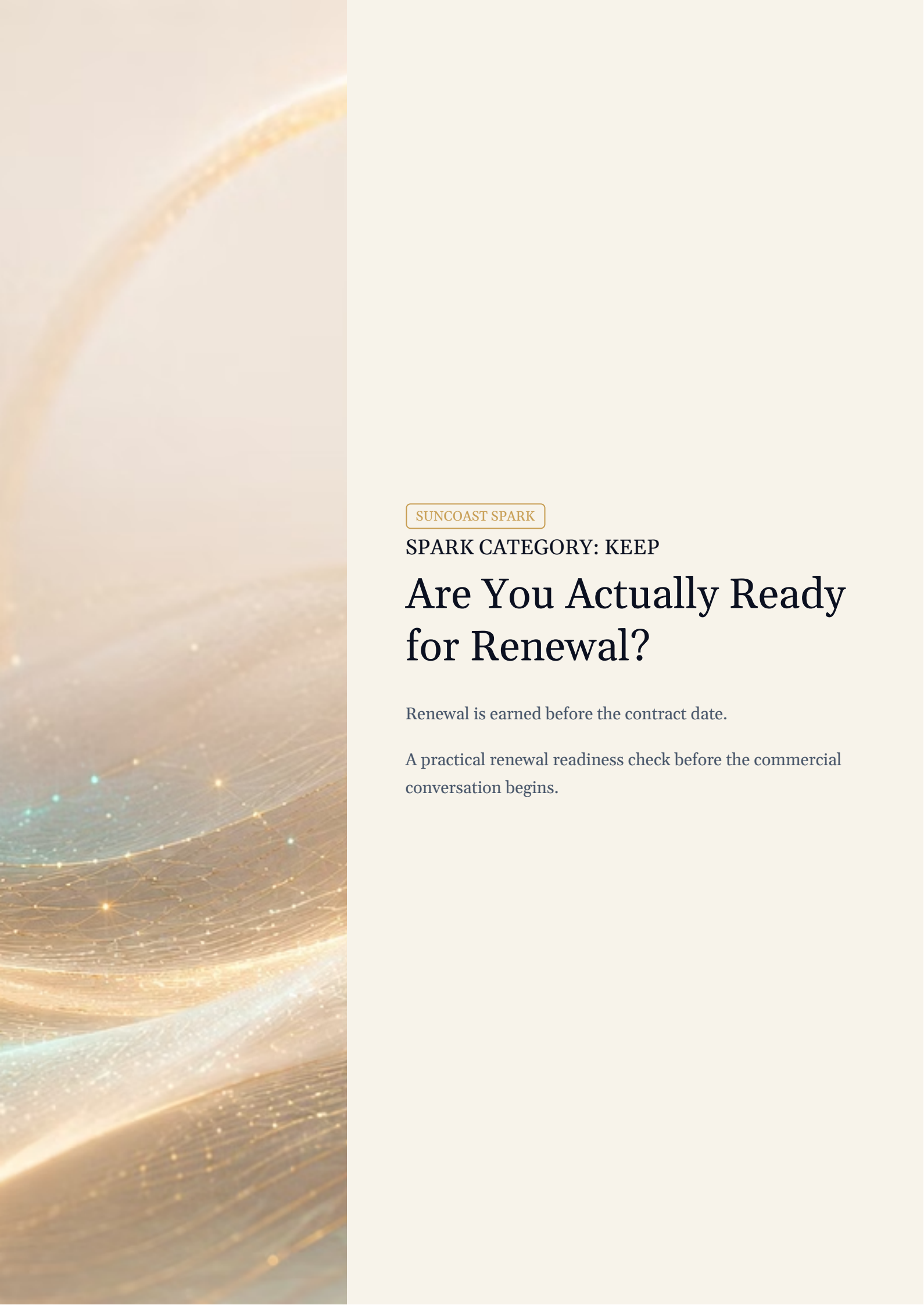




SUNCOAST SPARK

SPARK CATEGORY: KEEP

Are You Actually Ready for Renewal?

Renewal is earned before the contract date.

A practical renewal readiness check before the commercial conversation begins.

Six Months Out Is Not Too Early

Waiting until a contract date appears on the calendar is not a renewal strategy. Renewal confidence — real confidence, not optimism — comes from signals you've been building for months. If you're starting to think about it now, that's the right instinct. The question is what to look at.

Value Evidence

Can the customer point to outcomes? Is there a record of what changed?

Adoption

Are the intended users actually using the solution — and is that expanding?

Stakeholder Strength

Do you have multiple relationships, or are you dependent on one contact?

Executive Alignment

Is the executive sponsor still engaged and still invested in the outcome?

Commercial Fit

Does the contract structure still match their business? What is changing?

Future Relevance

Is what you deliver still aligned to where their priorities are heading?

Each section that follows turns one of these into a set of direct questions. Answer them honestly before you enter any commercial conversation.

Value

The most common renewal failure is not a pricing problem or a relationship problem. It is a value problem that no one named early enough. Before you open a commercial conversation, you need honest answers to these questions.

Can the customer explain what improved?

Not in your words — in theirs. If they cannot describe the before-and-after in a sentence, the value story has not landed. That is a problem you own.

Was the original success criteria achieved?

Go back to what was agreed at the start. If the goalposts shifted, document that. If the original criteria were never met, you need a plan before the conversation, not during it.

Is there measurable evidence?

Anecdotes are not enough at renewal. Do you have data — usage, outcomes, metrics — that a skeptical CFO or procurement lead would find credible?

What value remains unproven?

Be honest about what has not yet been demonstrated. Naming it yourself is far stronger than having it surfaced by the customer at the wrong moment.

Relationship

Renewals do not happen with organizations. They happen with people. If your relationship map is thin or outdated, the commercial conversation is already at risk before it begins.

Is the executive sponsor still engaged?

Engaged means actively informed and willing to advocate — not just aware you exist. When was the last meaningful executive-level interaction? If you cannot remember, that tells you something.

Has leadership changed?

New executives often mean new scrutiny of existing spend. If someone new is in the chair above your main contact, you need to build that relationship now — not when they ask their first hard question about your contract.

Who owns renewal internally?

Someone on the customer side is going to run the internal process. Do you know who that is? Have you spoken with them recently about what they need to make this straightforward?

Do you have multiple relationships?

Single-threaded accounts are fragile. If your primary contact left tomorrow, would renewal still be straightforward? If the honest answer is no, diversifying that map is urgent.

Adoption

Adoption is the most honest signal you have. Customers who are deeply embedded in the solution rarely choose to leave. Customers with shallow usage almost always have options — and they know it.

Are intended users using the solution?

Not the champions — the actual end users. What does usage data show? If you do not have access to that data, that is also a signal worth examining.

Where has adoption stalled?

Every deployment has friction points. Do you know what they are for this account? If the customer has complained about them, what happened after that? Unresolved friction at renewal is leverage in the wrong direction.

Is usage expanding or contracting?

Trend matters more than current state. A customer using half the licensed seats but growing week-over-week is a different renewal from one that peaked at onboarding and has been declining since.

Is the product embedded in workflow?

Embedded means it is part of how work gets done — not an add-on that could be dropped without disruption. The more deeply embedded, the lower the risk. Know where you sit honestly.

Commercial

A renewal is not just a yes or no. It is a negotiation about scope, structure, and price — often with people who were not in the original buying decision. Know where the pressure points are before they become surprises.

Scope

What is changing in the scope of what they are using? Is there a case for expansion — or are there seats, modules, or services that are not being used and will become negotiating points?

Budget

Has their budget situation changed? A team that was well-funded eighteen months ago may now be under pressure. Do not assume budget is stable. Find out.

Pricing

Are there price increase expectations on your side? If so, do you have the value narrative to support it? Surprising a customer with a price increase at renewal without groundwork is a recoverable situation — but only if you start early.

Procurement

Does procurement need to be involved this time in a way they were not before? New spend thresholds, new policies, or new approvers can slow a renewal significantly if you discover them late.

Contract Structure

Is the current contract structure still the right one? Multi-year, monthly, usage-based — what does the customer want, and what are you prepared to offer?

Competitive Pressure

Is there an active competitor in the account? Have you heard of any evaluation under way, even informally? Knowing this now gives you time to respond. Discovering it at the contract date does not.

Renewal Risk Score

Score each dimension honestly. This is for your own clarity, not for a deck. The goal is to know where you stand before the customer tells you.

Dimension	✓ Strong	⚠ Watch	☒ At Risk
Value	Customer can articulate outcomes. Evidence exists.	Partial evidence. Some value unclaimed.	No clear story. Success criteria unmet or unknown.
Adoption	Usage is high, expanding, embedded in workflow.	Usage steady but not growing. Some friction.	Usage low or contracting. Known friction unresolved.
Stakeholders	Multiple contacts. Renewal owner identified.	One or two contacts. Renewal owner unclear.	Single-threaded. No internal advocate visible.
Executive Support	Sponsor active and engaged. Recent meaningful contact.	Sponsor aware but passive. Contact infrequent.	Sponsor changed, disengaged, or gone.
Commercial	Scope clear. No surprise pricing. Procurement aligned.	Some open questions on scope or budget.	Competitive pressure, price sensitivity, or procurement risk.
Timing	Six-plus months out. Groundwork already underway.	Three to six months. Catch-up required.	Under ninety days. Commercial urgency now driving everything.



If two or more dimensions score At Risk, this renewal needs a recovery plan — not a call. Identify what would need to change in each dimension and work backward from the contract date.



AE ON DEMAND

Renewal should not become urgent because the contract is expiring.

AE on Demand helps account teams organize what they actually need to run a renewal well — before the conversation becomes a scramble.

Value evidence

Capture and structure the proof of outcomes so you can present it clearly when it matters.

Customer risk signals

Track adoption, engagement, and relationship health in one place, not across emails and notes.

Stakeholder context

Know who owns what, who has changed, and where your coverage is thin.

Next actions

Move from diagnosis to a clear plan — what to do, in what order, before the contract date arrives.

Explore AE on Demand at aeondemand.com