A Claude power user is not an enterprise AI strategy

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IN BRIEF

For: CEOs and COOs whose teams are building AI tools on their own

- A capable employee building with Claude is an asset. A working prototype is not an enterprise application.
- Across four or five engagements, not one of these tools has scaled without being completely rebuilt, and the data underneath is usually the bigger problem.
- Protect your best people's time, encourage experimentation, and decide in advance when experimentation becomes engineering.

FIGURE 1. PROTOTYPE VS ENTERPRISE APPLICATION

	Prototype	Enterprise application
Who can see which records	Whoever has the builder's login	Access set by role, with an owner who reviews it
Where the data comes from, and who owns it	Spreadsheets exported by hand, with no named owner	The systems of record, with agreed definitions and a named owner
What happens when the AI is wrong	Someone notices, or nobody does	A person approves the decisions that carry risk, and every action is logged
Who maintains it when the builder leaves	Nobody; the logic lives in their prompts	A team, with documentation, tests and a backup owner
What it costs to run	A personal card, or a guess	A known monthly cost, with limits
Whether it passed a security review	It never went through one	Reviewed before it touched live data

WHAT TO DO THIS QUARTER

Protect your best people's time. Encourage experimentation. I think it is great for people to experiment in the right sandboxes, in the right environments, to prove out and pilot use cases, with approved tools, company accounts and no live customer data. Agree in advance where the line is, using the seven signs, and when a tool crosses it, make it a project with an owner, a budget and engineers. **Keep the builder in the room**: their prototype is often the clearest statement of what the business needs that you will ever get, written by someone who does the job. And bring the right people in before three months of productivity and thousands of dollars disappear into a dashboard that was never designed to scale.

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