

Worked example (sample numbers)

Decision: Customer analytics dashboard inside a B2B software product. All figures are illustrative.

Criterion	Weight	Score			Weighted		
		Build	Buy	Partner	Build	Buy	Partner
Strategic differentiation	15	4	2	3	0.60	0.30	0.45
Time to market	15	2	5	4	0.30	0.75	0.60
Total cost of ownership	12	2	4	3	0.24	0.48	0.36
Fit to requirements	10	5	3	4	0.50	0.30	0.40
Control and roadmap flexibility	8	5	2	3	0.40	0.16	0.24
Delivery and vendor risk	10	2	4	3	0.20	0.40	0.30
Team capacity and skills	8	2	4	4	0.16	0.32	0.32
Integration and data effort	8	3	3	4	0.24	0.24	0.32
Scalability and long term viability	8	4	4	3	0.32	0.32	0.24
Exit flexibility	6	5	2	3	0.30	0.12	0.18
Weighted total (out of 5.00)					3.26	3.39	3.41
Result: Partner 3.41, Buy 3.39, Build 3.26. All within 0.25 points, so too close to call.							

What this shows: the scores alone do not separate the options, which is common. That is the signal to move to the cost page and the risks and tripwires on page 5 rather than agonize over one more point on a score.

COST AND SPEED

Build

3 year cost: \$430,000
First value: 9 months

Buy

3 year cost: \$375,000
First value: 3 months

Partner

3 year cost: \$325,000
First value: 5 months

DECISION IN THIS EXAMPLE

Partner. It has the lowest three year cost, the second fastest path to value, and the top score by a hair. Build is slowest and most expensive.

TRIPWIRES

Revisit if the partner raises prices more than 15 percent, misses the five month milestone, or usage doubles the forecast.