

From Optionality to Focus

Case Study: A Strategic Quickscore at CarCuSol / CARMEC

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CarCuSol / CARMEC is a young, technology-driven company operating in the European automotive damage and remarketing ecosystem. At its core lies a genuinely strong asset: VIN-based, OEM-backed vehicle intelligence that enables highly precise calculations of repair methods, parts, costs and value impact. In essence, it provides something rare in this market: *certainty* where uncertainty normally dominates.

Yet by the end of 2025, despite years of effort and a capable team, the company struggled to translate this technological strength into sustained commercial traction. There were pilots, conversations, and a growing stack of presentations — but little repeatable proof that customers were willing to pay, at scale, for the value being offered.

The question facing the board was deceptively simple, but strategically decisive:

What game are we actually playing — and in what sequence can we realistically win it?

A familiar pattern in asset-rich tech companies

What we encountered at CarCuSol / CARMEC follows a pattern common among smaller, asset-rich technology companies. Strong intellectual property and broad applicability had led to a wide inventory of plausible markets and use cases: insurers, centrally steered repair networks, independent repairers, remarketing platforms, parts distributors, leasing companies, public authorities, and data platforms.

Each segment made intuitive sense. Each exposed a genuine pain point. But collectively, they created a different problem.

The issue was not lack of opportunity, but lack of strategic choice.

Implicitly, the company was trying to be relevant to many actors in a system dominated by powerful incumbents, entrenched platforms, network effects, and high switching costs. In practice, this resulted in long sales cycles, fragmented stakeholder conversations, and a widening gap between limited organisational capacity and expansive ambition. The outcome was strategic drift: sustained activity without cumulative progress.

The intervention: a deliberately constrained quickscan

Outdoor Connect was asked to conduct a short, independent strategic quickscan. The scope was intentionally narrow: a review of existing materials and a single, intensive board-level working session.

There was no mandate for implementation. No go-to-market plan. No organisational redesign.

The objective was more fundamental: to restore strategic coherence by sharpening choices, clarifying focus, and establishing a credible sequence of commitments — and to test whether the Outdoor Connect strategy framework, typically applied in larger mid-market organisations, would hold under early-stage constraints.

Reframing the strategic question

An early step in the discussion was to separate *optionality* from *strategy*. Much of what had been labelled strategy proved, on closer inspection, to be an inventory of things the company *could* do. Useful as exploration, but insufficient as direction.

Using the Outdoor Connect framework, the conversation was reframed around a small set of decisive questions:

- Where in the ecosystem is real economic value created?
- Who controls the critical decision points?
- And where could a small player establish leverage without competing head-on with entrenched platforms?

This reframing shifted the discussion away from building yet another workflow or platform in insurer-driven damage management. Instead, it focused attention on how CarCuSol / CARMEC's OEM-backed data assets could function as an embedded *decision and certainty layer* — influencing outcomes inside existing processes rather than attempting to replace them.

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The outcome of the quickscan was not a plan, but a sharper strategic frame.

The board emerged with clarity on three fronts:

- which parts of the ecosystem offered theoretical relevance but little realistic leverage;
- where the company's unique assets could create disproportionate economic value;
- and why sequencing choices mattered more than speed or breadth.

Crucially, alignment emerged not around what to pursue next, but around what *not* to pursue — at least for the foreseeable future. In a context where nearly every option appeared plausible, the discipline of postponement proved more valuable than the addition of new initiatives.

What changed at board level

While specific market choices and commercial decisions remain confidential, the effect of the quickscan was concrete at board level.

The discussion moved:

- from parallel exploration to sequential commitment;
- from feature narratives to control-point logic;
- and from broad ambition to testable strategic bets.

This created a shared language for subsequent decisions about capital allocation, partner selection, and proof requirements — without prematurely locking the company into irreversible execution paths.

A note on scope and confidentiality

This case study describes a strategic diagnostic intervention. It does not disclose specific customer segments, partners, pricing, or implementation details. Those choices belong to the company and were deliberately kept out of the public domain.

The role of the quickscan was not to execute strategy, but to ensure that future investments of time, capital, and management attention would reinforce one another rather than fragment.

In that sense, the intervention functioned as a strategic reset rather than a transformation programme: a short pause to decide *which game to play* before playing it better.

This case study abstracts from client-specific decisions to illustrate a recurring strategic pattern: how asset-rich technology companies move from optionality to focus by reframing strategy around control points, sequencing, and proof rather than breadth.

About Outdoor Connect

Outdoor Connect is an independent strategy advisory platform focused on board-level value creation for mid-sized, growth-driven companies (€50–€1B). We bring direct senior engagement—without the traditional consulting pyramid—to help founders, CEOs and boards set direction, make sharper capital allocation choices, and embed an execution rhythm. Core areas include growth strategy in technology and the energy transition, strategic repositioning in fragmented markets, and board-level sparring on value creation and M&A preparation.

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