OUT+COME | FIELD GUIDE

25 Buying Signals Beyond Hiring and Funding

A field guide for founders and sales teams who want better aim, not more noise

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READ THIS FIRST

A signal is a hypothesis, not a verdict

Most teams watch the same two events: a company hires, or a company raises money. Everyone else watching them is the reason those signals are crowded. This guide is about the quieter ones, and about using any signal with judgement.

Treat every signal as a question to check, not a reason to send a message. A signal on its own proves nothing. A signal that matches a problem you genuinely solve, at a time when it is live, is worth a thoughtful conversation.

How each page works

The event	What actually happened, in plain terms.
What it can mean	A possible reading. Possible, not certain.
Where to look	The kind of public place such events usually appear.
Check before you act	A question that keeps you honest.

The confidence ladder

Weak clue	One indirect sign. Worth noticing, not worth acting on alone.
Supporting evidence	Two or more signs that point the same way, or one sign plus a relevant fact.
Direct evidence	A clear public statement or event directly connected to the problem you help with.

One honest note on ethics and law. Use public information only, be relevant and respectful, and never imply you know more than you do. If you contact people in the UK, your lawful basis, opt-out handling and any telephone rules (UK GDPR, PECR, TPS) still apply. Check details with your own adviser.

GROUP 1 OF 5

Change

Something has recently moved inside the organisation.

01 A new leader in a relevant role

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

A leader with a fresh mandate may be about to challenge the existing approach.

WHERE TO LOOK

Company news pages, press releases, leadership and about pages, public professional profiles.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is this their remit, and is there evidence they are making changes?

02 A reorganisation or restructure

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Teams that are reshaped often re-examine tools, processes and priorities.

WHERE TO LOOK

Company news pages, press releases, leadership and about pages, public professional profiles.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Does it touch the area you help with, or is it unrelated?

03 A new market or region launch

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Entering a new market usually means new buyers, new messaging and new gaps.

WHERE TO LOOK

Company news pages, press releases, leadership and about pages, public professional profiles.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

What are they trying to do that they could not do before?

04 A new product or service launch

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Launches create a short window where sales and marketing priorities change.

WHERE TO LOOK

Company news pages, press releases, leadership and about pages, public professional profiles.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Who owns the launch, and what does success look like?

05 A system or platform migration

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Moving systems tends to open up process questions that were previously ignored.

WHERE TO LOOK

Company news pages, press releases, leadership and about pages, public professional profiles.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is the change early enough that choices are still open?

GROUP 2 OF 5

Pressure

Something outside or inside is pushing for a response.

06 A visible miss against targets

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Public statements about growth or results can show where the pressure is.

WHERE TO LOOK

Results announcements, regulator websites, trade press, public reviews and social posts.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is the cause something you can help with, or something else?

07 A competitor move

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

A competitor launch or price change can make a company reconsider what its current approach delivers.

WHERE TO LOOK

Results announcements, regulator websites, trade press, public reviews and social posts.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is the company responding, or ignoring it?

08 A regulatory change or deadline

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Fixed deadlines create real urgency.

WHERE TO LOOK

Results announcements, regulator websites, trade press, public reviews and social posts.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is the deadline close enough to drive action now?

09 Visible customer complaints or churn

WHAT IT CAN MEAN
Public customer friction can shift priorities quickly.

WHERE TO LOOK
Results announcements, regulator websites, trade press, public reviews and social posts.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT
Is it a one-off, or a pattern?

10 An efficiency or cost programme

WHAT IT CAN MEAN
Cost pressure changes what gets approved and what gets challenged.

WHERE TO LOOK
Results announcements, regulator websites, trade press, public reviews and social posts.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT
Does your offer save money, time or risk in a way they can measure?

GROUP 3 OF 5

Capability

The organisation is showing what it is missing.

11 A job post that reveals a skill gap

WHAT IT CAN MEAN
The wording of a role often says more than the fact that it exists.

WHERE TO LOOK
Public job boards and career pages, company blogs and content, public tool and partner pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT
What problem is this person being hired to solve?

12 A first-of-its-kind role

WHAT IT CAN MEAN
A first sales, first operations or first enablement hire means a function is being built.

WHERE TO LOOK
Public job boards and career pages, company blogs and content, public tool and partner pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT
Are they building it themselves or looking for help?

13 A change in tools

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Adding or removing tools can show a change in how the team intends to work.

WHERE TO LOOK

Public job boards and career pages, company blogs and content, public tool and partner pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is it a one-off purchase, or a wider shift?

14 A new channel experiment

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Starting outbound, events or partnerships signals appetite for change.

WHERE TO LOOK

Public job boards and career pages, company blogs and content, public tool and partner pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Are they early enough to still want input?

15 Content that shows a new priority

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

What a company starts publishing often follows what it has started caring about.

WHERE TO LOOK

Public job boards and career pages, company blogs and content, public tool and partner pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is it consistent, or a one-off?

GROUP 4 OF 5

Behaviour

People are showing interest in a topic or a problem.

16 Leaders speaking on a theme

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Conference talks and podcasts show what leaders are focused on.

WHERE TO LOOK

Conference agendas, podcasts, public posts, partner and integration pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is the theme tied to a decision, or is it general thought leadership?

17 Visible dissatisfaction with a current provider

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Public frustration with an incumbent can open a conversation.

WHERE TO LOOK

Conference agendas, podcasts, public posts, partner and integration pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is it specific and recent, or a passing comment?

18 A renewal or contract window

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Renewal timing is when many buying decisions are reopened.

WHERE TO LOOK

Conference agendas, podcasts, public posts, partner and integration pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Do you have any honest evidence of when it falls?

19 Partner or integration announcements

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

New partnerships can change how a company sells and delivers.

WHERE TO LOOK

Conference agendas, podcasts, public posts, partner and integration pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

What gap does the partnership leave open?

20 Hiring for a role next to yours

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

A related role opening can mean your area is about to get attention.

WHERE TO LOOK

Conference agendas, podcasts, public posts, partner and integration pages.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Who will this person report to, and what do they need?

GROUP 5 OF 5

Context

The wider situation around the organisation has shifted.

21 An acquisition or merger

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Combining organisations raises process, data and team questions.

WHERE TO LOOK

Press, filings where relevant, award and accreditation pages, customer announcements.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is integration under way, or still being planned?

22 A new certification or accreditation

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Earning standards often changes what the business can sell and to whom.

WHERE TO LOOK

Press, filings where relevant, award and accreditation pages, customer announcements.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

What does it now let them do?

23 Expansion into a new customer segment

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

A new segment usually needs new messaging and proof.

WHERE TO LOOK

Press, filings where relevant, award and accreditation pages, customer announcements.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Do they already have evidence for this segment?

24 A big customer win

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Large wins stretch teams and expose process gaps.

WHERE TO LOOK

Press, filings where relevant, award and accreditation pages, customer announcements.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

What will they need to deliver or sell next?

25

A leadership departure or ownership change

WHAT IT CAN MEAN

A change at the top can reset priorities and budgets.

WHERE TO LOOK

Press, filings where relevant, award and accreditation pages, customer announcements.

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT

Is the change settled, and who now owns the decision?

YOUR TEST

Is this signal worth acting on?

Before you act on any signal, answer all four. If one is a no, it is probably a clue, not a reason.

Relevance	Does this event connect to a problem you genuinely help with?	Yes / Not sure / No
Recency	Is it recent enough that the need is live, not history?	Yes / Not sure / No
Reachability	Is there a sensible person to speak to, and a respectful way to do it?	Yes / Not sure / No
Reason	Can you state in one honest sentence why you are getting in touch because of this?	Yes / Not sure / No

Your signal log

Account	Signal	Confidence	The honest reason to get in touch

NEXT STEP

Better aim beats more effort

Knowing the signals is the easy part. Deciding which ones matter for your market, and turning them into a repeatable, respectful way of starting conversations, is where most teams get stuck.

If you would like a second pair of eyes on how you find and prioritise accounts, we would be glad to talk. The Founder-Led Sales Scan and the Sales Team Scan both look at exactly this.

Book a pit stop: outpluscome.com

This guide shares general ideas and is not legal or professional advice. Examples are illustrative.