

The GPU Buyer's Playbook

The prices, the arithmetic and the questions that expose a weak desk.
Written from live deal flow. Figures current September 2026.

What the market actually sells

A GPU server is 8 accelerators plus CPUs, memory, storage and network cards, and that is the unit suppliers quote, ship and rack. So 4,096 GPUs is 512 machines, and 512 machines is a power conversation, a cooling conversation and a freight plan before it is a purchase order. Current listed prices per 8-GPU node, from our own live inventory:

NVIDIA B300 HGX, new, US	\$563,000
NVIDIA B300 HGX, refurbished, US	\$530,000
NVIDIA H200 HGX, new, EU	\$395,000
NVIDIA H100 HGX, refurbished, US	\$240,000
NVIDIA A100 HGX, used, US	\$125,000
GB300 NVL72, 10-node L11 build, US	\$5,900,000

Rent or buy: the B300 arithmetic

A 3-year term is 26,280 hours. GPUaaS rates for B300 currently run about \$3.75 to \$4.50 per GPU-hour depending on scale, term, prepayment and how badly an operator needs an anchor tenant. Take the middle of that range and compare it against simply buying the same hardware.

Rent 1 node, 3 years at \$4.00/GPU-hour	\$840,960
Payable up front at 30% down	\$252,288
Buy the same node outright, new	\$563,000
Difference over 3 years	\$277,960
Which is, per node, per month	\$7,721
Same comparison at 512 nodes	\$430,571,520 rented vs \$288,256,000 bought

How to read that number

\$7,721 per node per month is the entire budget the rental premium buys you for colocation, power, cooling, networking and hands. If you can land a B300 node for less than that all-in, owning wins on cash alone, and in most markets it is not close. Two things flip it back. Utilisation, because purchase cost is fixed whatever you run while rental scales with hours, so at 40% utilisation the comparison inverts. And capital, because the rental asks \$252,288 up front where the purchase asks \$563,000. At the end of the term the rental leaves you with nothing. The purchase leaves an asset with a real floor: refurbished H100 nodes list at \$240,000 today, years into their life, which is the honest way to sight residual value.

The bill beyond the accelerator

Buyers negotiate the GPU line hardest and it is rarely the line that decides the project.

Budget these before the first quote, not after the decision.

Fabric and optics	Every node has multiple ports, each needing a transceiver at both ends, plus spares. The most underestimated line in AI infrastructure.
Power and cooling	Modern racks run into the tens of kilowatts and GB300-class racks exceed 120kW, which most halls cannot deliver or cool.
Storage	Fast enough to keep the accelerators fed, or you have bought expensive silicon that waits.
Freight, duties and import	At node weights and values this has its own lead time and belongs on the critical path.
Commissioning	The gap between hardware on site and hardware running jobs.

Landed cost, not ex-works

An ex-works price stops at the factory door. Between that door and your rack sit freight, insurance, export screening, classification, duties, import VAT and handling. Two quotes 10% apart on hardware can invert once landed, and the border is where buyers find out. If you have no registered entity in the destination country you will need an Importer of Record. Arranging one late is a common reason hardware sits at a border while the facility bill runs.

Six questions that expose any desk, including ours

Ask all six. The answers, and how long they take, tell you more than any price sheet.

1	Who pays you, and does any part of it sit inside my price?
2	Show me a line you turned down, and why.
3	What is my priority when capacity tightens?
4	Is this quote landed or ex-works, and what is missing from it?
5	Who do I actually contract with, you or the supplier?
6	What happens at the end of the term?

SSP is a buyer-side GPU procurement desk. We pressure-test price, lead time, terms and exit before you sign, and you contract directly with the supplier. Our compensation comes from the supply side under disclosed arrangements, so using the desk costs a buyer nothing directly. Prices are indicative, ex-works USD, and move with the market.

Live inventory and the desks: sspglobal.ai · supply@strategicsupplypartners.com.au