

WHERE LOCK-IN LIVES

Four layers. Stickiness climbs. Price your exit before you enter.

↑ SWITCHING COST CLIMBS

PEOPLE & ADOPTION

STICKIEST

Daily workflows get built around the tool. Switching means retraining humans — a cost that shows up on no invoice.

THE AGENTIC LAYER

STICKY

Agents do not lift and shift between frameworks. Interoperability is not portability — switching platforms still means a rebuild.

DATA

MOVABLE

Warehouses and formats are portable, like a cloud migration. Your job is to keep it that way.

CLOUD & INFRASTRUCTURE

MOVABLE

The foundation layer. Some lock-in is tolerable here: cloud-to-cloud migration is a known, doable exercise.

THE ESCAPE HATCH

Keep context, prompts, skills, and workflow definitions portable and vendor-neutral — the one layer you fully control.

Lock-in at the people level outlasts every contract you sign. Pairs with the Vendor Lock-In Checklist — run both before any AI commitment.