

Making a service promise clearer

A short research illustration | Sources checked 12 October 2026

THE QUESTION

When does ongoing customer help become a separately scoped piece of work?

Two published examples show why the service name alone is not enough to set expectations.

WHAT THE SOURCES SHOW

GitLab distinguishes a customer-success role from scoped project work. Its Essentials Success Tier includes a designated customer success manager responsible for a success plan, regular calls and renewal strategy.[1] Its professional-services guidance separately describes standard services sold with predefined statements of work, and custom services agreed through a tailored statement of work.[2] The role description alone does not establish whether customer-success access is included in the software subscription or bought separately.

HubSpot makes another boundary visible: how effort is counted. Its Technical Consulting: Standard offer provides up to eight hours of total support, which may include calls, email, preparation and other related activity. The service expires 60 days after purchase.[3] Eight hours of total support therefore cannot be read as a promise of eight hours of live calls plus preparation.

OUR JUDGEMENT

These are different services, not equivalent packages. Together, they suggest three things to make explicit when describing an offer:

Access: Who receives the help, under which plan or purchase?

Work: Which activities are covered, and what needs a separate agreed scope?

Effort: What counts against the allowance, and when does it expire?

HOW THIS COULD HELP A DECISION

Suppose a customer wants eight hours of live guidance and a prepared action plan. The HubSpot description does not establish that both fit within its eight-hour allowance. The customer would need to agree the work and allocation of time before buying; a team designing its own offer could explain the same boundary before quoting.

A short comparison can therefore help a team review an offer's wording and scope. It cannot determine the right price or staffing model without their own costs, capacity and customer evidence.

SCOPE AND SOURCES

An illustrative public-source exercise, not commissioned client work. It does not establish either provider's actual customer experience or results. AI-assisted preparation; source claims checked against the passages below.

[1] GitLab: Customer Success Management Handbook - Success Tier Context.

[2] GitLab: Working with Professional Services - How to order Professional Services.

[3] HubSpot: Product & Services Catalog - Technical Consulting: Standard.