ATTIC STANDARD

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The Attic Standard Clause

Index-linked pricing for AI inference purchase agreements

$$\text{Rate}_t = \text{Rate}_0 \times \frac{\text{Index}_t}{\text{Index}_0}$$

PART ONE

The clause

What it does, in one formula

§ 1.1 The clause in brief

The Attic Standard Clause ties the price of an AI inference purchase agreement to the independent price benchmark for AI inference, so the contract rate follows the market rather than a single vendor’s price list. Buyer and seller agree the committed volume and a starting rate; in each settlement period, the rate moves in the same proportion as the reference index.

$$\text{Rate}_t = \text{Rate}_0 \times \frac{\text{Index}_t}{\text{Index}_0}$$

Rate_0 is the contract rate at signing and Index_0 the base level of the reference index at signing. Index_t is the level published for the settlement period. A floor and a cap, agreed at signing, keep the rate within a range acceptable to both parties. The complete model clause is set out at the end of this paper.

A second form follows established commodity practice, in which contracts price at the market plus an agreed differential. The rate starts from the published spot price at signing, moves with the index, and carries a fixed premium or discount, D, that index movements do not affect.

$$\text{Rate}_t = \text{Spot}_0 \times \frac{\text{Index}_t}{\text{Index}_0} \pm D$$

PART TWO

The evidence

Why fixed rates and list prices both fall short

§ 2.1 The challenge with fixed-price commitments

Inference prices move in discrete steps rather than gradually. When a price changes, the median change is a third of the price, and a fixed-rate agreement carries every such step, in either direction, for its full term.

Experienced buyers will recognize that most prices hold from one week to the next: in the latest Attic Standard reading, 1.8% of the 1,290 prices tracked had changed. The significance lies in the size of the changes that do occur. The median change was 33%, and half of all changes fell between 16% and 52%. Three in four were reductions and one in four was an increase.

Newly launched models follow the same pattern. Almost one in five was repriced after launch, and where the price fell, the median reduction was 45%.

No buyer can anticipate which vendor will reprice, or when. An agreement signed the week before a reduction holds the buyer to the former price for its full term; one signed before an increase leaves the seller absorbing the difference until renewal.

§ 2.2 Why list prices are not a reference

The same model, on the same day, sells for up to 3.75 times as much depending on where it is purchased. The open-weight model gpt-oss-120b is priced by thirteen vendors tracked by Attic Standard, at between $0.00020 and $0.00075 per 1,000 output tokens.

ONE MODEL, THIRTEEN PRICES



gpt-oss-120b output price per 1,000 tokens at each vendor, week of 21 September 2026. Vendors are not named.

The dispersion is significant across the market as a whole. Among all models sold by more than one company:

MEASURE, LATEST READING	VALUE
Models priced by more than one company	171
Companies selling each model (median)	4
Highest price over lowest, same model (median)	1.4×
Highest price over lowest, same model (upper quartile)	2.6×
Premium where a cloud marketplace is higher than the direct route (median)	112%
Premium where the model’s developer is higher than resellers (median)	69%

A vendor’s list price establishes what that vendor charges, not what the market charges. The Attic Standard index addresses that gap: a single published figure, calculated by the same method every week, that neither party to an agreement controls.

PART THREE

In practice

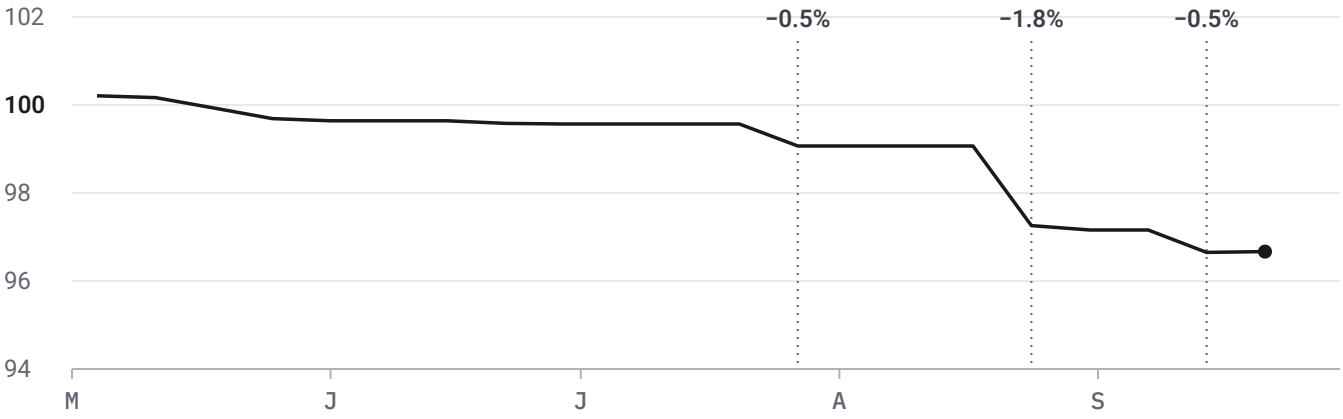
An agreement under the Attic Standard Clause, month by month

§ 3.1 A worked example

A $10M annual commitment under the Attic Standard Clause would have cost $48,236 less over its first five months than the same commitment at a fixed rate, and is currently running approximately $317,000 a year below it.

The example assumes a 12-month, $10M commitment to flagship models, signed at the May 2026 base. The rate settles each month on that month's average level of the Attic Standard Flagship output index (`AIPI FLG GLB`), a published index of the top-line model in each developer's lineup, with a floor at 90% and a cap at 110% of the starting rate. Neither limit was reached.

FLAGSHIP OUTPUT INDEX, MAY AVERAGE = 100



Weekly level, May to September 2026. The May weeks sit either side of their average; dotted lines mark the three weeks that carried most of the decline.

The index declined 3.5% from its first May reading, with three individual weeks accounting for most of the movement. Monthly invoices under each arrangement compare as follows:

MONTH	INDEX	FIXED RATE	ATTIC STANDARD CLAUSE	DIFFERENCE
May	100.00	$833,333	$833,333	$0
June	99.61	$833,333	$830,116	$3,217
July	99.44	$833,333	$828,708	$4,625
August	98.33	$833,333	$819,383	$13,950
September	96.83	$833,333	$806,889	$26,444
Five months		**$4,166,665**	**$4,118,429**	**$48,236**

Index: monthly average of the weekly AIPI FLG GLB output levels, May 2026 = 100.

No renegotiation was required at any point. Had the index moved in the opposite direction, as the published Core index (`AIPI COR GLB`), which tracks each developer's everyday production model, did over the same months, rising 1.2%, the seller's invoice would have risen with it, within the cap and again without renegotiation. The figures scale proportionally to any commitment size.

PART FOUR

Both sides of the contract

What each party gains from a common reference

§ 4.1 Buyer benefits

The buyer obtains market pricing for the full term without renegotiation, and a cap that limits the cost of any price increase.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	
Budget certainty	The cap sets a known maximum rate for the full term, so the commitment can be budgeted with confidence.
Automatic pass-through	A price reduction anywhere in the market reaches the invoice in the following settlement period rather than at renewal.
Auditable rates	Every invoice can be verified against a published figure, which simplifies audit and internal approval.

CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER	
Longer commitments	Volume can be committed for longer terms without the risk of holding a rate the market has left behind.
Freedom to upgrade	A substitution right moves committed volume to successor models as they are released, without reopening the price terms.
Engineering focus	Engineering capacity is no longer spent on price reviews or on vendor migrations undertaken only to secure a lower rate.

PROCUREMENT

A single negotiation	One clause replaces the periodic renegotiation of the rate for the life of the agreement.
Transparent concessions	Any volume discount is recorded as an explicit differential, kept separate from market movements.
Faster execution	A standard, published clause shortens drafting and legal review.

§ 4.2 Seller benefits

The seller exchanges a fixed rate for a longer and larger commitment, a floor under the price and participation in any increase.

Committed volume	A buyer whose rate tracks the market has less reason to hold back volume or to maintain a second vendor as insurance.
A price floor	The rate cannot fall below the floor agreed at signing, whatever the market does.
Participation in increases	One in four price changes in Attic Standard data is an increase. Under a fixed agreement the seller absorbs it until renewal; under the clause the invoice rises with the index, within the cap.
Improved retention	Price reductions occur regardless, with a median of 45% where a new model’s price fell after launch. An agreement already linked to the market gives a buyer no cause to leave when a competitor reduces its price.
Discounts on merit	On a fixed agreement, part of a commitment discount compensates the buyer for holding a rate the market may undercut. With that risk transferred to the index, a discount can reflect volume alone.
A credible price	The Attic Standard Clause signals that the rate is set against the independent reference for the market, which shortens negotiation ahead of the first agreement.

PART FIVE

The standard

The reference, the choice of index and the language

§ 5.1 Why the standard is independent

A settlement price is credible only if neither party sets it. Attic Standard sells no inference, buys none and routes none; its sole product is the measurement.

Independent ownership	Attic Standard is privately funded and independently owned. No vendor, buyer or marketplace holds a stake, and its executives hold no board or advisory positions with any company in the market it assesses.
Equal access	No vendor sees a figure before publication, and commercial relationships, subscriptions included, have no bearing on any assessment.
Verifiable sources	Every price is a published list rate captured at source from the seller that sets it, so any party can check it against the vendor's own price list.
Published method	Every index is calculated by the same method each week, comparing each model with itself and combining models as an equal-weighted geometric mean, so each model carries one vote however many vendors sell it. The full methodology is published at atticstandard.com/methodology.
Complete capture	A week is released only after every tracked vendor has been captured and verified.
Broad coverage	Prices are collected weekly from 49 vendors across model developers, cloud marketplaces, inference platforms and neoclouds.

A fixed base	Every index is expressed against a predetermined base of 100, so any two indexes can be compared and any agreement can name its starting level.
Stable rules	Methodology changes and index rebasings are announced before they take effect and are never applied to periods already settled.
Queries	Any published figure can be queried and receives a documented response.

§ 5.2 Choosing the index

The reference should reflect what the buyer actually consumes, which for most enterprises means a blend of published indexes weighted by their own spend.

> **ONE PUBLISHED INDEX**
>
> Suited to a commitment concentrated in a single segment, such as flagship models (`AIPI FLG GLB`) or models with published weights (`AIPI OSS GLB`).

> **A BLEND OF PUBLISHED INDEXES**
>
> Suited to a mixed estate, for example 60% Flagship (`AIPI FLG GLB`), 30% Core (`AIPI COR GLB`) and 10% Embeddings (`AIPI EMB GLB`). Every component is public, so both parties can verify each settlement; only the weights are specific to the agreement.

> **A TAILORED BASKET**
>
> Suited to a buyer whose models or channels no published index covers. Attic Standard constructs it case by case, publishes it privately to both parties in the Terminal (its subscriber dashboard), and delivers settlement values through the Feed (its data delivery service).

The clause references the benchmark rather than the spot price, because the benchmark follows the same models over time, so each settlement reflects a change in the price of what was contracted. The spot price serves a different purpose: it establishes where the market stands at signing and informs the starting rate.

Where consumption spans several segments, the reference is a blend of published indexes, or a tailored basket built around the buyer's own models and channels. A substitution right then allows committed volume to move to successor models as they are released, so the agreement captures the savings of newer models without reopening its price terms.

§ 5.3 Model clause

The language below is a starting point for the parties' own counsel to adapt, not legal advice.

> **4.1 Definitions.** "Reference Index" means the Attic Standard index or blend of indexes named in Schedule A, as published at atticstandard.com. "Index Level" for a Settlement Period means the average of the weekly levels of the Reference Index published within that period. "Base Index Level" (Index_0) means the Index Level for the Settlement Period in which the Effective Date falls, unless Schedule A specifies otherwise. "Spot Price" (Spot_0) means the spot price for the Reference Index published by Attic Standard for the week in which the Effective Date falls. "Contract Rate" means the unit rate agreed on the Effective Date. "Floor" and "Cap" mean the minimum and maximum Unit Rates set out in Schedule A.
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> **4.2 Price adjustment.** For each Settlement Period, the Unit Rate (Rate_t) shall equal the Contract Rate (Rate_0) multiplied by the ratio of the Index Level for that period (Index_t) to the Base Index Level (Index_0), provided that the Unit Rate shall neither fall below the Floor nor exceed the Cap.

4.2A Differential form. Where Schedule A specifies a Differential, the Unit Rate ($Rate_t$) shall instead equal the Spot Price ($Spot_0$) multiplied by the ratio of the Index Level for that period ($Index_t$) to the Base Index Level ($Index_0$), plus the Differential (D), which may be positive or negative, subject to the Floor and the Cap.

4.3 Fallback. If the Reference Index is suspended or discontinued, the parties shall settle on the fallback index named in Schedule B. If no fallback applies, the last published Index Level shall be used for up to two Settlement Periods, after which the parties shall agree a replacement in good faith.

4.4 Methodology changes. Changes to the Reference Index methodology announced by Attic Standard apply from the Settlement Period following their effective date and shall not restate any period already settled.

4.5 Substitution (optional). Where Schedule A grants a substitution right, the Buyer may move committed volume to a successor model in the same tier of the Reference Index, at that model's rate under this Agreement on the date of substitution, and the Index Level for the Settlement Period in which the substitution takes place becomes its Base Index Level ($Index_0$). Committed volume is unchanged.

ABOUT ATTIC STANDARD

Attic Standard is the global price benchmark for AI inference.

We are the independent price reporting agency for AI inference, a market in which thousands of models are priced differently across dozens of vendors and repriced constantly. We collect every published rate, normalize it to the unit its market trades in, and publish the reference both sides of a trade can use.

Our indexes span the full supply chain, from model developers and cloud marketplaces to inference platforms and neoclouds, with dedicated series covering modality, channel, tier, license, origin and use case.

Inference providers positioning their rates, buyers judging a quote, analysts tracking the market and investors assessing unit economics all measure against our benchmarks.

For a benchmark license, a tailored settlement index or a copy of the model clause for counsel, contact info@atticstandard.com.