

FREE BD PLAYBOOK — 2025 EDITION

# The Web3 & Fintech BD Playbook

30 Days to Your First Strategic Partnership — A step-by-step framework for founders and BD leaders in Web3, DeFi, Fintech, TradFi, and AI.

**120+**

PARTNERSHIPS CLOSED

**5**

SECTORS COVERED

**60-Day**

AVG. FIRST DEAL

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# Why Most BD Efforts Fail in Emerging Tech

Most founders treat business development as a contact sport — the person with the most LinkedIn connections wins. That's wrong, and it's why 80% of BD efforts in Web3 and Fintech produce nothing in the first 90 days.

## ✗ Mistake #1: Starting with outreach instead of strategy

Sending 200 cold DMs before you've defined your ideal partner profile is like pouring fuel before you've built the engine.

## ✗ Mistake #2: Pitching before building trust

In Web3 especially, trust is the currency. Projects that lead with a pitch deck and skip relationship-building get ghosted — every time.

## ✗ Mistake #3: Founder-dependent BD that doesn't scale

If your BD stops when the founder stops, you don't have a BD function — you have a networking habit.

*"The companies that win in Web3 and Fintech build BD systems, not BD sprints. The playbook you're holding is the system."*

— GAAS BD Team

# Build Your Partnership Thesis First

Before you reach out to a single partner, you need to answer three questions. If you can't answer them clearly in 30 seconds, your BD will produce noise — not signal.

1

## Who is your ideal partner, specifically?

Not "exchanges" or "VCs" — be precise. Series A DeFi protocols with \$10M+ TVL operating in Southeast Asia. Layer-2 infrastructure projects with active developer communities. The more specific, the better your targeting.

2

## What does the ideal partner gain?

Distribution? Co-marketing reach? Technical integration? Access to your user base? Lead with their gain, not yours. The partnership pitch that opens with "we'd like to offer you access to our 50K users" closes faster than "we're looking for distribution partners."

3

## What does the partnership look like in 90 days?

Co-marketing campaign? API integration? Joint event? Revenue share? Define the deliverable before the first meeting so you can steer toward a concrete outcome from day one.

### ✦ YOUR THESIS TEMPLATE

"We partner with [specific partner type] who want [specific gain] to achieve [specific outcome] within [timeframe]."

# Map Your Ecosystem — The Sector Framework

Every emerging tech sector has a distinct ecosystem map. Here's how to identify partner tiers across the five sectors GAAS operates in:

SECTOR	TIER 1 PARTNERS	TIER 2 PARTNERS
<b>Web3</b>	L1/L2 chains, major DEXes, top-tier VCs	Wallets, bridges, developer tools, auditors
<b>DeFi</b>	Lending protocols, DEX aggregators, oracles	Yield optimizers, insurance, analytics tools
<b>Fintech</b>	Banking-as-a-service, payment rails, neobanks	Compliance tech, KYC/AML, embedded finance
<b>TradFi</b>	Tier-1 banks, prime brokers, custodians	Fund admins, data providers, RegTech
<b>AI</b>	Foundation model providers, AI infra, hyperscalers	Vertical AI apps, data providers, MLOps

# The 30-Day BD Sprint Framework

DAYS 1-7

## Foundation Week — Research & Thesis

- Finalize your partnership thesis (use the template from Chapter 2)
- Map 50 target partners using the ecosystem framework
- Research each target: team, recent announcements, funding stage
- Identify 3 warm introduction paths per target if possible

DAYS 8-14

## Warm-Up Week — Visibility Before Outreach

- Engage with targets' content (Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Discord) authentically
- Contribute to shared communities without pitching
- Publish one piece of thought leadership that tags or references targets
- Request introductions from mutual connections

DAYS 15-22

## Outreach Week — Personalized, Value-First

- Send first-touch outreach to 20 highest-priority targets
- Lead with their gain, not your pitch
- Reference something specific from their recent work
- Offer something free: data, intro, co-marketing asset

DAYS 23-30

## Conversion Week — Meetings & First Proposals

- Follow up on outreach (day 7 follow-up converts 3x better than day 3)
- Run discovery calls — listen 70%, talk 30%
- Send a one-page partnership brief (not a 40-slide deck)
- Target: 3-5 qualified partnership conversations by Day 30

# Outreach That Actually Gets Replies

The average BD outreach message in Web3 gets a 4% reply rate. The top performers hit 35–50%. Here's the difference:

## ✓ HIGH-CONVERTING MESSAGE TEMPLATE

Hey [Name], saw your [specific thing – tweet/announcement/blog post].

We're [one sentence, lead with what you offer THEM].

Given what you're building at [Company], I think there's a real opportunity around [specific idea – 1 sentence].

Worth a 20-min call this week?

- ✓ **Specific reference** — shows you did homework, not mass outreach
- ✓ **Their gain first** — not "we'd love to partner" but "here's what you get"
- ✓ **One idea, not a pitch deck** — cognitively light, easy to say yes to
- ✓ **Soft ask** — "20-min call" is less scary than "partnership discussion"

# Structuring the Deal — Tokens, Equity & Cash

Emerging tech partnerships require flexible deal structures. Here's how to approach compensation across sectors:

## ⌘ WEB3 / DEFI — TOKEN-FIRST

Most early-stage protocols are cash-light but token-rich. Accept 1–3% token allocation vesting over 12–24 months. For established protocols, push for \$5K–\$25K/month retainer + performance bonuses in tokens on KPIs hit.

## 🏠 FINTECH — RETAINER + REV SHARE

Fintechs budget for vendor contracts. Target \$8K–\$20K/month retainer with 3–8% revenue share on deals you source. Always tie success fees to closed deals, not meetings booked.

## 🤖 AI COMPANIES — EQUITY + RETAINER

For early-stage AI startups, consider advisor equity (0.1–0.5%) alongside a reduced retainer. For growth-stage companies, push for a full retainer — they have the cash and need the pipeline.

## 🏛️ TRADFI — PROJECT-BASED + SUCCESS FEE

Traditional finance expects clearly scoped engagements. Lead with a project fee (\$15K–\$50K) and layer in a 5–10% success fee on deal value. Never start with an open-ended retainer in TradFi — they want deliverables.

# Metrics, Iteration & Scaling BD

The BD function that doesn't measure itself doesn't improve. Track these six metrics every week:

**50+**

TARGETS RESEARCHED / MONTH

Pipeline input metric — if this drops, everything downstream drops

**20%**

OUTREACH REPLY RATE TARGET

Below 10%? Your message or targeting needs work

**40%**

REPLY → MEETING RATE

If lower, the follow-up cadence needs tightening

**30%**

MEETING → PROPOSAL RATE

Measures discovery call quality and needs fit

**25%**

PROPOSAL → CLOSE RATE

Below 15%? Revisit deal structure and partner fit

**60**

DAYS TO FIRST DEAL (TARGET)

GAAS portfolio average across 120+ partnerships



# Ready to Pour Some **GAAS** on Your Growth?

You have the playbook. Now you need the team to execute it. GAAS combines AI-powered growth systems with sector-native BD experts who've closed 120+ partnerships across Web3, DeFi, Fintech, TradFi, and AI.



SPARK plan from **\$3,500/month** — pipeline + BD advisory + warm intros



ACCELERATE from **\$6,500/month** — full BD execution + deal negotiation



FULL THROTTLE from **\$12,000/month** — fractional VP BD + full pipeline ownership

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