10 SaaS trends for 2026 navigating risks and unlocking competitive advantages for growth

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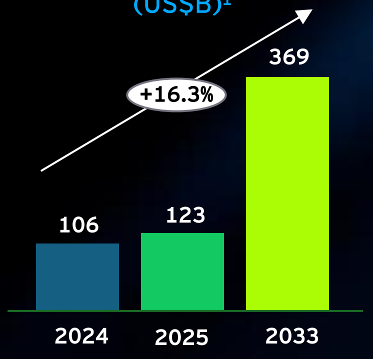
1 How start-ups can build products that win faster ...

Going deep in vertical SaaS, the way to win in crowded markets

The recap: Vertical SaaS Is Winning

- AI + domain expertise accelerates vertical SaaS adoption: Truly understanding the clients needs and sticking to them, provides trust you understand their reality. In a vast ocean where everything is blue, you choose a partner who masters your challenges
- Generic Tools = Weakness: "I could approach any market" sounds flexible, but in regulated sectors like healthcare and finance it means slow adoption, costly customization, and compliance gaps, buyers increasingly reject one-size-fits-all solutions
- The SaaS market is flooded with lookalike solutions, making differentiation harder than ever. Buyers don't want "just another tool", they want clarity, specialization, and real value

Global Vertical SaaS Market Size (US$B)[1]



The challenges you must face

- Deep domain expertise required : SaaS fails when industry-specific pain points aren't understood. Do the homework: engage experts, map pain points into user stories, and validate assumptions early on with real users and experts. Without this insight, you'll build features nobody uses. Adoption slows, churn rises, and trust evaporates
- Legacy Integration = Friction: If integration fails, your product becomes shelfware. Clients won't rip out legacy systems, they expect you to fit in seamlessly. Start with a deep audit of the client's legacy systems to uncover integration blockers, then design APIs that speak their language.
- Specialization limits total market size. What works for hotels may fail for restaurants, causing slow rollouts, higher costs, and frustrated customers. Scaling starts with adjacency mapping, building compliance checklists per region, …

Driving business impact

Niche-focus wins

Vertical SaaS delivers a strong value proposition with industry-specific workflows and compliance features, creating clear differentiation and faster sales. Speaking the industry's language, gives buyers instant clarity, helping them recognize relevance right away and reducing the need for persuasion

Pricing power

When your SaaS becomes the backbone of operations, like a healthcare platform automating patient scheduling and compliance, switching feels impossible. That depth creates loyalty and pricing power, turning customers into partners for the long run

High Retention

Compliance is often a barrier in sectors like healthcare and finance, so achieving a strategic fit for regulated markets becomes critical. It's hard and demands real effort, but that investment pays off as it can turn into a competitive advantage. Regulation stops competitors at the door, while you unlock high-value niches others can't touch

deliverect

Belgium-based SaaS platform that connects restaurants with multiple food delivery services (Uber Eats, Deliveroo, etc.), integrating orders into one system to streamline operations. In 2024, Deliverect generated $44.7 million in revenue and employed approximately 217 people.

Vertical Focus

Restaurants in hospitality, solving a clear pain point fragmented delivery channels leading to manual order entry, errors, and lost revenue during peak hours

Impact

- Raised $240M+ in funding, now serving 43 countries
- Scaled from local Belgian market to global presence in under five years, showing how vertical SaaS can grow fast when solving a niche operational challenge

[1] Source: BusinessResearchInsights, The global Vertical SaaS market with CAGR during forecast period 2025-2033

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Automation & no-code, turning SaaS delivery into a growth engine

The pressure is on...

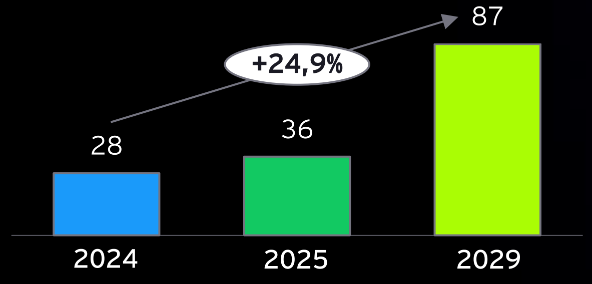
Competitive pressure: Market competition demands that we operate with maximum speed. When competitors can launch features in weeks using automation and no-code, your six-month roadmap looks like a liability. Buyers don't wait for perfection, they choose whoever solves their pain first.

Agility under pressure: Respond quickly to AI, data, and regulatory changes without heavy redesigns. Heavy rebuilds kill agility and drain capital. Automation and no-code break that cycle by enabling smaller, faster enhancements without massive investment, so you keep evolving continuously instead of stalling in costly transformation projects.

Business impact

- Faster time-to-market = revenue acceleration: Launch features and internal tools in weeks, not months. Faster delivery means faster monetization.
- Non-technical staff can create workflows, dashboards, and internal tools without waiting for developer resources. This democratization of development accelerates innovation, reduces IT bottlenecks, and allows teams closest to the business problem to deliver solutions faster.
- Developer talent is scarce and expensive. Scaling with traditional engineering means ballooning burn rates and delayed profitability. No-code shifts internal tool development to business teams which lowers the development costs.

No-Code Development Platforms Global Market Report (US$B) [1]



The challenges you must face

Relying on third-party low-code or no-code platforms can create strong dependency. If the vendor changes pricing, restricts features, or discontinues services, your business may face unexpected disruptions. Always evaluate exit strategies and portability before committing to an external platform.

No-code empowers non-technical teams to build apps, but without governance, you risk leaks and violations.. Establish clear approval workflows and monitoring to keep control without slowing innovation.

It's easy to get caught up in adding features, so keep things simple. At the same time, remember that not all low-code tools scale well, so choose a stack that can support future growth. Ensure you plan your database and workflows efficiently.

"If you are not doing it, you are missing it"[2]

58% of organizations report using low-code/no-code SaaS tools. Adoption is mainstream, not experimental

The technology sector leads with a **65%** adoption rate

70% of new business apps are using these tech in 25, if you aren't yet, having it in your roadmap is a must

comet

Comet

A French SaaS marketplace founded in 2016 connecting companies with vetted tech freelancers and employing 50+ staff members as of 2025

How they did it

Built entirely on Bubble.io, a no-code platform, by a non-technical founder

Impact

- Scaled to €800K MRR, raised €14M funding
- No-code can scale to a fully-fledged SaaS product, supporting a multi-user, marketplace-style architecture

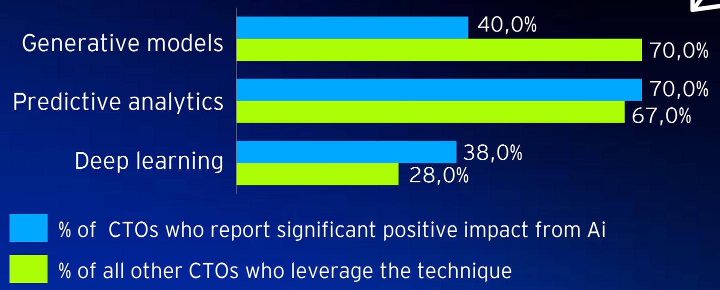
[1]Source : Thebusinessresearchcompany: no-code development platform global market report
[2]Source : Gartner. (2022, December 13). *Gartner Forecasts Worldwide Low-Code Development Technologies Market to Grow*

AI-native SaaS, the new norm of winning products

It goes beyond adding a chatbot

- AI-native SaaS requires reimagining how users interact with software. Instead of users clicking through menus, AI anticipates intent and acts proactively. It means designing experiences where AI actively drives value through automation, intelligent suggestions, and natural language interfaces
- Strengthening data and infrastructure layers includes clean, well-integrated data pipelines and systems that support continuous learning and deployment of AI models. Without this, AI cannot be embedded meaningfully into the core product
- True AI-native products are built with reliability and accountability in mind ensuring robust model performance and governance. That means continuously monitoring model performance, managing risks like bias or drift, and ensuring governance frameworks are in place

Adoption of AI methodologies and usage patterns by level of realized impact,% of respondents[1]



Business Impact

Boosted Customer lifetime value

By analyzing usage patterns and behavior in real time, you can identify at-risk customers early and trigger personalized interventions, such as tailored offers or feature recommendations

Enhanced productivity

Instead of manual tasks, teams focus on high-value work, accelerating product development and customer success.

The companies that are breaking through are building tailored AI solutions[1]

Rather than relying on generic, pre-trained models, they are more likely to invest in:

- Predictive analytics models to personalize experiences and forecast demand.
- Deep learning and reinforcement learning, where adoption is rising sharply among high-impact companies
- Proprietary in-house models tailored to customer needs, rather than off-the-shelf GenAI models, where reliance declined from 70% to 40%.

The risk of standing still

Falling behind AI-native startups that can out-innovate incumbents stuck by legacy systems and technical debt.

Losing defensibility as off-the-shelf models become widely available and commoditized, eroding differentiation

What should you do next?

Modernize the foundation: Upgrade data architectures and cloud stacks to reduce friction for AI deployment. Legacy architectures and siloed systems choke model performance

Embed governance and machine learning operations
Ensure reliability, explainability, and bias mitigation while enabling rapid iteration

Invest selectively in proprietary AI
Build or train models that can meaningfully enhance customer experience that competitors cannot copy

Balance ambition with pragmatism
Deliver incremental ROI through automation now, while laying the groundwork for bold, tailored implementations in the future

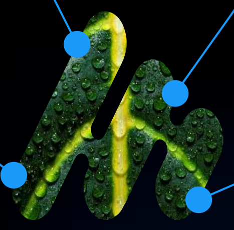
[1]Source :Five forces redefining the CTO mandate in software companies. Insights from 350 European software CTO's 2025 EY-Parthenon and Potloc

Composable SaaS outpaces monolithic suites

Why are monoliths failing fast?

Scaling is clunky
Need to boost one feature? You can't. Instead, you're forced to scale the whole application, whether you want to or not"

Security risks escalate
When everything is tightly coupled, one vulnerability can put the entire stack at risk.



Integration roadblocks
Want to add an AI tool, analytics engine, or automation layer? Good luck. Monolithic architectures weren't designed for seamless API integration.

Updates are painful
One small change can ripple through the entire system. Suddenly, development slows, releases slip, and innovation stalls

Three things you should remember

1. **Flexibility is king** with composable SaaS replaces rigid, one-size-fits-all suites with best-of-breed tools connected via APIs. In Europe, where markets are fragmented and compliance varies by country, flexibility means you can localize features, integrate niche solutions, and stay competitive without heavy engineering overhead
2. **In need of new features? Plug-in and go on.** No need for heavy updates that can break everything. This translates into faster product iteration and quicker response to market opportunities
3. **Composable is future-proof:** Monoliths are rigid and slow. Building modularity based on API-first and cloud-native principles ensures you can grow without hitting technical walls

Business Impact

Businesses want tools that reflect their unique workflows, customer needs, and growth ambitions. Composable SaaS makes this possible by giving you the freedom to design your stack

Scaling individual components without breaking the system. A microservices architecture lets you grow specific parts of your platform independently, ensuring agility and resilience

People will only pay for the SaaS that they use, which makes it cost efficient. Modular pricing beats expensive all-in-one suites and reduces technical debt

Connect everything, collaborate everywhere. Open APIs make integrations seamless and partnerships effortless. For start-ups, this means faster time-to-market, easier partnerships, and the flexibility to adapt to customer needs

70%
of organizations will be mandated to acquire composable DXP tech in 2026, as opposed to monolithic DXP suites, compared to 50% in 2023[1]

80%
This is the speed at which organizations, adopting a composable approach, outpace their competition in implementing new features[2]

TicketManager is an enterprise SaaS platform that helps companies manage and optimize their corporate ticketing and event experiences

Legacy monolithic architecture created bottlenecks
- Slow feature releases due to tightly coupled components
- Limited scalability as customer base grew
- Difficult integration with external ticketing systems (StubHub, Ticketmaster)

Migrated to a modular SaaS architecture:
- Faster feature development cycles and reduced release times
- Improved scalability, supporting enterprise clients globally
- Enhanced user experience through simplified integrations and secure access

TicketManager
- Formerly SpotlightTMS
- Headquarters: USA
- Founded: 2007

[1]Source : Magic Qudrant for Digital Experience Platforms – Gartner - 28 January 2025 - ID G00811676
[2]Source : 2025 Publicis Sapient whitepaper "A Composable Approach to Technology Modernization"

2 Turning trust and compliance into your biggest sales advantage...

Cybersecurity maturity is overstated and underinvested

Why you should do it

Sales Accelerator: Buyers demand proof of security maturity before signing. Compliances aren't paperwork, they're deal enablers. A strong posture shortens sales cycles and builds trust

Investor Confidence: Cybersecurity is now a valuation lever. VCs audit security posture during due diligence, weak governance signals risk and kills funding momentum

Operational Resilience: One breach can derail growth. Average cost of a SaaS data breach in Europe: €4.3M plus reputational damage that kills enterprise trust. Turn this around as a sales argument to capture more value

The reality is, you are most likely on of these companies[1]

39%
of companies do not perform risk assessments or threat modeling

50%
of companies do not embed automated security scans in their continuous integration (CI) pipelines.

83%
do not conduct penetration testing or bug bounty programs.

Regulation basics

1 NIS2 (Network and Information Security Directive): Imposing cybersecurity obligations for critical sectors, which your big customers will expect you to meet too.

- Large customers will ask for stricter security terms multi-factor login, quick patching, logs, right to check). Be ready to agree and to prove it.
- Have a simple "when something goes wrong" playbook with severity levels and who alerts whom, fast.
- Name one senior person who is clearly accountable for cyber risk and keep simple evidence (policies, training records, test results)

2 CRA (Cyber Resilience Act): Your product must be secure from the start and you must fix bugs quickly.

- Bake security into coding and reviews, keep track of open-source components and fix risky ones promptly.
- Be ready to provide security updates for a reasonable product lifetime and explain how customers get them.
- Keep a straightforward product file that shows how you designed, tested, and keep the product secure.

3 EU Cybersecurity Act : Creates EU security "badges" for digital services that can make enterprise and public-sector sales easier.

- Decide if it helps sales: If your buyers care, plan for a relevant EU security certificate.
- Compare your current practices to what the badge expects and fix the shortfalls
- Be audit-ready: Keep tidy proof (policies, logs, test reports) so checks and renewals are painless.

The challenges you must face

- An acute understanding of security frameworks is essential because most SaaS teams underestimate their complexity. Grasping real security risks and frameworks early is important
- Security budgets often get buried under "product development." That's a mistake, make your funding explicit. Underfunding means patchwork fixes and exposure to ransomware or GDPR fines
- Maintaining a singular focus on security as a board-level KPI is critical. Tie it to revenue goals: faster audits = faster enterprise deals. Communicate this link internally so security isn't seen as a blocker but as a growth enabler

The standard to follow

ISO 27001: International standard for information security: protects confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data

- Importance for Start-up in SaaS : you sell trust, not just software
- It structures your organization around an ISMS (Information Security Management System)
- Business benefits: Close enterprise deals faster with proof of security maturity, Reduce future compliance and security costs and Accelerate investor due diligence

[1]Source :Five forces redefining the CTO mandate in software companies. Insights from 350 European software CTO's 2025 EY-Parthenon and Potloc

Data transparency can be your strategic edge

Why it matters now?



- For buyers, trust = currency. Customers, investors, and regulators demand visibility into how data is used, stored and shared. By doing it you showcase added value to buyers
- Many tenders in Belgium and across the EU now require proof of data governance, clear hosting documentation, signed data processing agreements, and often even a public-facing "Trust Center" where clients can check your policies and security commitments

Regulation basics

1 GDPR sets strict rules for personal data processing, transparency, and user rights:
- Publish clear privacy notices and consent flows for all data collection
- Have a simple process for data access, deletion, and correction requests
- Document how you detect, report, and fix data breaches within 72 hours

2 EU Data Act (Sept 2025) makes data access and portability mandatory, preventing vendor lock-in:
- Offer an exit process with easy data export in machine-readable formats
- Remove lock-in clauses and add portability guarantees
- Design APIs for interoperability with other platforms

3 AI Act regulates AI systems based on risk, requiring transparency and human oversight for high-risk use cases
- Keep clear records of how your AI works and decisions it makes
- Test for fairness and accuracy regularly and log results
- Ensure critical decisions have human review options

The challenges you must face

- Avoid partial transparency such as promising EU data residency while relying on unverified subcontractors This can quickly damage your credibility
- Be aware of maintenance challenges, transparency requires continuous effort, keeping audit logs, updating processor lists, and maintaining accurate documentation
- Even if your company is still small or not yet in regulated sectors, preparing early creates a strong foundation. It builds trust with investors and clients and avoids costly retrofitting once regulations apply

Some interesting trends

€1.2b

GDPR enforcement has become increasingly rigorous, with fines reaching €1.2 billion in 2024[1]

AI

is transforming compliance by enabling automated monitoring of data flows

SBOM (Software Bill of Materials) is a critical way to provide transparency through an inventory of all software components (including third-party libraries and dependencies) used in your product

What should you do next?

1 **Turn your Trust Center into a sales engine**
Transparency sells. A public Trust Center showing where data lives, who processes it, and which certifications you hold turns compliance into credibility. Ask questions like "See how we protect your data" and "Choose where your data is stored".

2 **Bring transparency inside your product**
Don't stop at your trust center, make openness part of the user experience. Show customers how their data is stored or used, let them view access logs, and explain how AI features handle their information.

axonjay

Brussels-based, privately held AI technology company born in the year of the pandemic. The company employs around 20 people and operates across Europe

How they did it
- Comprehensive, publicly accessible Trust Center powered by SafeBase
- Trust Center contains complete documentation on compliance (SOC 2, SOC 3, GDPR, ISO), security policies, privacy FAQs, …
- They share their approach to AI risk management and responsible AI usage
- The Trust Center is highly user-friendly & up-to-date

[1]Source: DLA Piper. (2025, January 21). *GDPR Fines and Data Breach Survey across Europe: January 2025*

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3

Smart ways to expand without burning cash

Strategic partnerships with PaaS providers drive SaaS business success

Why should you care?

- Accelerated Growth: Platform-as-a-service (PaaS) partnerships give SaaS startups instant scalability, security and compliance frameworks without heavy upfront investment. PaaS partners provide access to developer communities, marketplaces, and co-selling programs
- Market Credibility : Aligning with trusted PaaS providers signals reliability to enterprise clients and investors. It positions the SaaS company within a recognized and reputable ecosystem
- Innovation boost : A partner can spark innovation by bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise. They can develop solutions that might be beyond the reach of a single organization

What does it mean for start ups?

Startups can concentrate on product innovation and customer experience instead of infrastructure management, speeding time-to-market. The focus can stay on the core business.

Building platforms from scratch burns capital and increases risk. PaaS offers ready-to-use environments cutting development time by up to 50% and reducing infrastructure costs by 40%.[1]

Joining forces with an established player can boost a startup by validating its platform and expanding its reach, ultimately increasing visibility.

What changes in your business model?

Shifting to Ecosystem-Centric

Partnerships enable a shift towards building and nurturing entire ecosystems of interconnected solutions. This approach provides more value to customers and creates more substantial barriers to entry for competitors.

Transforming Pricing Models

Collaborations can lead to innovative pricing models that better align with customer value. For example, offering bundled services with partners might let you charge for use across many services. This would give you more options and make more money overall.

Finding the right partner can be challenging…

1 Define clear goals
Set goals for your partnership projects, whether you want to expand into new markets or improve product features

2 Identify ideal partners
Look for partners that complement your offerings and share similar target audiences. Consider factors like company culture and technological compatibility.

3 Mind the details
Watch out for topics like data sovereignty, the EU is increasingly putting rules around this, and not all partners are equal on that front

4 Measure, optimize and communicate
Maintain open lines of communication. Assess your partnerships' performance regularly and ensure you have fall back solutions

In practice…

miro

Google Cloud

- Founded in 2011 in Russia, employing around 1600 people
- Offering an online collaborative whiteboard

How the partnership works?

- Miro partners with Google Cloud for global scalability and security
- Google provides compute, storage, and compliance frameworks
- Seamless integration with Google Workspace enhances collaboration

Impact

- Scaled to 60M+ users worldwide without own infrastructure.
- Boosted enterprise trust through Google's security and compliance.

[1]Source: Forrester Consulting on behalf of Microsoft, The Total Economic ImpactTM (TEI) of Azure PaaS

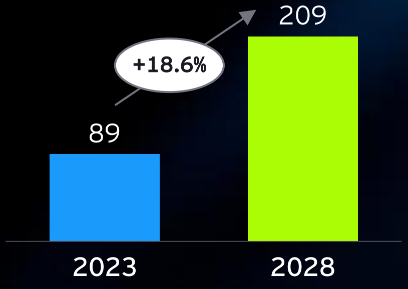
Unlocking new revenue streams through white-label platforms

Why should you care?

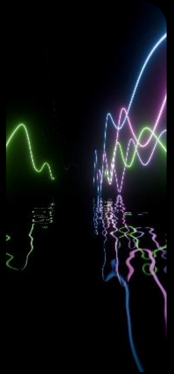
Customer demand for customization:
Clients increasingly expect solutions that feel tailored to their unique workflows and brand experience. Instead of building multiple product versions or custom deployments for each client, white-labeling allows you to reuse your core technology while offering flexibility in branding and configuration

Partnership Ecosystems:
White-labeling transforms your go-to-market from transactional to collaborative growth. Instead of selling solely to end-users, you partner with resellers, consultants, and other tech platforms that already have market traction

Global White-label Market Size (US$B)[1]



The challenges you must face



- Your product's identity is hidden behind another brand, reducing direct recognition and long-term brand equity. The essence is to embed subtle brand cues and thought leadership while letting partners lead externally. Include co-branding in marketing collateral, maintain visible product signatures, and collect case studies under your name
- Poorly executed white-label deployment doesn't just hurt that partner, it can reflect on your reputation. Offer pre-set templates, clear customization boundaries, and partner onboarding programs to gain quality control
- Unlike direct sales, you cannot fully control how your product is marketed, sold, or supported because you depend on other partners. This risk is amplified when multiple partners account for large portions of your revenue

Business impact

Market penetration

Additional revenue stream

- Collaboration with brands that already have loyal customers can lead to accelerated market penetration. The outcome will provide a new revenue stream with low customer acquisition cost. Their brand reaches customers you wouldn't access efficiently on your own
- Testing new verticals with minimal risk means entering new sectors without full internal infrastructure. You license or white-label your existing SaaS solution to partners who already serve that market. This way you can get quick validation of market demand and revenue
- Licenses sold via partners create monthly, recurring revenue and predictable cash flow which will lead to more stable MRR and higher valuation for investors

CentralApp

CentralApp is based in Brussels, Belgium, and offers agencies and resellers an online presence management platform, including website creation, reviews, social media, which can be offered under their own brand (white-label)

Way forwards:

Provides the platform, so partners focus on client relationships and growth. The platform is designed to be easy to use and modular, allowing agencies to select and combine features for their clients

Impact:

Resellers unlock new revenue streams and stronger client ties by selling the platform as their own product

[1]Source: Global Saas white label solution market size: What It Is and How to Launch Yours in 2025, Callin.io

4

Turning pricing and sustainability into competitive advantages...

Value and outcome based, the future of licenses and subscriptions is happening now

What does this mean?

The move to the cloud in the early-to-mid 2000s laid the groundwork for dynamic consumption models, but its true impact came with the democratization of the cloud in the 2010s. Pricing strategies evolved to reflect elasticity as adoption scaled globally.

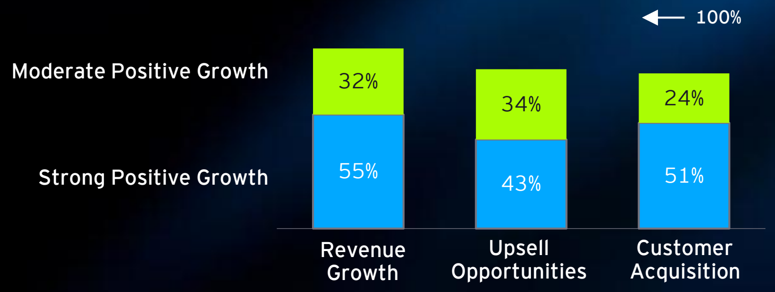
In the AI era, pricing is less about infrastructure or computational costs than about the quality of outcomes delivered. When results drive value, pricing must reflect impact rather than volume.

Nearly 50% of companies that adopted usage-based pricing did so in the last two years, indicating a snowball effect as the model proves its value. Delaying adoption risks competitive disadvantage as peers leverage this model to align value with revenue.

Why should you care?

- Higher retention rate: Customer loyalty rises due to perceived fairness as value drivers that are meaningful to customers, are targeted accurately
- Increased contract value: Customers are often willing to pay more for products that offer higher perceived value, which can be due to brand reputation, quality, or unique features
- Profitability impact: Greater profitability due to efficient pricing. Small price adjustments can deliver significant margin gains without extra cost
- Strategic Product Development: Focuses on innovation that is driven by customer value perception and the evolving needs of the market

Usage-based pricing has a positive impact on companies' growth for more then 87%[1]



The challenges you must face

- Without accurate usage and outcome data, proving value is impossible. Make pricing decisions data-driven and defensible Conduct customer driven research to understand the perceived value of the product.
- Outdated pricing and old packages hide high-value features, making it hard for customers to recognize differentiation. Customers won't pay for what they can't see.
- Sudden shifts trigger churn, poorly managed transitions damage retention and brand trust. Migration paths and clear communication are essential to minimize the disruption of the introduction of a new pricing approach.

Monetizing value in practice

Segment by Value Drivers: Group customers by what they value most. Use data from usage patterns, surveys, and purchase history

Define 1-2 Value Metrics: Measurable indicators that reflect customer-perceived value, cluster by relevance for different customer segments

Select monetization Model: Choose between an a la carte model, for high flexibility, or an all-in model, offering low flexibility

Consider pricing structure: The model should have a metric (tiered, pay what you consume or outcome based) which links with the value delivered

Get the commercial policy right: Define discounts drivers that appropriately reflect why the value is being shared with customers (volume, strategic relationship…)

Pilot & Iterate: Test, iterate and adjust to optimize revenue and customer satisfaction

[1]Source: Data from a January, 2025, survey conducted by Metronome and Greyhound Capital of 100 SaaS companies on a Global level

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Sustainability is climbing up the purchasing criteria

Why should you care?

Sustainability as Differentiator

In a crowded market of look alike features, a strong sustainability narrative signals innovation and responsibility. Under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, roughly 90% of SaaS emissions fall under Scope 3 (indirect emissions from your value chain), primarily from cloud infrastructure. Procurement teams explicitly request activity-based data for these categories.

Evidence Pack

Enterprise buyers want simplicity and clarity. They expect data center KPIs (e.g. % renewable energy), ESG ratings, and CSRD alignment in one place. Deliver this proactively so procurement avoids extra due diligence. If you offer an audit-ready emissions sheet you score higher in RFPs. Be also prepared to fill-in EcoVadis questionnaires on the topic used by big corporates

Authenticity Matters

Buyers are quick to spot greenwashing, so back up your claims with measurable actions. Include recognized certifications like ISO 14001 (Environmental Management), ISO 50001 (Energy Management), or B Corp certification to strengthen credibility. These norms are not only made for corporates, leverage them to your advantage!

Pricing Strategy

More tenders use life-cycle costing and CO_2 intensity as evaluation criteria By offering a Low-Carbon plan (for example, hosting in regions powered by 100% renewable energy), you can justify premium pricing. Transparent emissions KPIs (such as gCO_2e per API call) make your value tangible.

Looking from an investors' perspective…

70% of SaaS companies consider sustainability reporting a priority for investor relations[1]

78% of investors surveyed think companies should make investments that address sustainability issues relevant to their business, even if it reduces profits in the short term[2]

Regulation Basics

Non-exhaustive

With growing digitalization and the shift to cloud computing, software applications are also leaving a huge imprint on the earth. Even if you're not directly in scope yet, EU rules are shaping the game.

- CSRD (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, not mandatory until at least 2028 for Start-ups): Large companies must report ESG data using European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS); they'll push this down to suppliers. Start tracking basic metrics early to avoid losing deals.
- CSDDD (Due Diligence Directive): Requires climate transition plans and ethical supply chains. You'll need to show alignment when selling to corporates or public institutions.

Don't miss out!

The EU's new strategy for start-ups and scale-ups (May 2025) aims to drive sustainable growth and innovation by reducing administrative burdens and improving access to financing through initiatives like the EU Scale-up Fund. SaaS companies, as tech-driven businesses, can benefit from these programs, but to access sustainable investment funds they must show strong ESG practices in areas such as energy efficiency, diversity, and governance.

Marketing it as "eco-friendly" ? Prove it !

wetransfer.com

- Amsterdam-based file-sharing and creative workflow platform. Founded in 2009, WeTransfer has grown into a globally used service In 2023, the company generated approximately €132 million in revenue and employed around 300+ people.
- Has received climate neutral certification, following its pledge to reduce emissions by 30% by 2025
- Became one of the few global tech companies to achieve B Corp status
- Demonstrates that certifications (like B Corp) and transparent goals strengthen brand trust and appeal to enterprise buyers and investors

[1]Source: Sustainability In The global Saas Industry Statistics Statistics: Market Data Report 2025 Gitnux
[2]Source: EY Thought Leadership: How can better sustainability reporting mobilize companies and capital? Respondents were drawn from 23 countries across the Americas, Europe, and Asia-Pacific