Fictional exchange. Companies, people, operational inputs, interviews and reviews are invented. Updated 15 September 2026. Listed attachments are rendered pages in this PDF, not native downloadable files.

Should we accept the QuillRail Group contract?

FROM Elena Quistmark, CEO, BrackenForge Systems <elena.quistmark@brackenforge.example>

TO IQ256 | iq256.com/contact

DATE 12 October 2025, 09:14 CEST

Hi IQ256,

We need to answer QuillRail Group by Thursday. They offer about EUR 1.8M over three years, but the requested integrations could consume most of our platform team for nine months.

Sales says this gets us into rail. Product says it turns us into a custom-development company. Finance says the headline margin is good. Engineering says the estimate excludes long-term support.

Please tell us whether to accept, renegotiate, or walk away. I care more about the right answer than defending the work already invested in the deal. Elena

ATTACHMENTS (3)

- **board_decision_brief.docx** — BrackenForge Systems | QuillRail Group contract — 01
- **contract_economics.xlsx** — Revenue, direct cost, and omitted commitments — 02
- **delivery_constraints.pdf** — What QuillRail asks for and what may still move — 03

Decision and strategic context

BrackenForge Systems | QuillRail Group contract

Fictional inputs. Benchmarks, interviews and voices are invented.

72	EUR 6.4M	17 months
Team	ARR	Runway
24 engineering	31% growth	Current plan

The decision

QuillRail Group offers a three-year contract with EUR 600k annual value. It requests eleven integrations, a 99.95% SLA, German isolated hosting, and delivery within nine months.

Option	Upside	Concern
Accept as written	Largest customer and a rail reference	Most of the platform team for nine months
Renegotiate	Keep opportunity with stronger boundaries	Could lose the deal during negotiation
Decline	Protect product and roadmap	Lose EUR 600k annual revenue and possible rail entry

Why the deal matters

- Annual contract value equals 9.4% of current ARR.
- QuillRail could reference BrackenForge to five European rail groups.
- Two smaller rail prospects represent EUR 310k annual value.
- The board expects a path to EUR 10M ARR within 18 months.

Internal disagreement

> Simulated voice: Sales: Nine months of platform capacity is justified by the reference and the competitor risk.

> Simulated voice: Product: Eight of eleven integrations are requested by no other customer. A fork creates permanent complexity.

> Simulated voice: Finance: The initial model shows 61% gross margin, but omits roadmap delay and some support obligations.

> Simulated voice: Founder: Declining may be too cautious; accepting may change what kind of company we are.

Current boundaries

- Current customers cannot lose the promised self-service analytics launch.
- A one-customer product fork is unacceptable.
- The company has four uncommitted platform engineers for six months, not 8.5 for nine.
- The customer will not accept time-and-materials billing.

Assignment scope

This fictional assignment is complete when the agreed review and documents are delivered and checked. Its business recommendations and future execution are separate from that completion.

Agreement	Boundary in this example
Delegated work	Review the proposed contract, test contribution and capacity, prepare negotiation conditions and draft a reply.
Requested output	A trade-off review, conditional financial comparison, negotiation workbook rendering and prepared reply. The reply is a fictional draft and has not been sent.
Completion checks	Distinguish opening ask from minimum; reconcile conditional reserve sensitivities; retain every acceptance gate and identify unconfirmed costs.
Authority retained by customer	Elena retains acceptance, sending, negotiation commitments and signature. IQ256 can recommend a preferred route without taking that decision. External communication requires separate authority.
Remaining checks	Reconcile the EUR 220k reserve allocation; confirm P90 capacity, counsel/escrow, security cost and final CFO/board economics before signing.
Fee and timing	Agree the review scope, price and deadline before paid work. This PDF illustrates a document assignment; the set of attachments is not automatically included in every review.
Business budget	The roughly EUR 1.8M customer contract, implementation payments and delivery budgets are fictional business figures, not an IQ256 quote.

Where human input is agreed, IQ256 selects, briefs, coordinates and pays contributors. IQ256 integrates the agreed work and performs baseline completion checks. Extra verification answers a specified additional concern. External information packets require explicit customer approval; no approval is needed for every internal step within the agreed mandate.

If scope, price, deadline, sharing or customer effort changes materially, agree the next course before exceeding the mandate. A recommendation may name one option while the customer retains the decision; permission to act or commit money is agreed separately.

Discuss a defined assignment

https://iq256.com/contact

Start with a short, non-confidential description. Initial human reply normally within 2-48 hours, distinct from the agreed delivery deadline.

Contract economics

Revenue, direct cost, and omitted commitments

Fictional inputs. Benchmarks, interviews and voices are invented.

Commercial model supplied by Finance

Year	Subscription	Implementation	Revenue	Direct cost	Reported margin
1	EUR 480k	EUR 120k	EUR 600k	EUR 310k	48%
2	EUR 540k	EUR 0	EUR 540k	EUR 175k	68%
3	EUR 600k	EUR 0	EUR 600k	EUR 185k	69%
Total	EUR 1.62M	EUR 120k	EUR 1.74M	EUR 670k	61%

The headline is rounded to EUR 1.8M because optional training is excluded from the table. Direct cost assumes 8.5 engineering FTE for nine months, then 1.5 FTE for support.

MISSING FROM MODEL

Roadmap delay, SLA penalties, security audits, integration rewrites, and the cost of scarce product capacity are not included.

Capacity and opportunity cost

Item	Expected effect	Confidence
Delayed analytics module	EUR 420k renewal or expansion at risk	Medium
Delayed connector marketplace	EUR 280k qualified pipeline delayed	Medium
SLA and on-call expansion	EUR 135k over three years	High
German isolated hosting	EUR 96k over three years	High
Integration maintenance reserve	EUR 220k over three years	Medium

- Four platform engineers are available for six months.
- Three new hires would need four to five months to become productive.
- Eight of the eleven integrations have no other known customer demand.

Requested obligations and negotiability

What QuillRail asks for and what may still move

Fictional inputs. Benchmarks, interviews and voices are invented.

Requirement	Customer position	BrackenForge concern
11 integrations	Before production	Eight are customer-specific
99.95% SLA	From first go-live	Current standard is 99.9%
German isolated hosting	Required	Separate operations path
Nine-month delivery	Board commitment	Estimate is P50, not P90
EUR 120k implementation	Budget ceiling	Covers less than half the build
Source-code escrow	Required	Acceptable with scope limits
Reference rights	Verbal support	Not written in contract

Negotiability

Annual subscription budget is described as fixed. Implementation structure, delivery sequence, reference rights, and the date the SLA begins are described as negotiable.

DECISION DEADLINE

BrackenForge must reply by 16 October 2025.