EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The smarter path to AI-driven planning

Why the build vs. buy decision matters more in the AI era



As every enterprise rushes to integrate AI into operational planning, leaders face the same question: build from scratch, or buy off the shelf?

Custom AI planning tools built on raw data lakes often bring unpredictable compute costs, technical debt, and governance gaps. Anaplan offers a combined approach: the speed and security of buying combined with the flexible, custom modeling power of building on a unified, enterprise-grade platform.

The evolving planning landscape

AI has made the initial phase of custom coding look deceptively simple and inexpensive. But the long-term reality is highly complex: enterprise planning requires continuous, real-time data orchestration across hundreds of interconnected models at scale that custom builds can rarely survive.

Why choose between speed and control?

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Anaplan provides the best of both worlds:

- Faster time to value
- Greater accuracy and control
- Enterprise-grade governance
- Scales with your business
- Innovate without compromise



Strategic options at a glance

Strategy	Speed to value	Flexibility	Cost and risk impact
Custom build	Slowest (12–24 months)	High control	**High costs and risk:** Concentrates risk, high cloud compute fees, ongoing engineering strain
Standalone buy	Fast	Low flexibility	**Rigid fit:** Point solutions create data silos and fail to adapt to complex evolving processes
Configure and extend (Anaplan)	**Fastest (weeks/months)**	**Unlimited**	**Optimized TCO: Low-code configuration backed by scalable, enterprise-grade governance**

The Anaplan advantage – Skip the code, keep the control

Anaplan supports a dual strategy, letting your organization choose the right approach for each need within one ecosystem. By offering extensible pre-built applications on top of an enterprise platform, Anaplan combines out-of-the-box convenience with tailored control.

- **Pre-built applications:** Purpose-built for demand planning, supply chain, FP&A, and go-to-market
- **Massive scale:** Real-time, simultaneous calculations across every business dimensions
- **AI capabilities:** Role-based AI agents paired with our proprietary calculation engine
- **Custom control, low overhead:** Flexibility without heavy engineering investment
- **Fast ROI:** Value on day one without locking you into rigid templates
- **Business-owned intelligence:** Business users own, modify, and integrate AI seamlessly
- **Enterprise-grade resilience:** Industry-leading security, governance, and structural resiliency

Four key differentiators

Custom tools require programming business logic from scratch. Anaplan's native architecture builds enterprise intelligence in, through four pillars:

Actionable business context

Anaplan encodes your business hierarchies, drivers, and dependencies so our AI understands how your planning scenarios actually work.

Unified systems and workflows

Enterprise data and operational workflows connect under one governed system, triggering automatic recalculations company-wide.

Deterministic real-time engine

We combine LLM reasoning with a deterministic calculation engine, delivering precise, auditable answers for complex decisions.

Proprietary decision data

Every planning scenario generates unique real-world data, creating a proprietary feedback loop of insights competitors cannot replicate.

Total cost of ownership (TCO) comparison

A directional 5-year TCO analysis for a representative $1B enterprise, based on industry benchmark, compares the rising costs of a custom build — headcount, maintenance, infrastructure, and compounding LLM token fees — against Anaplan's scalable platform.

Metric	Use cases deployed	Custom build	Anaplan platform	The Anaplan advantage
Initial cost	First use case: FP&A (4 agents)	$5.6M - $7.5M	$2.8M - $3.6M	**36% - 63%** lower TCO (~$2.0M - $4.7M saved)
Incremental cost	Add Workforce Planning (2 agents)	$3.4M - $4.5M	$1.7M - $2.5M	**26% - 62%** lower TCO (an additional ~$0.9M - $2.8M saved)
Five-year total	Two use cases, six agents	$9.0M - $12.0M	$4.5M - $6.1M	**32% - 63%** lower TCO (~$2.9M - $7.5M saved)
Time-to-value	Each use case	12 to 24 months	Months (applications in weeks)	Up to **6x** faster deployment

TCO estimates are directional and project costs over a five-year period based on standard assumptions. Actual costs vary by deployment, usage, and infrastructure. Contact your Anaplan team for more details and request customized business case assessment today.

Unlock efficiency and growth with Anaplan

Streamline processes and drive efficiency:

Establish a single source of truth with real-time data connecting financials, supply chain, sales, and HR.

Achieve speed to productivity in weeks, not months or years, moving from reactive to proactive planning.

Flexibly model complex scenarios to plan for critical issues and future strategies.

Drive measurable business outcomes:

Maximize revenue: Drive innovation, improve customer service levels, and enter new markets with confidence.

Optimize costs: Gain a clear understanding of future costs, identify and reduce waste, and optimize spending on key initiatives.

Minimize risk: Reduce risk associated with market volatility or key business decisions and successfully deliver complex projects.

Request a demo and learn more at www.anaplan.com.



About Anaplan

Anaplan is a leading AI-driven scenario planning and analysis platform designed to optimize decision-making in today's complex business environment so that enterprises can outpace their competition and the market. By building connections and collaboration across organizational silos, our platform intelligently surfaces key insights — so businesses can make the right decisions, right now.

More than 2,800 global brands plan with Anaplan.

To learn more, visit www.anaplan.com

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