THE DECISION / 01

Morrow.

At the idea stage / Climate technology · Home renovation

Should I build the product now, or first prove who will pay for it?

THE CENTRAL FINDING

The frustration is clear. The paying customer is not.

Test a paid planning service before committing to a platform. The immediate aim is to identify a customer with a current decision and a reason to pay for help, then learn what that person actually buys.

The company in this scenario

An idea for a service that helps homeowners plan energy upgrades, compare costs, and find installers. The founder sees widespread confusion, but has not yet identified who will pay to solve it.

The reader's perspective

A first-time founder deciding where to put their time and savings.

> **Scope of this sample**
>
> A fictional company and a worked example of reasoning. The scenario is the only input. No underlying customer data, financial statements, interviews, market research, or third-party sources have been verified. Proposed tests are recommendations, not completed work.

THE CASE / 02

Interest is an invitation to test, not proof of a market.

Morrow starts with a recognizable frustration. But the moment of frustration and the moment of purchase may be far apart. A homeowner can value a clearer renovation plan while expecting the installer to provide it for free. The business needs to resolve that gap before committing to a full platform.

The customer problem

A homeowner can struggle to compare upgrade options, costs, and installers. A clear plan could make the decision easier. The scenario establishes this as the founder's starting observation; it does not supply interviews, purchase records, or a measured level of demand.

The buyer is still a hypothesis

The person who benefits, the person who chooses, and the person who pays may be different. A homeowner might pay for independent advice. An installer might pay for an introduction. A lender might value a finance-ready project. Each is a different business model, with a different promise to the customer.

Alternatives and trust

The proposed service competes with more than other planning software. A homeowner may rely on an installer, informal advice, or postponement. The pilot should ask what someone would otherwise do and why they would trust Morrow's recommendation. No market or competitor research is supplied in this sample.

The first product boundary

A manual plan can test the decision without assuming a software interface will create willingness to pay. It should be a useful, defined deliverable with clear limits. Complex building, financing, or installation judgments would require appropriate expertise; they should not be implied by a general planning offer.

THE EVIDENCE STILL MISSING / 03

What we would need to know.

These are the questions that would need evidence before the sample's conclusion could become a company-specific assessment. Missing evidence should remain visible, rather than being replaced with a confident assumption.

A live decision

Find people considering a specific upgrade now. General enthusiasm for a future service is less informative than a current decision with a clear next step.

A named payer

Make one real offer to one customer type. Record who approves the purchase and whether another party is expected to pay for the advice.

The value of the plan

Ask which uncertainty the plan resolves. Observe whether the customer uses it to choose, defer, seek a quote, or reject a project.

Delivery effort and incentives

Measure the work needed to produce a useful plan. If an installer or lender pays, examine how that arrangement changes the promise of independent advice.

The strongest argument against this view

A manual pilot may understate the value of a well-designed product. Slow delivery, a narrow local network, or the founder's limited execution could discourage customers even if a better service would appeal to them. One refusal would not settle the market question.

Treat the pilot as a way to locate the problem, payer, and useful output. Record why someone declines, not just whether they pay. If the offer fails, distinguish a weak need from poor timing, unclear scope, or insufficient trust before deciding what the result means.

THE NEXT LOOK / 04

Test the assumption. Then look again.

01 / Choose one decision and customer

Select a narrow homeowner situation and a decision the plan will help resolve. State the deliverable, limits, timing, and price in plain language.

02 / Offer a paid manual plan

Present the offer to people making that decision. Keep acceptance, refusal, and requests for changes. Deliver the work by hand within the stated scope, rather than building the whole platform first.

03 / Trace the customer's next action

Ask what the plan changed and what remained unresolved. Record delivery effort, sources of trust, and whether the customer would have expected similar help from an installer for free.

What would strengthen the case

A defined customer pays for a clear output, uses it in a real decision, and values something that could be delivered consistently. Build around that job.

What would make us reconsider

Interest disappears at the offer, or another party is expected to pay. Reconsider the payer, scope, or timing before committing to software.

What would change this view?

A paid pilot with a narrowly defined customer would reveal more than a broad waitlist. The useful signal is a payment tied to an actual renovation decision.

> **The question for the next revision**
>
> Who paid, for which decision, and what changed because of the plan?