



INDUSTRY BENCHMARK REPORT · 2025–2026

The State of Executive B2B Event Attendance

What 191 invite-only, free-to-attend executive events tell us about who actually fills the room.

191
events analysed

13,155
registrations tracked

8
formats benchmarked

86–19%
show-up range

Why did we create this?

We were analysing our event's audience performance internally and realised we were sitting on a goldmine of data for the B2B events industry that nobody is honest about. Mostly because your average event organiser doesn't like to broadcast no-show rates publicly, it's always about the '250+ senior leaders who joined us today' and never about the 457 other registrations that didn't show up.

So we turned our internal analysis into an industry benchmark. When we started Clutch Events, we struggled for a couple of years to understand what was actually good or bad, because there was little to no data publicly available on show-up rates or dropouts. This report is as neutral and transparent as possible, the good, the bad, and the ugly.

The dataset: 191 free-to-attend events from the start of 2025 into early 2026 across ANZ, APAC and North America. Full attendance outcomes for 175 of them, spanning 13,155 individual registrations.

The short version

86–19

Format is the dominant variable

VIP & sport hit 86%, exec dinners 70%, customer/partner 62%. Practitioner conferences ran 38%; vendor-owned just 19%.

12:1

Opposite failure modes

Roundtables warn you, 12 cancels per 1 no-show. Conferences barely cancel but no-show heavily. Plan each differently.

H1>H2

Timing is a tax

Attendance falls through the year, H2 gap is ~5pts (roundtables) to ~9pts (conferences). Aug/Oct/Nov weakest; Sep the outlier.

62/56

Audience > topic or city

Directors+ attend at 62% vs 56% for technical 'do-ers', whose no-show rate runs 3x higher. Senior leaders warn you earlier.

Reading the numbers: a registration-to-attendance (RtA) rate of 45% on 100 registrations means 45 show up and 55 cancel or no-show. Every figure here uses this honest denominator.

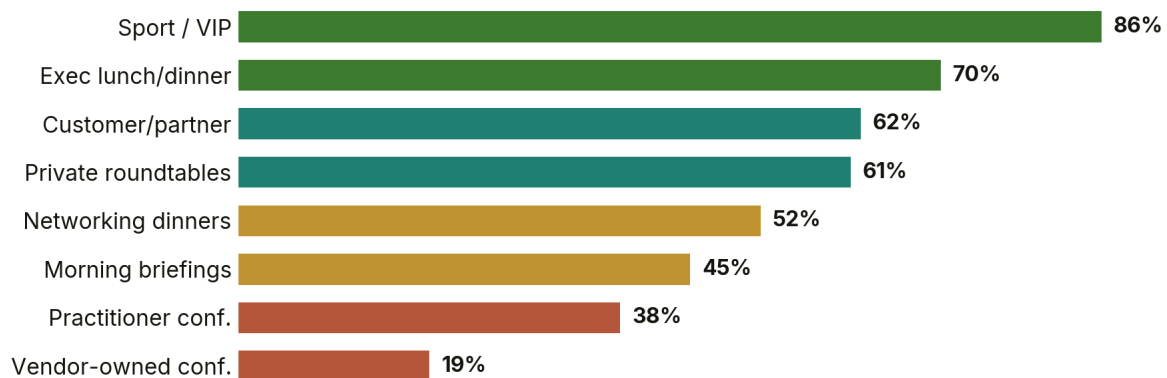
03

ALL FORMATS AT A GLANCE

Eight formats, one honest ranking

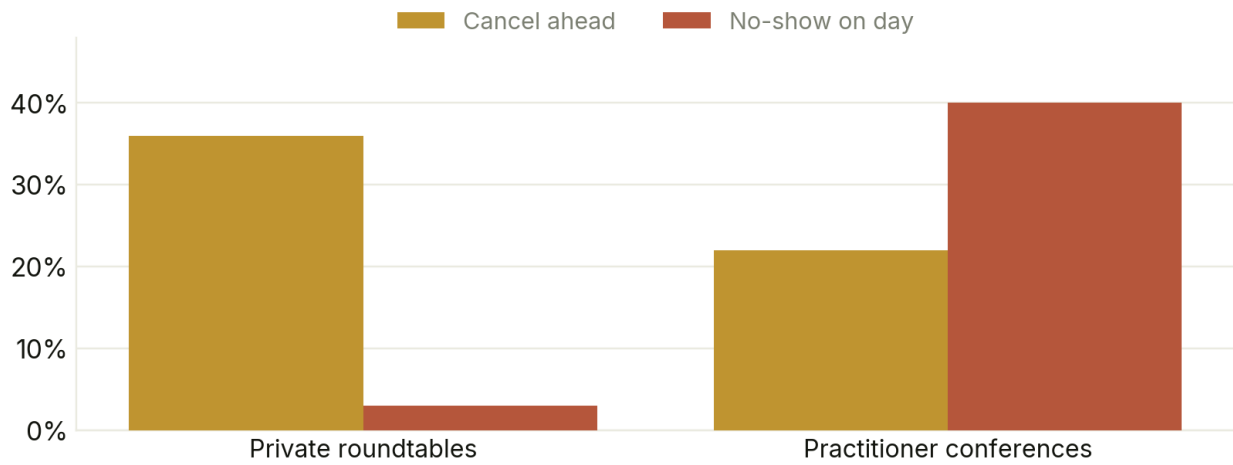
Attendance rate by format

Share of registrations that show up



Two ways to lose a guest

Of those who don't attend: cancel ahead vs no-show on the day



04

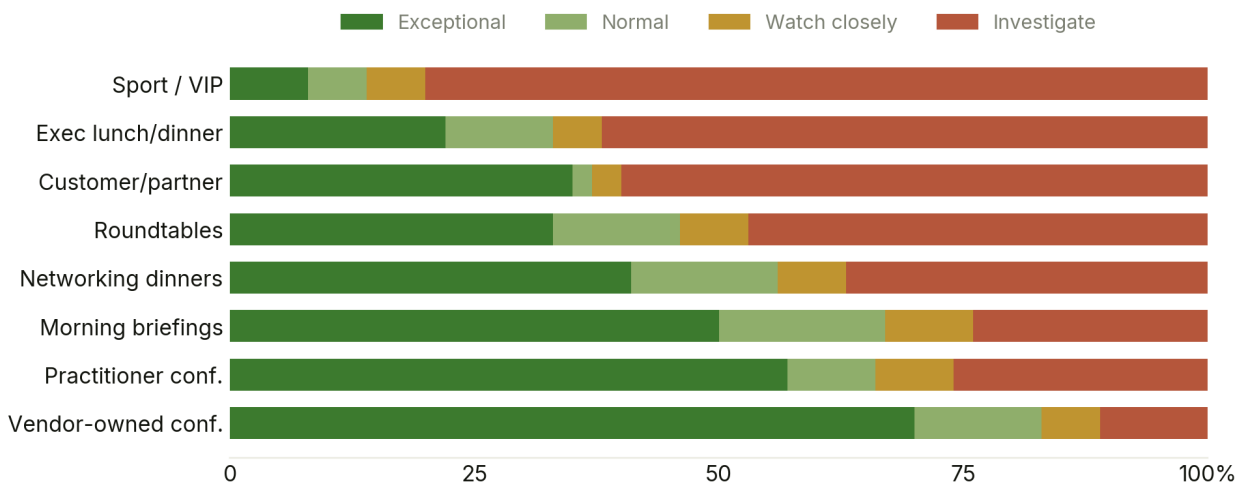
SO HOW AM I DOING?

Benchmark drop-out bands

Drop-out = (cancellations + no-shows) ÷ registrations. Find your format and see where you land against the field.

Where your drop-out rate falls

Exceptional · Normal · Watch closely · Investigate



What moves the drop-out rate: persona (technical = higher), timing (H2, esp. Aug/Oct/Nov), location (US no-shows ~10x ANZ), pitch-style framing, vendor-led vs peer-led speakers, and whether you reconfirm guests at all.

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DEEP DIVE

Private roundtables

61%

Attended

Half land between 54–67%. Mean, median and blended sit within a point.

11/12

Cancel in advance

11 of every 12 no-shows cancel ahead, line of sight a week out.

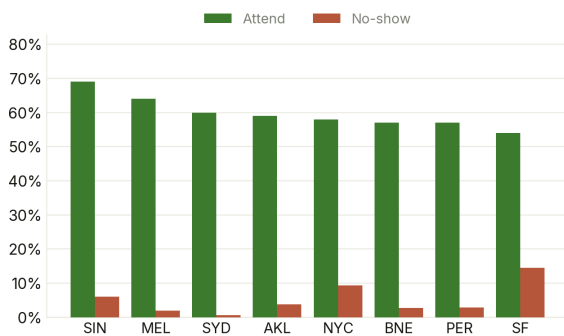
44%

Director+ in room

23% are C-suite or founder. No format pulls a more strategic audience.

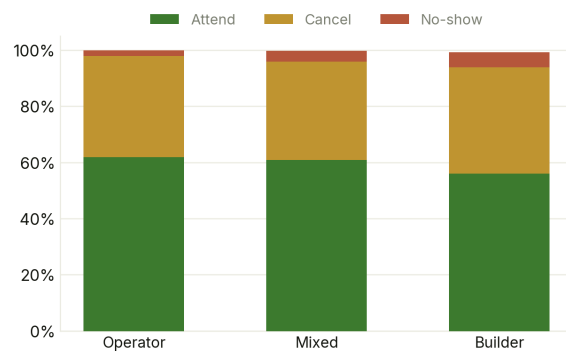
Attendance by city

SYD & SF converge, SF via 14.5% no-show, SYD via 0.6%



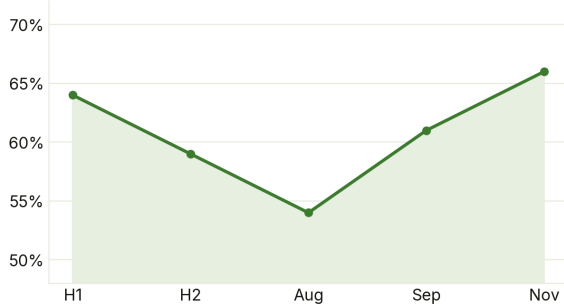
Persona split

Operators show up more, no-show less than builders



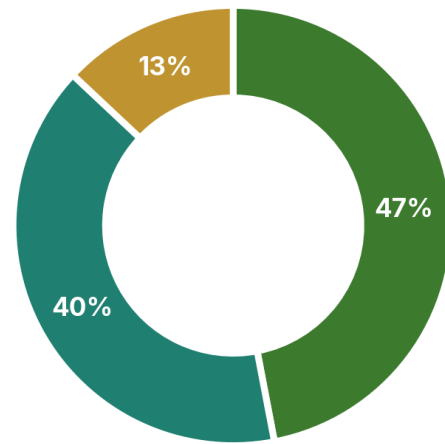
Attendance through the year

H1 outperforms H2; August weakest, Nov rebounds



How the room builds

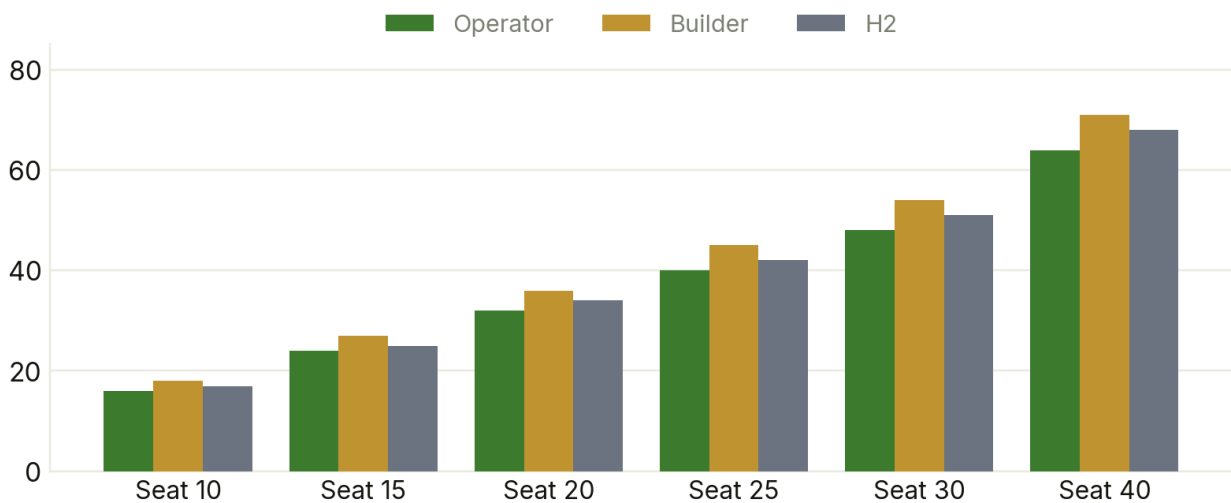
Share of acceptances by invitation wave



- Wave 1 · ~20d
- Wave 2 · 13-20d
- Wave 3 · final 13d

Registrations to fill a roundtable

By audience type and season, for each target room size



Three that compound: later in the year stacks the effect (a 20-person engineering roundtable in October needs ~38 not 33); US events reach the ANZ number only with morning-of calls; and there's a soft ceiling at ~35-40 registered, beyond that, split into two rooms.

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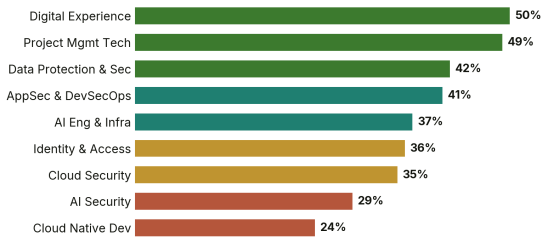
DEEP DIVE

Practitioner-led conferences

Headline: 38% attend, 22% cancel in advance, 40% no-show on the day. The opposite of roundtables, most drop-out arrives as silence on the day.

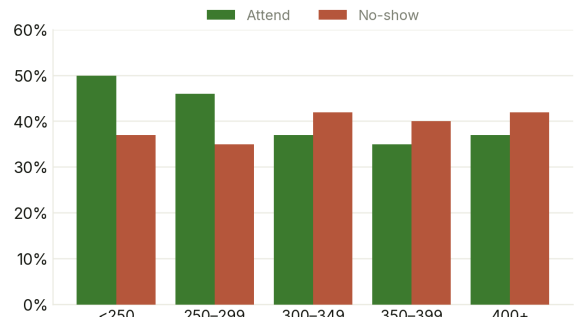
Attendance by topic

Operator-leaning topics avg 44%; builder-leaning 33%



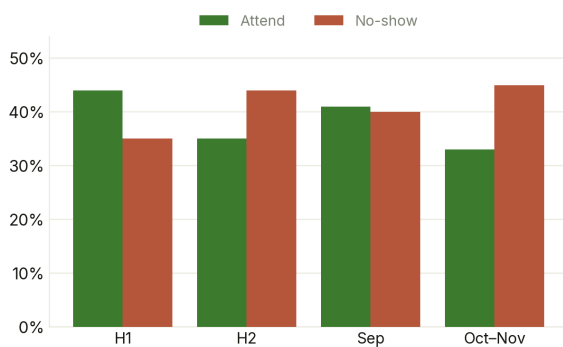
Bigger list, emptier room

No-show, not cancellation, drives the gap at scale



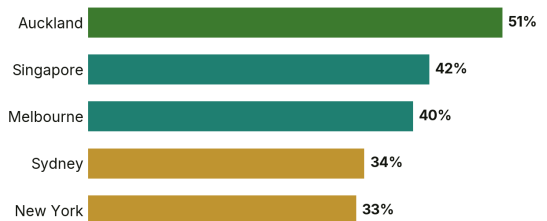
Season is the strongest signal

Attend vs no-show across the year



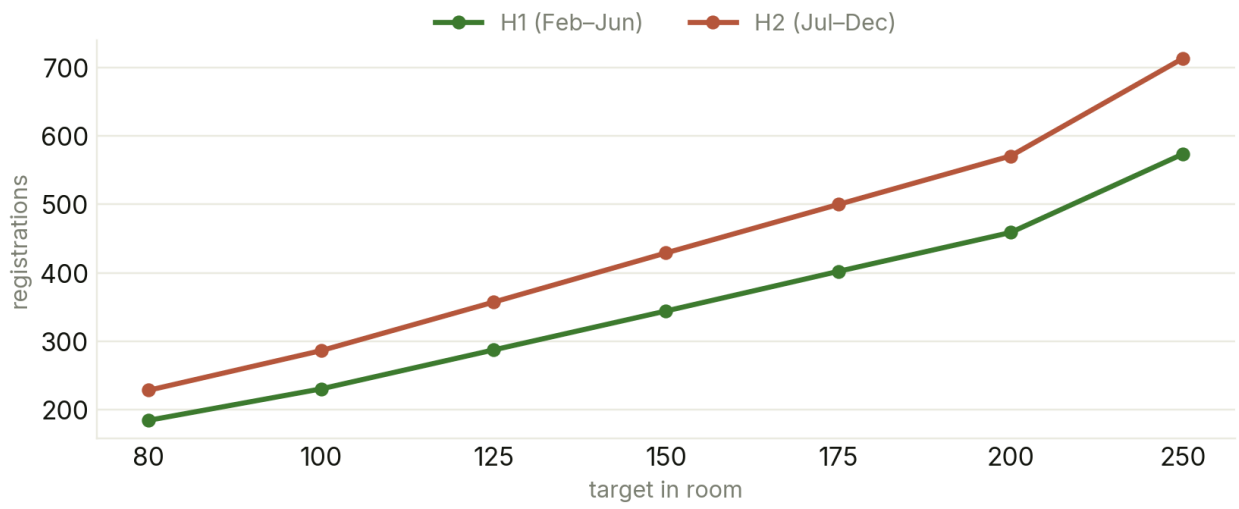
Attendance by city

Auckland leads; Sydney on par with New York



Registrations to fill a conference

H1 vs H2, register more as the year progresses

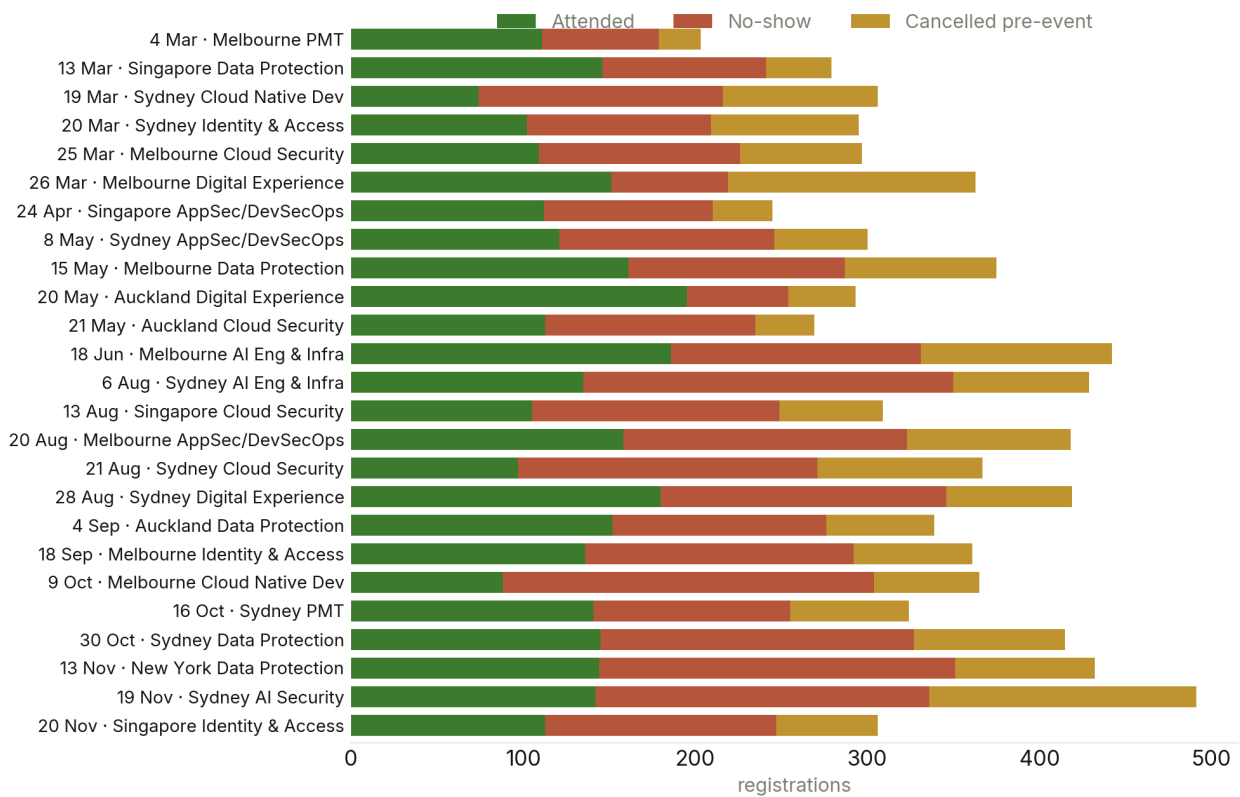


Every 2025 summit, event by event

The raw material behind this report: 25 practitioner-led summits we ran across ANZ, APAC and North America in 2025. Each bar splits a summit's registrations into who attended, who no-showed on the day, and who cancelled in advance.

Attended, no-show @ cancelled, chronological

Earliest at top. Green = attended · red = no-show (confirmed, didn't show) · gold = cancelled pre-event.



8,642

Registrations

Across 25 summits, an average of 346 per event.

38%

Attended

3,317 in the room; 48.9% of those who stayed confirmed.

40%

No-showed

3,463 confirmed but didn't appear, the silent gap that scales with list size.

The pattern is the report in miniature: **cancellations stay modest (~22%) while no-shows balloon to ~40%**, and the gap widens as registration lists grow past ~350. The strongest events, Auckland & Melbourne Digital Experience, were operator-leaning topics in H1.

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OTHER FORMATS

Three that outperform, three that underdeliver

Sport / VIP • 86%

The experience is the draw, can't-miss. Register ~24 to seat 20.

Exec lunch/dinner • 70%

Exclusive, tightly targeted to a real pain. Register ~29 to seat 20.

Customer/partner • 62%

An existing relationship carries it. Register ~161 to seat 100.

Networking dinners • 52%

No agenda breeds uncertainty, pivot to content-led. ~48 to seat 25.

Morning briefings • 45%

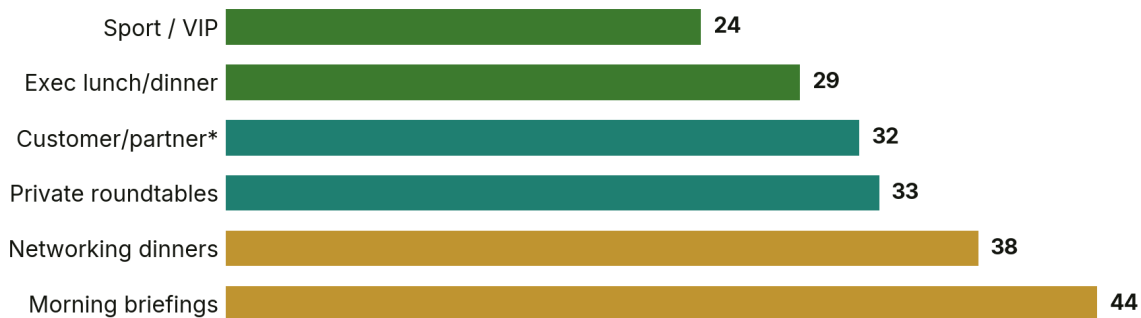
Huge variance (25–85%); content quality decides. ~89 to seat 40.

Vendor-owned conf. • 19%

Weakest by far, no exclusivity, no relationship. ~527 to seat 100.

What it takes to seat 20, across formats

Registrations needed for a 20-person room (where the format makes sense)



Five 25-person roundtables across the year deliver ~55 Director-plus attendees. A single 150-person conference delivers ~37. The conference looks bigger on paper; the roundtable series delivers more of what most sponsors are actually paying for.

09

ARE WE JUST MAKING THIS UP?

Methodology & definitions

Every figure comes from events Clutch ran or co-ran between February 2025 and March 2026. Account names are anonymised, no attendee, company or sponsor is identified. We use attended ÷ registered, never redefined to flatter the result.

Registration: accepted an invitation and held a confirmed seat as of the day before.

Pre-event cancel: notified cancellation before the event start.

Attended: physically present at the event.

No-show: did not cancel, did not appear.

Operator audience: IT, Cybersecurity, Finance, Marketing, HR, Sales.

Builder audience: Engineering, AI, Engineering / Infrastructure.