THE

Customer Intent Intelligence™

FRAMEWORK v1.0

*A Practical, Human-Centered Framework for Understanding What Customers **Mean, Need,** and **Do** — and Turning Insight into Success*



HUMAN SIGNALS
What customers express and do

»

INTENT
What they are trying to achieve

»

MEANING
The need, context, and motivation behind the intent

»

ACTION
The choices they make across their journey

»

OUTCOMES
The results that drive customer and business success

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CUSTOMER INTENT INTELLIGENCE™ FRAMEWORK

Framework v1.0

Creator: Yasha Sterling Release: 2026 Version: 1.0

FRAMEWORK PURPOSE

An evidence-first method for moving from customer signals to better-supported decisions and outcomes.

Customer Intent Intelligence™ is designed to make the reasoning between customer signals and organizational action visible: what was observed, what was inferred, what evidence supports the inference, what remains uncertain, what action the evidence justifies, and whether the customer ultimately achieved the intended outcome.



Official five-stage method: Observe -> Interpret -> Validate -> Decide -> Measure

Framework status: Initial public framework. Several constructs introduced here are intentionally positioned for continued empirical evaluation and refinement.

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Executive Summary

Organizations have more customer data than ever. They can observe searches, clicks, transactions, page visits, conversations, journeys, service events, account activity, AI interactions, and increasingly the actions of autonomous agents.

Yet observation is not the same as understanding.

A customer may search “My electric bill is too high.” The signal is visible. The customer goal is not necessarily clear. The customer may be trying to understand an unexpected increase, obtain financial assistance, verify a possible billing error, reduce future costs, or make sense of a change in circumstances.

Each goal could produce a different appropriate response.

> **Customer Intent Intelligence™ is the evidence-first discipline of investigating, evaluating, and validating possible customer goals so organizations can make better decisions about what to do next.**

The framework is built on a simple premise: organizations should not act as though they understand customer intent simply because they can observe customer behavior.



The framework uses five stages: Observe -> Interpret -> Validate -> Decide -> Measure. These stages establish a repeatable discipline for moving from customer signals toward responsible action.

Five principles anchor the framework: Behavior Is Not Intent. Inference Is Not Evidence. Agent Action Is Not Customer Intent. Alignment Is Not Validation. Rewrite Is Not Resolution.

CII is designed to operate across search, AI assistants, customer journeys, content, enterprise intelligence, and agentic systems. It is not a system for reading customers' minds. It is a system for reasoning more responsibly before acting as though customer intent is known.

PART I

The Foundation

Defining customer intent and the evidence-first discipline built around it.

Customer Meaning Model



Do not collapse these concepts into one another.

1. What Is Customer Intent?

Customer intent is the goal a customer is trying to accomplish in a specific moment, context, or journey. It may be expressed directly. It may be suggested by behavior. It may be inferred from context. But it should not be treated as known unless the available evidence supports that interpretation.

> **Canonical definition: Customer intent is the goal a customer is trying to accomplish in a specific moment, context, or journey. It may be expressed directly or suggested by signals, but it should not be treated as known unless supported by evidence.**

A click is not intent. A search query is not intent. A page visit is not intent. A segment is not intent. A prediction is not intent. A transaction is not necessarily intent. These can all provide useful evidence. They are not the customer goal itself.

> **Intent is not the behavior itself. Intent is the purpose the customer is attempting to advance through that behavior.**

2. Signal, Intent, Motivation, and Outcome

Concept	CII Meaning
Signal	An observable action, statement, event, or contextual indicator. It answers: What happened?
Intent	The customer goal that may explain or give purpose to the signal. It answers: What is the customer trying to accomplish?
Motivation	The reason the customer goal matters. It answers: Why does accomplishing this goal matter?
Outcome	The observable state indicating whether the customer moved closer to or achieved the goal. It answers: Did the customer accomplish what they were trying to do?



These concepts should not be collapsed. The same signal may support several possible intents. The same intent may be driven by different motivations. An organizational action may occur without producing the intended customer outcome.

3. What Is Customer Intent Intelligence™?

> **Customer Intent Intelligence™ is the evidence-first discipline of investigating, evaluating, and validating possible customer goals so organizations can make better decisions about what to do next.**

CII moves from signal to possible intent to evidence to decision to action to outcome. The purpose is not to eliminate interpretation. Interpretation is necessary. The purpose is to prevent interpretation from silently becoming certainty.

4. The Problem CII Solves

Organizations possess enormous quantities of customer information. Yet more information does not automatically produce more understanding. A search query may identify a topic. A click may indicate movement. A transaction may indicate action. A conversation may provide language. None necessarily reveals the complete customer goal.

> **ONE SIGNAL. MULTIPLE POSSIBLE GOALS.**



The signal remains the same. The appropriate response changes dramatically depending on the goal. CII therefore treats customer intent as an interpretation problem that requires evidence.

PART II

Core Principles

Five guardrails that keep signal, inference, evidence, alignment, action, and outcome distinct.

5. Behavior Is Not Intent

Observed customer behavior can provide evidence about intent, but behavior should not automatically be treated as the customer goal itself. Behavior tells us what happened. Intent asks what the customer was trying to accomplish.

Framework implication: This principle governs the transition from Observe to Interpret.

6. Inference Is Not Evidence

A plausible interpretation is not evidence simply because it was produced by analytics, AI, a model, or an experienced practitioner. Inference is reasoning. Evidence is what supports or contradicts that reasoning.

Framework implication: This principle governs the transition from Interpret to Validate.

7. Agent Action Is Not Customer Intent

An agent's action reflects an interpretation of customer intent; the action itself does not validate that intent. Completed execution demonstrates what the system decided to do, not necessarily what the customer meant.

Framework implication: This principle is central to agentic systems.

8. Alignment Is Not Validation

A response can align perfectly with a hypothesized customer goal while the hypothesis itself remains poorly supported. High Intent Alignment and low Evidence Strength can produce an excellent experience solving the wrong problem.

Framework implication: Intent Alignment and Evidence Strength must remain separate.

9. Rewrite Is Not Resolution

Improving communication does not necessarily resolve the customer's goal. A clearer CTA can still direct the customer toward the wrong outcome.

Framework implication: CII connects communication to customer resolution.

10. The CII Reasoning Discipline

Together, the principles create a progression: do not mistake the signal; do not mistake the interpretation; do not mistake execution; do not mistake fit for proof; do not mistake activity for outcome.

Observe carefully. Interpret cautiously. Validate explicitly. Decide proportionately. Measure outcomes.

PART III

The Five-Stage Framework

The operating method: Observe -> Interpret -> Validate -> Decide -> Measure.



11. Overview

The stages are sequential in logic but iterative in practice. New evidence may send the process backward. Unexpected outcomes may reveal that an earlier interpretation was weak. Customer goals may change. CII is therefore a learning system.



12. Stage One · Observe

Core question: What do we actually know happened?

CII rule: Describe the signal before interpreting the signal.

Primary output: Signal Record

Dimension	Guidance
Primary activities	Capture the signal, identify its source, preserve context, separate direct statements from behavioral indicators, and record unknowns.
Failure modes	Signal Inflation; Behavioral Certainty; Context Loss; Data Privilege.
Decision rule	Move to Interpret when the organization can clearly distinguish what happened, what is known, and what remains unknown.

13. Stage Two · Interpret

Core question: What might the customer be trying to accomplish?

CII rule: When multiple customer goals are plausible, keep multiple hypotheses visible.

Primary output: Goal Hypothesis Set

Dimension	Guidance
Primary activities	Generate plausible goals, distinguish topics from goals, examine organizational assumptions, preserve alternatives, and define evidence that would disconfirm each interpretation.
Failure modes	Premature Intent Collapse; Topic-as-Intent; Organization-First Interpretation; Model Authority; Confirmation Framing.
Decision rule	Move to Validate when meaningful hypotheses and alternatives have been identified and the evidence questions are clear.

14. Stage Three · Validate

Core question: What evidence supports or contradicts this interpretation?

CII rule: Search for evidence that could weaken the hypothesis, not only evidence that supports it.

Primary output: Intent Evidence Record™

Dimension	Guidance
Primary activities	Gather supporting and contradicting evidence, compare competing hypotheses, evaluate source quality, identify gaps, and assign Evidence Strength™.
Failure modes	Confirmation-Only Reasoning; Evidence Quantity Over Quality; False Precision; Validation by Repetition; Ignoring Contradiction.
Decision rule	Move to Decide when the organization can explain what supports the interpretation, what weakens it, what remains unknown, and whether the evidence is sufficient for the action being considered.



15. Stage Four · Decide

Core question: Given what we currently know, what should happen next?

CII rule: The strength of the action should not exceed the strength of the evidence and authorization supporting it.

Primary output: Intent-Informed Decision Record

Dimension	Guidance
Primary activities	Review Evidence Strength™, assess Intent Alignment, assess consequence and reversibility, determine human oversight, establish authorization, choose Observe/Test/Pilot/Proceed, and define expected outcome.
Failure modes	Action Outruns Evidence; Alignment Substitutes for Validation; Automation Bias; Irreversible Action Under Ambiguity; Organizational Convenience.
Decision rule	Before acting, explain what goal is being acted on, what evidence supports it, what happens if the interpretation is wrong, and what outcome is expected.

DECISION POSTURES

Observe: gather information. Test: run a low-risk experiment. Pilot: apply under controlled conditions. Proceed: act when evidence, authorization, risk, and governance requirements are satisfied.

16. Stage Five · Measure

Core question: Did the action actually move the customer toward the intended outcome?

CII rule: Do not confuse organizational completion with customer resolution.

Primary output: Intent-to-Outcome Record

Dimension	Guidance
Primary activities	Define the desired outcome, capture resolution evidence, monitor correction and repeat effort, compare expected vs observed outcome, identify intent drift, and feed learning back into future interpretation.
Failure modes	Conversion Equals Success; Completion Bias; Missing Correction Signals; Measurement Without Learning; Static Intent.
Decision rule	Measurement is sufficient when the organization can explain what outcome was expected, what happened, whether the goal was resolved, and what should be learned.

Intent Drift: Customer goals may change during a journey. Intent drift is different from intent error: the original interpretation may have been correct, but the customer's goal changed.

PART IV

Operational Machinery

Intent Evidence Record™, Evidence Strength™, and the Competing Hypotheses Model.



17. Intent Evidence Record™

The Intent Evidence Record™ is the primary operational artifact of CII. Its purpose is traceability. When an organization acts on an interpretation of customer intent, it should be possible to answer: Why did we believe this was the customer's goal?

Record Field	Purpose
Observed Signal	What happened?
Signal Source	Where did the information come from?
Context	What circumstances surrounded the signal?
Possible Customer Goal	What might the customer be trying to accomplish?
Supporting Evidence	What supports this interpretation?
Contradicting Evidence	What does not fit?
Missing Evidence	What would materially strengthen or weaken the interpretation?
Alternative Hypotheses	What other plausible goals remain?
Evidence Strength™	Hypothetical / Directional / Evidence-Informed / Validated
Intent Alignment	How well does the response serve the selected goal?
Decision Readiness	Observe / Test / Pilot / Proceed
Recommended Next Action	What should happen next?
Expected Customer Outcome	What should improve if the interpretation is correct?
Observed Outcome	What actually happened?
Learning	What should future decisions change?

18. Evidence Strength™

Evidence Strength™ communicates how well a customer-goal hypothesis is supported. It should not be confused with model confidence. CII avoids unexplained precision unless a validated statistical model exists and the probability is clearly defined.



Hypothetical: plausible with little direct support. Directional: some relevant evidence supports the interpretation while alternatives remain. Evidence-Informed: multiple reasonably independent sources converge. Validated: strong evidence supports the goal sufficiently for the relevant decision context.

19. Evidence Independence

Repeated versions of the same inference should not be treated as independent evidence. A search-derived intent label may be copied into CRM, read by an AI assistant, and passed to a journey system. Several systems now repeat the same interpretation. The underlying evidence may still be one original signal.

20. Competing Hypotheses Model

> **CII does not ask only, "What is the customer's intent?" It first asks, "What customer goals are currently plausible?"**

Each hypothesis should contain a possible goal, rationale, supporting evidence, contradiction, missing evidence, disconfirmation criteria, Evidence Strength™, and decision posture. A hypothesis may be ranked. Ranking does not transform it into fact. When validation remains incomplete, CII prefers Leading Hypothesis rather than Detected Intent.

21. Disconfirmation

A strong intelligence process asks what would make an interpretation wrong. This reduces confirmation bias and prevents systems from becoming more certain merely because they keep collecting evidence that fits the existing assumption.

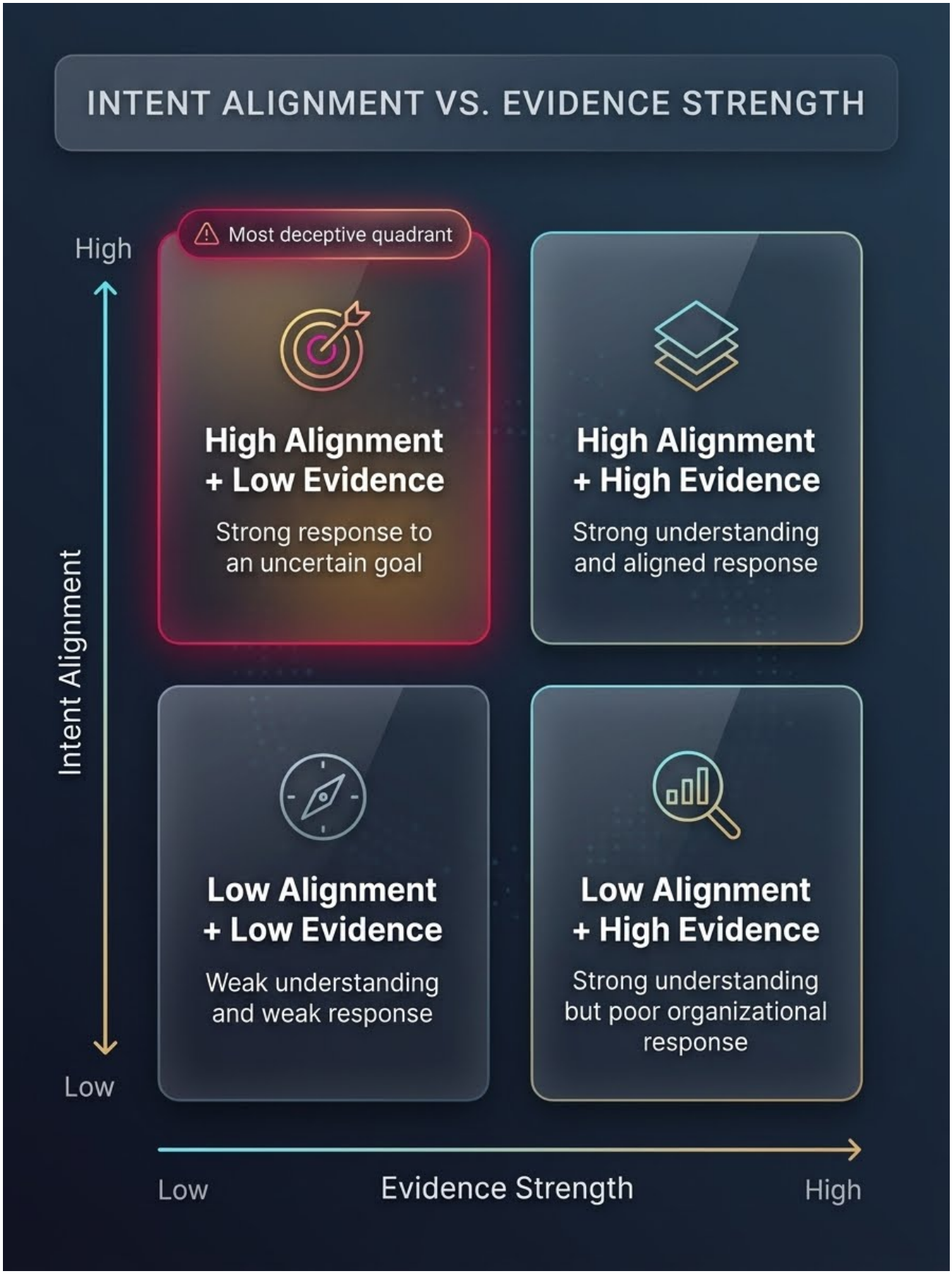
22. Multiple Goals

Customers may pursue multiple goals simultaneously. CII should not force one mutually exclusive label when the evidence supports several goals. Primary and secondary goals may coexist.

23. Evidence Strength by Decision Consequence

Condition	Typical
Hypothetical + High Consequence	Observe. Do not automate consequential action.
Directional + Low Consequence	Test. Use reversible experiments.
Evidence-Informed + Moderate Consequence	Pilot under controlled conditions with measurement.
Validated + Appropriate Authorization	Proceed while continuing to monitor outcomes and drift.

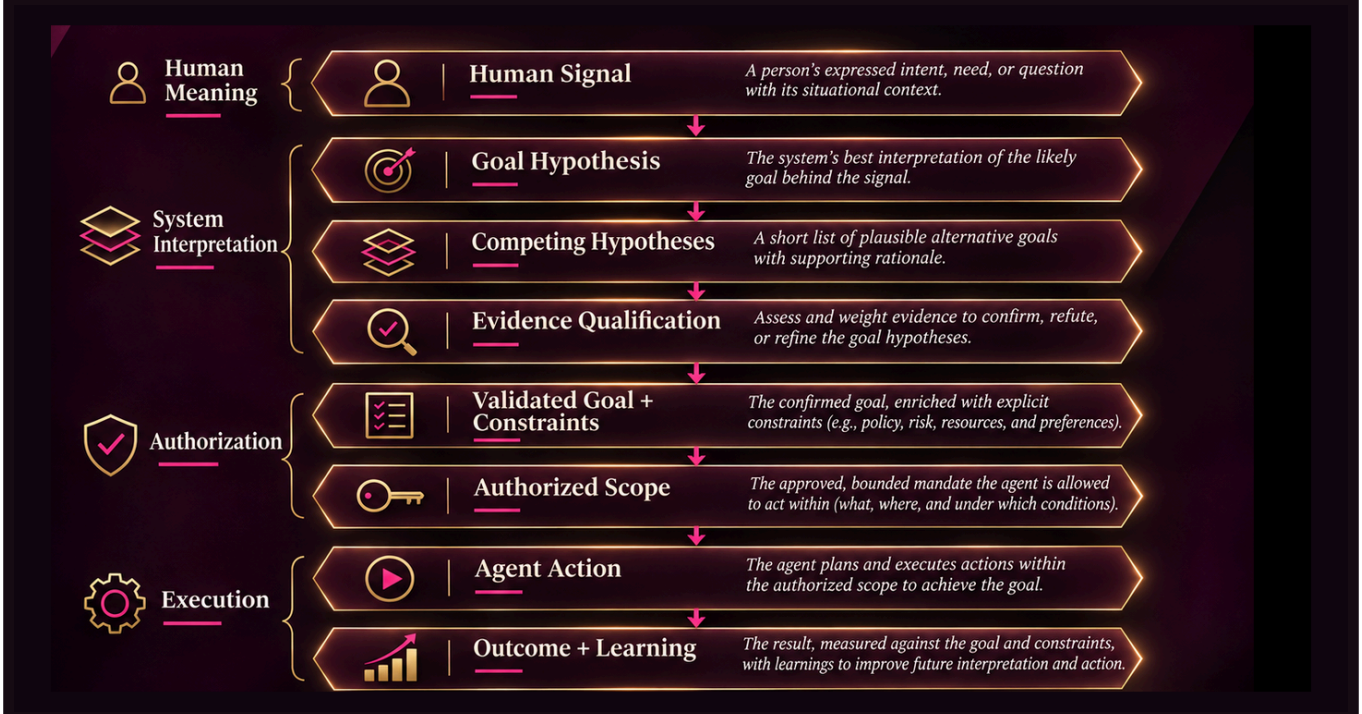
24. Intent Alignment by Evidence Strength



PART V

CII in Agentic Systems

Evidence-first intent reasoning before, during, and after autonomous action.



25. Why Agentic Systems Change the Stakes

AI systems are increasingly capable of acting rather than simply answering. They may compare, select, schedule, book, purchase, modify, submit, coordinate, and transact. The more capable the system becomes, the more consequential intent interpretation becomes.

> **Agentic systems should not become more certain about customer meaning merely because they become more capable of acting.**

26. The Agentic Trust Problem

Agentic environments involve several distinct questions: Who is the agent? What did the customer authorize? What goal did the system interpret? What action did the agent execute? Did the action actually serve the customer? CII's distinctive contribution is the reasoning layer connecting signal, goal interpretation, evidence, and outcome.

27. CII Agentic Intent Lifecycle™



The lifecycle distinguishes human signal, goal hypothesis, competing hypotheses, evidence qualification, validated goal plus constrints, authorized scope, agent action, and outcome plus learning.

28. Preserve the Provenance of Meaning

Agentic systems should preserve where meaning originated: Customer stated; Behavior suggested; Model inferred; Agent generated; System defaulted; Customer later confirmed. This prevents Inference Laundering, where an inferred interpretation is reused until its original status as an inference disappears.

29. Validated Goal Is Not Authorized Action

A system may have strong evidence that a customer wants a product. That does not necessarily authorize the system to buy it. Understanding and permission are different.

30. Agentic Decision Envelope™

The Agentic Decision Envelope™ defines the validated and authorized space within which an agent may act without additional confirmation.

Boundary	Question
Goal Boundary	What customer outcome may the agent pursue?

Boundary	Question
Action Boundary	What actions may it take?
Financial Boundary	What spending limits apply?
Product Boundary	What products or providers are permitted?
Time Boundary	How long does authorization remain active?
Constraint Boundary	What conditions must remain true?
Substitution Boundary	What changes may the agent make?
Escalation Conditions	When must the agent return to the customer?
Prohibited Actions	What may the agent never do?

31. CII Handoff Triggers™

Potential handoff triggers include ambiguity, weak evidence, constraint failure, cost thresholds, material substitution, intent drift, contradiction, irreversibility, and regulatory requirements. Human involvement is not necessarily a system failure; it can be a governance capability.

32. Appropriate Autonomy

> **Autonomy should be proportional to evidence, authorization, consequence, and reversibility.**

A useful action ladder is: Observe -> Recommend -> Prepare -> Bounded Act -> Standing Autonomy.

33. Intent Expiration

Intent Expiration occurs when an earlier validated goal or authorization should no longer be assumed to represent the customer's current intent without renewed evidence or confirmation. Potential triggers include time, price changes, changed context, changed constraints, contradictory behavior, or expired authorization.

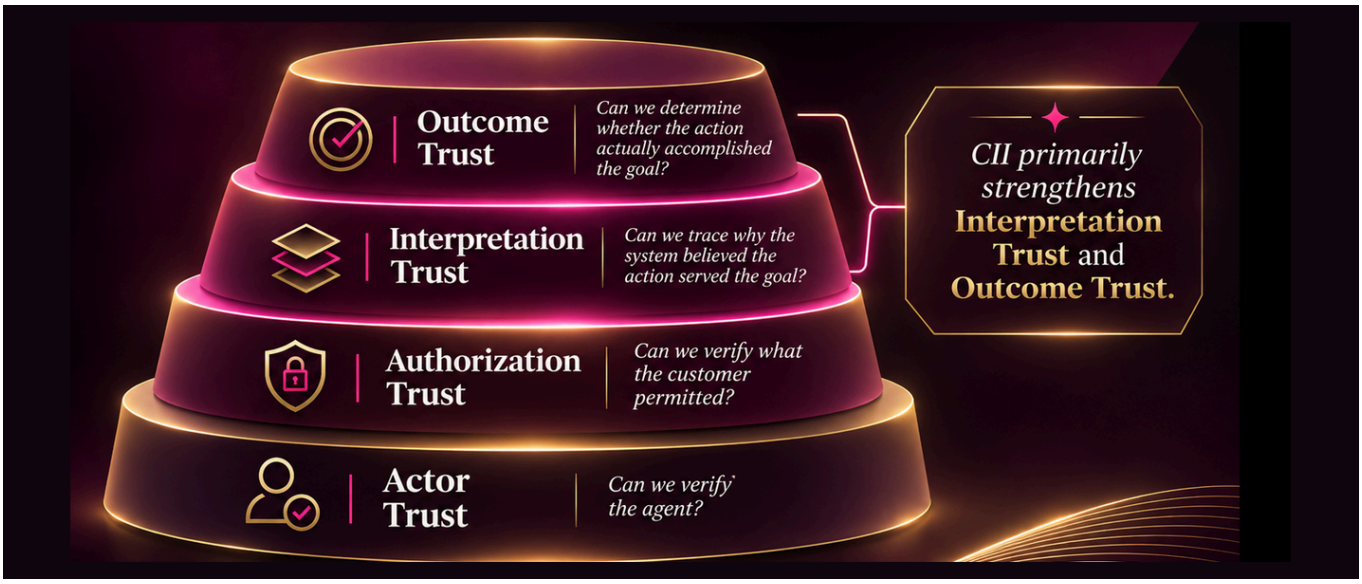
34. Agentic Meaning Preservation

In multi-agent systems, customer meaning may pass through several systems. Agentic Meaning Preservation maintains relevant customer goals, evidence state, constraints, authorization, and unresolved ambiguity across those handoffs.

35. CII Correction Loop™

Customer correction is high-value evidence. An agent action followed by customer correction should identify an interpretation gap, update the Intent Evidence Record™, revise the hypothesis, update the decision rule, and improve future behavior.

36. Four Layers of Agentic Trust



37. Agentic Thesis

Understand before you authorize. Authorize before you act.
Stay within the boundary. Measure whether the customer actually succeeded.

Underlying principle: Agent Action Is Not Customer Intent.

PART VI

Applications

How the same reasoning discipline travels across search, AI, journeys, content, and enterprise intelligence.

38. CII + Search

> **Search intent describes the nature of the query. Customer intent investigates the goal behind it.**

CII extends Query -> Content into Query -> Possible Goal -> Evidence -> Experience -> Outcome.

39. Search-to-Goal Handoff™

Search should preserve relevant customer-goal reasoning into the destination experience: Query -> Possible Goals -> Evidence -> Selected Pathway -> Outcome. This prevents a search system from successfully identifying a need only for the landing experience to return to generic organizational structure.

40. CII + AI Assistants

AI assistants can produce fluent answers even when intent interpretation is weak. CII calls this Fluent Misalignment: an excellent answer to the wrong problem. CII encourages assistants to recognize ambiguity and ask clarifying questions when one additional question could materially change the appropriate action.

41. CII Assistant Response Pattern™



42. CII + Customer Journeys

> **A journey should not require the customer to understand the organization before the organization understands the customer.**

Customer journeys are frequently organized around departments, products, programs, and channels. Customers enter journeys because they are trying to accomplish something.

43. Intent Mismatch

Intent mismatch occurs when the organizational response is aligned to a different goal from the one the customer is attempting to accomplish. A journey may function perfectly and still create intent mismatch. This is distinct from ordinary usability friction; the issue is meaning.

44. Detection-to-Action Window™

The Detection-to-Action Window™ is the time between recognizing a meaningful customer signal and taking an appropriately aligned organizational action. The goal is not merely faster action. It is faster evidence-informed action.

45. CII + Content

> **Content quality and intent alignment are different things. The question is not only "Is this clear?" but "Clear for what customer goal?"**

A page can be clear, readable, accessible, persuasive, and well optimized while still addressing the wrong customer goal.

46. Intent Friction

Friction Type	Meaning
Language Friction	The language is difficult to process.
Goal Friction	The customer cannot tell what can be accomplished.
Decision Friction	The information does not help the customer decide.
Action Friction	The next step is unclear.
Structural Friction	The customer must navigate organizational structure rather than goal structure.
Contextual Friction	The experience fails to reflect urgency, stakes, or situational context.

47. CII + IntenSight™

IntenSight™ is a standalone Intent Alignment Intelligence platform built on Customer Intent Intelligence™ principles. It can operationalize selected mechanisms such as friction diagnosis, competing goal hypotheses, evidence evaluation, intent alignment, experience reframing, and validation planning. CII remains the theory and methodology; IntenSight is a commercial application.

48. CII + Enterprise Intelligence

Customer intent interpretation often occurs across CRM, analytics, search, CMS, contact centers, AI, journey systems, transactions, and operations. Without shared reasoning, several systems may assign different intent labels to the same customer. CII provides a common discipline for preserving signal provenance, goal hypotheses, evidence, Evidence Strength™, decision state, and outcome.

49. CII + Customer Success

> **The objective is not merely intent detection. The objective is to help the customer successfully accomplish what they came to accomplish.**

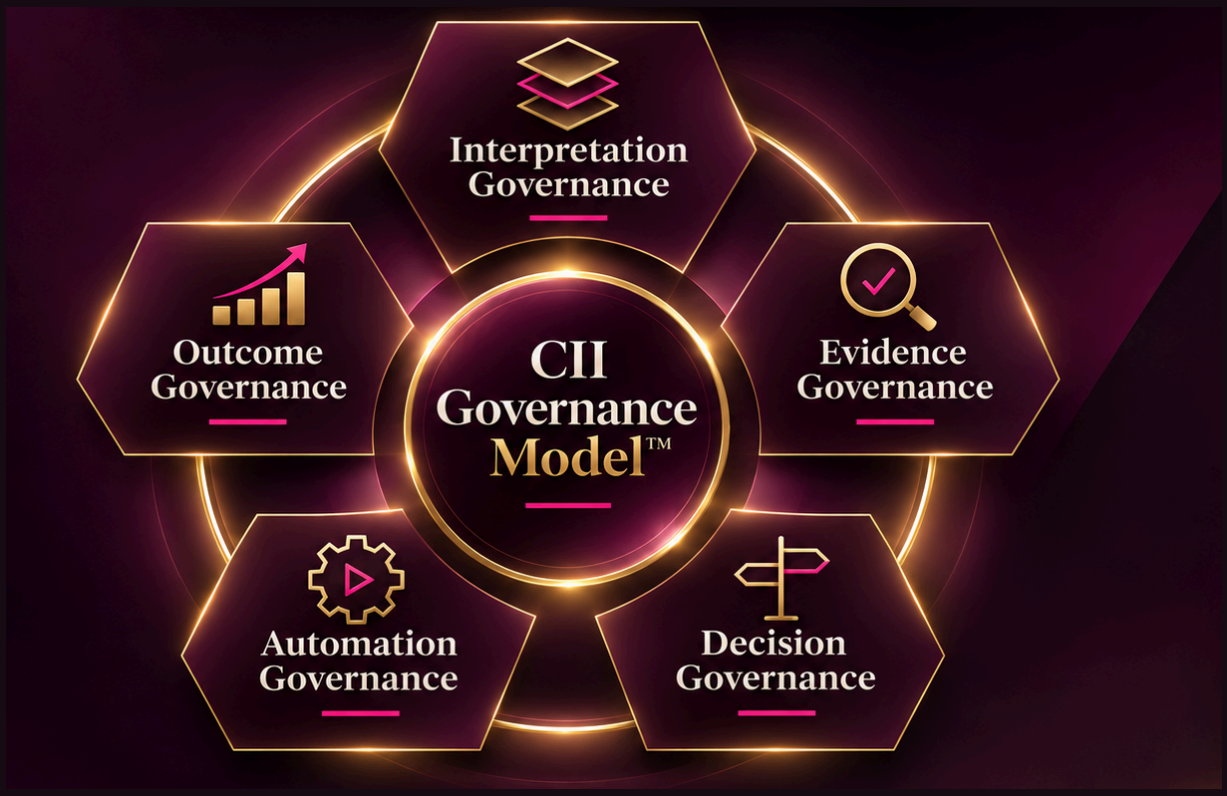
50. Universal Application Pattern



PART VII

Governance and Boundaries

Responsible interpretation, proportional action, recoverability, and explicit non-claims.



51. CII Governance Model™



The five governance domains are Interpretation Governance, Evidence Governance, Decision Governance, Automation Governance, and Outcome Governance. Their purpose is to prevent uncertainty from disappearing simply because an inference entered a system.

52. CII Transparency Principle™

> **Make the reasoning visible.**

An organization should be able to show what it observed, what it inferred, what evidence it used, what remained uncertain, why it acted, and what happened afterward.

53. CII Proportionality Principle™

> **The stronger the consequence of an action, the stronger the evidence, authorization, and governance should become.**

54. CII Recoverability Principle™

> **Systems should be capable of recovering from incorrect intent interpretations.**

Recoverability may include customer correction, alternate pathways, easy reversal, human escalation, hypothesis revision, and restored customer control.

55. CII Learning Principle™

> **An incorrect interpretation should produce learning, not merely failure.**

56. What CII Does Not Claim

- CII does not read customers' minds or claim behavior automatically reveals intent.
- CII does not claim AI can determine true intent with certainty, and it does not claim inference is inherently bad.
- CII does not require perfect certainty before action or assume customers hold one static intent.
- CII does not claim probability scores equal understanding or that more data automatically creates better understanding.
- CII does not claim personalization is always better, conversion equals customer success, or clearer copy guarantees alignment.
- CII does not claim high alignment validates the customer goal or agent execution proves customer intent.
- CII does not replace customer research, UX, CX, SEO, analytics, AI, legal compliance, privacy governance, or human judgment.
- CII does not guarantee financial outcomes or claim causality without evidence.
- CII does not override customer authorization and does not require one universal technology implementation.

CII provides a disciplined way to reason before acting as though customer intent is known.

57. Privacy and Ethical Boundaries

Access to customer data does not automatically justify every possible intent inference. Organizations should consider relevance, necessity, proportionality, customer expectations, privacy requirements, and potential harm. CII should not be used as justification for manipulative targeting, exploitative personalization, coercive design, hidden vulnerability inference, or unauthorized profiling.

PART VIII

Research Agenda

A framework designed to be tested, challenged, refined, measured, and extended.

58. CII as a Research Program

Framework v1.0 establishes a conceptual and operational methodology. Several constructs remain appropriate for continued empirical evaluation. The framework should not ask to be believed simply because it is well articulated. Its constructs should be clear enough for others to test.

59. Research Priorities

- Signal-to-Intent Interpretation
- Competing Goal Hypotheses
- Evidence Strength(TM)
- Intent Alignment
- Intent-to-Outcome Measurement
- Intent Drift
- Intent Friction
- Search-to-Goal Interpretation
- AI Assistant Clarification
- Agentic Systems
- Governance
- Customer Success

60. Key Empirical Questions

- How often do several customer goals explain the same signal?
- Does generating competing hypotheses improve decision quality?
- Can practitioners consistently assign Evidence Strength(TM)?
- Does high Intent Alignment improve outcomes only when the goal is well supported?
- How often do customer goals change during journeys?
- Can systems distinguish intent error from intent drift?
- Do AI assistants ask clarifying questions at the right moments?
- How frequently do agent-generated choices become treated as customer preferences?
- Does preserving evidence provenance improve decision quality?
- Does CII reduce repeat effort, correction, escalation, and unresolved journeys?

61. Customer Intent Benchmark Set

A future research initiative should create a Customer Intent Benchmark Set containing customer signals, context, possible goals, direct customer confirmation, competing hypotheses, evidence-strength labels, and expected outcomes. This benchmark could support academic research, practitioner calibration, AI evaluation, and IntenSight™ testing.

62. Falsifiability

If research finds that competing hypotheses provide no benefit, Evidence Strength™ cannot be applied reliably, clarification consistently creates more friction than value, or particular governance mechanisms do not improve decisions, the framework should evolve. A framework that cannot change in response to evidence contradicts its own philosophy.

63. CII Research Posture

Define it clearly enough to cite. Structure it clearly enough to test. Measure it honestly enough to improve.

PART IX

Citation and Framework Usage

How to reference, version, and preserve the intellectual lineage of CII.

64. Recommended Citation

Sterling, Yasha. Customer Intent Intelligence™ Framework: An Evidence-First Method for Moving from Customer Signals to Better-Supported Decisions and Outcomes. Version 1.0, 2026.

The final release should include the official publication URL and final publication date.

65. APA-Style Citation

Sterling, Y. (2026). Customer Intent Intelligence™ Framework: An evidence-first method for moving from customer signals to better-supported decisions and outcomes (Version 1.0). Yasha Sterling. [Official Framework URL]

66. In-Text Citation

Suggested: (Sterling, 2026) or "According to Sterling's Customer Intent Intelligence™ Framework (2026)..."

67. Citation of the Five-Stage Method

The official method should always appear as Observe -> Interpret -> Validate -> Decide -> Measure. Suggested usage: "Sterling's Customer Intent Intelligence™ Framework uses a five-stage method: Observe, Interpret, Validate, Decide, and Measure (Sterling, 2026)."

68. Citation of Named Concepts

Attribution should remain visible when researchers or practitioners materially use named CII concepts such as Intent Evidence Record™, Evidence Strength™, Competing Hypotheses Model, Intent Mismatch, Search-to-Goal Handoff™, Detection-to-Action Window™, Agentic Decision Envelope™, CII Handoff Triggers™, Agentic Intent Drift™, CII Correction Loop™, Intent Expiration, and CII Governance Model™.

69. Framework Versioning

Version 1.0 represents the initial public framework. Future versions may incorporate empirical findings, implementation learning, technological changes, and additional guidance. Versioning preserves intellectual history while allowing the framework to evolve.

PART X

Applying the Framework

A compact practitioner path from signal to goal, evidence, action, outcome, and learning.

70. Practitioner Questions

- What happened?
- What might the customer be trying to accomplish?
- What else could explain the signal?
- What supports or contradicts each interpretation?
- How strong is the evidence?
- What action does that evidence justify?
- Did the action actually resolve the customer's goal?

71. CII Application Test

For any technology, journey, or experience, ask: What signal are we observing? What customer goal are we currently assuming? What other goals remain plausible? What evidence supports the selected interpretation? What contradicts it? How well does the current response serve that goal? What happens if the interpretation is wrong? What action does the evidence justify? How will we know whether the customer succeeded?

If these questions cannot be answered, the organization has identified an intelligence gap.

72. CII Maturity

Maturity Level	Description
Level 1 · Behavioral	We know what customers did.
Level 2 · Inferential	We predict what behavior may mean.
Level 3 · Evidence-Informed	We evaluate competing customer goals using evidence.
Level 4 · Decision-Integrated	Intent intelligence changes organizational decisions and experiences.
Level 5 · Outcome-Learning	Customer outcomes continuously improve future interpretation.

73. See CII in Action

- CII Intent Delta & Opportunity Diagnostic(TM)
- Intent-to-Outcome Simulator(TM)
- Intent Mismatch Audit
- Intent-Driven Prompt Library(TM)
- How CII Helps Google
- IntenSight(TM)

These tools demonstrate different aspects of the framework without becoming substitutes for the framework itself.

74. IntenSight™

IntenSight™ is a standalone Intent Alignment Intelligence platform built on Customer Intent Intelligence™ theory. Its role is to operationalize selected CII principles commercially. Potential capabilities include friction diagnosis, competing hypotheses, evidence analysis, intent alignment, experience reframing, and validation planning. CII remains the intellectual foundation; IntenSight is one product built from that foundation.



CONCLUSION

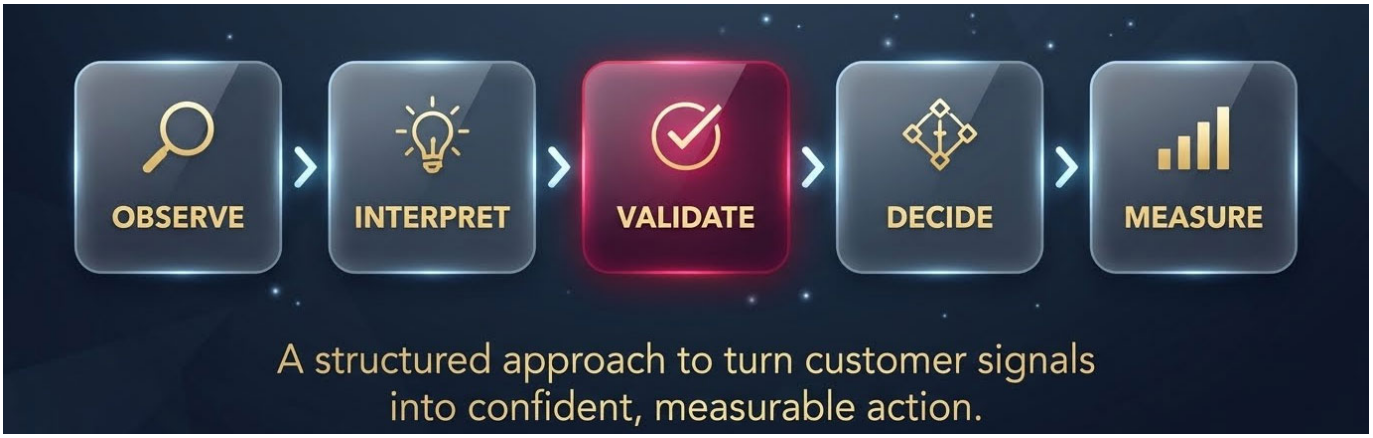
Customer Intent Intelligence™

Organizations increasingly possess the ability to observe customers at extraordinary scale. Artificial intelligence can interpret those observations rapidly. Agentic systems can increasingly act on those interpretations.

This makes one question more important, not less:

> **What are we actually justified in believing the customer is trying to accomplish?**

Customer Intent Intelligence™ provides a structured way to answer that question responsibly. It begins by separating signal from meaning. It preserves competing explanations where ambiguity exists. It evaluates supporting and contradicting evidence. It makes uncertainty visible. It matches decision authority to evidence and consequence. It measures whether the customer actually achieved the intended outcome. And it learns when the interpretation was wrong.



Its central promise is not certainty. Its promise is better reasoning.

> **Customer behavior provides signals. Signals support hypotheses. Evidence strengthens or weakens those hypotheses. Decisions should reflect the strength of that evidence. Outcomes determine whether the interpretation ultimately helped the customer accomplish the goal.**

FRAMEWORK SIGNATURE

Behavior informs. Evidence clarifies. CII helps decide.

> **What is this customer actually trying to accomplish - and what evidence supports that interpretation?**

CITE THIS FRAMEWORK

Citation Guidance

Sterling, Y. (2026). Customer Intent Intelligence™ Framework: An evidence-first method for moving from customer signals to better-supported decisions and outcomes (Version 1.0). Yasha Sterling. [Official Framework URL]

Framework Version: 1.0

Publication Year: 2026

First-reference naming: Customer Intent Intelligence™. Subsequent references may use CII.

Official five-stage method: Observe -> Interpret -> Validate -> Decide -> Measure.

RESEARCH POSTURE

Define it clearly enough to cite. Structure it clearly enough to test. Measure it honestly enough to improve.

Framework v1.0 establishes a conceptual and operational methodology for evidence-qualified customer-goal interpretation. Several constructs introduced in this framework are intended for continued empirical evaluation. Future research is encouraged to test, challenge, refine, and extend the framework across industries, technologies, and customer contexts.