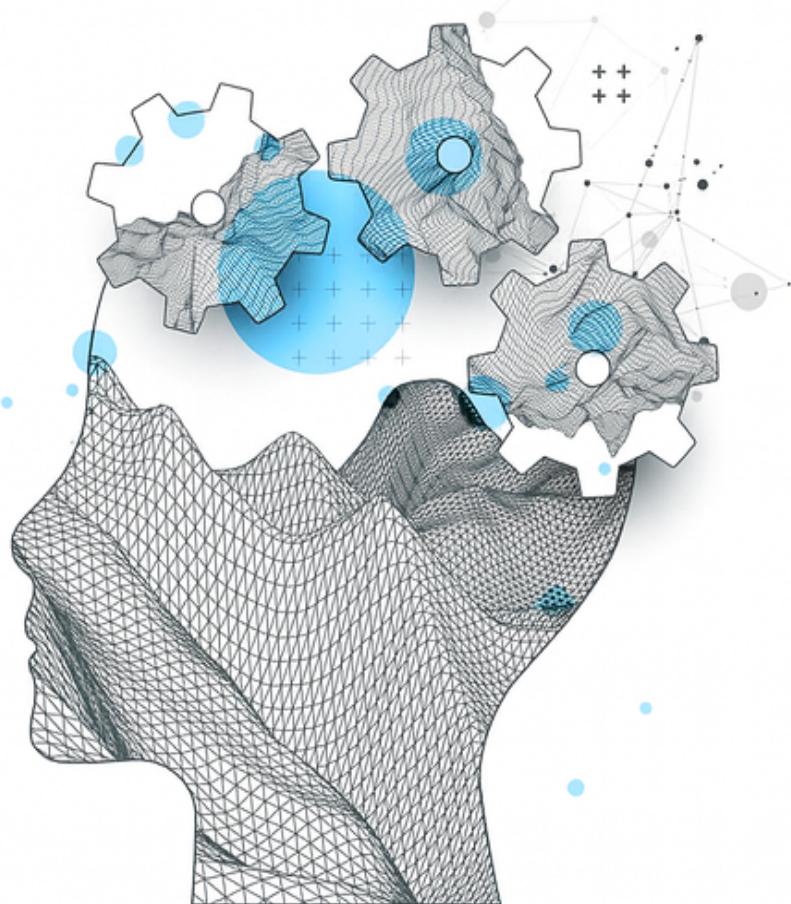


THE AI HYPE HANGOVER

— CEO Edition

500 case studies, one verdict, what works now and what to stop funding



SAM SCHREIM

The AI Hype Hangover – CEO Edition

500 case studies, one verdict:
What works now and what to stop funding

BY

SAM SCHREIM

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Welcome to The AI Hype Hangover: A Two-Volume Solution

You are holding more than a single book; you are holding a **two-volume, zero-fluff playbook** engineered to pull your organization out of the AI hype cycle and deliver predictable, measurable business value.

The concept of the **AI Hype Hangover** is simple: The past few years have been dominated by dazzling demos, sci-fi promises, and vendor noise. This has led to a paralyzing paradox in the C-suite: *Do nothing and risk being left behind, or do everything and risk burning capital in "pilot purgatory."* The hangover is the moment when executives realize the dazzling AI proof-of-concept they funded hasn't actually moved a single needle on the P&L.

This book is the antidote. It replaces noise with an operating system for strategic deployment. The single volume you hold is a powerful consolidation of two distinct, highly pragmatic playbooks

Volume I: The No-BS AI Strategy Playbook

Your Blueprint for Escaping Pilot Purgatory

The first volume is a necessary **diagnosis and framework** designed for the executive who needs to anchor every AI investment to a clear business metric.

- **The Diagnosis:** This volume begins by clearly outlining the failure patterns that plague over 80% of AI projects, such as a "**Solution Looking for a Problem**," the "**Island of Automation**" phenomenon, and the debilitating effects of "**Data Delusions**". You'll learn to spot the
- "**Science Project Mentality**" before it incinerates your budget.
- **Strategic Alignment:** It is a direct strategy primer, based on Michael E. Porter's seminal work, forcing you to link every AI initiative to your competitive advantage: **Cost Leadership, Differentiation, or Focus**. AI for AI's sake is a waste; this volume ensures AI amplifies your chosen strategy.
- **The Lighthouse Initiative:** The core of this volume is **Play 1: The "Lighthouse" Initiative**. It guides you to select a single, high-value, feasible project that passes the **3-point Litmus Test** (Strategic Alignment, Data Readiness, System Regularity). This is your **90-day win** that builds cross-functional credibility and momentum.

Volume 1 gives you the "**Why**" and the "**What**"—the single, most important bet you need to place *right now*.

Volume II: AI-Powered Optionalities at Scale

Your System for Portfolio Management and Compounding Value

The second volume is the **system for scale, funding, and resilience**. It is where you transition from managing a single pilot to managing a high-performing portfolio of AI bets that fund themselves.

- **The Optionality Triad:** You will learn to categorize every initiative into a financial portfolio, known as the **Optionality Triad**:
 - **Annuities:** Mature, stable earners providing steady cash flows (e.g., automated core processes).
 - **Growth Stocks:** Scaling initiatives that have proven their value and aim for strategic differentiation.
 - **Options (Experiments):** Small, cheap, reversible, high-risk, high-reward bets on the future, where you cap your loss but keep a chance to win big.
- **The Optionality Score:** This proprietary metric helps you quantify your portfolio's exposure to upside and resilience to shocks, ensuring you allocate at least 5% of capital to high-convexity Options for sustainable growth.
- **The Engine of Innovation:** This volume introduces **Natural Fractal Units (NFUs)** to deconstruct your business into its core, measurable revenue-generating components. It provides the practical process of the **One-Day Optionalities Sprint** to select and fund the next lighthouse and a pipeline of options on rhythm.
- **Beyond the Core:** Finally, you learn to exploit **Discontinuities** (sudden market, regulatory, or technical jolts) by using your portfolio balance to leapfrog rivals instead of getting blindsided.

Volume 2 gives you the "**How**" and the "**When**"—the repeatable cadence to move from a single 90-day win to a machine that continuously delivers compounded value.

THE AI HYPE HANGOVER - CEO EDITION

Taken together, these two volumes in *The AI Hype Hangover* provide a complete, end-to-end operating rhythm for the AI-powered organization. You will gain the diagnostic rigor to avoid failure, the strategic framework to target the right value, and the portfolio discipline to turn AI's volatile potential into predictable, scalable profit.

While the core principles of the **AI Hype Hangover** are drawn from the comprehensive frameworks within **Volume I: The No-BS AI Strategy Playbook** and **Volume II: AI-Powered Optionalities at Scale**, please note that these two foundational playbooks remain distinct works. For ease of use and maximum actionability in the field, they will continue to be distributed as two separate, stand-alone titles, maintaining their individual covers and organization. This cover and book serve as a unified conceptual map to ensure you master the complete system across both guides.

About the Author

Sam Schreim is a strategy obsessive first and a technologist second. For more than two decades, he has helped Fortune 500 CEOs, fast-moving startups, and government leaders tackle the same fundamental questions: *Where should we play? How do we win?* As AI moved from the research lab to the executive agenda, Sam wove machine-learning tools into his strategy playbook—turning data models into levers for margin, speed, and public-sector impact. Today his work sits at the intersection of classic competitive thinking and the new, AI-powered engines that now drive it.

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