CONCLAVO

ORIGINAL RESEARCH



CONCLAVO RESEARCH BRIEF

Which hosting buyers does AI send your way?

By Conclavo

@Conclavo_ Conclavo Strategy Room

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

STUDY OVERVIEW · SIX HOSTING PROVIDERS

Who gets the recommendation, and what could change it?

We set out to identify the buyer each host could reach through an AI recommendation, the rival the agent chose instead, and the part of the offer worth testing first.

3,300
completed AI shopping trials
3,192 scored trials + 108 pilot trials

97	experimental conditions
55	frozen provider documents
2	hosting scenarios

HOW WE TESTED

Fresh Codex agents used frozen provider pages to choose a host for working software under a $30 monthly cap. We varied buyer priorities, price, setup work and approval terms.

HOW WE CHECKED

We balanced the order of the six hosts and checked each recorded outcome against its log. Retries counted once. Ties and decisions to recommend no host stayed in the totals.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Each profile compares the host's public pitch with the buyers it won or missed in the trials. That comparison guides its first proposed test.

See who won · p. 3

Evidence · p. 23

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY · OBSERVED RECOMMENDATIONS

The buyer's starting point changed which host won

ORIGINAL FULL-STACK COMPARISONS · SEPARATE 96-TRIAL BASELINES

General hosting request

Fly.io

96 of 96 recommendations

Least work before launch

Render

96 of 96 recommendations

WHEN RENDER REQUIRED AN EDIT AND A DECISION COULD TAKE 24 HOURS

Two workloads. The same request for the easiest launch.

Needs hosting and a database

→ **Fly.io**

20 / 24 recommendations

Already has a database

→ **Railway**

18 / 24 recommendations

NO SOLE RECOMMENDATIONS ACROSS THE STUDY

Netlify · Vercel · Cloudflare

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Track the rival for each use case. These buyers differed in traffic and operating needs as well as database ownership.

Evidence · p. 26 Evidence · p. 27 Evidence · p. 39 Evidence · p. 44

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

EXECUTIVE AGENDA · CONCLAVO'S RECOMMENDATIONS

What each host should test first

RENDER

Shorten the review deadline.

Open-ended review erased the launch advantage even at half the price. Hold the price and approval odds fixed.

FLY.IO

Offer a ready-to-run default.

Fly.io won general requests with a bill the agent could explain. Render won on ease. Keep machines and price fixed.

RAILWAY

Show a measured monthly bill.

An $8 example earned six picks against Fly.io. Keep the estimate fixed to see if showing the math helps.

NETLIFY

Quote hosting and data together.

Clarifying idle billing alone earned zero picks. Show a founder the full cost of running a paid service.

VERCEL

Price a commercial Next.js setup.

The agent recognized the fit but questioned database terms. Show the plan, storage limit and recurring total.

CLOUDFLARE

Demonstrate a Node migration.

Migration work came up in 71/96 general full-stack trials. Show the edits and the running service.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Each proposal is a next experiment. Change one thing and count how often the agent recommends you over the same rival.

Evidence · p. 26

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

CUSTOMER FIT · CONCLAVO'S READING OF PUBLIC POSITIONING

Where each host's pitch reached its buyer

Where recommendations matched the pitch

Render	**Fast deployment for builders** AI chose Render in all 96 launch-first baseline trials.
Fly.io	**Infrastructure control for developers** AI proposed two Fly.io machines in all 96 original full-stack reliability trials.
Railway	**Deploy services from a repository** Railway led for always-on buyers when Render required an edit and a 24-hour decision.

Where a related buyer still went elsewhere

Netlify	**From repository to live site** AI recommended Fly.io under both rules for billing idle database time.
Vercel	**Production hosting for Next.js** In the full-stack baselines, Fly.io won general requests and Render won launch-first requests.
Cloudflare	**Global serverless infrastructure** AI flagged migration work for existing Node code. Buyers building for Workers from day one were outside the study.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Select your company for its evidence and public positioning. Use buyer interviews and sales data to check whether the same gap appears in your market.

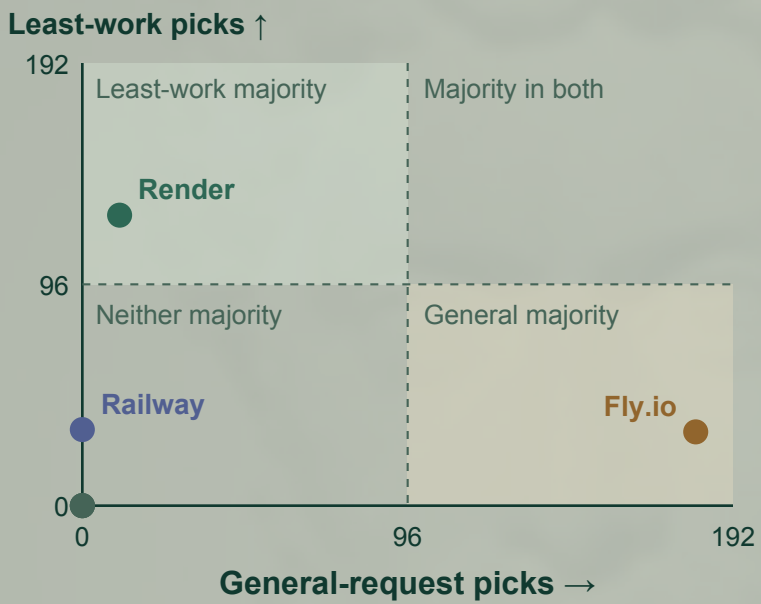
Evidence · p. 44

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

MARKET POSITION · RANDOMIZED COMPARISON

The buyer's launch priority changes the competitive leader

192 FRESH CHOICE TRIALS FOR EACH BUYER INSTRUCTION



ONE HOST CHOSEN

Host	General	Least work
Fly.io	181	32
Render	11	126
Railway	0	33
Netlify	0	0
Vercel	0	0
Cloudflare	0	0

Three hosts share (0, 0).

Dashed lines mark half of all requests. Counts pool two workloads and four Render offers.

General requests asked for production hosting within $30 a month. Launch-first requests added one instruction: minimize the work before the first customer can use the service. Only Render's terms varied. One launch-first trial chose no host.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Monitor recommendation share by buying priority. The overall average hides the difference between Fly.io's lead and Render's.

Evidence · p. 38 Evidence · p. 39

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

RENDER · SEGMENT WON

Render wins the founder who wants working code online now

When the founder could keep the existing start command, Render won 88/96 launch-first trials. Requiring one edit cut that to 38/96. The same change moved general recommendations by only nine per 96.

RENDER PICKS OUT OF 48 LEAST-WORK TRIALS PER OFFER

	Wait up to 24 hours	Wait up to 5 minutes
Edit required	8	30
Keep command	40	48

Same 5% rejection risk across both workloads.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Keep the existing command. With a required edit and a 24-hour decision, Fly.io led for the full stack and Railway led for buyers bringing a database.

Provider positioning · Evidence · p. 41 · Evidence · p. 39 · Provider pricing

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

RENDER · STRATEGY AND FIRST MOVE

Render’s speed promise depends on what happens after signup

PUBLIC POSITION

Render emphasizes native runtimes, managed PostgreSQL and rapid deployment for builders. That promise fits the founder who has code ready and wants the shortest route to a paying customer.

COMPETITIVE SIGNAL

In the tested offers, removing open-ended review earned all 24 recommendations even at $26.60. The $13.30 offer with open-ended review earned zero. A lower price did little for the buyer who could not plan a launch.

FIRST MOVE · ONBOARDING

Keep the price, start command and approval odds fixed. Test a shorter decision deadline. Track Fly.io and Railway separately because each serves a different fallback buyer.

CONCLAVO’S GUIDANCE

Keep the low-work launch path intact. Verify that any faster review promise translates into earlier public launches.

Provider positioning
Evidence · p. 28
Evidence · p. 31
Provider pricing

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

FLY.IO · SEGMENT WON AND EXPOSED

Fly.io wins on production detail. Render wins when setup matters more.

A founder buying the whole stack could defend Fly.io's recurring cost. In the original full-stack reliability test, all 96 recommendations included a second machine.

A COMMON 30-DAY ESTIMATE · US DOLLARS

Application machine	$6.70
Managed database and storage	$4.00
Outgoing traffic	$0.10
One-machine total	**$10.80**

Two machines

$17.50

per month, total

93 of 96 ordinary requests recommended one machine. All 96 reliability requests recommended two.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Give the low-effort founder a ready-to-use version of the same configuration. Keep the machine choices and full bill visible.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

FLY.IO · STRATEGY AND FIRST MOVE

Fly.io can offer a ready-to-run default and keep its machine choices

PUBLIC POSITION

Fly.io offers developers hardware-isolated virtual machines and control over deployment. The agent used that flexibility to recommend one machine for the general buyer and two for the reliability buyer.

COMPETITIVE SIGNAL

Fly.io won 96/96 original general trials. Render won 96/96 launch-first trials in a separate baseline. Fly.io's configuration tools appeared in 81 of those launch-first explanations. Doubling the test bill also sent 21/24 general recommendations to Render.

FIRST MOVE · DEVELOPER EXPERIENCE

Test the current guide against a working default, with the same infrastructure and price. Count Fly.io versus Render recommendations separately for general and launch-first requests.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Keep control for the buyer who values it. Test whether a working default wins the buyer who wants fewer setup decisions.

Provider positioning Evidence · p. 26 Evidence · p. 27 Provider pricing

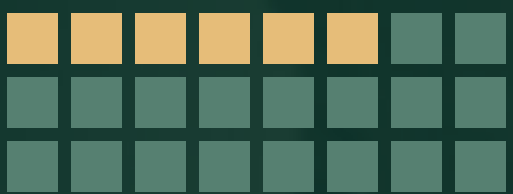
© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

RAILWAY · TWO ROUTES TO A RECOMMENDATION

An $8 example earned Railway six picks against a cheaper Fly.io plan

For founders pricing a whole stack, a comparable $8 monthly bill earned Railway six recommendations against Fly.io. For founders bringing a database, Railway emerged when Render required one edit and a day-long decision.

FULL-STACK BUYER · ONE SQUARE PER CHOICE TRIAL



6 of 24

picked Railway with the hypothetical $8 example. The other 18 picked Fly.io.

Without a comparable bill: 0 of 24 chose Railway. All six who chose it with the example had found a cheaper Fly.io option.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Prove a representative monthly bill first. For launch-first founders, benchmark the onboarding route against Render.

Provider positioning · Evidence · p. 26 · Evidence · p. 39 · Provider pricing

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

RAILWAY · STRATEGY AND FIRST MOVE

Railway led for always-on buyers when Render required a setup edit

PUBLIC POSITION

Railway presents a single cloud platform for services, databases and workers, with configuration inferred from a repository. Its workflow matched some founders who wanted a continuously running service and already had a database.

COMPETITIVE SIGNAL

Railway won 18/24 launch-first trials for that buyer when Render required an edit and a day-long decision. With the working command accepted and a five-minute decision, Render won all 24. A useful price example also left Render's full-stack launch lead intact.

FIRST MOVE · PRICING

Compare two offers with the same estimated bill. Give one a measured workload behind the estimate. Track the full-stack buyer against Fly.io and the launch-first buyer against Render.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Preserve the simple deployment route. Check that the representative bill matches what comparable customers actually pay.

Provider positioning · Evidence · p. 39 · Evidence · p. 26 · Provider pricing

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

NETLIFY · BUYER MISSED

Fly.io won both Netlify idle-billing tests

The exposed buyer is a founder turning a site into a paid service who needs one dependable budget for hosting and data. Explicitly making database idle time free in the comparison earned Netlify no recommendations.

ORIGINAL 96 TRIALS AND TWO FRESH 24-TRIAL TESTS

84 of 96

flagged billing at baseline

Idle time billed

0 of 24 chose Netlify

Idle time free

0 of 24 chose Netlify

All 24 choice trials in each test received the clarification and picked Fly.io.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Price a complete production configuration before spending more effort explaining an individual charge.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

NETLIFY · STRATEGY AND FIRST MOVE

Netlify's next proof point is the first recurring bill

PUBLIC POSITION

Netlify offers a path from an AI tool or Git repository to deployment, including server and database services. The next buying decision for a founder moving beyond a prototype is whether the combined service fits the monthly budget.

COMPETITIVE SIGNAL

No tested buyer group gave Netlify a sole recommendation. Fly.io won all 24 general comparisons under each idle-billing rule. The high frequency of billing questions did not identify a fix sufficient to win this customer.

FIRST MOVE · PRODUCT AND PRICING

Keep rates unchanged. Price hosting, 250 MB of stored data, four monthly builds, 20,000 monthly API requests at 100 ms each and 5 GB of monthly outbound traffic for 2,000 monthly users. Compare that worked bill with the existing pages.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Judge the quote by two outcomes: can the agent reproduce the bill, and does Netlify gain recommendations from Fly.io?

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

VERCEL · BUYER MISSED

Next.js recognition got Vercel considered. The agent chose another host.

The exposed buyer is a commercial Next.js founder buying hosting and persistent data under one cap. In 66/96 general trials, the agent raised database pricing or allowance questions.

COURIER SERVICE · ONE CONSIDERED PLAN, MONTHLY



$32 before other charges. This plan exceeded the cap by $2.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Quote one eligible Next.js production plan with its database. Show the founder what the complete purchase costs.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

VERCEL · STRATEGY AND FIRST MOVE

Vercel should make its framework advantage easy to buy

PUBLIC POSITION

Vercel puts Next.js alongside build, deployment and agent infrastructure. Framework familiarity worked: the agent recognized the match. The commercial founder still needed a price and sufficient database capacity.

COMPETITIVE SIGNAL

Vercel received zero sole recommendations. Fly.io won the original general comparisons and Render won the launch-first comparisons. In the separate courier-service test, the $32 estimate combined $20 for Pro plus the buyer's existing $12 database subscription. The budget was $30.

FIRST MOVE · PRODUCT MARKETING

Publish a worked commercial configuration with the plan, database limits and monthly total. Compare against Fly.io for the general request and Render for the launch-first request.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Preserve the Next.js advantage. Test whether the agent can turn technical fit into a complete, affordable order.

Provider positioning Evidence · p. 43 Provider pricing

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

CLOUDFLARE · BUYER MISSED

Cloudflare missed founders who wanted to keep their Node code

For a founder with a functioning Node service, moving to another runtime can create a new job before launch. The agent raised adaptation work in 71/96 general comparisons.

WHAT THE AGENT MENTIONED IN ITS EXPLANATIONS



71 of 96 general full-stack trials cited work to adapt existing Node code.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Demonstrate one migration end to end, including the code changes, persistent database connection and working public endpoint.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

CLOUDFLARE · STRATEGY AND FIRST MOVE

Cloudflare needs to show existing-code buyers how to migrate

PUBLIC POSITION

Workers emphasizes globally distributed serverless execution with little infrastructure to manage. That can be attractive to a team designing for the edge. An owner of existing Node code has an earlier decision: what must change before the benefits are available?

COMPETITIVE SIGNAL

Cloudflare earned zero sole recommendations. For the same existing Node code, Fly.io won all 96 general baseline trials. Render won all 96 in the separate launch-first baseline. Both offered routes the agent could explain for the existing code.

FIRST MOVE · DEVELOPER EXPERIENCE

Add a verified migration example for that buyer. Test the same workload and rival offers. Evaluate teams building for Workers from day one as a distinct customer profile.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Preserve the global serverless proposition. Test whether migration proof earns existing-code buyers from Fly.io or Render.

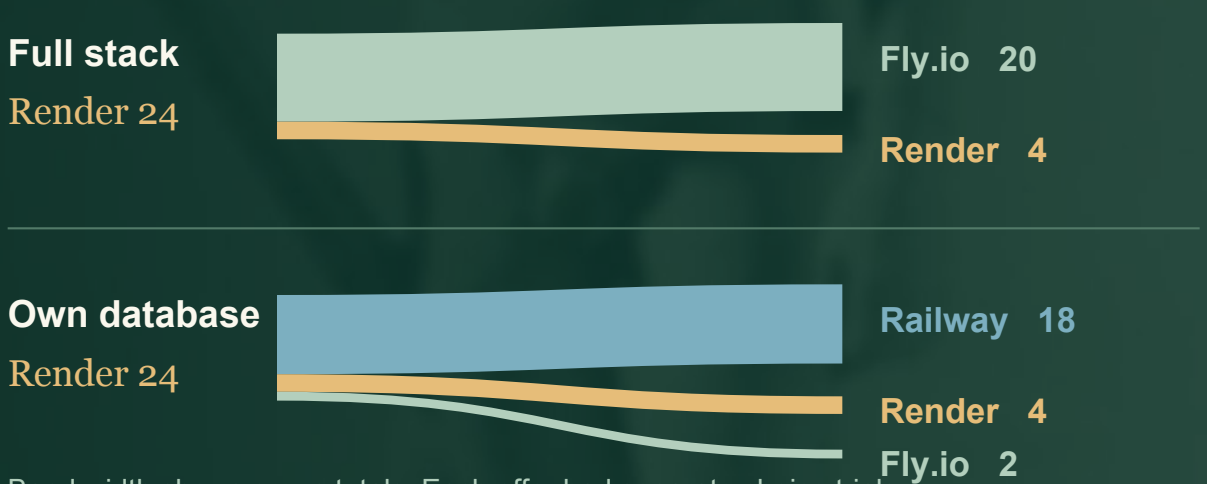
Provider positioning Evidence · p. 44 Evidence · p. 43 Provider pricing

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

COMPETITIVE SUBSTITUTION · LAUNCH-FIRST BUYER

A harder launch for Render sent different buyers to different rivals

LEAST-WORK RECOMMENDATIONS · 24 TRIALS PER BUYER TYPE AND OFFER



Band width shows group totals. Each offer had separate choice trials.

With an edit and a 24-hour decision, Render kept 4/24 in each test. The other 20 went to different rivals. The buyers also differed in workload and operating needs.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Build competitor comparisons around what the buyer already owns. A founder buying an entire stack has different alternatives from one bringing a database.

Evidence · p. 39

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

COMMERCIAL TERMS · CONTROLLED COMPARISON

Render kept every pick without review, even at twice the price

RENDER PICKS · LEAST-WORK BUYER · 24 TRIALS PER OFFER

$13.30		$26.60	
No review	24/24	No review	24/24
Review required	0/24	Review required	0/24

The review offer gave no deadline. Doubling the price left both results unchanged.

The launch-first founder asked the agent to get to a real customer with the least work. Both hypothetical monthly prices fit the same $30 cap.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

If approval is required, specify when it ends and what the customer can do afterward. Test the actual policy before changing the price.

Evidence · p. 28

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

COMMERCIAL FOLLOW-THROUGH

Measure provider, plan and first customer outcome separately

A MEASUREMENT PLAN FOR A SELLER

- **Recommendation** — Studied here
  Which provider and which plan?
- **Activation** — Measure in the field
  Did the buyer reach the first useful result?
- **Commercial outcome** — Measure in the field
  What did the buyer pay, and did they stay?

A provider can keep its recommendation and still earn a recommendation for a larger plan. Reliability requests produced a second Fly.io machine. Record the proposed configuration alongside the brand, then follow the buyer through launch and billing.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Give the test to the team that owns the obstacle. Repeat the recommendation comparison, then verify the outcome with real customers.

Evidence · p. 37

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

MEASUREMENT AND INTERPRETATION

What counts as a recommendation?

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Each choice trial gave a fresh instance of the same Codex model a buying brief, a repository and six frozen provider sites. The first recorded recommendation counted. Ties and explicit no-recommendation outcomes stayed in the denominator.

BUYER PROFILES

A US solo founder and a small courier operator each had a $30 recurring budget. Instructions varied their buying priority. Two workloads represented buying a full stack or bringing a database to an always-on service. These profiles describe purchase needs, not customer demographics.

STRATEGY AND SCOPE

Provider profiles compare observed choices with the companies' public positioning. Strategic alignment and proposed actions are Conclavo's interpretation. Experimental offer changes applied to private copies. The appendix contains the complete results and limitations.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Read recommendation counts as evidence about an AI-assisted shortlist. Estimate acquisition, revenue and retention with customer data.

Evidence · p. 23

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · METHODOLOGY

What the study counted

From November 25 to 27, 2026, fresh Codex CLI runs using GPT-6.1-sol at medium reasoning effort shopped for hosting. Each trial received a working app, a buyer instruction and the same six vendors in balanced starting positions.

Study detail	Scope
Trials	3,300 in 97 conditions. 3,192 scored study trials plus 108 pilot trials.
Counting rule	Count the first recommendation the AI recorded as final. If the same task was retried, count the accepted decision once.
Vendor counts	Each vendor column counts sole picks. Vercel, Netlify and Cloudflare had zero sole picks and appeared in zero ties.
Other outcomes	Tie counts one trial with multiple preferred vendors. None counts an explicit decision to recommend no vendor. Every trial recorded an outcome.
Evidence available to shoppers	55 usable first-party documents from 58 archived responses. Three billing URLs were missing. Shoppers could browse and search the archive.
Buyer budget	$30 USD per normal month for the whole stack after promotional credits expire, before tax.

All study and pilot conditions follow. When the Tie / None column is omitted, both counts were zero. The later deadline-by-priority summary reused four earlier least-work conditions, counted once here.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Use one recommendation per trial. Count ties and no-picks when comparing offers.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · STUDY SCOPE

Two apps required different hosting plans

The calendar buyer had to purchase a full stack. The dispatch buyer already had a database and had to keep a Node process running to maintain live event streams.

App	Hosting requirements
Workshop calendar	Next.js frontend and Node API with persistent Postgres. About 2,000 users and 20,000 API requests per month, 5 GB outbound, 250 MB storage and four builds.
Courier dispatch board	Continuously running Node process with long-lived event streams. An existing $12/month Postgres database counted toward the $30 cap.

The study used one model configuration, six providers and a selected offline archive with hypothetical terms. It measured advice after a local app smoke check. Launches, invoices, conversion, uptime and approval outcomes were outside the experiment.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Price the services the buyer still needs, including any infrastructure they already pay for.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · PILOTS

The pilots answered two different feasibility questions

The first pilot identified unresolved billing questions. The second checked whether two vendors could compete for dispatch under the same neutral buyer instructions.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Calendar · Unedited neutral buyer	96	0	96	0
Dispatch · Neutral · Existing command · 5 min	12	4	8	0

One calendar pilot shopper discovered outside tool descriptions. Participant apps, plugins and skill discovery were then disabled and the baseline recollected. Dispatch passed its prespecified screen of two sole picks each for two vendors.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Use pilot trials to choose a question. Use fresh trials to estimate the result.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · NEUTRAL

A higher Fly.io bill moved 21 picks

Fly.io won every control trial. Doubling its hypothetical paid U.S. bill shifted 21 of 24 choices to Render, even though those shoppers still priced a Fly.io configuration under $30.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Unedited baseline	96	0	96	0
Fresh unchanged control	24	0	24	0
Netlify bills idle database time	24	0	24	0
Netlify excludes idle database time	24	0	24	0
Railway gives no comparable bill	24	0	24	0
Railway shows an $8 example bill	24	0	18	6
Fly.io waives manual review	24	0	24	0
Fly.io requires manual review	24	3	21	0
Fly.io doubles its standard U.S. bill	24	21	3	0

Railway gained six picks with an $8 reference bill, which changed both the evidence and the displayed price. Both Netlify billing clarifications reached all assigned shoppers and produced zero switches.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

For a budget-conscious buyer, test the whole monthly price even when both offers fit the cap.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · LEAST WORK

All 288 launch-first full-stack trials favored Render

The app and offer treatments stayed the same. The buyer asked for the least work to reach a first real customer. Render won every condition, including the Railway reference bill and all three Fly.io edits.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Unedited baseline	96	96	0	0
Fresh unchanged control	24	24	0	0
Netlify bills idle database time	24	24	0	0
Netlify excludes idle database time	24	24	0	0
Railway gives no comparable bill	24	24	0	0
Railway shows an $8 example bill	24	24	0	0
Fly.io waives manual review	24	24	0	0
Fly.io requires manual review	24	24	0	0
Fly.io doubles its standard U.S. bill	24	24	0	0

The neutral and least-work batches ran successively. The final same-batch study offers the stronger test of whether buyer priorities change responsiveness.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Benchmark the unchanged rival before attributing a least-work win to a page edit.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · PRICE AND APPROVAL

Render kept every pick at both prices when review was waived

The least-work buyer saw two in-budget estimated monthly prices tested with and without manual review. Requiring review with no stated turnaround cost Render all 24 picks at each price.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Review waived · $13.30	24	24	0	0
Review waived · $26.60	24	24	0	0
Manual review · $13.30	24	0	22	2
Manual review · $26.60	24	0	23	1

These are hypothetical offer terms. The comparison measures the effect on recommendations in this setting. It leaves the buyer's dollar valuation of avoiding review unresolved.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Separate the price decision from the approval decision. Compare both prices with and without review.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · FIRST SETUP TEST

A required start-command edit cost Render three picks

The deployment guide either accepted the least-work buyer's existing command or required a one-line edit before deployment. The original approval and pricing pages stayed fixed.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Existing command accepted	24	24	0	0
One-line command edit required	24	21	3	0

All three alternative picks cited the edit and priced Render within budget. The exact paired p-value was .25. Later work tested the edit on the pricing page together with a specified review deadline and denial rate.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Check small setup penalties on a fresh app before budgeting a major redesign.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · APPROVAL TURNAROUND

A guaranteed approval recovered almost every pick

Render went from 24 of 24 with review waived to zero when review was required and neither approval nor timing was guaranteed. Promising approval recovered at least 23 of 24 picks at each tested deadline under the least-work instruction.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Review waived	24	24	0	0
Review, no turnaround stated	24	0	22	2
Guaranteed approval within 5 min	24	24	0	0
Guaranteed approval within 1 hr	24	24	0	0
Guaranteed approval within 24 hr	24	23	1	0

The three turnaround promises guaranteed approval. The next test varied whether a decision could end in denial.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

When review is necessary, state what the buyer can actually do when it ends.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · SHORT AND LONG DEADLINES

At 24 hours, possible denial cost 11 picks

At each deadline the least-work buyer saw a promise of either approval or a decision that could end in denial. Five minutes and one hour yielded unanimous Render picks either way.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
5 min · Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
5 min · Denial possible	24	24	0	0
1 hr · Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
1 hr · Denial possible	24	24	0	0
24 hr · Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
24 hr · Denial possible	24	13	10	1

The numerical risk was unspecified. At 24 hours the comparison survived adjustment for the planned tests ($p = .00293$).

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Distinguish a guaranteed approval from a guaranteed answer in sales and onboarding copy.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · INTERMEDIATE DEADLINES

With possible denial, longer deadlines drew fewer picks

Guaranteed approval kept every pick. With possible denial, Render's choices declined from 22 at two hours to 14 at 12 hours. All 22 displaced picks went to Fly.io.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
2 hr · Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
2 hr · Denial possible	24	22	2	0
4 hr · Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
4 hr · Denial possible	24	20	4	0
8 hr · Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
8 hr · Denial possible	24	18	6	0
12 hr · Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
12 hr · Denial possible	24	14	10	0

Denial odds were unspecified. Of the four deadlines tested, only 12 hours cleared the adjusted threshold ($p = .0078$). The precise timing of the change remains unresolved.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Give buyers a real turnaround commitment. These trials did not establish a universal cutoff.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

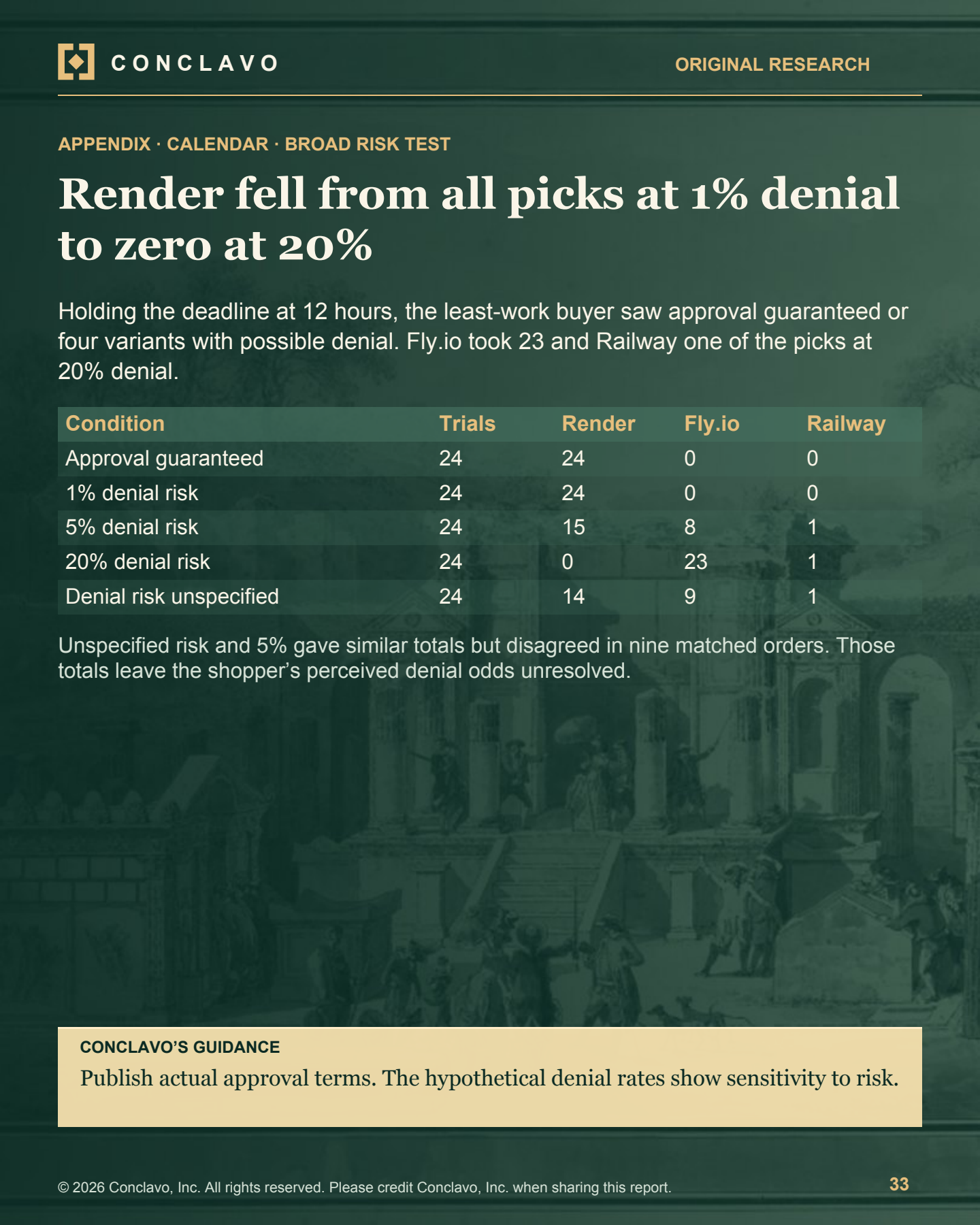
APPENDIX · CALENDAR · BROAD RISK TEST

Render fell from all picks at 1% denial to zero at 20%

Holding the deadline at 12 hours, the least-work buyer saw approval guaranteed or four variants with possible denial. Fly.io took 23 and Railway one of the picks at 20% denial.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Approval guaranteed	24	24	0	0
1% denial risk	24	24	0	0
5% denial risk	24	15	8	1
20% denial risk	24	0	23	1
Denial risk unspecified	24	14	9	1

Unspecified risk and 5% gave similar totals but disagreed in nine matched orders. Those totals leave the shopper’s perceived denial odds unresolved.



CONCLAVO’S GUIDANCE

Publish actual approval terms. The hypothetical denial rates show sensitivity to risk.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · LOW-RISK REPLICATION

The decline from 1% to 4% replicated

Two fresh batches tested low denial rates at 12 hours with the least-work buyer. The larger run showed a 19.8-point decline from 1% to 4%, smaller than the first estimate of 45.8 points.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Initial · 1% denial	24	23	1	0
Initial · 2% denial	24	21	3	0
Initial · 3% denial	24	19	5	0
Initial · 4% denial	24	12	12	0
Initial · 5% denial	24	15	9	0
Replication · 1% denial	96	89	7	0
Replication · 3% denial	96	78	18	0
Replication · 4% denial	96	70	24	2
Replication · 5% denial	96	56	39	1

In the replication, adjusted p = .00109 for the 1%-to-4% drop. The small first batch rose at 5%, while the replication fell. The replication's 4%-to-5% adjusted p was .0541.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Rerun close results with more trials before treating an apparent reversal as real.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · LARGER RISK TEST

The larger 4%-to-5% test left the difference uncertain

At the same 12-hour deadline, 64 matched orders lost a Render pick and 45 gained one as the hypothetical denial rate increased from 4% to 5%. That was a net 7.2-point decline.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
4% denial risk	264	193	67	4
5% denial risk	264	174	87	3

Paired 95% interval −14.9 to +0.5 percentage points. Exact two-sided p = .0842. The 264 pairs were set before collection for about 92% power at the earlier, larger estimated effect.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Avoid a policy threshold at 4% or 5%. The larger study could not settle the difference.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · LEAST WORK AT 5% DENIAL

At fixed risk, a longer wait cost Render ten picks

In the least-work batch, all 24 trials picked Render with a five-minute decision. At 24 hours, 14 picked it. All 96 shoppers cited the deadline and risk.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
5 min	24	24	0	0
1 hr	24	22	2	0
12 hr	24	16	8	0
24 hr	24	14	10	0

Ten matched orders switched from Render to Fly.io across the endpoint comparison, with zero opposite switches (exact p = .00195). This estimates the deadline effect at one stated denial risk.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

For launch-focused buyers, test a shorter response window with rejection risk held fixed.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · CALENDAR · OTHER PRIORITIES AT 5% DENIAL

The host stayed the same while the plan changed

All 192 ordinary or reliability requests chose Fly.io. The one-machine setup commonly cost $10.80 per month. The two-machine estimate was $17.50.

One machine: 93/96 ordinary requests. Two machines: 96/96 reliability requests.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Neutral · 5 min	24	0	24	0
Neutral · 1 hr	24	0	24	0
Neutral · 12 hr	24	0	24	0
Neutral · 24 hr	24	0	24	0
Reliability · 5 min	24	0	24	0
Reliability · 1 hr	24	0	24	0
Reliability · 12 hr	24	0	24	0
Reliability · 24 hr	24	0	24	0

The two prompt batches ran successively. All received the terms. The numerical rate appeared in 80/96 neutral and 65/96 reliability explanations. Render’s zero baseline limits what this stage reveals about speed.

CONCLAVO’S GUIDANCE

Track the configuration and recurring bill as well as the provider name.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · FINAL STUDY · NEUTRAL

Fly.io led every neutral condition

The same-batch test crossed both apps, three buyer instructions, two setup rules and two decision deadlines. Each condition had 24 shoppers and the stated denial risk stayed at 5%. Render's best neutral result was 6 of 24 in dispatch.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway
Calendar · Keep · 5 min	24	0	24	0
Calendar · Keep · 24 hr	24	0	24	0
Calendar · Edit · 5 min	24	1	23	0
Calendar · Edit · 24 hr	24	0	24	0
Dispatch · Keep · 5 min	24	6	18	0
Dispatch · Keep · 24 hr	24	4	20	0
Dispatch · Edit · 5 min	24	0	24	0
Dispatch · Edit · 24 hr	24	0	24	0

Keep means Render accepted the existing start command. Edit means Render required a one-line change. Each cell ran once in each of 24 balanced vendor-order blocks.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Test a closer contest before concluding that a general buyer never values faster review.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · FINAL STUDY · LEAST WORK

Setup and waiting changed the least-work pick

Render won 24 of 24 in each app with the existing command and a five-minute decision. With a required edit and a 24-hour wait, it won 4 of 24 in each. Fly.io took 20 calendar picks and Railway took 18 dispatch picks in that condition.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway	Tie / None
Calendar · Keep · 5 min	24	24	0	0	0 / 0
Calendar · Keep · 24 hr	24	18	6	0	0 / 0
Calendar · Edit · 5 min	24	20	4	0	0 / 0
Calendar · Edit · 24 hr	24	4	20	0	0 / 0
Dispatch · Keep · 5 min	24	24	0	0	0 / 0
Dispatch · Keep · 24 hr	24	22	0	2	0 / 0
Dispatch · Edit · 5 min	24	10	0	13	0 / 1
Dispatch · Edit · 24 hr	24	4	2	18	0 / 0

Keep means Render accepted the existing start command. Edit means Render required a one-line change. Tie / None counts multiple preferred vendors and explicit decisions to recommend none, respectively.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Measure hands-on work separately from time spent waiting on a provider.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · FINAL STUDY · RELIABILITY

Render's reliability picks were concentrated in dispatch

Render won 40 of 48 on dispatch when the existing command was accepted and zero of 96 on the calendar under this buyer priority. All 11 study ties came from these dispatch conditions.

Condition	Trials	Render	Fly.io	Railway	Tie / None
Calendar · Keep · 5 min	24	0	24	0	0 / 0
Calendar · Keep · 24 hr	24	0	24	0	0 / 0
Calendar · Edit · 5 min	24	0	24	0	0 / 0
Calendar · Edit · 24 hr	24	0	24	0	0 / 0
Dispatch · Keep · 5 min	24	20	0	0	3 / 1
Dispatch · Keep · 24 hr	24	20	2	0	2 / 0
Dispatch · Edit · 5 min	24	7	15	0	2 / 0
Dispatch · Edit · 24 hr	24	5	14	0	4 / 1

Keep means Render accepted the existing start command. Edit means Render required a one-line change. Six ties named Render and Fly.io. Five also named Railway. Tie / None counts multiple preferred vendors and explicit decisions to recommend none, respectively.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Define reliability for the actual workload before comparing hosting configurations.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · FINAL STUDY · INFERENCE

Least-work shoppers responded most to removing the edit

The numbers show how much more each change helped Render under the named priority than under the ordinary request. A point means one percentage point of recommendations. The right columns repeat the check using only groups that finished on their first try.

Change and buyer priority	Full study	Adjusted p	First try	Adjusted p
Keep the command · Least work	+42.7 points	.000019	+41.2 points	.00098
Decide in 5 min · Least work	+28.1 points	.00570	+20.6 points	.152
Keep the command · Reliability	+19.8 points	.00641	+16.2 points	.152
Decide in 5 min · Reliability	−1.0 point	1.000	−4.4 points	.685

Adjusted p accounts for testing four comparisons. Smaller values give stronger evidence of a difference. Only the least-work setup result stayed below .05 in both checks. The first-try subset had 408 trials in 17 of 24 groups and may differ from the rest.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Give the strongest weight to the setup result for buyers explicitly seeking less work.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · FINAL STUDY · VERIFICATION

The audit recovered all 576 first locked choices

Independent reconstruction matched all 24 condition counts and all four primary tests. Every shopper received the assigned terms before locking. The two apps differed in several ways at once, so the study cannot isolate which architectural difference explains their contrasting responses.

Check	Observation
Retries	18 pre-choice timeouts finished with identical assignments on retry. One process timed out after locking its counted choice.
Outside discovery	Two shoppers made generic resource-discovery calls that returned empty results.
Starting position	Each vendor appeared 96 times in each of six slots. Render won 35 from the first and 35 from the third. Shoppers chose which pages to open.
Keeping the command	The extra setup benefit vs neutral for least-work shoppers was +39.6 points on calendar and +45.8 on dispatch.
Differences by buyer priority	The extra deadline benefit vs neutral for least work was +43.8 points on calendar and +12.5 on dispatch. The extra setup benefit for reliability was +2.1 and +37.5 points.

App-specific results are descriptive. Each matched order used fresh trials. The exact tests flip the signs of differences across matched groups, assuming symmetry under no effect.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Preserve first choices and failed attempts so another analyst can reconstruct the count.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · REASONS

What did the AI mention while choosing?

These are mentions in the 96 ordinary calendar trials. The same explanation could mention price, setup and backups. References to competitors were counted too.

What the agent discussed	Trials out of 96
Backups or protection against failure	96
Existing website and API could run together	94
Database capacity	94
Complete bill or room under budget	91
Setup or changes needed to the app	91
Adapting the app for Cloudflare	71
Lower price than a competitor	20

Every shopper opened pages from all six sites. A typical trial opened 22 or 23 different pages. In each of the seven edited groups for the ordinary calendar buyer, all 24 received the complete changed sentence.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Use repeated concerns to design tests. Verify whether answering them moves the pick.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

The agent could choose a host and still list concerns

The AI could mention risks for the host it chose and for rivals it passed over. Several concerns could appear together. In 67 of 96 ordinary calendar trials it reported no explicit obstacle to deployment.

Concern in ordinary calendar trials	Trials out of 96
Railway computing usage and resulting bill	88
Limits on sharing database connections	86
Limits on database support	85
Netlify database active time and bill	84
App size or peak demand unmeasured	66
Vercel database allowances or bill	66
App could lack a backup machine	51
Variable charges or spending ceiling	31
Cloudflare external database terms	16

The pilot often flagged the same questions: Netlify billing in 93 of 96 trials, Railway charges in 86 and Vercel database terms in 79. Only changing a fact and seeing a change in picks tests whether answering it can win a recommendation.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Separate unresolved questions about competitors from blockers on the winning plan.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · LIST ORDER

Both early favorites won from every position

In their original calendar baselines, Fly.io (ordinary request) and Render (least work) each won 16 of 16 at every list position. That was 16 of 16 when first and 80 of 80 when later.

Separate randomized study: 576 trials

Host	Picks when first, out of 96	Picks later, out of 480
Fly.io	59	281
Render	35	154
Railway	5	28
Vercel	0	0
Netlify	0	0
Cloudflare	0	0

Read one row at a time. Each host was first in a different set of 96 trials and later in its other 480. The agent could open sites in any order. These counts alone cannot establish how an individual buyer responded to position.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Balance the starting order when you compare offers. Keep actual browsing order separate.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

APPENDIX · LIMITS

Do AI recommendations lead to paying customers?

The evidence ends when one model records its recommendation. It cannot establish which provider is most reliable, which is best reviewed, what real customers will pay or who will gain market share. The tests devoted more conditions to Render than to any other provider.

To learn about…	What to test next
Other buyers and apps	Repeat with other models, larger budgets and an app designed for an edge network. The dispatch app was deliberately chosen to give two hosts a chance to compete.
Actual customer outcomes	Follow builders from a recommendation through a working launch, first customer, monthly invoice and continued use.
Small differences	Many conditions had just 24 trials. Later tests were chosen in light of earlier results. Give greater weight to the planned final comparisons and fresh larger reruns.
Information gaps	The archive lacked three billing pages and live calculators. Try a complete worked plan for providers that rarely entered the contest.

A private page edit can change both what the buyer learns and the terms on offer. In practice, some improvements require a product or policy change. A clearer description alone may leave the buyer facing the same obstacle.

CONCLAVO'S GUIDANCE

Follow the recommendation through first launch, invoice and retention before estimating revenue.

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.

CONCLAVO

ORIGINAL RESEARCH



WORK WITH CONCLAVO

Which buyers could your company win?

To sponsor a research report and/or request a client engagement, email

contact@conclavo.com →

@Conclavo_ Conclavo Strategy Room

Cover adapted from a photo by Jörg Bittner Unna CC BY 3.0

© 2026 Conclavo, Inc. All rights reserved. Please credit Conclavo, Inc. when sharing this report.