS the infrastructure.

The Default Assumption



The Platform Inversion



Why MCP Makes It Work

- IP Protection (Black box execution)
- Monetization Gating (Tool-level access control)
- Zero LLM Cost (Learner brings the API key)

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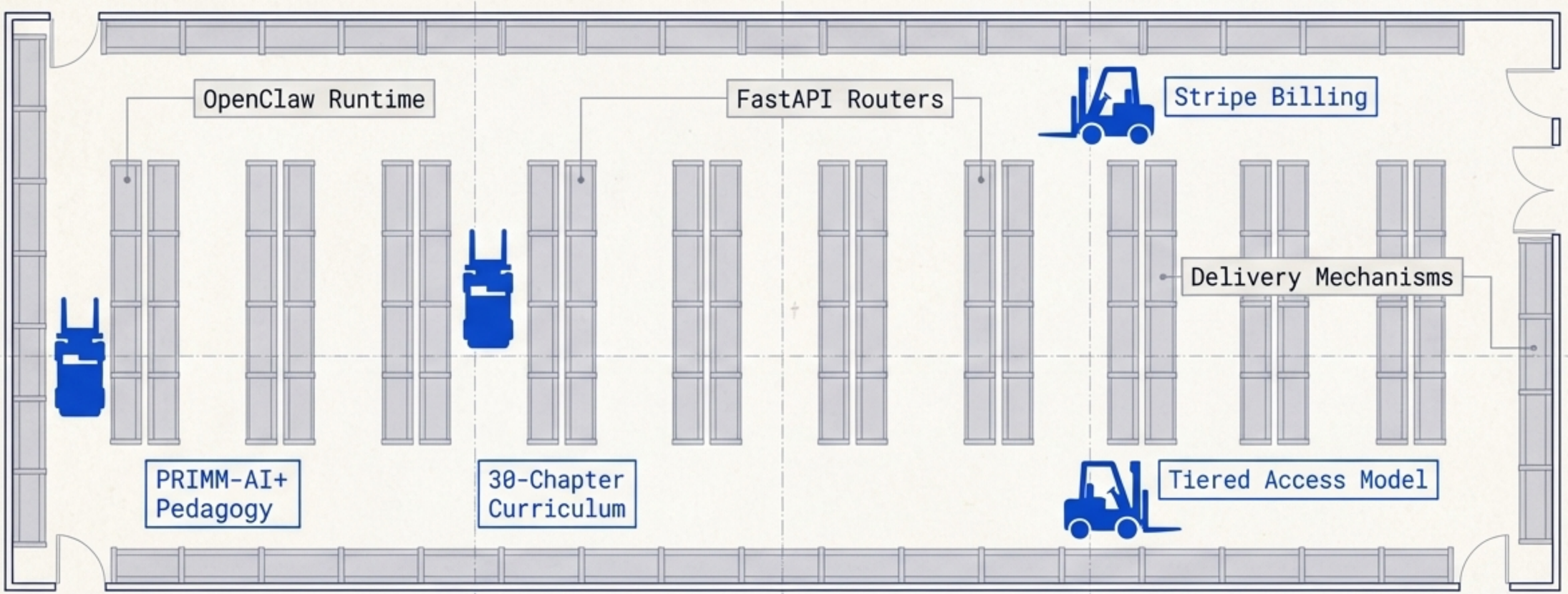
Designing for Portability: The Warehouse Metaphor



The Forklifts (Business Value)	The Shelving (Implementation Choices)
They do the actual work. They transfer across architectures without changing substance.	They organize the space. They are ripped out and replaced every time the layout changes.

Takeaway: The tools are the business. Everything else is plumbing.

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3 Principles from 6 Pivots

1. Structure for Replacement

(Layers, not monoliths). Designing isolated layers makes it safe to ship fast.

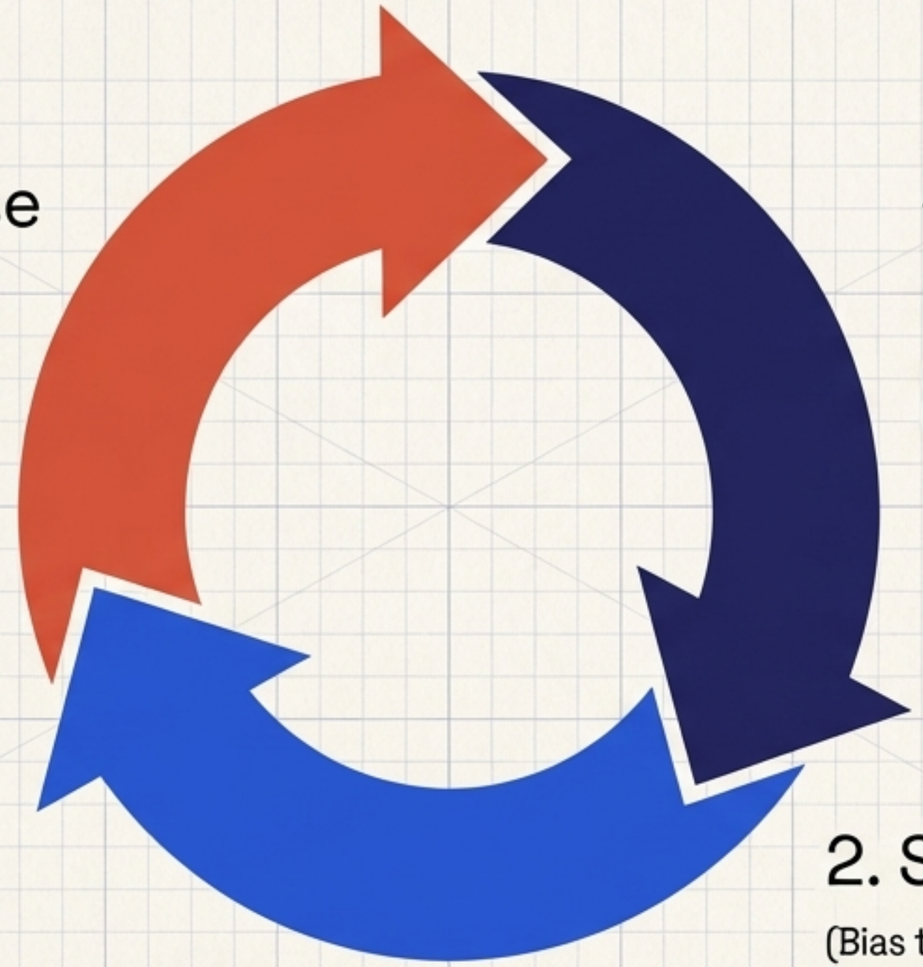
2. Ship & Learn

(Bias toward action, document reasoning). Shipping a working product imperfectly generates real data.

3. Question the Premise

(Challenge infrastructure, rethink costs).

Real data exposes flawed assumptions, revealing when elimination beats optimization.



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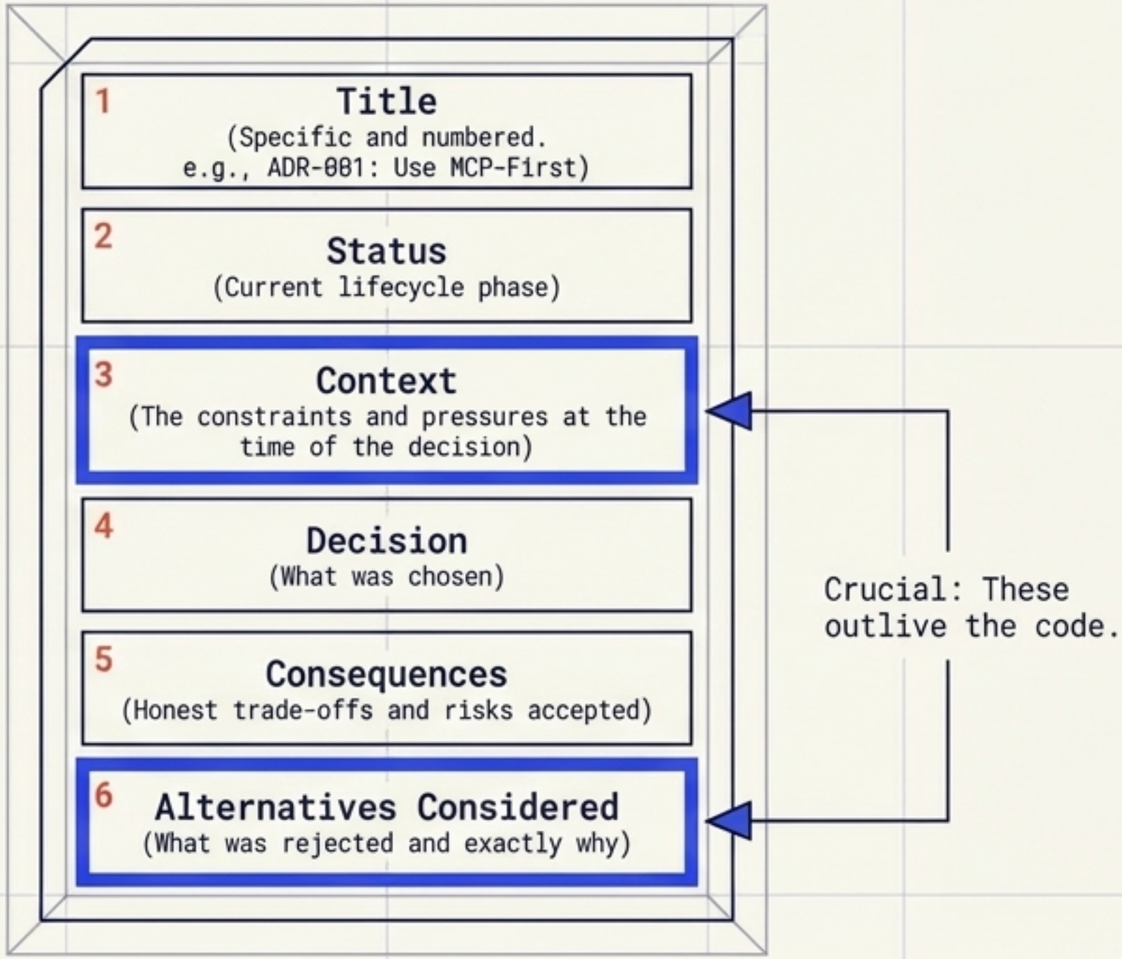
The Amnesia Antidote: Architecture Decision Records

> The code shows **WHAT** was built.
> The ADR documents **WHY** it was built that way.



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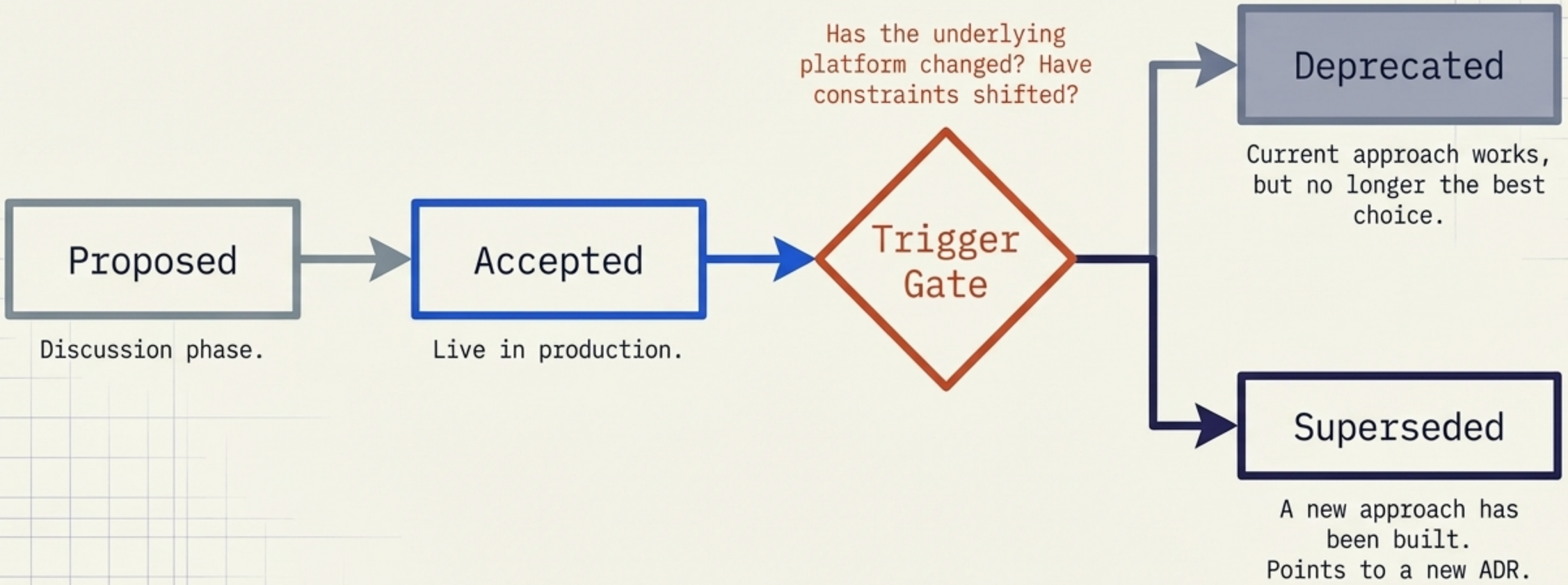
Architecture is a Living Document



Rule: ADRs are not gravestones. They are an active decision trail tracking the evolution of the system.

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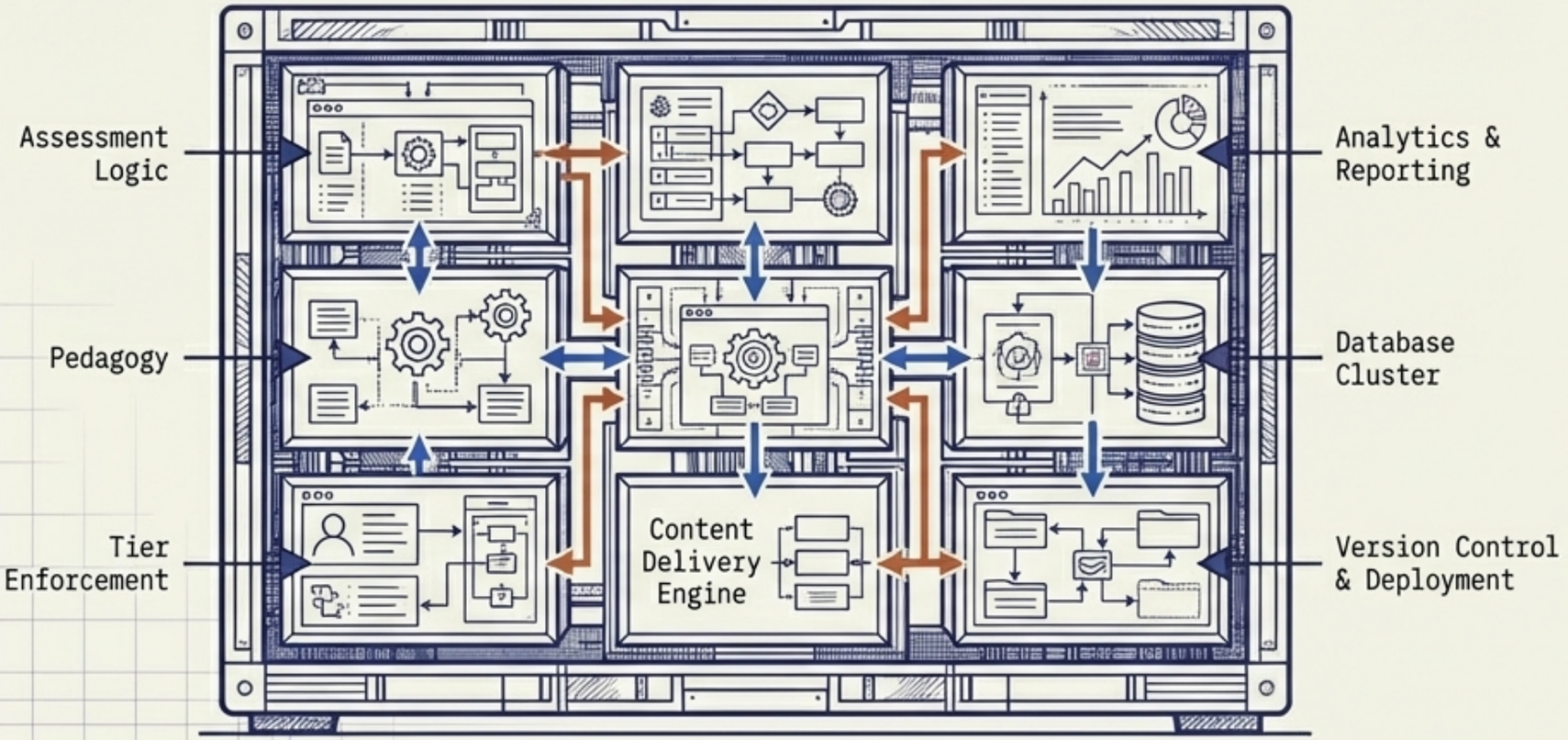
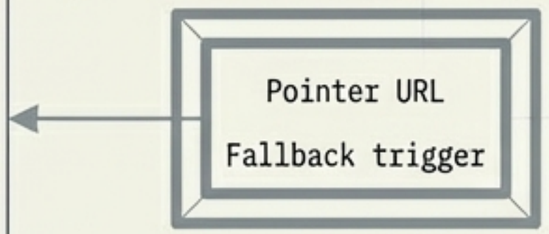
Maintenance: The 95% Server-Side Advantage

The Thick Server
(Panaversity VPS)



The Thin Client
(Learner's Local Shim)



Because the intelligence lives on the MCP server and the Shim is just a pointer, 95% of product improvements (new chapters, better prompts, bug fixes) require zero user updates. The server changes; the user benefits instantly.

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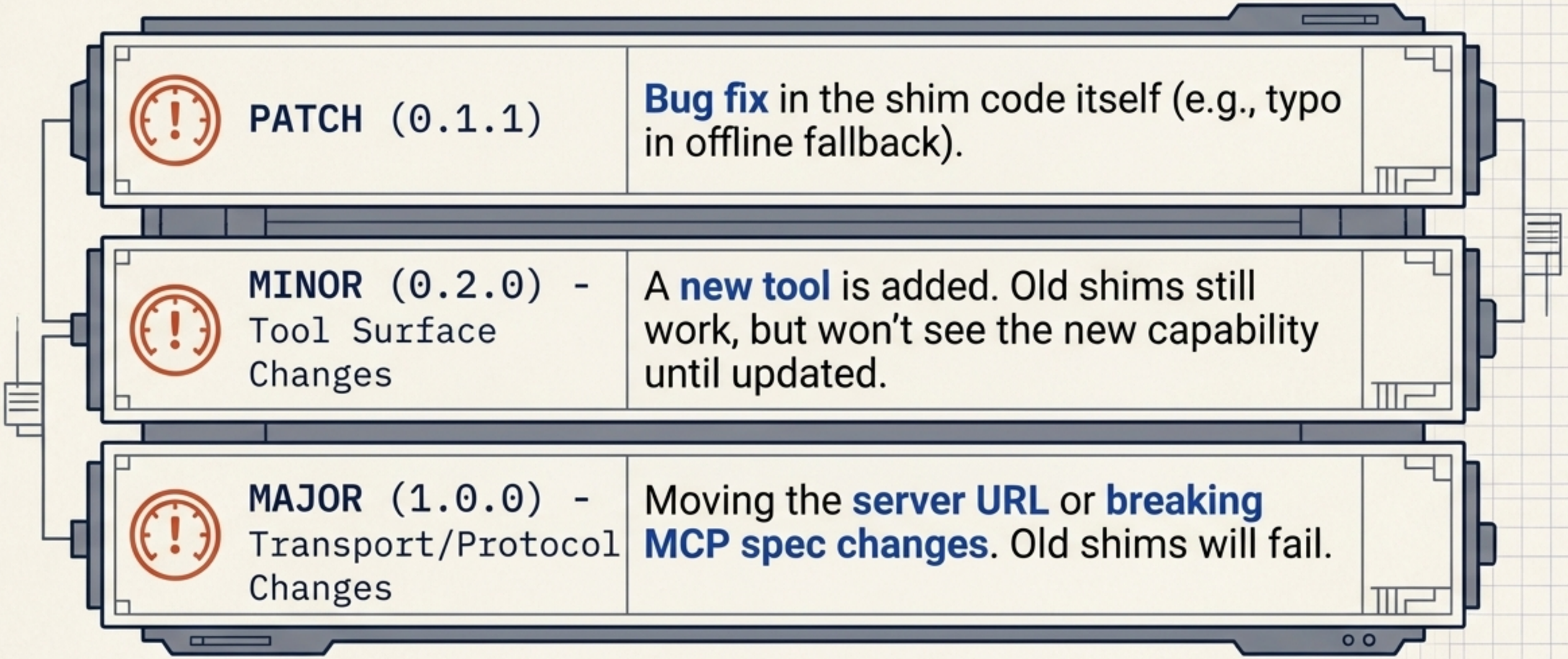
The 5% Triggers: When the Contract Breaks

Semantic Versioning applies to the Shim, not the Server. You only bump the Shim version when the interface changes.



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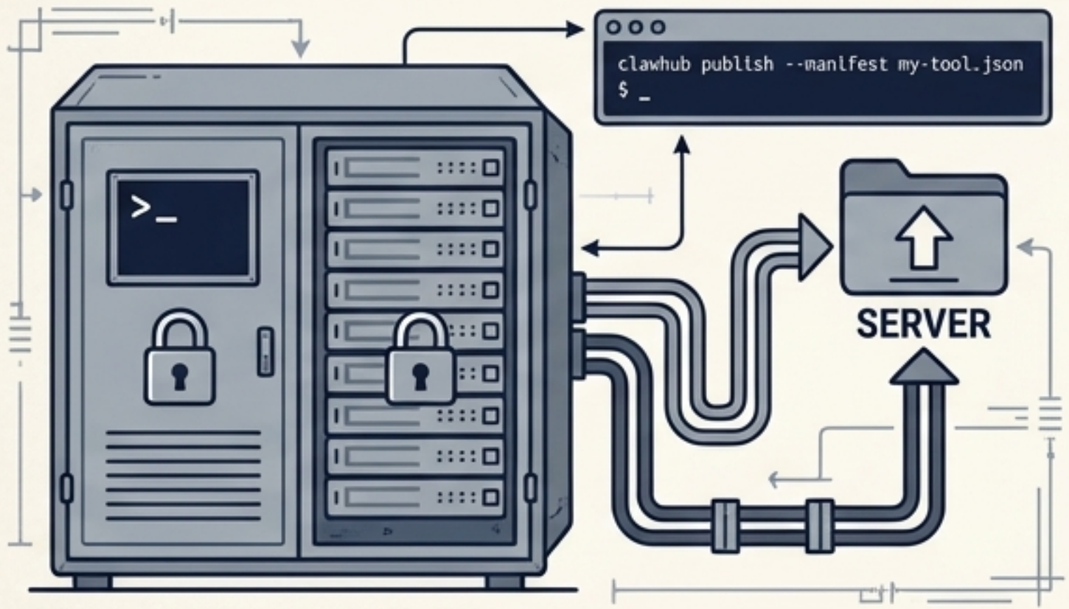
Publishing vs. Distribution

Publishing (The Technical Milestone)

Question: How do I get this onto ClawHub?

Effort: Manifest, verify, publish command.

Success: It is on the server.



Distribution (The Business Strategy)

Question: How do people find and install it?

Effort: Marketplace dynamics, network effects, community trust.

Success: People find it, rate it, and recommend it.

Publishing makes it available. Distribution makes it discoverable.

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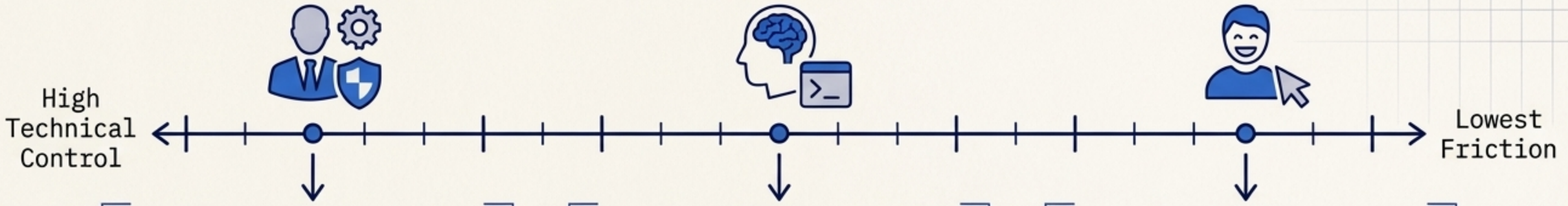
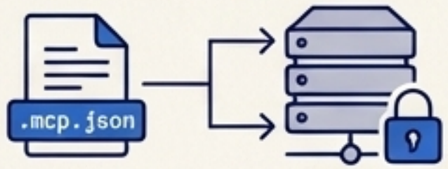
The 3 Install Paths at Scale



Path 3: Manual Config (.mcp.json)

Segment:
Enterprise Users

Why:
High technical control for auditable, policy-compliant environments. Enables precise configuration management.



Path 1: CLI (clawhub install)

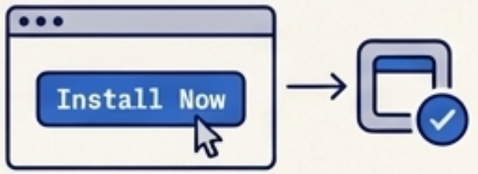
Segment:
Power Users / Developers

Why:
Lowest friction for terminal-native users; fast and explicit. Ideal for scripting and automation.

Path 2: Launch GUI (One-Click Web)

Segment:
Mainstream Users

Why:
Removes the barrier of knowing command-line syntax entirely. Drives maximum adoption.



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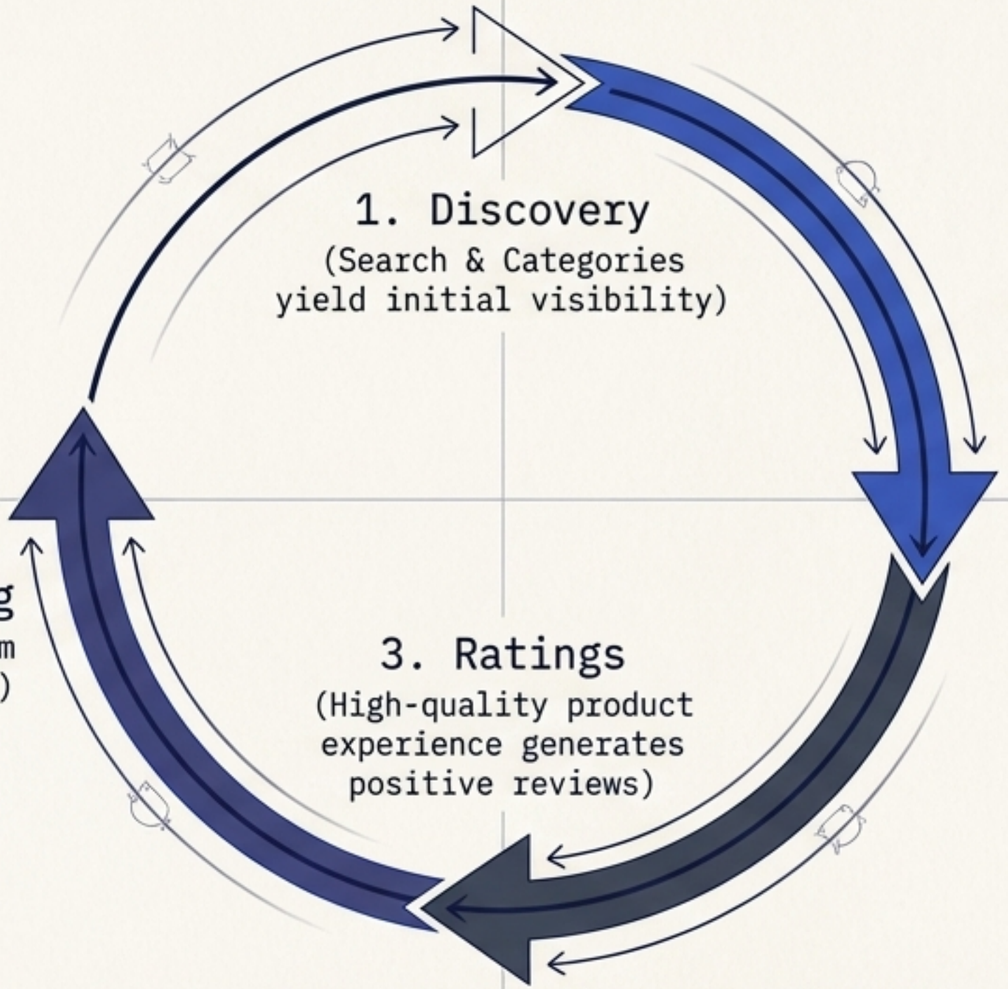
The Marketplace Flywheel



Core Insight:
In a merit-based marketplace, you cannot purchase placement. The product's quality is the engine of its own distribution.

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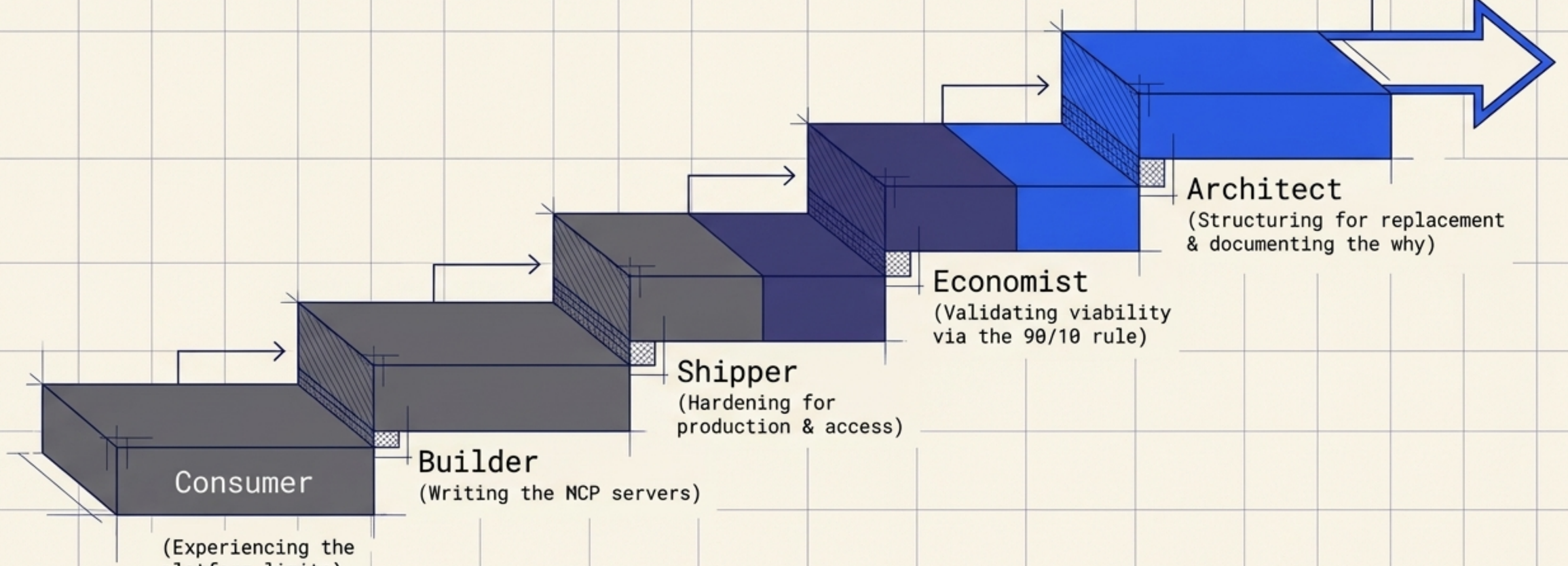
The Builder's Progression

The Bridge: Every skill here was built on top of someone else's platform. What happens when you must build the platform itself?



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