**Value‑Creation Structure Rubric (Pipe vs. Platform & Hybrids)**

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| **Attribute** | **Pipe (Linear)** | **Platform (Multi‑sided)** | **Layer (API/Infrastructure)** | **Hybrid** |
| **Value Flow** | One‑way (make → sell) | Two‑sided (enable exchanges) | Enable others’ value flows | Combination |
| **Key Activities** | Production, distribution | Matchmaking, curation, governance | API ops, scaling | Both production & curation |
| **Network Effects** | None/weak | Strong (direct & indirect) | Moderate (tech ecosystems) | Selective |
| **Asset Intensity** | Medium‑High | Low‑Medium | High (capex) | Varies |
| **Monetization** | Mark‑up, subscription | Take‑rate, ads, data, SaaS | Usage, tiered subscription | Mixed (take‑rate + SaaS) |

**Pipe (Linear)**

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| **Aspect** | **Details** |
| Core Logic | Firm produces something → pushes it down a value chain → sells to the next actor or the end-user. Value flows one way. |
| Value Proposition Patterns | • Quality / performance leadership (e.g., Intel CPUs). • Cost leadership via scale (e.g., fast‑fashion apparel). • Convenience & speed (meal kits, DTC consumables). |
| How Money Is Made | • Unit markup on COGS. • Tiered or bundled subscriptions for replenishment (Dollar Shave Club). • Service & maintenance annuities on top of CapEx sale (industrial machinery). |
| Scaling & Moat | • Economies of scale / learning curve lower unit cost. • Brand differentiation. • Patents, exclusive supply contracts, distribution reach. |
| Key Capabilities | Supply‑chain orchestration, demand forecasting, manufacturing or content production, channel marketing. |
| Common Partners | Contract manufacturers, component suppliers, wholesaler / retail distributors, 3PL providers, field‑service firms. |
| Typical Risks | Inventory write‑offs, commodity price swings, channel power imbalance, high working‑capital needs. |
| Success Metrics | Gross margin %, inventory turns, EBIT per unit, on‑time‑in‑full (OTIF), subscription retention if recurring add‑ons. |

**Platform (Multisided)**

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| **Aspect** | **Details** |
| Core Logic | Build a space where two or more participant groups meet and transact; the platform orchestrates matching, trust, and rules. Positive cross‑side network effects drive scale. |
| Value Proposition Patterns | • Liquidity & choice (Amazon Marketplace). • Speed & convenience (Uber). • Discovery & curation (Airbnb Experiences). |
| How Money Is Made | • Take‑rate on each transaction. • Listing / placement fees. • Ancillary services: ads, payments, insurance, data. |
| Scaling & Moat | • Direct & indirect network effects—every new user raises value for others. • Data feedback loop improves matching. • Lock‑in via reputation scores or accumulated listings. |
| Key Capabilities | Growth loops to seed both sides, trust‑and‑safety ops, ranking algorithms, API/SDK for partner services, community governance. |
| Common Partners | Payment processors, ID‑verification services, logistics & fulfillment players, ad networks, insurance underwriters. |
| Typical Risks | Cold‑start liquidity, disintermediation, regulatory re‑classification (contractor vs. employee), platform abuse/fraud. |
| Success Metrics | Gross merchandise value (GMV), take‑rate %, match rate, cross‑side conversion, incident rate per 1 k transactions. |

**Layer (API / Infrastructure)**

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| **Aspect** | **Details** |
| Core Logic | Provide a programmable building block (API, SDK, infrastructure) that other businesses plug into their own products; value flows through you rather than from you. |
| Value Proposition Patterns | • Abstract away complexity (Stripe for payments, Twilio for comms). • On‑demand elasticity (AWS, Snowflake). • Compliance / “one‑throat‑to‑choke” (Plaid for banking data). |
| How Money Is Made | Usage‑based metered billing, tiered subscriptions with overage, enterprise commitments for volume and SLA. |
| Scaling & Moat | • High switching cost once integrated into customer workflows. • Ecosystem flywheel—developers build, which drives more usage. • Cost advantage from massive capex (hyperscaler datacenters). |
| Key Capabilities | API design & documentation, 99.99 % uptime engineering, developer relations, multi‑tenant security, rapid global scaling. |
| Common Partners | Cloud colocation providers, developer‑tool vendors, channel SIs for integration, compliance auditors, CDN networks. |
| Typical Risks | Latency/outage backlash, margin erosion from infrastructure costs, platform dependency (if built on another cloud), regulatory compliance (data residency). |
| Success Metrics | Dollar‑based net retention (DBNRR), requests per second, gross margin after infra, developer NPS, time‑to‑first‑call. |

**Hybrid (Pipe × Platform or Layer × Platform)**

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| **Aspect** | **Details** |
| Core Logic | Combine owned product flow and third‑party ecosystem to capture both linear margin and network effects. Examples: Apple (hardware pipe + App Store platform), Tesla (cars + Supercharger & software APIs), Shopify (SaaS layer + merchant marketplace). |
| Value Proposition Patterns | • “Showcase” first‑party product sets quality bar and seeding demand. • Third‑party contributions multiply variety and lock customers in. • Can cherry‑pick high‑margin ancillary services (payments, ads). |
| How Money Is Made | Mix of unit margin, SaaS subscription, transaction take‑rates, and infrastructure usage. Revenue stack is deliberately diversified. |
| Scaling & Moat | • Dual‑flywheel: scale manufacturing / content and expand network effects. • Better control of user experience vs. pure open platform. • Ability to internalise best‑performing ecosystem niches. |
| Key Capabilities | Both pipe capabilities (supply‑chain, production) and platform capabilities (matchmaking, governance). Strong partner‑ops to manage conflict of interest. |
| Common Partners | Contract manufacturers, ISVs, payment gateways, ad networks, carrier or retail channels, logistics firms, developer communities. |
| Typical Risks | Channel conflict with ecosystem, regulatory scrutiny over self‑preferencing, organisational complexity, capital intensity if both sides scale fast. |
| Success Metrics | Blend of hardware/service margin, GMV per active user, attach‑rate of native services, ecosystem contribution to total revenue, ROIC across segments. |

\* Adjust wording for industry context, scale stage, or regulatory environment.