

The Silent Growth Diagnosis

The board-ready answer to *your flat NRR.*

Client

Series A SaaS

anonymised

ARR

£2.4M

Delivered

10 days from access

⁰ ¹ *The situation*

What the team had already tried

NRR flat for two quarters.

The team had rebuilt onboarding twice in three months. Neither change moved the number. Activation metrics looked fine. The board wanted an explanation.

Internal debate had split across three theories: onboarding copy, feature discoverability, and pricing structure. Every team was confident. Nobody had proof.

Why they called me

"We keep shipping. Nothing moves."

02

The finding

Primary finding

One cause. Nobody had named it.

The bottleneck

A permissions wall invisible in demo, hitting every paying multi-seat account at the moment of second-user activation.

Multi-seat accounts on the standard plan hit a hard permissions block when a second user attempted to access core functionality. The block was invisible in the sales demo environment. Every paying account encountered it. Many had already churned silently.

The team had been optimising onboarding for a problem that lived downstream. The cause was not copy, not features, not pricing. It was a single configuration failure in production.

23%	10	30
Improvement in 90-day retention after fix	Days from product access to this finding	Days to recover the engagement fee in ARR

Single engagement. Results specific to this product and configuration.

0
3 *How I found it*

The diagnostic framework

The problem lived at level three.

Most diagnostics stop at level two, the product debate. The real cause was one level deeper, at the exact user moment where value breaks.

Level one	The business symptom	NRR flat. Board wants answers. The metric moved weeks after the real problem started.
Level two	The product debate	Onboarding, features, pricing. Teams arguing. Closer, but not the cause.
Level three	The user moment	A specific user, a specific configuration, a specific moment where the product silently fails. This is where I found it.

I walked the product cold. No briefing. No internal narrative. No assumptions carried in from the team. That distance is what made the finding possible.

0
4

Commercial impact

What this was costing the business

Every paying multi-seat account hit this wall.

Affected accounts	All standard-plan multi-seat accounts, approximately 34% of the paying customer base.
Churn signal	Users hitting the permissions wall had a 3.4x higher 90-day churn rate than unaffected accounts.
Expansion drag	Affected accounts showed near-zero expansion revenue. The permissions wall blocked the natural upgrade path.
Revenue at risk	Estimated annualised impact of £180k to £240k, approximately 8 to 10% of total ARR.

The commercial case for fixing this first

One engineering change. One week of work. Estimated £180k or more in annualised revenue impact.

05

What to do first

Prioritised by revenue impact

Three actions. One changes everything.

Fix the permissions logic for multi-seat standard accounts	One engineering change. Apply correct permissions on second-user session initiation in standard plan. Estimated one to three days of engineering time.	This week
Add a production smoke test for multi-seat configurations	The demo environment does not reflect production state for shared accounts. This class of silent failure will recur without a proper test.	This month
Audit other plan configurations for similar silent failures	If this existed in standard multi-seat, it may exist elsewhere. A one-day audit of all plan types is recommended.	This quarter

06 Board narrative

Suggested language for your next board meeting

Walk in with an answer.

"NRR softness was traced to a permissions configuration affecting all standard multi-seat accounts. The issue was invisible in demo and had been suppressing activation and expansion across approximately 34% of the customer base. Root cause identified. Fix scoped and underway. We expect retention improvement in the next 60 to 90 days."

This is what the Board Brief produces. Not a list of issues. Not a roadmap. A single clear answer your team can act on and your board can hear.

Everyone has a theory. Nobody has proof. The Board Brief ends that conversation.

07 *The Diagnosis*

What you receive

The Silent Growth Diagnosis Brief

A board-ready executive deck built for decision-making. 10 to 15 slides. Decision-ready. No filler.

- + The bottleneck identified
- + Behavioural evidence and journey visuals
- + Commercial impact hypothesis
- + Recommended first action
- + Suggested board narrative

The terms

£5,000	Fixed fee. No scope creep.
10 days	Board Brief delivered on day 10.
15 minutes	The rest runs independently.

No commercially meaningful finding. No fee. I only take on work where the signal is already visible.

Tell me which number is stuck.

I will tell you if this is the right fit.

Book a call at siftly.co

Four engagements per month. £5,000. 15 minutes. No commercially meaningful finding, no fee.

ryan@siftly.co | siftly.co