ACCELER8 COMMERCIAL

The SaaS Pricing Strategy Checklist

25 checks, written from the buy side · Adam Solley

Every box you can't tick is costing you margin somewhere.

I've set pricing on the sell side and pulled it apart on the buy side. Procurement teams run a set of checks against your pricing before they ever speak to your rep. This checklist turns those checks into a self-audit. Work through it honestly.

1. The metric you charge on

- [ ] **You can name the metric your price scales on.**
  Seats, usage, transactions, revenue under management.
- [ ] **That metric grows when the customer gets more from the product.**
  If they can double their usage while their bill stays flat, you're funding their growth.
- [ ] **The customer can't game it cheaply.**
  Shared logins are how seat models get gamed.
- [ ] **Your finance team can forecast it, and so can the buyer's.**
  Products that are hard to budget for get cut first.

2. Your list price

- [ ] **You can say when you last raised it.**
  A date, not "recently".
- [ ] **You know what percentage of revenue is sold at list.**
  If almost nothing is, buyers already treat your list price as an opening offer.
- [ ] **New business and renewals are priced off the same book.**
  Two books means renewal prices drift down over time.
- [ ] **Your own team believes the number.**
  When sales treats list price as fiction, buyers find out in one phone call.

3. Discounting

- [ ] **Discount approval levels are written down.**
  Who can sign off 10%, who can sign off 20%, who has to say no.
- [ ] **Every discount is traded for something.**
  A longer term, upfront payment, a committed minimum, a referenceable logo. A discount given for nothing tells the buyer the price was padded.
- [ ] **Your time-bound discounts actually expire.**
  The first "this expires Friday" that quietly survives to Monday kills every deadline you set after it. Buy-side teams keep notes on this.
- [ ] **Nobody discounts before the buyer asks.**
  An unprompted discount reads as a gift, and the negotiation starts below it.
- [ ] **You know your average discount by segment and by rep.**
  The outliers in that data are worth a conversation either way.

4. The contract terms that are really pricing

- [ ] **Annual uplift is in the contract.**
  A fixed percentage or an index, capped if the buyer negotiated one. Silence here means every renewal starts from zero.
- [ ] **Payment terms are priced.**
  Annual upfront against monthly in arrears is a real cash difference. Give the better terms away free and that's a discount you're not counting.
- [ ] **Auto-renewal and notice windows are set deliberately, and someone tracks them.**
- [ ] **Multi-year deals trade both ways.**
  The buyer gets a held or discounted rate; you get a committed minimum. If only one side of that trade is in your paper, it's the buyer's side.

5. The checks the buy side will run on you

- [ ] **You know what buyers actually pay for your competitors.**
  Procurement benchmarks on settled prices, not website prices.
- [ ] **Every line in your package has a price.**
  Anything bundled with no number next to it gets valued at zero when procurement unbundles it, and then you have nothing to trade.
- [ ] **Your quarter-end isn't running your deals.**
  Buyers can read urgency in a rep's behaviour, and they will sit on a deal for two weeks to buy it cheaper.
- [ ] **Your reps hold something back for the close.**
  A rep who gives their best price in week one negotiates against themselves for the rest of the deal.

6. Ownership and cadence

- [ ] **One named person owns pricing.**
  When pricing is everyone's job, it moves at the speed of the most nervous person in the room.
- [ ] **Pricing gets reviewed on a schedule.**
  At least annually, against cost and win rates.
- [ ] **You know how many customers sit on grandfathered pricing and what that costs you per year.**
- [ ] **Win/loss reviews separate “we lost on price” from “we lost, and price was the polite reason”.**
  Those two need different fixes.

What to do with your score

Count the boxes you couldn't tick. One or two: tighten them this quarter. Five or more: buyers are almost certainly taking margin off you in ways you can't see. Start with the discounting section. It loses the most, fastest.

Want a second pair of eyes on your pricing?
Pricing is one of the first things I look at in any engagement. adam@acceler8commercial.co.uk · acceler8commercial.co.uk · linkedin.com/in/adamfsolley