








# SSCN Launch Strategy: How to Start

## **The Answer: Full SaaS Platform (Not Just a Website)**

**You MUST build this as a proper SaaS with backend + frontend** because:

1.  **User Authentication Required** - LinkedIn OAuth, user sessions, permissions
2.  **Dynamic Data** - RFQs, responses, messages change constantly
3.  **Real-time Features** - Notifications, messaging, status updates
4.  **Privacy & Security** - Can't expose supplier data publicly
5.  **Business Logic** - Matching algorithms, verification workflows
6.  **Scalability** - Need to handle thousands of users and RFQs
7.  **Monetization** - Subscriptions, payments, usage tracking

**A static website won't work** - this is a marketplace that requires server-side logic, databases, and authenticated user sessions.

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## **Recommended Launch Path: "Phased MVP"**

### **Phase 0: Validation (2-4 weeks) - START HERE**

**Goal:** Validate demand before building anything

#### **What to Build:**

A **simple landing page** to collect interest:

- Value proposition: "Connect with verified supply chain POCs"
- Email signup form
- Feature highlights
- "Join Waitlist" CTA

#### **How to Validate:**

##### **1. LinkedIn Outreach (Manual)**

- Message 50 procurement professionals
- Message 50 suppliers/manufacturers

- Ask: "Would you pay \$99/month for verified supplier POC access?"

## 2. Landing Page Traffic

- Run small Google Ads (\$500 budget)
- Target keywords: "supplier sourcing platform", "procurement software"
- Goal: 100+ email signups

## 3. Manual "Concierge" Service

- For first 10 interested buyers:
- Manually source suppliers via LinkedIn
- Verify POCs yourself
- Connect them via email intro
- **Charge \$299 for the service**
- Learn their exact pain points

### Success Criteria:

- 100+ email signups
- 5+ paying customers for manual service
- 20+ suppliers express interest

**If validation fails, pivot. If it succeeds, build Phase 1.**

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## Phase 1: Functional MVP (8-12 weeks)

**Goal:** Launch working product with core features only

### Tech Stack (Fastest to Build):

#### Frontend:

- **Next.js 14** (React framework)
  - Built-in routing, server components
  - Great SEO (important for supplier discovery)
  - Fast development

#### Backend:

- **Supabase** (Backend-as-a-Service)
  - PostgreSQL database
  - Built-in authentication
  - Real-time subscriptions
  - Row-level security
  - File storage
  - **Saves 4-6 weeks of backend development**

#### **Authentication:**

- Start with **email/password** (Supabase Auth)
- Add LinkedIn OAuth in Phase 2 (while applying for API access)

#### **Hosting:**

- **Vercel** (frontend) - \$20/month
- **Supabase** (backend) - \$25/month
- **Total: \$45/month**

#### **Core Features (MVP Only):**

- ✓ User registration (email/password)
- ✓ Company profile creation
- ✓ Add 2+ POCs manually (email verification)
- ✓ Post RFQ (with basic form)
- ✓ Browse RFQs (suppliers)
- ✓ Submit quote/response
- ✓ View responses (buyers)
- ✓ Basic messaging (in-app)
- ✓ Email notifications
  
- ✗ LinkedIn OAuth (Phase 2)
- ✗ Advanced search (Phase 2)
- ✗ File uploads (Phase 2)
- ✗ Payment processing (Phase 2)
- ✗ Analytics dashboard (Phase 2)

#### **Development Timeline:**

- **Week 1-2:** Database design, authentication, basic UI
- **Week 3-4:** Company profiles, POC management
- **Week 5-6:** RFQ posting and browsing
- **Week 7-8:** Response system and messaging
- **Week 9-10:** Email notifications, polish
- **Week 11-12:** Testing, bug fixes, deploy

#### Team Needed:

- **Option A (Solo):** You + no-code/low-code tools (12 weeks)
- **Option B (Small Team):** 1 full-stack dev (8 weeks)
- **Option C (Faster):** 1 frontend + 1 backend dev (6 weeks)

#### Budget (Phase 1):

- **DIY:** \$500 (hosting + tools)
  - **Hire Developer:** \$8,000-15,000 (freelancer rates)
  - **Agency:** \$25,000-50,000
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### Phase 2: Growth & Verification (12 weeks)

**Goal:** Add LinkedIn verification and scaling features

#### New Features:

- ✓ LinkedIn OAuth integration
- ✓ Automatic company data pull (Clearbit API)
- ✓ Advanced search with filters
- ✓ File upload (specs, CAD files)
- ✓ Stripe payment integration
- ✓ Analytics dashboard
- ✓ Supplier ratings and reviews
- ✓ Mobile responsive optimization

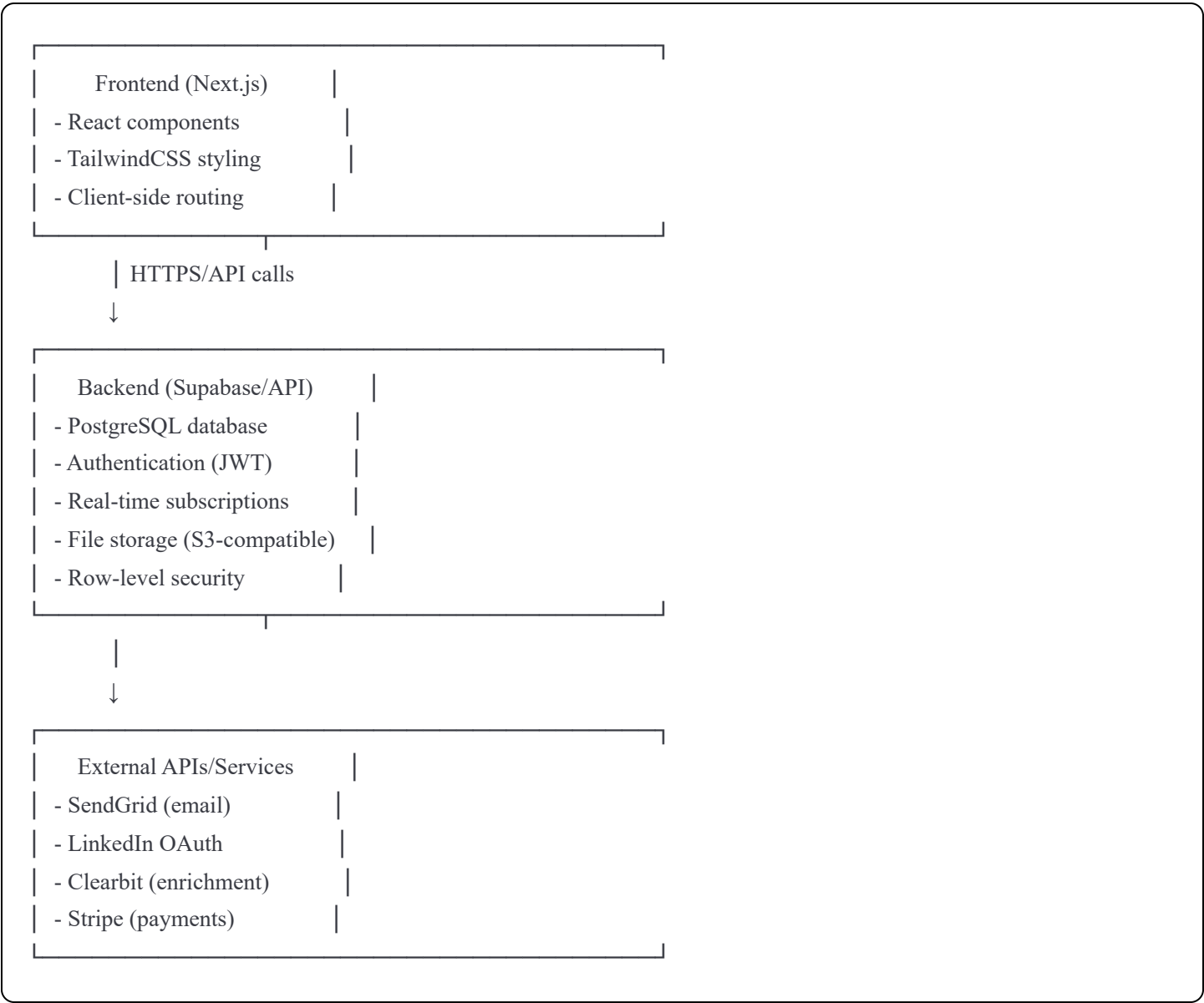
#### Apply for LinkedIn Partnership:

- Submit detailed use case

- Explain POC verification value
- Show MVP traction (user numbers)
- May take 2-3 months for approval



## Recommended Tech Stack (Full Details)

### Architecture: Modern Full-Stack SaaS



### Why This Stack?

#### Next.js 14:


-  Full-stack framework (frontend + API routes)
-  Server-side rendering for SEO

- ☒ Fast development with hot reload
- ☒ Easy deployment to Vercel
- ☒ Built-in API routes for custom logic

### Supabase:

- ☒ Managed PostgreSQL (no DevOps)
- ☒ Real-time updates (live notifications)
- ☒ Built-in auth (saves weeks)
- ☒ File storage included
- ☒ Generous free tier
- ☒ Row-level security (data privacy)
- ☒ Auto-generated REST API

### Alternative: Traditional Approach If you want more control:

- **Backend:** FastAPI (Python) or Express (Node.js)
  - **Database:** Self-hosted PostgreSQL
  - **Auth:** Auth0 or custom JWT
  -  **Adds 4-6 weeks to development**
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## Step-by-Step Launch Plan

### Month 1: Validation & Setup

#### Week 1-2: Validation

- ☐ Create landing page (Carrd, Webflow, or Next.js)
- ☐ Run LinkedIn outreach campaign (100 contacts)
- ☐ Set up Google Ads (\$500 budget)
- ☐ Goal: 50+ email signups

#### Week 3-4: Foundation

- ☐ If validation succeeds, set up development environment
- ☐ Create Supabase project
- ☐ Design database schema

- ☐ Set up Next.js project
- ☐ Deploy to Vercel (staging environment)

## **Month 2: Core Development**

### **Week 5-6: Authentication & Profiles**

- ☐ User registration/login
- ☐ Company profile CRUD
- ☐ POC management (add/edit/delete)
- ☐ Email verification flow

### **Week 7-8: RFQ System**

- ☐ RFQ posting form
- ☐ RFQ listing page (for suppliers)
- ☐ RFQ detail view
- ☐ Basic search/filter

## **Month 3: Interactions & Launch**

### **Week 9-10: Response System**

- ☐ Quote submission form
- ☐ Response listing (for buyers)
- ☐ Basic in-app messaging
- ☐ Email notifications (SendGrid)

### **Week 11-12: Polish & Launch**

- ☐ UI/UX improvements
- ☐ Testing (10 beta users)
- ☐ Bug fixes
- ☐ SEO optimization
- ☐ **Soft launch to waitlist**

## **Month 4: Feedback & Iterate**

- ☐ Onboard first 50 users
- ☐ Collect feedback
- ☐ Fix critical issues
- ☐ Add most-requested features
- ☐ Prepare for LinkedIn API application

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## Pricing Strategy (From Day 1)

Don't wait to monetize - validate willingness to pay:

### For Buyers (Free Tier)

- ☒ Post 3 RFQs/month
- ☒ Browse supplier responses
- ☒ Basic messaging
- ☐ Advanced search
- ☐ Analytics

### For Buyers (Pro - \$99/month)

- ☒ Unlimited RFQs
- ☒ Advanced search filters
- ☒ Priority support
- ☒ Analytics dashboard
- ☒ Export data

### For Suppliers (Free Tier)






- ☒ Create profile
- ☒ Add 2 POCs
- ☒ View 5 RFQs/month
- ☒ Submit 3 quotes/month

### For Suppliers (Premium - \$199/month)

- ☒ Unlimited RFQ views
- ☒ Unlimited quotes
- ☒ Priority placement in search
- ☒ Featured profile badge
- ☒ Analytics & insights
- ☒ Up to 10 POCs



## For Suppliers (Enterprise - \$499/month)

-  Everything in Premium
-  API access
-  Custom integrations
-  Dedicated account manager
-  White-label options

**Alternative:** Transaction fee model (5-10% of closed deals)

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## Success Metrics (First 90 Days)

### Phase 0 Validation (Days 1-30):

- 100+ email signups
- 5+ paying concierge customers
- \$1,500+ revenue (validates demand)

### Phase 1 MVP (Days 31-90):

- 50+ registered companies (25 buyers, 25 suppliers)
- 100+ RFQs posted
- 30+ successful connections
- 10+ paying subscribers
- \$1,000+ MRR (Monthly Recurring Revenue)

### Phase 2 Growth (Days 91-180):

- 200+ companies
  - 500+ RFQs
  - 150+ successful matches
  - 50+ paying subscribers
  - \$10,000+ MRR
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# **Critical Success Factors**

## **1. Solve Cold Start Problem**

The biggest challenge: "Buyers won't join without suppliers, suppliers won't join without buyers"

### **Solutions:**

- **Seed Database:** Manually add top 100 suppliers (research + outreach)
- **Supplier-First Approach:** Get 50 suppliers onboarded before launching to buyers
- **Free Premium:** Offer 3 months free to first 100 suppliers
- **Content Marketing:** "Top 50 Steel Suppliers" guides that link to your platform
- **LinkedIn Outreach:** Directly message procurement professionals

## **2. Trust & Verification**

Without LinkedIn API initially, you need alternative trust signals:

### **Immediate Trust Builders:**

- Email domain verification (@company.com)
- Company website verification
- Manual verification call for premium subscribers
- Reviews and ratings from other users
- "Verified Supplier" badge for completed verifications

## **3. Quality Over Quantity**

Better to have 50 highly engaged, verified suppliers than 500 fake profiles.

### **Quality Controls:**

- Manual review of first 100 companies
  - Require proof of business (business license, D&B number)
  - Remove inactive users after 90 days
  - Regular "are you still active?" verification emails
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## Action Steps (Start This Week)

### If You Want to Move Fast:

#### Day 1-2: Validate the Idea

1. Create simple landing page (use Carrd.co - 2 hours)
2. Write compelling copy: "Stop sending RFQs into the void"
3. Add email signup form
4. Post on LinkedIn about your idea

#### Day 3-5: Market Research

1. Message 20 procurement professionals on LinkedIn
2. Message 20 suppliers/manufacturers
3. Ask: "What's your biggest sourcing pain point?"
4. Ask: "Would you pay for verified POC access?"

#### Day 6-7: Decision Point

- If 10+ people say "yes, I'd pay," continue
- If 5+ people offer to pay now, DEFINITELY continue
- If nobody cares, pivot or abandon

### Week 2: Start Building or Hire

- **Option A:** Learn Next.js + Supabase and build yourself
  - Free courses: Next.js tutorial, Supabase docs
  - Time: 12 weeks part-time
- **Option B:** Hire a developer
  - Post on Upwork/Toptal
  - Budget: \$10k-15k for MVP
  - Time: 8 weeks
- **Option C:** Find a technical co-founder
  - Offer 30-40% equity
  - Time: 10 weeks (once you find them)

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## Investment Options

### **Bootstrap (Recommended for MVP)**

**Budget: \$5,000-15,000**

- Hosting & tools: \$500
- Developer (freelancer): \$8k-12k
- Marketing (ads, SEO): \$1k-2k
- Legal (LLC, terms): \$1k

**Pros:** You keep 100% equity **Cons:** Slower growth

### **Pre-Seed Funding**

**Target: \$100,000-300,000**

- Bring on technical co-founder
- Hire 2-3 person team
- 6 months runway
- Aggressive customer acquisition

**Give up:** 10-20% equity

### **Accelerator (Y Combinator, Techstars)**

**Get:** \$125k-500k + mentorship **Give up:** 7-10% equity **Pros:** Network, credibility, faster growth **Cons:** Very competitive (1-3% acceptance)

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## My Recommendation: Start Lean

**If I were building this, here's what I'd do:**

### **Week 1:**

- Build landing page (2 days)
- LinkedIn outreach to 50 people (3 days)
- Collect 30+ emails

### **Week 2-3:**

- Offer "concierge service" to 5 buyers at \$299 each
- Manually connect them with suppliers
- Learn exact workflow and pain points
- Make \$1,500 (validates demand)

### **Week 4-12:**

- Use that \$1,500 to hire freelancer OR buy myself time to learn
- Build MVP with email auth only (skip LinkedIn for now)
- Focus on perfect UX for RFQ posting and supplier responses

### **Week 13-16:**

- Launch to 50 beta users
- Get feedback and iterate
- Apply for LinkedIn API access (while users grow)

### **Month 5+:**

- Add LinkedIn OAuth once approved
- Scale marketing
- Raise pre-seed if traction is strong

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### **Bottom Line**

**Yes, build a full SaaS platform, not just a website.**

**Start with validation, then build lean MVP with modern stack (Next.js + Supabase).**

**Budget \$10k-15k and 3 months for MVP if hiring. Or 6 months if building yourself.**

**The opportunity is HUGE - B2B procurement is a \$50B+ software market.**

Let's get started! What's your timeline and budget looking like?