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SOLUTIONS ARCHITECTURE | CLOUD ENGINEERING

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A STANDARD FOR CLIENT-OWNED SYSTEMS

The Ownership Standard

Client control during build, operation, maintenance, and continued delivery.

VERSION	1.1
EFFECTIVE	August 2026
ISSUER	Conti Digital LLC, Naples, Florida
SIGNED BY	/s/ Peter T. Conti, Principal
CHECKLIST LICENSE	CC0, no attribution required
CANONICAL	petertconti.com/ownership-standard

You own the platform.
I can keep operating and improving it.

This document is attached as an exhibit to every build agreement Conti Digital LLC signs.

The Ownership Standard

This document is the exhibit copy of the standard published at petertconti.com/ownership-standard. It is versioned, its items are numbered so they can be cited by name, and it is attached as an exhibit to every build agreement Conti Digital LLC signs. Every build closes against it, item by item, audited by an engineer the client chooses.

THE ONE-SENTENCE BAR

The Exit Test

At any point in the relationship, the client controls the accounts, code, data, billing, and deployment path. If the operating relationship ends, another qualified engineer can operate the system without buying anything from me or migrating off a proprietary runtime.

This is a continuity test, not the proposed end state of the relationship. Conti Digital can remain responsible for operations, maintenance, incidents, and continued delivery because the original engineer already knows the system. The test keeps that long relationship voluntary. Operate means deploy, debug, recover, maintain, and extend. No proprietary component, vendor-owned account, or private control plane can make the system disappear when access changes.

THIRTEEN ITEMS, FOUR GROUPS

The Standard

Accounts and infrastructure

- OS-1 **AWS organization and accounts:** created in the client's name, root credentials held by the client. I work through scoped roles the client can revoke in one console session.
- OS-2 **Infrastructure as code:** every resource defined in Terraform, in the client's repository. The environment is not a pile of console clicks; it can be reviewed, diffed, reproduced, and recovered without reverse-engineering console state.
- OS-3 **IAM and permissions:** least-privilege roles defined in code the client can read. Nothing in production depends on my personal access existing.
- OS-4 **Secrets:** in the client's AWS Secrets Manager. I never hold the only copy of a credential, and rotating me out is a procedure, not an archaeology project.

Code and delivery

- OS-5 **Source repositories:** in the client's GitHub organization, full history, no private forks held back. The commit log is part of the deliverable.
- OS-6 **CI/CD pipelines:** defined in the client's repositories, running on the client's accounts, with health checks and rollback. Deploys do not route through my laptop.
- OS-7 **Documentation and runbooks:** written for the next engineer, not for me. Deployment, operations, and incident procedures, kept in the repository where they age with the code.

Data and operations

- OS-8 **Production data:** in the client's databases, in the client's account, exportable at will, with backups and encryption configured as code.
- OS-9 **Observability and logs:** dashboards, alarms, and structured logs in the client's account. The operating history stays under client control while I run the system and if responsibility later changes.
- OS-10 **Model usage and billing:** AI model calls metered in the client's account at published prices. The client sees the bill I see, down to the model and the day.
- OS-11 **Third-party accounts:** Stripe, DNS, email, analytics: registered to the client's business, administered by the client. I request access; I do not own the relationship.

The operating relationship

- OS-12 **Exit path:** a named transition procedure in the documentation. Changing operators is a documented engineering transition, not a forced replatform.
- OS-13 **Ongoing operation:** the client decides who operates the system. Conti Digital can remain accountable for AWS and application operations, maintenance, incident response within defined coverage, reliability, cost, vendor integrations, and continued delivery under a separately scoped engagement. The accounts, code, data, pipelines, logs, and third-party relationships remain under client control while I do the work.

THE CONSEQUENCE

Acceptance

A build is complete when it passes this standard, item by item, not when the software works. If any item fails at the ownership audit, I remediate it at my own expense before final payment is due.

That clause converts thirteen promises into one commitment: final payment is gated on the ownership audit passing, and the audit is run by the client's engineer. The governing build agreement defines the audit window, the definition of a qualified engineer, and the mechanics where an item cannot be met for reasons outside the builder's control.

ELEVEN CHECKS, ONE FOCUSED TECHNICAL REVIEW

The Exit Test as a checklist

The same test as a runnable procedure, vendor-neutral by design. Each check cites the items it verifies. Run it against Conti Digital, or against any vendor being evaluated.

- 01 Sign in to the AWS management account with root credentials your business holds, without contacting the vendor. (OS-1)
- 02 Run terraform plan from a repository your organization owns and read a clean, explainable diff of production. (OS-2)
- 03 Revoke the vendor's access in a single console session. Production keeps running. (OS-1, OS-3)
- 04 Rotate every secret from your AWS Secrets Manager using the documented procedure. (OS-4)
- 05 Ship a one-line change to production through CI, from your repositories, with the vendor's machines involved nowhere. (OS-5, OS-6)
- 06 Export the production database, today, to storage you control. (OS-8)
- 07 Hand the runbooks to an engineer who has never seen the system and have them walk through the three most likely incidents. (OS-7)
- 08 Inventory production for anything that requires a license, account, or runtime the vendor controls. The correct length of that list is zero. (OS-12, OS-13, Exit Test)
- 09 Read this month's model and API usage in your own billing console, at published prices, down to the model and the day. (OS-10)
- 10 Confirm the domain registrar, the DNS zones, and every third-party account, payments, email, analytics, are registered to your business. (OS-11)
- 11 Open the dashboards and alarms in your own account and trace last week's deploy through the logs, with no vendor login involved anywhere. (OS-9)

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MAINTAINED, NOT DECORATED

Version history

v1.1 **Version 1.1, August 2026:** clarified that client ownership does not assign operations to the client. Reframed OS-13 around continued Conti Digital operation, explicit coverage, maintenance, incident response, and continued delivery. Repositioned the Exit Test as continuity protection for a long operating relationship. Tightened the reproducibility, transition, and evidence language so the standard does not promise an arbitrary recovery time or treat contractual ownership and operational control as the same thing.

Changes to this standard are recorded here, with what changed and why. A build closes against the version in effect on the date its agreement was signed.

Signed

The Exit Test asks every vendor to write their version of the sentence and sign it. This page is mine.

/s/ Peter T. Conti

Principal, Conti Digital LLC. Naples, Florida.

Signed against Version 1.1 of this standard, August 2026.

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