ALLIED BizTech SOLUTIONS

FIELD GUIDE · 2026

Rebuild SFMC yourself.
The plan we follow.

For enterprise B2C marketing teams on 500K to 50M+ contacts who want to own their journeys, email, SMS and segmentation, and stop paying Salesforce Marketing Cloud by module, contact count and send volume.

- → Is it worth it, at your size
- → What to rebuild and what to drop
- → The architecture, in three layers
- → Migration and go-live checklists
- → The data model
- → A week-by-week build plan
- → Deliverability and journeys
- → Where teams get stuck

SFMC charges by module. *A rebuild charges by send.*

SFMC prices Email Studio, Journey Builder, Mobile Studio, Personalization, Audience Studio and Datorama as separate modules, on a multi-year contract tied to contact count and send volume. A rebuild replaces them with direct bills from AWS SES, Twilio and your AI provider.

CONTRACT	SFMC A YEAR	REBUILT: YEAR ONE / AFTER	SAVED IN YEAR ONE
500K contacts · Email + Journey · 2 BUs	~$120,000	~$57,200 / $24,000	~$62,800
3M contacts · 4 BUs · full suite	~$420,000	~$87,200 / $54,000	~$332,800
10M contacts · 8 BUs · all modules	~$1,000,000+	~$175,800 / $108,000	~$824,200
50M+ contacts · global	~$2,000,000+	~$314,500 / $190,000	~$1,685,500

SFMC enterprise contracts are quoted custom; typical contract sizes, May 2026. "Rebuilt" runs on AWS SES, Postgres, Twilio and Anthropic or OpenAI, billed direct, plus hosting and maintenance, and our fixed build price: $33,200 up to 3M contacts, $67,800 (the top of the scale tier) at 10M, $124,500 (the top of the enterprise tier) at 50M+. If your own team builds it, put your engineering cost in that place.

THE RULE OF THUMB

At 500K contacts, the rebuild pays back in about five months and ~$96K a year comes back after. **At 3M contacts, it saves ~$332K in year one and ~$366K a year after.** From 10M contacts, year one alone saves more than $820K.

Who you need

- **A senior full-stack engineer** at home with Postgres, job queues, the SES and Twilio APIs and the Salesforce API. Our team ships this in 8–12 weeks; one engineer between other priorities should plan for longer.
- **Your marketing ops lead**, two hours a week: the journeys that matter, the pilot BU, the go-live call.
- **An owner after launch**: hosting, monitoring, sender reputation, upgrades and on-call.

02 · SCOPE

Rebuild the 15 features in daily use. *Drop the rest.*

SFMC ships hundreds of features across its Studios, Journey Builder and Datorama. Enterprise marketing ops uses about 15 every day. Those are the project; the long tail is where rebuilds stall.

REBUILD ONE FOR ONE

- **Journey Builder**: the visual designer, drag and drop, every canvas activity
- **Email Studio**: a block-based editor with AMPscript-equivalent personalization
- **Mobile Studio**: SMS through Twilio, push through Apple and FCM, direct
- **Audience Studio**: SQL queries plus a visual builder, on first-party data
- **Subscriber preferences**: double opt-in, a preference centre, CCPA and GDPR
- **Salesforce CRM sync**: bidirectional, real time, contact and opportunity events
- **Multi-BU isolation**: separate domains, IP pools and preferences
- **Approval workflows** for brand, legal and compliance review
- **Datorama-class reporting**: unified attribution on Looker or Metabase, priced as an add-on

REBUILD, SIMPLER

- **Personalization Builder** (Interaction Studio): Anthropic or OpenAI direct plus a recommendation engine
- **Einstein recommendations and send time**: custom ML on your data, no per-prediction fee
- **Marketing Cloud Connect**: a native API integration, with no sync lag

DROP ON PURPOSE

- **Trailhead and certifications**: marketing ops skills transfer; the SFMC cert does not matter
- **The unused Studios**: Social Studio is sunsetted; Advertising Studio becomes Meta Ads Manager plus an audience sync

ADD WHAT PER-MODULE PRICING PENALISES

- Direct SQL on all marketing data, in Postgres and ClickHouse, with no ETL
- Setup included, in place of a $200K–$1M ProServ project
- A dedicated SES IP per BU, with full control of its reputation

Three layers. *Your CRM stays untouched.*

SFMC sits next to Sales Cloud and Service Cloud, not inside them. Your CRM is the source of truth; SFMC adds journeys and delivery on top. Rebuild that layer and the CRM, its contracts and your sales team see no change.

LAYER 1 · ORCHESTRATION

The journey app

- Visual designer: wait, decision and send blocks
- Email, SMS, push and in-app
- Triggers from Salesforce CRM
- Goals and branch performance
- A/B tests and holdout groups
- A workspace per BU

LAYER 2 · STUDIO

Content and segments

- Template editor and content blocks
- Segment builder, SQL or visual
- Personalization tokens
- Subscriber preferences
- CAN-SPAM, CCPA, GDPR, CASL
- Approvals for regulated brands

LAYER 3 · DELIVERY

Direct providers

- **AWS SES**: bulk email, IPs per BU
- **Postmark**: transactional
- **Twilio**: SMS, WhatsApp, voice
- **Apple Push and FCM**, direct
- **SPF, DKIM, DMARC** per domain
- **Salesforce Connect API**: CRM sync both ways

Decisions to make in week one

DECISION	OUR DEFAULT	WHY
Where it runs	Your AWS account	Subscriber data and its residency stay yours
Sending	SES for bulk, a dedicated IP pool per BU; Postmark for transactional	Each BU keeps its own reputation; receipts never queue behind a campaign
Data	Postgres for contacts and journeys, ClickHouse for send and engagement events	Query everything with SQL, from your warehouse, without ETL
Segments	SQL in your data warehouse, synced for targeting	One definition of a customer, shared with analytics
CRM sync	Salesforce Connect API, contact and opportunity events	Journeys react to the pipeline; Sales Cloud is never modified
Sign-in	Your SSO, with roles per BU	Offboarding happens where it already does

Compliance: AWS SES is HIPAA-eligible with a BAA, and on your own AWS account you document a SOC 2 Type II posture. Approval workflows, audit logs and content versions are part of the core build. Write the control documentation as you build, not after.

Ten tables *carry the whole product.*

Model these before writing any screen. Keep SFMC's subscriber key and journey ID on every imported row, so the import can run twice and any contact traces back to its source.

TABLE	KEY COLUMNS
`business_units`	id, name, sending domains, ip_pool, from addresses, preference-centre URL, approval policy
`contacts`	id, subscriber_key, salesforce_id, bu_id, email, phone, locale, attributes (jsonb), created_at
`consents`	contact_id, channel, category, status (opted in, opted out, pending double opt-in), source, ip, consented_at
`suppressions`	address, bu_id, reason (hard bounce, complaint, unsubscribe, legal), source, created_at
`segments`	id, bu_id, name, sql, refreshed_at, member_count; members in `segment_members`
`templates`	id, external_id, bu_id, name, blocks (jsonb), version, approval_status, approved_by, approved_at
`journeys`	id, external_id, bu_id, version, status, entry source, goal, definition (jsonb: wait, decision and send steps)
`enrollments`	id, journey_id, journey_version, contact_id, current_step, state, entered_at, next_run_at, exited_at, exit_reason
`sends`	id, enrollment_id, step_id, contact_id, channel, template_version, provider_message_id, status, sent_at
`events` (ClickHouse)	send_id, bu_id, type (delivered, open, click, bounce, complaint, unsubscribe), at, meta

TWO RULES THAT SAVE A REBUILD

Check consent and suppressions at send time, not when the segment is built: an unsubscribe that lands mid-journey must stop the next send. **Pin every enrollment to a journey version**: publishing an edit moves new entrants, never the contacts already halfway down a path.

Twelve weeks, *pilot included.*

This is the order we build in. IP warm-up starts early because it takes 4–6 weeks; each stage ends with something your marketing ops lead can try; the last four weeks run one business unit for real.

WEEK	BUILD	DONE WHEN
1–2	**Inventory and model.** List every journey, audience, template, data extension, BU and sending domain. The ten tables, AWS and SSO. Export contacts, consents and suppressions into staging.	The inventory is signed off; counts in staging match SFMC
2–3	**Delivery.** SES with a dedicated IP pool per BU, SPF, DKIM and DMARC per domain, Postmark, Twilio, push. Start the IP warm-up.	Test sends pass DMARC and land in the inbox
3–4	**Studio.** Template editor, content blocks, personalization tokens, the preference centre, approval workflows.	A marketer builds and approves an email without help
5–6	**Journeys.** The designer and the enrollment engine: wait, decision and send steps, goals, A/B tests and holdouts. The Salesforce CRM sync.	A CRM event enters a contact and the right sends go out
7–8	**Segments, reporting, migration.** SQL segments, the attribution dashboard, every journey translated and replayed against SFMC on a sample.	Sample contacts take identical paths in both systems
9–12	**Pilot and rollout.** One BU sends for four weeks on warmed IPs, with a daily fix list; then the other BUs move one at a time.	The pilot BU's deliverability matches or beats SFMC

AFTER CUTOVER

Keep SFMC **read-only until your renewal date**, then let the SFMC line item lapse. Your Sales Cloud and Service Cloud licenses are unaffected, and nobody is in a hurry.

Land in the inbox. *Send on time, once.*

Sending an email is the easy part. The real work is the reputation behind it and the engine that walks millions of contacts through multi-month journeys without a double send or a missed one.

1. **One IP pool per BU.** Give each business unit dedicated SES IPs, so one brand's complaint spike never touches another's inbox placement, and your reputation no longer pools with other senders'.
2. **Warm before you cut over.** Ramp volume on each pool for 4–6 weeks, most engaged contacts first. Authenticate every sending domain with SPF, DKIM and DMARC, and add one-click unsubscribe headers.
3. **Close the loop on bounces and complaints.** SES notifications write to the suppression table at once. Track bounce and complaint rates per BU per day, and pause a BU's sends automatically on a spike.
4. **Store every contact's place.** Each enrollment keeps its current step and the time its next step is due. A scheduler picks up due steps in batches, so a wait of three months survives restarts and deploys.
5. **Make every send idempotent.** Key each send on enrollment and step. A retry after a timeout finds the send already made, so no contact gets the same email twice.
6. **Prove the migration on a sample.** Replay a sample of contacts through each translated journey and check they take identical paths: the same splits, waits, sends and goals as in SFMC.

Personalization without a per-prediction fee

Recommendations run on your own data with Anthropic or OpenAI direct. For real-time decisions under 100 ms, cache recommendations per contact and serve them from edge functions.

Move it, launch it, *run it.*

Migration

- ☐ Import suppressions and unsubscribes first, before any contact can be sent to
- ☐ Keep SFMC's subscriber key and journey ID on every row
- ☐ Move consents with their source and date
- ☐ Recreate BUs, domains and IP pools before journeys
- ☐ Translate every journey and replay a sample against SFMC
- ☐ Move templates and content blocks with their approvals
- ☐ Rebuild the preference centre on the same URLs, or redirect them (301)
- ☐ Export twice: everything at the start, the changes since at cutover

Go-live

- ☐ IP pools warmed for 4–6 weeks
- ☐ SPF, DKIM and DMARC passing on every domain
- ☐ Bounce and complaint handling proven end to end
- ☐ CRM triggers firing from Salesforce
- ☐ Alerts on queue depth, send failures and complaint rate
- ☐ Rollback ready: SFMC sends one switch away

Running it

- ☐ **Always on:** send and journey alerts, security patches
- ☐ **Daily:** bounce and complaint rates per BU
- ☐ **Weekly:** inbox placement and journey performance to marketing ops
- ☐ **Monthly:** upgrades, suppression list and consent review
- ☐ **Quarterly:** cost review, the AWS and Twilio bills against the SFMC contract you replaced
- ☐ **Yearly:** a restore drill and an access review

Who owns it

Name one person before launch. Sender reputation takes weeks to build and one bad send to damage: someone has to own the complaint rate and answer when a journey stalls on a Saturday.

Five ways a rebuild *stalls.*

1. Swapping one enterprise suite for another

Adobe Marketo Engage and Oracle Eloqua are competent, B2B-flavoured, and priced in the same enterprise tier, with a 4–6-month migration. The bill survives the move.

2. Iterable, Braze or Klaviyo

Iterable and Braze have better UX than SFMC, and still price per contact: $300K–$1M a year at enterprise scale. Klaviyo is D2C-native; SFMC customers usually run B2B and B2C blends it does not fit.

3. Paying a partner to tune SFMC

Implementation partners charge $300K–$1M for a typical enterprise rollout. That buys a better-tuned SFMC, not less SFMC.

4. Cutting over on cold IPs

New IPs at full volume land in spam. Start the warm-up in week two or three, so the pools have 4–6 weeks behind them when the pilot BU moves.

5. Moving every BU at once

One BU for four weeks finds what a test plan misses: the journey nobody listed, the approval step legal relies on, the report the CMO reads every Monday.

And one that is not a mistake: negotiating

Salesforce discounts SFMC 15–25% on multi-year commits, especially bundled with your Sales Cloud renewal. Do it if the rebuild is a year away; it captures less than a quarter of what the rebuild does.

RATHER HAVE IT BUILT?

We build this exact plan. *Fixed price.*

The same scope, architecture and twelve weeks, delivered by a senior team that has shipped 250+ products.

$33,200 fixed up to 3M contacts and 4 BUs, $49,800–$67,800 from 10M contacts, $83,000–$124,500 for global enterprise, agreed before we start

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Live in 8–12 weeks, with a four-week pilot with one BU before full rollout

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Every journey, audience and template migrated, and a dedicated SES IP pool per BU, warmed before cutover

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90-day warranty, quarterly check-ins in year one, and the code in your GitHub from day one

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We can run it for $18,000–$36,000 a year: hosting, monitoring and monthly upgrades

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