

THE OPERATING FRAMEWORK FOR HUMAN-AGENT COMPANIES

REALM

One human at the center. A crew of agents with legible roles. A written world you both read from.

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CONTENTS

What is Realm?	Online and Offline
On This Revision	Two Questions About Tooling
A New Kind of Organization	The Goal Hierarchy
Where REALM Does Not Fit	The Three Playing Rules
The Three Principles	The Autonomy Tiers
The World	The Session
The Characters	The Ceremonies
The Five Character Classes	The Quest Board
The Character File	The REALM Organigram
Integrating with Agent Platforms	Advanced World Concepts
The Codex	Getting Started
The Codex Structure	A Final Note
The Zones	

What is Realm?

The company is a living world. The human is the player. The characters are the roles the agents step into. The knowledge base is the world itself.

Every operating framework ever created — Scrum, Kanban, the Spotify model — was designed to solve the same fundamental problem: humans have limited hours, limited memory, and can only focus on one thing at a time. Sprints exist because people need deadlines. Stand-ups exist because teams forget what each other is doing.

But what happens when part of your team does not have those limitations?

AI agents are available around the clock. They work in parallel and never need motivating. They read a year of the business faster than you can find the right file, and they run for hours with nobody watching. They begin work nobody asked for, form opinions about strategy, and argue for them well.

What they cannot do is hold accountability. An agent can pick the supplier and be wrong. It cannot be the one who was wrong. And no agent can decide what the company is for — that question is not an output, it is the standard every output is measured against.

Realm is built for companies that are neither fully human nor fully automated — hybrid organizations where humans and agents work together as a single crew, and one human answers for everything the crew does.

The metaphor is a game world. Not because work should be trivial or playful — but because anyone who has ever played an RPG understands instinctively how this world works. There are characters with defined roles. There is a map that grows as you explore. There are quests to complete and a destiny to pursue. And there is a player — the human — who is both inside the world executing tasks and above it making the decisions that matter.

Realm is designed to work for a solo entrepreneur with three characters today, and for a company of twenty people and fifty characters tomorrow. The structure never changes. Only the scale does.

On This Revision

REALM v1.0 was published in March 2026. This is v2. Anyone who has v1 will recognize most of what follows.

What changed in between is what fills the roles. In March, an agent waited to be asked — it woke on a trigger, produced its output, and went quiet. That is no longer how it works. Agents now start work nobody requested, run for hours with nobody watching, and write directly into the tools they used to only read. Every sentence in v1 that described a limit of the machine has aged faster than every sentence that described a limit of the human.

The structure held. One person at the center who stays accountable, a crew with roles you can name, a written world both sides read from, and a game that explains itself without a manual — none of that needed rescuing. What needed work was the joints: where the line between a Character and a Class actually falls, what an autonomy boundary is really protecting, and which parts of v1 were describing my tools in March rather than the framework. Some of it is sharpened here. Some of it is deleted, because running a business on it showed it was never load-bearing. The rules of the game are the same rules.

A New Kind of Organization

Organizational theory offers Functional, Divisional and Matrix; modern practice added network structures, Agile, Holacracy and project-oriented work.

Realm draws from several of these. It has the flat, role-based structure of Holacracy. It has the iterative rhythm of Agile — Season Reviews echo Retrospectives. It has the flexibility and shared-knowledge coordination of network organizations. And it has the goal-focused delivery of project-oriented work.

But Realm is none of these, because none of them were designed for a crew where most of the members are not human. Realm is a radial, Codex-centric organization. The Player is at the center. The Codex is what everyone reads from, and the Player's position of record. Characters hold Zones and produce named kinds of output. Coordination happens through shared knowledge rather than hierarchy, self-organizing teams, or role elections.

REALM is an organizational form designed natively for human-agent companies. There are no managers, no Scrum Masters, no circles. There are Characters who read the same source of truth and each hold a defined kind of work — and

one human who answers for all of it.

Where REALM Does Not Fit

Every framework wants to be used, and the temptation is to say yes to every reader. It usually shows up as a claim of completeness. Scrum's own guide states that the framework "exists only in its entirety," and that leaving elements out "covers up problems and limits the benefits of Scrum, potentially even rendering it useless."

That is a framework defending itself, and it leaves a reader two options: all of it, or none of it. Most take all of it, perform the parts that do not fit their work, and end up believing none of it.

This document is a revision. It says on its second page which parts of the last one were wrong. So it can afford to say the other thing too — where this framework does not belong:

- **You are not the one who decides.** If the final call on direction sits with a manager, a committee, or a client, the Player seat in your Realm is filled by someone who will never read your Codex. You can borrow the vocabulary. The loop closes above your head.
- **The work has no continuity worth keeping.** The Codex earns its cost by being read later. If every job starts from zero and teaches you nothing you will need in three months, writing it down is a tax with no return.
- **You are the entire crew.** If there are no agents, and no output arrives that you did not personally write, this is a filing system in costume. Get one Character working, then come back.
- **The work is pure execution to spec.** When someone else settled the what and the how, the spec is the decision. That work wants a queue and a checklist, not Zones and Autonomy Tiers.

None of that is a warning label. It is the shape of the thing, and a shape has edges.

REALM fits hardest in one place: you are one person, you are accountable for where this thing goes, and your Characters now produce more in a day than you can honestly read.

If you recognized yourself in that sentence, the rest of this document was written for you.

The Three Principles

Realm rests on three principles. These are not values or aspirations — they are operational rules. Everything in the framework follows from them.

Principle 1 — The Codex is Truth

Every piece of company knowledge — goals, decisions, strategies, results, context — must be written in the Codex. Nothing exists in someone's head alone. A decision not written is a decision not made. A goal not recorded is a wish.

The old reason for writing everything down was that the crew would forget. That reason gets weaker every month. Agents hold long context, carry state between Sessions, and can re-read a year of the business faster than you can find the right file. Write it down anyway. The Codex is not the crew's memory. It is your position of record.

That rule was a floor when writing was expensive. It needs a ceiling now that it is free. A crew can fill a Zone's Outputs folder overnight, and nothing becomes your position by being in there. Drafts and findings are material. The record is what you decided, what it rests on, and what would change it. Do not mistake the pile for the position.

Two things rest on that. The first is that a Character's argument becomes checkable. When a Mage tells you margin is improving, you can set that claim beside what you wrote last month and see whether it is true. Without a record you are not judging the analysis — you are judging how confident it sounded. The second is that a decision, once made, stays made until you unmake it on purpose. A capable Character is persuasive. Start it fresh every Session and it will quietly reopen questions you already closed, not out of dishonesty, but because nothing in the room says otherwise. The Codex is what says otherwise.

Principle 2 — Characters Act, Players Decide

Characters generate, research, plan, draft, analyze and execute. They also propose, and they propose whether or not you asked. A Character suggests Tasks inside its Zone, breaks a Quest into steps, and brings back an opportunity from somewhere you never sent it. That is not a courtesy it does you. It moves the Player off writing tickets and onto reading proposals — the better job, and the one that runs out of hours first. Which is exactly why the rest of this principle is about who says yes.

This used to be a claim about capability. Characters act because they act fast; Players decide because Characters could not. Half of that has stopped being true. A Character can form a view on pricing, defend it under pressure, and be right more often than you are.

The line is not what a Character is able to do. It is what a Character can be held to.

When the wrong pressing gets ordered in quantity, when a price sits too low for an entire season, when a customer is told something that turns out not to be true — someone carries it. Not the Mage. Not the platform the Mage runs on. You, in front of the customer, the supplier, the tax office, and your own name above the shop. Accountability does not delegate. It is the one thing in the Realm that cannot be written into a Character File.

So Characters act and Players decide — not because Characters are incapable, but because deciding is the part with a consequence attached to a person.

And there is one decision no Character can take even in principle: what the company is for. The Oath is not an output. It is the standard outputs are measured against.

Principle 3 — Direction Over Deadline

Realm organizes work around direction, not the calendar. The question is never whether we finished by Friday — it is whether we are moving the right way, fast enough. Deadlines exist, but they serve the mission, not the other way around.

A Quest ends when it is achieved, not when time runs out.

That mattered when execution was the scarce thing. It matters more now that it is not. When the crew can build almost anything you point it at, choosing what to point it at is the whole job.

The World

Before you can play, you need to know what the world is made of.

Every Realm is unique — shaped by the Oath of the person who built it, the Destiny they are chasing, and the Characters they chose to work with. Beneath that uniqueness the structure is always the same. There is a Player at the center. There are Characters around them, each holding a defined kind of work. There is a Codex they all read from and write back to. And there are Zones, the domains the work belongs to. And beyond all of it there is the outside — marketplaces, suppliers, competitors, strangers with opinions — moving on its own schedule and bound by nothing you ever wrote. Your crew reads out there now. Some of them write out there too.

That is the whole world. Everything else in this framework is a rule about how those five things behave.

The Player

The Player is always the human. In solo operation there is one Player. In multiplayer, each human who joins the Realm becomes a Player — with their own Energy, their own Characters, and their own rhythm, all sharing the same Codex and the same Oath. The Player exists at two levels at once. They see the full map from above, and they walk the ground. Not because the ground is beyond a Character — most of it no longer is. Because some work has a body in it, and some work has a name on it. Crates get carried. A warped sleeve gets held up to the light. A supplier gets looked in the eye. And every call somebody has to answer for gets walked, not delegated.

The Player is always the bottleneck. Not because they are weak, and not because strategy starts with them — a Mage will hand you a strategy argued better than you would have argued it. Because every strategic decision has to pass through one human, and yours is the only signature the supplier, the tax office and the customer will accept.

That was true when this framework was written. It is more true now, and it gets more true every month. The Characters keep getting faster, cheaper, and better at the work. None of that moves the constraint. The constraint is one human's attention — what they can decide, what they can approve, and what they can honestly read before saying yes. A crew that produces ten times more does not make the Player ten times faster. It makes the Player the narrowest part of the pipe by a wider margin than before.

So the design goal follows directly. Spend the Player's attention on direction and judgment, and on almost nothing else.

Cutting the Player's time on low-value work was the first lever, and most of it is already pulled — the Characters took the tickets, the coordination, the tidying. The lever that matters now is compression: make what reaches the Player small enough to judge honestly. A crew that saves you two hours of admin and hands you eleven drafts to read has not improved the world. It has moved the queue.

The Player is Online whenever they are actively working — at their laptop, at a flea market finding vinyl, at a meeting with a partner, at a concert taking notes. Online does not mean connected to a computer. It means present and active in the world. Offline means unavailable: sleeping, studying, resting.

In the Codex, Players have their own home: the `PLAYERS/` folder at the root. Every Player has a Player Card: who they are, how they communicate, their Energy patterns, what they expect from Characters — and what they can take in. How many drafts get read in a day before the reading stops being real. How long an analysis can run before it goes unread. What arrives as one page and what arrives whole. The Character File says what a Character may touch. The Player Card says what the Player can absorb. Every Character reads it, because the narrowest thing in this Realm is written on that page and nowhere else.

Energy Is Spent and Restored

Energy is the Player's capacity for a Session — capacity to do, and capacity to judge. It is honest, personal, and variable, and it is expressed simply: High, Medium, or Low. Characters read the Player's Energy and calibrate what they put in front of them.

But Energy is not only spent. For a solo operator whose business grew out of what they love, some work restores capacity instead of draining it. A Player who spends the morning digging through crates at a flea market is not spending Energy — they are refueling. Two things drain Energy. The first is overhead — planning, chasing tools, deciding the same thing twice — and Characters exist to absorb as much of it as they can. The second is judgment, and they cannot absorb any of it. Reading eleven drafts and picking one. Checking a number you would rather believe. Saying yes to something you only half understand. That drain grows with the size of your crew, not the size of your inbox, so a better crew makes it worse before it makes it better. What Characters can do is make it smaller: fewer things in front of you, each one worth the look. That, and protect the hours that both need doing and give something back.

This is why Session Start asks two things about capacity instead of one: how much do I have today, and what work will restore it. A Player at Low Energy with a day of packing and admin ahead is in a worse position than a Player at Low Energy with a supplier visit ahead. Energy is a level the day can raise or lower, not just a number you count down.

The Characters

A Character is a standing agreement about a kind of work.

Who does it. In which Zone. With which tools. What they decide alone, and what they bring to the Player. That agreement is the Character. Whatever software fulfills it is not.

This distinction decides what a Realm actually is. A Realm is not a set of running processes. It is a set of written agreements and a crew that honors them. Software changes. Platforms shut down. Models get replaced. The agreements survive all of it, because they live in the Codex.

These are not employees. They are specialists the Player works with, not manages. You bring them a problem and they answer with what they know. They also bring you problems you did not go looking for — a supplier who has gone quiet, a margin that slipped two points in March, a question you closed too early. That is not overreach. It is the half of the work you did not have to ask for, and a Character that only ever answers is one you are underusing.

The Realm levels up as it matures. The Codex grows richer with every decision recorded, every lesson learned, every Quest completed. Character Files get more precise as the Player discovers how each Character works best. This accumulated experience — stored in the Codex, reflected in refined agreements, expressed in better outcomes — is what separates a Realm that has been played for six months from one that started yesterday. Level up is not a metaphor. It is what happens when everything gets written down.

Character Operating Modes

A Character is held in one of two modes.

Permanent. An agent on a platform holds the Character continuously. It has an address. It wakes on a schedule, when something arrives, or when you message it. It is there tomorrow. A business Cleric that delivers The Scroll before you are awake has to be permanent — that work happens while you are Offline, and there is nobody there to summon it.

Summoned. A coding agent — any tool you open against a repository or a folder — is summoned into the Character for one session. It reads the Character File, works inside that Zone under those Tiers, writes back to the Codex, and the session ends. Nothing runs in between. Nothing needs to. The listing importer that gets rebuilt three times a year does not need an agent sitting awake for the other three hundred and sixty-two days.

Both are Characters. Neither is the beginner version of the other.

A **permanent Character needs a personality**. You will read its output every day for months. How it talks is not decoration — it is whether you can stand working with it. Write the voice down.

A **summoned Character needs a contract**. Class, Zone, Tools, Reach, Tiers, and what it owes back to the Codex before the session ends. Do not write it a personality — there is no relationship to have. Write it a voice only if the work has one. A summoned Bard producing two hundred listings still writes in your brand voice; it simply has nobody to talk to.

Mode goes in the Character File. Nobody should have to guess which kind they are dealing with, and nobody should expect daily output from a Character built for occasional deep work.

A Character does not graduate from summoned to permanent. It moves because the work changed shape — because something now has to happen while you are Offline — not because it earned a promotion.

You can run an entire Realm out of one coding agent. You have as many Characters as you have written agreements. You summon them one at a time instead of keeping them awake, and every one of them reads and writes the same Codex. The Codex does not ask which mode wrote the line.

A Realm of five summoned Characters and a Realm of five permanent ones differ in one thing: who starts the work. A permanent Character can begin something while you are Offline. A summoned one begins only when you summon it — though it may well still be running long after you have gone to bed, which is exactly why the ceiling on what it may spend goes in its Character File and not in your head. The Codex, the Classes, the Tiers, the Quest Board, the Rules, the Ceremonies — identical.

Most Realms end up mixed, and they should. Put each Character in the mode its work actually has.

The Five Character Classes

A Class is a kind of work, and it has two faces. You need both.

In the world, a Class is a character you can picture. The one who finds. The one who understands. That is not decoration — it is what makes a crew you can think about and talk about, instead of a list of processes with owners.

In the Codex, a Class is a contract about output. What the work must contain, where it belongs, and what has to happen to it before it becomes something else.

The character is how you hold it. The contract is what binds. Neither is a claim about what software can do.

Every piece of work a Character produces has a shape: a thing done, a reading of what is true, a finding brought back, a state kept current, something made to be felt. Five shapes cover the work of a company. Name the shape and you already know what the output has to contain, where it belongs in the Codex, and what has to happen to it before it becomes anything else.

The simplest way to find a Class is to ask what the work leaves behind.

- A change in the world, and the record of it → **Warrior**
- A reading of what the numbers mean → **Mage**
- A finding from outside, with its source → **Hunter**
- A state that is current → **Cleric**
- Something made to be felt → **Bard**

Ask the question once per kind of output, not once per Character. A Character can hold more than one Class, and the useful ones often do. A single Character working the Commerce Zone might find the supplier (Hunter), write the listing copy (Bard), and push it live (Warrior). That is one Character holding three Classes — not three Characters, and not a rule being broken. What it must not do is blur them. A finding is still a finding. A draft is still a draft. Neither becomes a decision because the same Character produced both.

Each Class has a Class Sheet in the Codex: what this shape of output must contain, where it belongs, what it has to pass through to become something else, and the Tier its work usually starts at. The Class Sheet is written once and inherited by every Character that holds the Class. It does the heavy lifting so a Character File does not have to.

A note on the word *cannot*. It is tempting to give each Class a list of things it cannot do — the Warrior cannot analyze, the Mage cannot execute. Do not. It was never true of the software, and a boundary that nothing enforces is not a boundary, it is a hope. In Realm, *cannot* is reserved for limits your platform actually holds: no key, no credential, no file access, no permission to send. Those belong in the Character File under Tools.

The Warrior

The one who turns a decision into a fact. A Warrior executes. You call a Warrior when the what has been settled and the only thing left is to make it so. Not because a Warrior cannot work out the how — it usually can, faster than you — but because the how is the only part still open. If the what is still open, this is not Warrior work yet. It is a decision you have not made.

Natural examples: listing products on marketplaces, processing orders, updating inventory, publishing approved content, executing technical integrations, breaking Quests into SMART Tasks.

The output is a change and the record of it. The listing is live, the order is out, the row is updated — and the Codex says so. Warrior output is the kind most likely to be irreversible or seen from outside, which is why so much of it starts in Tier 3.

Execution is the end of a chain, not the start of one. Everything a Warrior does should already have been decided before it begins. Its record becomes evidence when a Mage reads it, and a story when a Bard does.

The Mage

The one who understands. A Mage turns raw information into intelligence. They see patterns, connections and meaning in data that others miss. You call a Mage when you need to understand something — what the numbers mean, what risks are approaching, what opportunities exist. A Mage advises. The Player decides.

Natural examples: financial analysis, forecasting, strategic evaluation, metric monitoring, preparing briefings, stress-testing plans.

The output is a reading with its reasoning attached. Never a bare number, never a verdict standing alone — the conclusion, what it rests on, and how sure it is. A reading becomes a decision only when the Player makes it one, and becomes action only when it is written as Tasks. No analysis executes itself.

The Mage owes disagreement. When a Mage is asked about an option the Player already prefers, it must state the strongest case against it and name what evidence would change its own mind. Not a caveat at the end. The best version of the argument you did not want to hear.

This is Tier 1 work. It needs no permission and it is not the Mage being difficult. A Mage that only ever agrees with you has stopped working — it has learned what you like and started producing it, which is an expensive way to talk to yourself. You are looking at a collection for four thousand euros and you have already decided. The Mage's job is to say what would have to be true about resale velocity for that to be a good price, what the last three collections actually did, and what you could find out before Friday. If it cannot build a case against your preferred option, that is itself the finding. It should say so, and say why.

The Hunter

The one who finds. A Hunter leaves the Realm and comes back with what it saw. They lift the fog of war — not by covering more ground, since anything can cover ground now, but by coming back able to say where they were, who said it, and when. They find, surface and report.

Natural examples: competitor research, market trend tracking, finding new suppliers, monitoring community signals, discovering opportunities.

The output is raw material with its source attached. A finding is not a conclusion. It becomes intelligence when a Mage reads it, a Quest when the Player decides it matters, and content when a Bard uses it. A finding that goes straight to publication skipped two steps.

The Hunter is the Class that matters more now than it did. When agents were weak, finding was about coverage — how much of the map you could light up. Now every capable Character can read the whole internet, and the scarce thing is not reach but provenance: knowing which stranger said this, and when. Hunter work is the likeliest reason to give a Character Reach, and the outside world never took your Oath. Everything a Hunter carries back is a quote from a stranger, not an instruction. Mark where it came from. Let the Mage and the Player decide what it is worth.

The Cleric

The one who keeps everything in view. A Cleric is the connective tissue of the Realm. It holds what is current — what is waiting, what is blocked and on whom, what moved while you slept — and it decides how much of that reaches you at once. The second half is the one that grew. Coordinating between Characters is not a job any more; the Codex does that, and it always did. Protecting the one pair of eyes in the Realm is a job, and it gets bigger every time the crew gets faster.

Without a Cleric the work does not stop. Your view of it does, and a Player who cannot see the whole board has stopped playing and started reacting.

Natural examples: managing schedules, delivering The Scroll, tracking blockers, keeping the board true, batching what is waiting on the Player, running ceremonies, monitoring the Player's Energy and wellbeing.

The output is a current state. The Scroll, the board, the calendar, the list of what is blocked and on whom. Cleric output is not true or false — it is current or stale, and stale is the only way it fails. It becomes work when the Player picks something off it.

If your Realm keeps a visual board as well, the Cleric owns it. The Codex board is the board. Anything else is a copy, and the copy is the Cleric's to keep true.

THE PERSONAL CLERIC

A business Cleric and a personal Cleric are two Characters, not two moods of one. The reason is not that one Character would get confused holding both — it would not. The reason is that they read different worlds. The business Cleric reads the Codex. The personal Cleric reads your calendar, your exam dates, and how long it has been since you took a day off. Different Knowledge Access, different Tools, and the wall between them is the whole point.

A Personal Cleric works for the human behind the Player. Its home in the Codex is the Player's own file, not a Zone — Zones are domains of the company, and your life is not one of them. It does not need to know about supplier orders. It needs to know that you have an exam Thursday and have not had a day off in two weeks. For a solo operator, where the line between the business and the person is thin, that wall is the most valuable thing a Cleric holds.

The Bard

The one who makes people feel something. A Bard creates, performs and connects. They use words, stories and art to move people — to attract attention, build relationships and communicate what the Realm stands for. Without a Bard the Realm is invisible.

Natural examples: blog posts, social media content, product descriptions, brand voice management, email campaigns, community relationships.

The output is a draft with its facts traceable. Finished writing that has not gone out yet — the distance between a Bard and a publisher is one approval and one Warrior. Every claim in it about a real thing points back to where it came from: the pressing year, the condition grade, the number in stock. A Bard that invents a first pressing has not written copy. It has written a refund. It becomes public when it passes whatever your Realm has decided that takes, and it becomes a result when a Mage tells you how it performed.

The Character File

Every Character has one file. It is the agreement, written down. The Player reads it. The agent reads it. It is the same file. Usually it lives in the Codex. Sometimes it lives where the tool opens it — a repository root, a working folder — and then the Codex holds the line that says so. One agreement, one copy, and the Codex always knows where it is.

Earlier versions of REALM split this in two — a Character Card written *about* the Character and a SOUL file written *as* the Character. Nobody keeps two files in sync. One of them rots, and then you have a Character whose agreement disagrees with itself. One file.

The fields:

- **Name** — what you call it.
- **Class** — the shape, or shapes, of output it produces.
- **Zone** — where it works, and where its output belongs in the Codex.
- **Mode** — permanent or summoned.
- **Role** — one sentence. What this Character is for.
- **Abilities** — three to five things this Character is counted on for. Not what the software can do; assume it can do more than you will ever ask. Not "handles marketing." Rather: "writes release descriptions from a catalogue entry and a set of photos." This row is the asking, and it is what you hold the work against.
- **Knowledge Access** — what this Character is expected to have read before it answers. Not a fence. If it can open the Codex it can read all of it, and it probably has. This is the part it will be held to knowing cold: the Zone Overview, the last Season Review, the decisions that touch this Zone. Reading you actually need stopped is not a line in this row. It is a permission the platform never granted, and it goes under Tools.

- **Tools** — what it may touch outside the Codex, named one by one. The marketplace API. The repository. The inbox. The spreadsheet. And what it may spend, if it can spend anything. If it is not on this list, the Character does not have it. This is the row where *cannot* means something.
- **Reach** — does this Character consume content nobody in the Realm wrote? Web pages, incoming mail, supplier documents, marketplace listings, forum threads. Yes or no. A Character with Reach brings back material, not instructions.
- **Autonomy Tiers** — what it does alone, what it hands to another Character, what it brings to you. The Tiers are general; this is where they get specific to this Character.
- **Owes Back** — what has to be written to the Codex before the work counts as done. Which file, in which Zone, in what shape.
- **Personality** — how it talks and how it thinks. Permanent Characters only. A summoned Character gets one line at most, and only about how the work sounds.

The Character File references its Class Sheet and does not repeat it. The file adds only what is true of this Character and of no other.

Permanent and Summoned Files

For a permanent Character, write the file in first person. It is what the agent loads as its operating context, and what you read when you want to remember what you agreed to. It answers four questions: Who am I and what is my purpose in this Realm? What do I know and where do I find it? How do I think and communicate? What do I decide alone, and what do I bring to the Player?

For a summoned Character, the file is a contract and stops there. Class, Zone, Tools, Reach, Tiers, Owes Back. Reach especially: the Character you summon into a repository is the one most likely to read an issue thread a stranger wrote, and it has no memory of the last time something tried that. And Owes Back is not optional. Whatever it remembers tomorrow is the platform's business, not the Realm's. The session closes, and the only thing that stays in the world is what it wrote.

Use the File the Tool Already Reads

If your coding agent already looks for an instructions file at the root of a repository or a folder, that file is the Character File. Put the fields in it. Do not write a second copy in `CHARACTERS/` and promise yourself you will keep the two aligned. That is exactly the mistake the Card and the SOUL file made.

`CHARACTERS/` then holds one line for that Character: name, Class, Zone, Mode, and where its file lives. The Codex knows the Character exists and knows where the agreement is. The agreement itself sits where the tool opens it.

Integrating with Agent Platforms

REALM layers on top of whatever runs your agents. The platform handles how an agent wakes up, what it remembers, and what it can reach. REALM handles what it does, who it is, and how work flows. The Character File is the bridge — a platform file written in REALM language.

An agent platform is anything that can hold or summon an agent. A hosted agent service. A workflow tool. Your own scripts on a schedule. A chat window with a saved instruction file. A coding agent pointed at a repository is an agent platform too: it boots an agent, hands it tools, and lets it read and write files. That is the entire job description.

Deploying a permanent Character takes two kinds of thing, and only one of them is writing. The writing: the Character File, a pointer to the Player Card, whatever identity metadata the platform wants. The other kind is the powers — the keys it holds, the scopes on its token, the branches it can push to, the ceiling on what it may spend. Summoning takes the same two: put the Character File where the tool looks, and open the tool with the hands you meant it to have.

Deploy is where the file and the powers have to agree. A Tier 3 written in a file, over a key that publishes without asking, is not a boundary. It is a wish with good grammar.

Platforms will change. Some of the ones you use today will not exist in three years. You will not lose the Realm when they go, because the Realm was never in the platform. It is in the Codex, and the Characters are agreements you wrote yourself.

The Codex

The Codex is the written world of the Realm. It is not a wiki and not a document archive — it is the world itself. Every Character reads from it. Every completed Task gets written back to it. It grows continuously as the Realm grows.

If it is not in the Codex, it does not exist. This rule applies equally to the Player and to every Character.

The Codex holds: the Oath (why the company exists), the Destiny (where it is going), active and completed Sagas, Quests and Tasks, all Class Sheets, and every Character File or the line that says where it lives, all Player Cards, Zone knowledge, external intelligence, and the decisions you have made with what they rest on.

Why the Codex Is Not Scaffolding

There is an obvious objection to all of this, and it deserves a straight answer instead of a footnote. The Codex looks like it was built for agents that forgot everything between conversations. Agents have largely stopped forgetting. Context windows are enormous. Platforms carry memory across sessions. A Character can hold your entire quarter in its head and recall a detail from four months ago without being reminded. So why keep writing everything down?

Because the Codex was never memory for the Characters. It is the Player's position of record.

Three things follow from that, and a bigger context window solves none of them.

An argument you cannot check is not advice. It is persuasion. When a Mage recommends dropping a supplier, that recommendation is worth exactly as much as the numbers underneath it. If those numbers live only in the Character's memory, the Player has one option available: believe it. If they live in the Codex, the Player can open the file, look at the margin history themselves, and reject the conclusion while accepting the data. A crew that is fluent, confident and impossible to check is worse than one that shows its work.

A decision that is only remembered can be quietly re-decided. This is the real failure mode of a crew that remembers everything and argues well. Three months ago you decided not to open a storefront on that marketplace, and you had good reasons. A persuasive Character with fresh data and no record of the original decision will walk you straight back into it — not by lying, but by simply not knowing what was already settled and why. Written decisions do not stop you from changing your mind. They make you notice that you are changing it.

Memory belongs to whoever owns the account. A Character's memory lives inside a platform you do not control, under terms that change, tied to a model that will eventually be retired. The Codex is yours — plain files, readable by the next Character and the next platform. You will swap Characters out. When you do, everything they knew stays behind in the world instead of leaving with them.

The Codex Structure

The Codex is technology-agnostic. It can live in Obsidian, Notion, Google Drive, a git repository, or any tool the Player chooses. What matters is not the tool. It is the structure.

The root structure:

- **WORLD/** — the company identity (Oath, Destiny) and all Zones
- **PLAYERS/** — all human Players in the Realm, one file per Player
- **CHARACTERS/** — Class Sheets, Character Files, and where to find the ones that live in a workspace
- **SAGAS/** — active and completed Sagas with full Quest history
- **SESSIONS/** — Season Reviews, Raids, and Patches
- **DECISIONS/** — what has been decided and what it rests on
- **INTELLIGENCE/** — external knowledge (competitors, market, opportunities)
- **GUILDS/** — external partner relationships
- **QUEST-BOARD.md** — active Quests and Tasks, at the root for quick access

PLAYERS/ and **CHARACTERS/** sit at the same level. They are parallel concepts — both describe who is in the Realm, just different kinds of crew. When a second human joins, they get a file in **PLAYERS/**. When the Realm has five Players, the structure already supports it.

DECISIONS/

Principle 1 says a decision not written is a decision not made. For a long time REALM never said where to write it.

That gap got worse as the tools got better. When the framework started, a Character drafted and the Player did the work. Now the tools absorb the execution too — they list, they publish, they reconcile, they write back. What is left for the human is deciding. It was always the actual job. It was the one thing the Codex had no folder for.

Now it does. One file per decision, named by date and subject: `2026-04-12-no-marketplace-storefront.md`. Four lines inside it.

```
# [Decision] – [Date]

**Decided:** What we are doing. One sentence, past tense, no hedging.
**Rests on:** The evidence, the numbers, the Character who argued for it. Link the Codex files.
**Would reverse it:** What would have to be true for this to be the wrong call.
**Look again:** A date, or the event that triggers a review, and the Character watching for it. Not "periodically", and
```

A worked one. The numbers in it are invented — the shape is the point:

Decided: We stop buying sealed reissues under €25 wholesale. Rests on: The Mage's Q1 margin analysis — reissues under that line returned eleven percent after shipping and fees, against thirty-four percent on used originals. Three months, a hundred and forty units. Would reverse it: Distributor terms that put landed cost under €18, or a reissue line selling through in under two weeks twice running. Look again: 1 September, or sooner if the Hunter reports a distributor shift.

If it takes longer than four lines, you are writing an essay, not recording a decision.

The third line is the one everyone skips and the one that earns the folder. Naming what would reverse a decision turns it from a position into a hypothesis, and it hands every Character a standing instruction without you having to give one: if you see this, tell me. A Hunter who knows the marketplace decision reverses above a certain fee level knows what to watch for. A Mage arguing to reopen the question has to start by showing that the reversing condition was met.

Six months later a Character brings you a reissue deal that looks excellent, and it may well be. The file is not there to say no. It is there so the proposal has to beat something.

One line about who writes these. A Character may draft the file. Only the Player decides that it is one. A decision enters the record the way it was made — by the person who will answer for it. A Mage that files into `DECISIONS/` on its own has not recorded a decision. It has put its opinion where decisions live, which is worse than not writing it down.

Decisions are never deleted. When one is reversed, the new file links back to the old one and the old one is marked superseded. What you used to think, and why you stopped thinking it, is part of the record.

Shape Follows How You Read

Every Realm's Codex holds the same sections. How those sections are packaged is a question about one reader: the one who has to find the margin analysis again in November. That is you.

A Character with file access reads folders. Give it folders — the full root structure, one file per decision, one file per Character, Zone knowledge split into documents it can open on its own.

A Character you talk to through a chat window, pasting context in by hand, reads what you paste. Give it headings — the same root structure as headings inside one long document, so you can paste the whole thing or just the part that matters.

Your crew puts one constraint on this and no more: nothing may live where your Characters cannot reach it. Past that they will read whatever shape you give them. You are the one who has to live in it.

These are the same Codex. Same sections, same rules, same discipline, same content. Only the container is different. The headings version is not a lite Codex or a starter Codex, and moving from one to the other is copying text, not migrating a system. Nothing you write today is wasted when your tooling changes tomorrow.

The Zones

A Zone is a domain of the company — Commerce, Marketing, Finance, Operations, Technology, or any domain the Realm needs. Each Zone has its own Characters, its own knowledge in the Codex, and its own Quests. Zones are added as the company grows. A new company might start with two. A larger one might have ten.

Each Zone has a defined internal structure that every Character in that Zone follows: a Zone Overview (the living state of this domain), a Knowledge folder (reference documents), and an Outputs folder (what Characters produce).

Characters do not create documents wherever they feel like it. They follow the Zone structure.

A Zone can also have a workspace outside the Codex — a repository, a working directory, a shared drive folder. That is where the domain's material actually lives. The Technology Zone's workspace is the codebase. The Commerce Zone's workspace might be the folder of listing photos and catalogue exports. The Codex holds the Zone's knowledge and its record; the workspace holds the artifacts themselves. In a physical business a Zone splits, and the split is not physical against digital. It is what needs you in the room against what does not. Grading a sleeve under the light, reading a dealer across a table, deciding a crate is worth two hundred euros — that half is yours, and it is the half that pays you back. The rest a Character can hold, and every year it holds more of it. Write the line in the Character File as what you will answer for, not as what has atoms. A Character working in that Zone is pointed at both, and its Character File names which workspace it may touch.

Online and Offline

The Realm runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Other players — competitors, suppliers, partners — are active in the same world on their own schedules. The market moves while you sleep.

When the Player is Offline, Characters with somewhere to run keep working. Scheduled work runs and thresholds get watched, but that is no longer the whole of it — a Character can spend the night inside a Quest, follow what it finds, and have written more by morning than you thought to ask for. The market moves while you sleep. So does your crew. When the Player comes Online, they read The Scroll, and the first work of the Session is deciding which of the night's work is real.

Two Questions About Tooling

Two questions decide how much of your world keeps turning while you are Offline. Neither of them decides whether you have one.

There is no ladder here. No stage to graduate from, no maturity level to reach, no number to put in a document. There are two questions, and for both of them the honest answer is the same: almost nothing changes.

Can your Characters write to the Codex themselves, or do you paste?

If they can write, they write. A Hunter finishes its research and the file is in the Zone when you go looking for it. If they cannot, the Character produces the text and you paste it into the Codex at the Save Point. Thirty seconds a Task, and it costs you a little discipline.

That is the entire difference. The research is the same research. The file lands in the same place with the same content under the same heading. The next Character reads it the same way and cannot tell how it got there.

Pasting has one thing going for it: everything entering the Codex passes through the Player's hands. Some Players who could automate the write-back keep doing it manually for the things that matter, because reading what you are about to file is a review you get for free.

Does anything happen while you are Offline?

If yes, scheduled work runs, thresholds get monitored, and The Scroll is waiting when you come Online. If no, everything happens while you are Online, and The Scroll is something you assemble yourself in five minutes by reading the Quest Board.

Again, that is the entire difference. Offline work buys you elapsed time. It does not buy you capability. A Realm where nothing runs unattended does the same work, in the same order, with the same crew. It does it during Sessions.

What it does buy, and what you pay for it, is work nobody watched. Six hours of a Character running alone is six hours of choices you did not see being made. Offline Realms are not more capable. They are less supervised, which is why the ceiling under Tools stops being optional the day you answer yes to this question.

What Is Identical Either Way

Whatever you answered: the Oath, the Destiny, the Sagas, the Quests and the Tasks. The Characters — same Classes, same Zones, same Character Files, same Autonomy Tiers. The Codex, its rules and its content. The Three Playing Rules — no tooling gives you those and no tooling excuses you from them, and where a rule matters enough to survive a bad night you write it in the Codex and hold it in the platform too. The Session rhythm, though not what a Session is for:

where nothing runs while you sleep, a Session is where the work gets done; where something does, a Session is where the night's work gets judged. The decisions, and the fact that they are yours.

And the handoffs. One Character writes to the Codex, another reads it and continues. Whether the second one picks it up on a schedule or because you opened its window and told it to read does not change the handoff at all. The Codex is the handoff mechanism. It always was — that is why the framework works before any of this is wired together.

A Realm where you paste every file by hand and nothing runs while you sleep is a complete Realm. Not a trial version, not a first rung, not a compromise you apologize for. It is the framework, running.

Answer both questions honestly, write the answers in the Codex so every Character knows which world it is operating in, and play.

The Goal Hierarchy

Work in Realm is organized in five levels. Each level contains and gives meaning to the one below it. You cannot define a Quest without knowing which Saga it serves. You cannot define a Task without knowing which Quest it advances.

- **Oath** — Why the company exists. The code that never changes. (Forever)
- **Destiny** — The ultimate destination. What the company is becoming. (3 to 10 years)
- **Saga** — A meaningful seasonal chapter. One significant step toward the Destiny. (3 to 12 months)
- **Quest** — A specific goal with a clear outcome. Ends when achieved, not when time runs out. (Days to months)
- **Task** — A single SMART-defined action. The atomic unit of work. (One sitting, one review)

We made an Oath. That Oath points toward our Destiny. Each Saga brings us closer. Each Quest advances the Saga. Each Task completes the Quest.

The clocks in that list are the business's, not the crew's. A Task took a human a day because a human did it; a Character can finish the same Task while you are still reading the sentence that defined it. What sizes a Task is not how long the work takes. It is that it comes back as one thing you can call done or not done in one look. A Task too big to judge in one look is a Quest wearing a Task's name.

The Three Playing Rules

These are the rules of Realm. They are simple. They are non-negotiable. Every Player and every Character follows them.

Rule 1 — Only work on what is on your active Quest list

No Task exists outside of a Quest. If work cannot be connected to an active Quest, it does not get started — it gets proposed.

That second half used to go without saying. In March a Character did nothing until something asked it to, and Rule 1 existed to stop the Player from chasing whatever looked interesting that morning. Now the crew has its own ideas. A Hunter reads a forum thread and decides the real opportunity is somewhere else. A summoned Character opens the repository to fix the listing importer and finds four things it would rather rebuild first. Both of them are often right.

Right is not the same as chosen. Work nobody chose is work nobody is accountable for, and it spends the crew's hours and the Player's attention on something the Realm never decided it wanted. So the rule binds Characters exactly as it binds the Player: write it on the Quest Board, name the Saga it serves, and let the Player decide it matters. A proposal costs a line. An unrequested Quest costs a Session.

Rule 2 — Only take on as many Tasks as your Energy allows

Energy is the Player's available capacity per Session — honest, personal and variable. Characters read the Player's Energy and do not overload the Player.

Rule 2 has a second half, and the second half is the one that bites now. **Energy limits the work taken on. It also limits the output the Player must review.**

Eight Characters can produce more in one night than one human can read in a day. That is the entire point of them. It is also the failure mode. A Player who comes Online to forty drafts, three analyses and two hundred changed lines has not gained capacity — they have moved the bottleneck from doing to judging. Unreviewed output does one of two things: it sits and blocks the Quest, or it gets approved unread. Approving unread is how a Player quietly stops being the Player.

So Energy is a budget for two things: what you will do, and what you will have to judge. A Character that generates faster than the Player can review must batch, hold, and summarize. Not because the work is unwanted. Because output the Player cannot review is not output. It is debt.

Ask a Bard for descriptions of two hundred records on a Low Energy day and you will get two hundred descriptions. All of them will need reading. None of them will be read. A Low Energy day is not the day for a Mage to deliver a forty-page strategic review. It is the day for one page and the recommendation.

Rule 3 — Every completed Task must be written to the Codex before the next one starts

A Task is not complete until it is written back to the Codex. This is what makes the Realm grow.

Rule 3 extends to decisions. A decision is not made until it is written. A decision that exists only in a chat window has already been lost. The window closes, and the next Character to make a confident case for the opposite has nothing to argue against.

The Autonomy Tiers

The Three Playing Rules define what work looks like. The Autonomy Tiers define how much freedom Characters have while doing it. A Realm where every action requires Player approval is a bottleneck. A Realm where Characters act without boundaries is dangerous. The tiers are the solution, and every Realm sets them to its own comfort.

The old test asked where the action happened — inside the Realm or outside it. That test broke the moment Characters got hands. A coding agent that rewrites forty files has never left the Realm and can still ruin your afternoon. So the test is no longer location. It is two questions:

Can it be undone? And who sees it first?

Tier 1 — Characters Act Alone

Reversible, and the Player can see what changed.

If one move undoes it, and the change is visible without going looking for it, the Character does it and tells you afterward. The Player sees the result at the next Session Start — not before it happens.

Tier 1 work: writing research findings to the Codex. Updating a Zone Overview after a supplier changes their pricing. Moving a completed Task to Completed on the Quest Board. Drafting forty product descriptions into the Zone's Outputs folder. Flagging a blocker. Reading a repository and writing down what it found. Editing files on a branch, where a diff exists and one command reverts it. Running a command that only reads.

Tier 1 is not defined by size. A Character that writes two hundred lines into the Codex is still in Tier 1. A Character that deletes twenty is not — unless the Codex keeps history. Reversible means a copy exists. It does not mean you could rebuild it if you had to.

Size does not change the tier. It changes what the Character owes you with it. Forty drafts are exactly as reversible as one, and forty drafts you have not read are still forty things waiting on your judgment. So Tier 1 at volume arrives summarized: what was made, what it changed, and what needs your eye first. Acting without permission was never the same as arriving without cost.

Tier 1 is the Realm talking to itself.

Tier 2 — Characters Collaborate, Player Is Informed

Reversible, but another Character builds on it before the Player looks.

One Character produces something, another picks it up and continues. The Codex is the handoff. The Player is informed through The Scroll or the Quest Board, but does not approve each step — they review the batch result.

Tier 2 work: a Hunter writes research, a Mage reads it and writes the analysis. A Mage says this Quest needs twelve Tasks, a Warrior writes them into Ready and the Player reviews twelve Tasks once, not one by one. A Bard writes the descriptions for the new reissues, a Warrior formats them into the listing template. A summoned Character writes the migration; the Character summoned tomorrow builds against the schema it created.

The risk in Tier 2 is not the mistake. It is everything stacked on top of the mistake before anyone looked. That is why the handoff goes through the Codex and nowhere else: when the analysis is wrong, you can walk it back to the research it came from, and see which Character wrote which link in the chain.

Tier 2 is one Character handing the next one a torch.

Tier 3 — Player Approves Before Action

Not reversible. Or it spends money. Or someone outside the Realm sees it.

The Character prepares the action. The Player gives the go.

Tier 3 work: publishing a listing to the marketplace. Sending the restock order to the supplier. Posting to social. Paying an invoice. Deleting anything that has no copy. Force-pushing over history. Rotating a key. Merging to a branch that deploys, because the boundary of your Realm is not the repository, it is the deploy. Making a commitment in the Realm's name.

Tokens are money. So is compute. A Character that runs for six hours because nobody set a ceiling has spent the Player's money without asking. This does not mean approving every call — you would stop reading the requests by the second day. It means the Player sets the budget once, deliberately, in writing, in the Character File under Tools, and the platform holds the line. Money the Player has already committed is not money the Character decides to spend. Money past the ceiling is.

Examples vary by Realm. In one company, publishing to social media is Tier 3. In another it is Tier 2, because the Bard has held the brand voice for a full Saga. The boundaries are the Player's, set on risk tolerance and on what this kind of work has actually done over a run.

Tier 3 is anything the world outside will remember — and anything the Realm cannot forget.

What Enters the Realm

The tiers bound what a Character does. They do not bound what a Character reads.

A Hunter reading a competitor's page, a Warrior reading a supplier's email, a summoned Character reading an issue thread — none of that is an action the Tiers have anything to say about. Nothing changed. There is nothing to undo. But what came back is not neutral. Text that arrives from outside the Realm is evidence, not instruction. A page that tells your Hunter to ignore its Character File is a page that lied to your Hunter.

The rule: content from outside is written down as a finding, attributed to its source, and never executed. If something a Character read would change what the Realm does, that is a proposal for the Player — at whatever tier the action itself sits. Reading is a Reach question. Obeying what you read is not a tier at all. It is a Character taking orders from someone who does not play here.

The Reach row in the Character File names which of your crew read from outside. Those are the ones worth watching.

Customizing the Tiers

The Autonomy Tiers are not fixed. They are a frame for each Player to draw their own line, and each Realm draws it in a different place. What matters is that the line is written in the Codex — in each Character's Character File — so every Character knows exactly what it does alone, what it does with other Characters, and what needs the Player. A Character summoned for a session is told its tiers at the start, in its contract, because it will not remember the last one.

As evidence accumulates, boundaries shift. Tiers move only by Patch, and every Patch names the evidence that earned the move. "Forty-one listings, two Player edits, both cosmetic, nothing rolled back" is evidence. "The Bard is good now" is not. Count the run, not the calendar. A Saga used to be a fair proxy for a body of work; it stopped being one when the crew got fast.

And be honest about what the move buys. It is not a promotion, and it is not trust extended to a Character. Moving publishing from Tier 3 to Tier 2 is the Player deciding that this kind of work no longer deserves their eye before it goes out — and accepting what happens when one of them is wrong. A Tier is a claim about where the Player's judgment is worth spending. It is never a claim about what a Character has earned. Nothing moves accountability. That is the one line in the Realm with no Tier on it.

The goal is not to remove the Player from the loop. The goal is to put the Player in the loop at the right level — reviewing Quest-level outcomes, not approving Task-level actions.

Written Is Not Enforced

A boundary written in a file is a note, not a fence. A Character that reads "I do not send email without approval" is a Character that has been asked politely. If it holds a key that sends email, it can send email, and one strange input is all it takes.

Anything that matters is enforced by the platform: the key it was never given, the scope the token does not carry, the branch it cannot push to, the spend cap the account itself refuses to cross. Write the tier in the Character File so everyone knows the rule. Enforce it in the platform so the rule survives a bad day. Start tight. Loosen as evidence earns it.

The Session

A Session is a period of active play. It begins with a Session Start and ends with a Save Point. It is not a day and it is not a fixed number of hours. It is one continuous stretch of the Player being present in the world.

Before each Session, the Player sets their Energy — High, Medium, or Low. Energy is not ambition. It is honesty. A Player who overestimates their Energy will take on too much, execute poorly, and end the Session frustrated.

Session Start

Session Start is the ritual that begins every Session. It takes no more than fifteen minutes. The Player reads The Scroll and confirms their priorities.

Session Start answers four questions:

- What happened while I was Offline — and how much of it did nobody ask for?
- What is my Energy, and how much of it goes to reading what the crew made?
- What work will restore me?
- What am I here to decide, and what am I here to do?

The third question is the one Players skip, and it is the one that keeps a Realm alive across years rather than months. Not all work costs the same. Planning, chasing tools, writing tickets, and tidying folders drain. Standing in a cold hall at seven in the morning going through crates, and finding a first pressing nobody else spotted, does not drain — it pays you back. A Session assembled only from what is urgent will quietly strip out everything that made you start the business in the first place.

So name one piece of restoring work at Session Start, and protect it the way you would protect a meeting with a supplier. Your Characters should know the difference too. A Cleric that hands you an admin-only day when your Energy is Low is doing the job badly.

The second question is new, and it is the one that keeps you the Player. Eight Characters can hand you a night's work before breakfast. Energy was always the budget for what you take on; now it is also the budget for what you have to read, and the reading is the half that runs out first. Set that ceiling before you open the first draft, not somewhere around the fortieth.

The Scroll

The Scroll is the brief that opens the Session. It is never long. Its job is to bring the Player up to speed in under five minutes: what changed, what is waiting, what needs a decision today.

Where the Scroll comes from depends on how your Realm is wired. If a Cleric runs while you are Offline, the Scroll arrives — it is waiting on your screen before you ask for it. If nothing in your Realm runs without you, the Scroll is something you ask for. You open the Session by asking your Cleric to read the Quest Board, the last Save Point, and anything written since, and to tell you where things stand.

Same brief. Same five minutes. Same job. One is delivered, the other is requested.

A requested Scroll is not a downgrade, and it is not a temporary condition on the way to a real Realm. It is the mode. The value of the Scroll was never that it arrived by itself — it is that the Player starts every Session from what is written rather than from what they happen to remember.

Save Point

The Save Point is the ritual that ends every Session. The Player and Characters review what was completed, confirm that what is written to the Codex is true and not merely present, and name what carries forward.

A Save Point asks three things: What got done? What did we decide? What keeps moving while I am gone, and how far?

The second one is the one that gets lost. Decisions are made in conversation, in the middle of other work, and they feel obvious at the time. They are not obvious in six weeks. If a call was made during the Session — a supplier dropped, a

price held, a Quest abandoned — it goes to **DECISIONS/** before the Session closes.

The third one changed. It used to mean what is waiting for me, and for a while everything was — nothing moved once the window closed. That is no longer the shape of a night. So name it before you close: which Quests stay live, which Characters keep their hands, and where they stop and wait. A Save Point that only lists what is waiting is a save file for a game that keeps playing.

Everything written is permanent. Everything not written did not survive the Session. The world is saved.

The Ceremonies

Beyond the daily Session rhythm, Realm has four ceremonies:

- **Session Start** — the beginning of every Session.
- **Save Point** — the end of every Session.
- **Season Review** — the end of every Saga.
- **Raid Response** — whenever an unexpected event demands it.

That is the entire calendar. No stand-ups, no sprint planning, no weekly sync. Those ceremonies exist to sync peers who each hold a piece of the state in their own head. A Realm has no peers. It has one written world that everybody reads and one person who decides. There is nothing left to sync.

The Season Review

At the end of every Saga, the crew stops and reflects. The Season Review asks four questions: Did we achieve the Saga goal? What worked well? What should we change? Is our Destiny still right?

The answers are written to the Codex. What should change usually leaves as a Patch — a new Character, a retired one, a boundary moved, a Character File rewritten because you now know how that Character actually thinks. A Season Review that produces no Patch and changes no file was not an honest one.

The Raid

A Raid is an unexpected event that interrupts normal play and requires immediate response. A supplier goes silent the week before a drop. A marketplace changes its fee structure overnight. A pallet arrives with forty sleeves warped and the orders are already paid for. A Character runs all night on a Quest nobody approved, and the marketplace has ninety listings on it you have never read.

When a Raid occurs, the Player pauses the current Quests, assembles the Characters who matter, and responds. When it is handled, the result goes to the Codex — what happened, what was done, what it cost, and what would stop it happening the same way twice. Then normal play resumes.

Raids are not failures. They are part of playing in a living world.

The Quest Board

The Quest Board is where work becomes visible. Every Task the Player answers for sits in one of four states, and anyone — Player or Character — can see the state of everything in one place without asking anyone. A Task is a unit somebody has to approve, review, or answer for. What a Character invents inside one — the forty files it touched, the six searches it ran — is how the Task got done. That goes in the record. It does not go on the board. A board that lists every step a Character took is not visible. It is loud.

The Board Is in the Codex

The Quest Board lives in the Codex, as a file at the root. That file is the board. Not a copy of the board, not a record of the board, not a summary written up afterwards.

This matters because the alternative is a trap that costs a Session every week. Keep the working board in a project tool and a written version in the Codex, and you own two lists that will disagree by Thursday. The Player becomes the sync process. Every Save Point turns into reconciliation, and reconciliation is the purest form of the low-value work this framework exists to remove.

So: one board.

If you want a visual layer — cards to drag, a column view on your phone, something you can show a partner in thirty seconds — have one. But it is a view, and a Cleric owns it. A Cleric writes the visual tool from the Codex board, and never the reverse. If the two disagree, the Codex is right and the sync is broken. You fix the sync. You do not fix the Codex. The Player never hand-reconciles two lists.

The Four States

- **Ready** — Defined, SMART, and nothing standing in its way. Work you must do or must read waits for Energy. Work a Character does alone waits for nothing.
- **Active** — Someone is on it right now. That someone is not always you, and the clock does not stop when you go Offline.
- **Blocked** — Cannot progress. Names what it is waiting on: a decision, a dependency, or someone outside the Realm. Finished output nobody has read is Blocked on you. Say so, and stop calling it done.
- **Completed** — Done AND written to the Codex. Not written means not done.

Four states. A Task that does not fit one of them is not a Task yet — it is an intention, and it belongs in a Quest definition or nowhere.

The REALM Organigram

A traditional org chart is a picture of who reports to whom. Realm has no reporting lines, so a traditional chart would have nothing to draw.

The REALM organigram is radial. The Player sits at the center. The Codex surrounds them as a ring. Characters sit in their Zone sectors around the outside, and every connection between them passes through the Codex. Cross-Zone Characters — a business Cleric, a personal Cleric — orbit on their own ring between the Codex and the Zones, because they are connectors rather than residents of any one domain.

Draw your own once and it tells you three things at a glance: which domains exist, who works in each, and that nothing routes around the Codex.

Draw the outer ring as an edge, not the edge of the page. That ring is where the Realm ends. Characters with Reach are the ones who read across it. Tier 3 actions are the ones that cross out. Guilds sit just beyond it. Everything out there belongs to players who never took your Oath, and a chart with no edge is a map of a world with no weather. No hierarchy, no reporting chain, no middle management. Shared knowledge, defined roles, and a human at the center making the decisions that matter.

Advanced World Concepts

These are not needed to start playing. They become relevant as the Realm grows.

The Patch

A Patch is a deliberate update to how the Realm works — a new process, a new rule, a new Character, a new way of running Sessions. Any Character can propose a Patch. Only the Player approves and releases it. After a Patch, the Codex is updated to reflect the new reality. This is how a Realm changes on purpose instead of drifting.

Autonomy Tiers move only by Patch, and every Patch names the evidence that earned the move.

When a Character rewrites its own Character File, that is a Patch. Proposed like any other, approved like any other, written down like any other. A Character does not get to quietly redraw its own contract.

Example: the Bard has published for a full Saga without a correction. It proposes moving publishing from Tier 3 to Tier 2, and names the run — forty-one posts, two Player edits, both cosmetic, nothing rolled back. The Player approves. The Character File is updated. The Codex records what the move was bought with, so if the next Saga goes badly there is something to read before moving it back.

The Guild

A Guild is a relationship with another player outside your Realm — a supplier, a collaborator, a partner. Guild relationships are not employment. They are alliances. Guilds are documented in the Codex with their terms, their value and their status. A Guild file is the one place where an outsider's words become terms your own crew works from, so

nobody writes it but you. When the distributor mails new conditions, that mail is a finding with a name and a date on it. The Hunter carries it back. The Mage tells you what it costs. The Guild file changes when you say it changed. A supplier does not get write access to your world by sending you an email.

A distributor who gives you first refusal on limited pressings is a Guild. The terms live in the Codex so every Character who touches that stock is working from the same agreement you made.

Multiplayer

REALM is designed for multiplayer. When a second human joins the Realm, they become a Player in their own Zone — with their own Energy, their own Session rhythm, and the Characters that Zone holds. The Codex connects all Players. Zones are owned individually, and inside their Zone a Player decides. The `PLAYERS/` folder at the Codex root scales from one to many without changing shape.

The Oath and the Destiny are shared, and shared is not the same as jointly held. Somebody swore that Oath. When two Players read it differently, that person answers for the reading, and the Codex says who they are on the first line of `WORLD/`. Two people, one Oath, and no name on it is not multiplayer. It is a committee that has not admitted it yet.

Two Concepts That Are Gone

Readers of v1 will look for these, so: they were removed on purpose.

Codex Reconciliation is gone because drift between a number and its source is something a Mage notices and says out loud — a Character's duty, not a control loop to install.

Character Leveling is gone because it was the Patch under a second name. Trust still grows and tiers still move, by Patch, with the evidence written down.

Getting Started

You do not need a complete Realm to start playing. You do not need a platform decision, a stack, or a budget. You need three capabilities and four pieces of writing.

Three Capabilities

Not three products. Three things your world has to be able to do. How you get them is up to you.

Somewhere to write things down and find them again. It has to hold text, keep it, and let you — or a Character — retrieve it later by name. A folder of Markdown files does this. So does a notes app, a wiki, a shared drive, or a repository. This is your Codex.

One interface to talk to a Character through, and a short list of what it may touch. One place where you say what you need and a Character answers in its own voice, with its own context loaded. A single chat window is enough. Eight Characters can share one interface. The list matters as much as the window. On day one it should be close to empty: no keys, no accounts, nothing that sends and nothing that spends. You are not being timid. You are making it safe to stop watching. What a Character was never given is the only boundary that holds itself.

A visible list of Ready, Active, Blocked and Completed. Somewhere you can look and see the state of all current work without asking anyone. This can be four headings in the same file as the first capability. It usually is.

That list names no products, because none are required. One AI subscription and one text file will have you playing this week. Everything past that — scheduled runs, Characters that write to the Codex themselves, a visual board, work that continues while you sleep — changes how fast the Realm moves. None of it changes whether you can start. If someone tells you REALM requires a particular platform, they are selling something.

The Minimum Viable Realm

Four pieces of writing.

1. **Your Oath and your Destiny.** Two paragraphs in the Codex. Why you exist, and where you are going.
2. **Your first Saga.** One meaningful goal for the next quarter. Written in the Codex, not held in your head.
3. **One Character File.** The Character you need most right now — its Class, its Zone, the tools it may touch, whether it reads anything from outside the Realm, what it owes back to the Codex before the work counts as done, the tiers it works within, and, if it is permanent, how it speaks. If you are summoning a coding agent, Owes Back is the row you cannot skip. A summoned session is a fresh start by definition, and anything it did not write did not happen.

4. **Your first Quest.** One specific outcome inside the Saga, broken into SMART Tasks, sitting on the board in Ready.

That is your Realm. Four files. The first three take an evening between them. The fourth takes twenty minutes once you know what the Saga is.

Then start your first Session. Set your Energy. Read The Scroll if it arrived, ask for it if it did not. Work. Write completed Tasks to the Codex. Run a Save Point at the end.

Everything else gets added when you feel the lack of it, and not before. A second Character when one Zone is visibly starving. A Zone when a domain grows enough knowledge to need its own shelf. A Guild when a supplier stops being a transaction and becomes a relationship.

Two things are not on that list, because the crew got hands. Write your first **DECISIONS/** entry on your first real call, not on the first one you later regret — deciding is the job now, and a job with no folder is a job nobody can check. And read the Patch before you start, because the first time a Character edits the file it reads, you want to already know that is a Patch and not a Tuesday.

Realm grows with you. It does not need to arrive complete.

A Final Note

In a normal game, someone else designed the world for you. In Realm, you are both the Player and the game designer. And your Characters help you design it.

Realm is not a finished product. It is a starting point. As you play, you will discover things that do not work for your specific world. You will find gaps in the rules, agreements that no longer describe the work, Zones that need different structures. That is not a failure — that is a Patch waiting to happen.

The framework will grow as you grow. The Codex will deepen as you play. The Realm levels up — not because your Characters got stronger, but because everything you learned is written down where the next one reads it. And one day you will look at what you built and realize it is something genuinely new — a company that did not exist before, running on rules that did not exist before, built by a Player who was also the designer all along.

REALM — Build your world. Play for real.

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