Stardance: funnel, cost, and weighted-project forecast

compared with Summer of Making 2025 and Flavortown

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Abstract

We trace three Hack Club programs from signup to a weighted project in the unified YSWS DB, compare them at the same elapsed day, overlay true spend, and forecast Stardance's final count. At day 102 Stardance has shipped more projects than either earlier program (5,355 vs 3,768 and 2,217) but has landed 982 approved projects (734 weighted) against 1,627 and 921, because 2,506 ship-certified, YSWS-reviewed projects are waiting on the final unified pass. Treating that pass as the pass-through it is meant to be, the base case is 4,576 weighted projects (45,762 approved hours; range 3,958 to 5,579). Stardance has already spent $457k, most of it on hardware before July; at a projected $585k final spend the base case costs $12.78 per weighted hour, against $6.06 for Summer of Making and $11.28 for Flavortown. If the unified pass keeps its September pace, Stardance ends near 910 weighted at $64 per hour.

4,576	734	2,506	$12.78
weighted projects, base case	weighted today (day 102 of 123)	projects waiting on the unified pass	per weighted hour at base case; $62.29 today

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1 Summary

A weighted project in the unified YSWS DB is approved hours divided by 10, exactly, in all three programs. Everything below is therefore an accounting of hours: hours tracked, hours shipped, hours certified, hours reviewed, hours landed, and dollars per hour landed.

At the same elapsed point, Stardance has produced more than either comparison program and landed less. On day 102 Summer of Making had 3,768 shipped projects and 1,627 approved; Flavortown had 2,217 shipped and 921

approved; Stardance has 5,355 shipped and 982 approved. Both earlier programs had converted about 46 percent of shipped hours into approved hours by day 102; Stardance is at 10.6 percent. The difference is not student output and not review capacity upstream. It is the unified-pass backlog: 2,506 projects that are ship-certified and through YSWS review, with adjusted hours already attached.

The unified pass does not change hours. Every Stardance row in the unified DB carries an override written by the Stardance app at sync time with the YSWS reviewer's adjustment. The 79 percent of logged hours that survive is decided inside Stardance's YSWS review. The model therefore treats the unified pass as a 100 percent pass-through and places the adjustment at the review stage.

On that basis the base case is 45,762 approved hours, about 4,900 approved projects and 4,576 weighted projects, with a range of 3,958 to 5,579. Stardance has spent $457k to date against $265k and $406k final for the earlier programs, and unlike them it spent most of it early: $115k before launch and $152k in July on hardware. Projecting $585k final spend, the base case costs $12.78 per weighted hour, about twice Summer of Making and slightly above Flavortown. The cost outcome is almost entirely a function of the unified pass: the same $585k buys $64 per hour at the current approval pace and $13 per hour if the backlog is cleared.

2 What each stage means

The funnel stages are the same for all three programs because the three apps share one codebase lineage (Summer of Making, then Flavortown, then Stardance). Table 1 defines each stage in the order a student passes through it.

Table 1: Stage definitions, in funnel order

Stage	*What counts*	*Where it comes from*
Email signups	An email address entered on the program landing page, before any account exists.	SoM email_signups; FT funnel_events (landing_email_submitted); SD materialized_all_signups. The unified DB's total_sign_ups is the Loops-based count of the same thing.
Accounts	A user record in the program app: the person logged in through Hack Club auth or Slack.	users table in each app.
Hackatime linked	The account is connected to Hackatime, the editor time tracker, so hours can be attributed.	SoM users.has_hackatime; FT user_identities; SD journey stage 6.
Users with tracked hours	At least one devlog carrying Hackatime time on a surviving project.	devlogs / post_devlogs joined to non-deleted projects.
Tracked hours	Sum of Hackatime time attached to devlogs on surviving projects. A devlog is a progress post the student writes; the app attaches the Hackatime time since the previous devlog.	duration_seconds on devlogs.
Users who shipped / shipped projects	The student pressed "ship": the project was submitted with a demo and repo for review. A project can ship more than once; the first ship event is counted.	ship_events / post_ship_events.

Stage	*What counts*	*Where it comes from*
Shipped project hours	Tracked hours on shipped projects.	devlog hours joined to shipped projects.
Ship-certified	A reviewer confirmed the shipped project runs and matches the demo. A ship that fails is "returned" (needs_changes) and the student may fix and re-ship.	SoM ship_certifications.judgement; FT/SD post_ship_events.certification_status.
YSWS-reviewed / submitted	The program's own YSWS reviewer checked the repo and the logged hours and set the hours to be paid; this is where hours are adjusted. Flavortown had no separate step.	SoM ysws_review_submissions; SD certification_ysws_reviews.reviewed_at.
Approved in unified DB	A row exists in the unified YSWS Projects DB with an approved date. The unified pass is the final check that the pipeline produced a sane record; it does not re-review.	approved_projects joined to ysws_name.
Approved hours; weighted projects	hours_spent on the unified row (for Stardance, written by the app from the YSWS-reviewed hours). Weighted projects = approved hours / 10.	approved_projects.hours_spent, ysws_weighted_project_contribution.
True spend	Money that left the program's HCB org tree for the outside world: direct card/ACH/wire spend, card grants to makers (including unspent balances), and internal payments for real costs such as postage. Transfers into personal author funds, intra-tree transfers and returns to HQ are excluded.	ysws-true-spend.duckdb, programs and spend_transactions (counted_as_spend).

3 Same-point comparison at day 102

Stardance started on 30 May 2026 and was 102 days in at the data pull. Table 2 places Summer of Making and Flavortown at their own day 102, counting only events timestamped before that point. Project counts exclude deleted projects in all three programs.

Table 2: The three programs at day 102 of their own calendars

Stage	*Summer of Making*	*Flavortown*	*Stardance (today)*
Elapsed	day 102 of 106	day 102 of 132	day 102 of 123
Calendar date	Sep 26 2025	Mar 31 2026	Sep 9 2026
Email signups (program app)	35,968	16,733	61,463
Accounts	23,869	10,866	60,326
Users with tracked hours	3,125	2,205	7,183
Tracked hours	89,167	51,472	139,683
Users who shipped	1,905	1,160	3,079

Stage	*Summer of Making*	*Flavortown*	*Stardance (today)*
Shipped projects	3,768	2,217	5,355
Shipped project hours	59,852	31,180	69,089
Ship-certified projects	2,782	n/a (no timestamp)	3,471
YSWS-reviewed / submitted	2,270	n/a	3,180
Approved in unified DB	**1,627**	**921**	**982**
Approved hours	**27,499**	**14,274**	**7,340**
Weighted projects	**2,750**	**1,427**	**734**
True spend to date	$110,800	$105,100	$457,000
Cost per weighted hour to date	$4.03	$7.36	$62.29
Approved projects / shipped projects	43.2%	41.5%	18.3%
Approved hours / shipped hours	45.9%	45.8%	10.6%
Approved hours / tracked hours	30.8%	27.7%	5.3%

Ship-certification and YSWS-submission timestamps exist for Summer of Making and Stardance but not for Flavortown. Signups are the apps' own email-signup tables so they can be cut by date; the unified DB figure is in Table 4. True spend to date is cumulative through elapsed week 14 (Section 7).

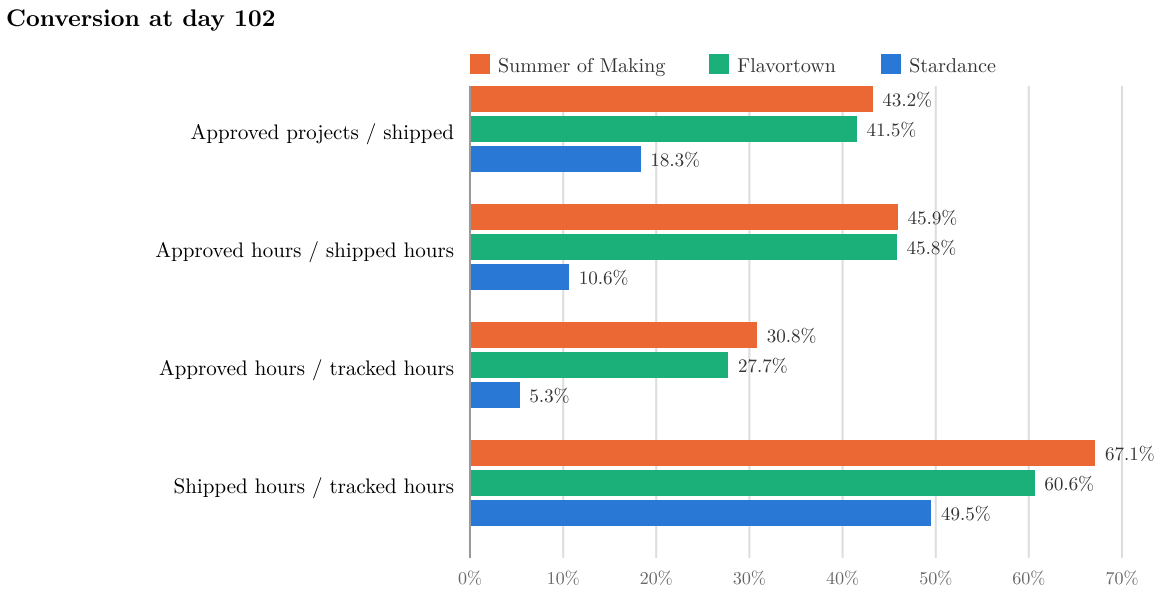


Figure 1: Conversion ratios at day 102. Stardance is well behind on every ratio that crosses the unified pass and only modestly behind on the one that does not (shipped hours per tracked hour).

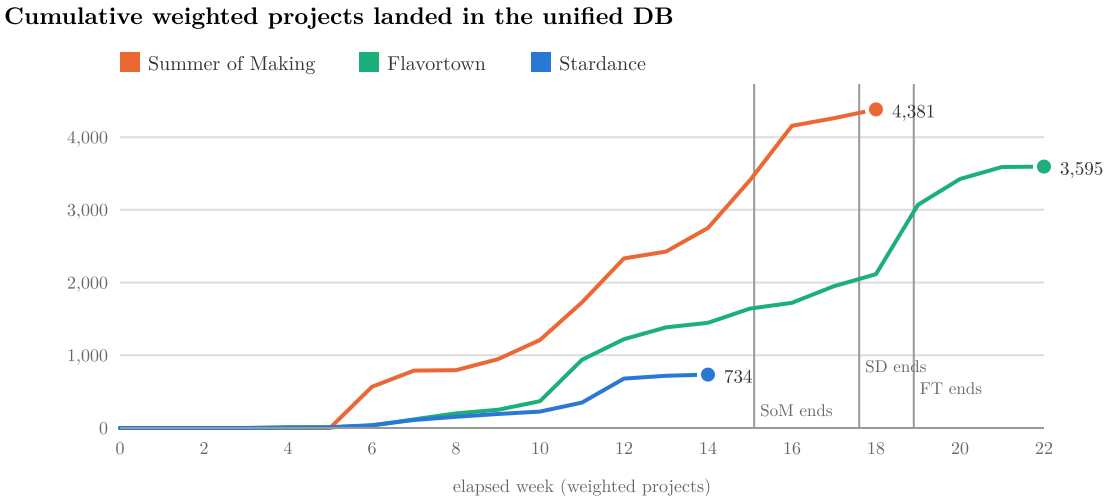


Figure 2: Cumulative weighted projects by elapsed week. Vertical lines mark each program's end date; approvals continued for about three weeks after each.

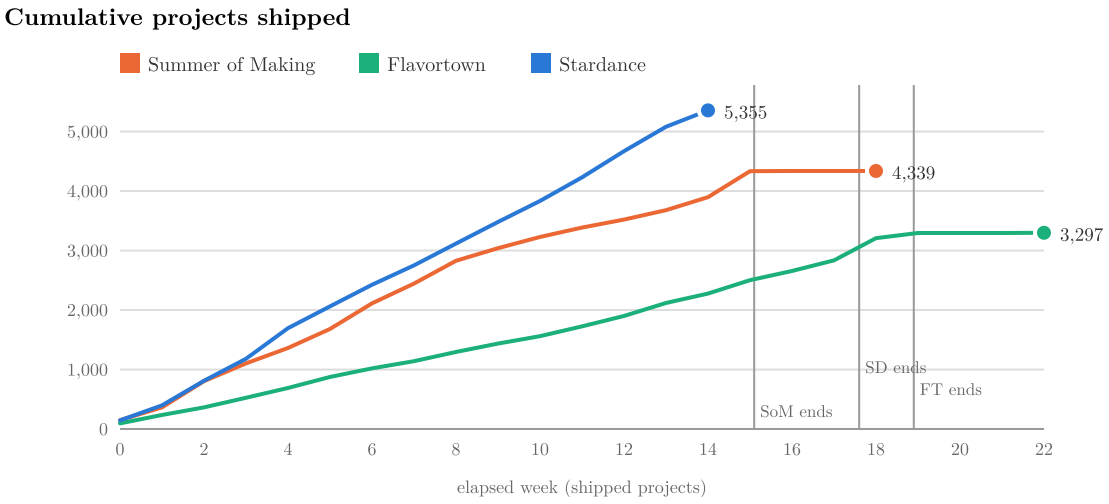


Figure 3: Cumulative shipped projects by elapsed week. Stardance passed Summer of Making's final total in week 12.

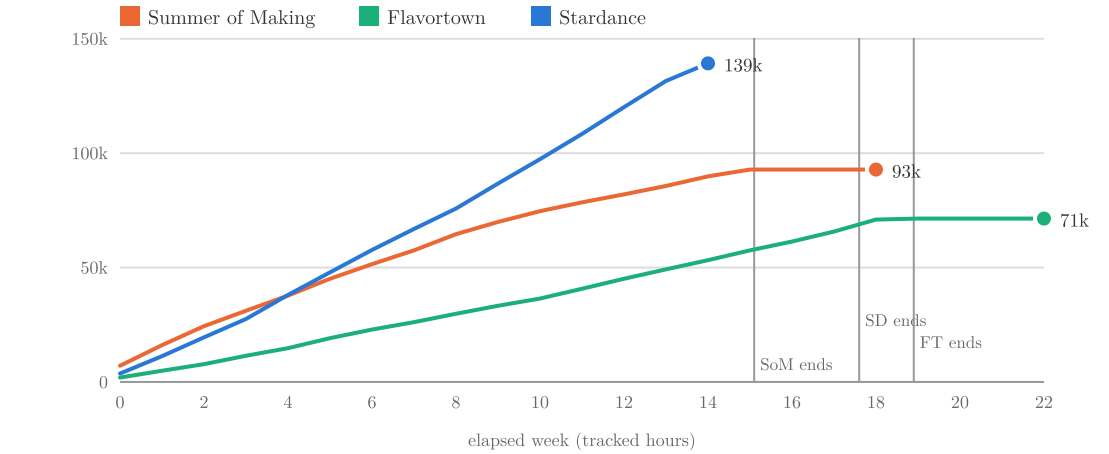


Figure 4: Cumulative tracked hours on surviving projects by elapsed week.

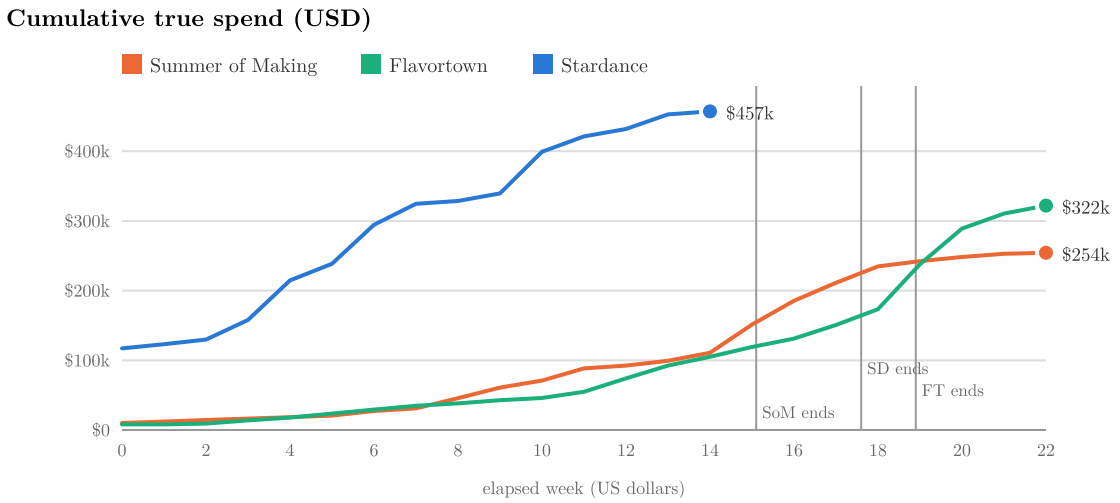


Figure 5: Cumulative true spend by elapsed week. Pre-launch spend is folded into week 0. Summer of Making and Flavortown spent most of their money after day 102 on prize fulfilment; Stardance bought hardware up front.

3.1 What the earlier programs landed after day 102

Table 3: Approvals landed after day 102

Program	*Day 102 (proj / hrs)*	*Final (proj / hrs)*	*After day 102*	*Window*	*Pace*
Summer of Making	1,627 / 27,499	2,817 / 43,810	+1,190 / +16,311	24 days	50 / day
Flavortown	921 / 14,274	1,909 / 35,952	+988 / +21,678	51 days	19 / day
Stardance (base case)	982 / 7,340	4,894 / 45,762	+3,912 / +38,422	42 days	93 / day

Time available includes the three-week approval tail after program end that both earlier programs used. Stardance ends 30 September, so its window runs to about 21 October.

A naive scaling says Stardance at 982 would finish around 1,700 to 2,050 projects, because the earlier programs were 48 to 58 percent done at day 102. That understates Stardance: it already has more ship-certified projects (3,471) than Summer of Making had at its end (3,421). The forecast in Section 8 therefore works from the pipeline.

4 Full funnel

Table 4: Full funnel, Summer of Making and Flavortown at final state, Stardance as of 9 September

Stage	*Summer of Making*	*Flavortown*	*Stardance*
Program window	Jun 16 - Sep 30 2025	Dec 19 2025 - Apr 30 2026	May 30 - Sep 30 2026
Signups (unified DB total_sign_ups)	26,169	18,196	60,359
of which new to Hack Club	19,415	11,372	45,587
Email signups (program app)	36,337	18,932	61,463
Accounts in program app	24,180	12,283	60,326
Hackatime linked	12,128	6,720	19,353
Users with tracked hours (surviving projects)	3,159	2,473	7,183

Stage	*Summer of Making*	*Flavortown*	*Stardance*
Tracked hours, surviving projects	**94,218**	**71,475**	**139,683**
Tracked hours, incl. deleted projects	147,932	92,692	148,672
Users who shipped	2,037	1,515	3,079
Shipped projects	4,339	3,302	5,355
Shipped project hours	74,221	59,194	69,089
Ship-certified projects	3,421	2,741	3,471
YSWS-reviewed / submitted	3,320	~2,524 eligible	3,180 reviewed + 333 queued
Approved in unified DB	**2,817**	**1,909**	**982**
Unique approved authors	1,457	984	712
Approved hours	**43,810**	**35,952**	**7,340**
Weighted projects	**4,381**	**3,595**	**734**
True spend	**$265,405**	**$405,639**	**$457,019 to date**
Cost per weighted hour	$6.06	$11.28	$62.29 to date
Cost per weighted project	$61	$113	$623 to date

Surviving projects are those not deleted in the program app. Summer of Making has 53,714 tracked hours on projects later deleted (36% of all logged time), Flavortown 21,217 (23%), Stardance 8,989 so far (6%). Deleted projects cannot be approved, so the surviving-project figure is the funnel basis. Unified-DB rows are matched to program projects by normalized repo URL: 98% of Stardance rows match, 92% of Flavortown, 86% of Summer of Making.

Table 5: Conversion ratios at final state

Ratio	*Summer of Making*	*Flavortown*	*Stardance so far*
Approved projects per signup	10.8%	10.5%	1.6%
Weighted per signup	0.167	0.198	0.012
Approved hours per tracked hour (surviving projects)	46.5%	50.3%	5.3%
Approved hours per shipped hour	59.0%	60.7%	10.6%
Approved projects per shipped project	64.9%	57.8%	18.3%
Shipped hours per tracked hour	78.8%	82.8%	49.5%
Ship-certified per shipped project	78.8%	83.0%	64.8%
YSWS-review hour adjustment (approved / original)	n/a	n/a (98% of hours at ship)	79.3%
Returned-by-ship-cert projects that later certify	n/a	n/a	3.3%

The YSWS-review hour adjustment is measured on the 981 landed Stardance projects: the unified DB holds 7,312 hours against 9,220 originally logged at review time. Flavortown's unified hours equal 98% of hours at ship, so its review adjusted very little.

4.1 Why Stardance converts differently per signup and per hour

- **Signup mix.** 45,587 of 60,359 signups are new to Hack Club (GPU raffle, AMD, NASA and GitHub campaigns). 12 percent of signups tracked an hour, against 13 percent for Summer of Making and 20 percent

for Flavortown on the same basis.

- **Less of the tracked time has shipped, so far.** 49.5 percent of tracked hours sit on shipped projects, against 67 and 61 percent for the earlier programs at their day 102 and 79 and 83 percent at their end. 6,077 draft projects hold 70,085 hours; 31,192 of those hours are on 1,604 projects active in the last 14 days.
- **Ship certification returns more, and returns are final.** 1,595 shipped projects (30 percent) sit in needs_changes with 16,253 hours. Of 1,158 projects returned before 10 August, 38 (3.3 percent) later certified.
- **YSWS review trims hours.** 79 percent of originally logged hours survive review on landed projects. If review stopped adjusting, the forecast rises by about 1,000 weighted projects.
- **The unified pass is the bottleneck.** Sections 6 and 9.

5 Where the approved count comes from

The count of 982 is what the unified DB holds under the program name Stardance. Table 6 lists every count between "shipped in Stardance" and "row in the unified DB", with the table it comes from.

Table 6: Reconciliation of Stardance counts from ship certification to the unified DB

Count	*Value*	*Source and notes*
Stardance projects with an approved ship event (non-deleted)	3,471	stardance.post_ship_events.certification_status = approved
of which YSWS review completed and not returned	3,180	certification_ysws_reviews.reviewed_at set, returned_at null
of which synced to Airtable by the app	2,907 (incl. deleted)	airtable_synced_at set
Rows in unified approved_projects with ysws_name = Stardance	982	981 distinct repo URLs; ysws_programs.unweighted_total also says 982
matched by repo URL to a Stardance project	980	953 to certified projects, 4 needs_changes, 3 draft, ~20 unmatched URL variants
with in_unified_db written back to the app	143	the app-side write-back lags; not usable for counting
Stardance-certified projects approved under another program name	~50	Macondo 19, Horizons 17, Boba Drops 6, Stasis 5, beest 5 (URL match)
Stardance rows later eliminated in spot checks	67	eliminated_projects; 432 hours; already excluded from 982
Pending rows (approved_at null) for Stardance	0	20 null rows exist in the whole table, none Stardance

All 981 matched Stardance rows have `override_hours_spent` set and equal to `hours_spent`. The justification text is generated by the app: "The user logged 10h 21min on hackatime. (This was adjusted to 7h 51min after review.) They had 32 commits, which compared to the original 10.4 logged..." The adjustment comes from the Stardance YSWS review; the unified pass copies it. The app's `approved_minutes` column is empty in the warehouse, so adjusted hours are visible only once a row lands, which is why the 79 percent ratio is measured on landed projects.

Two things this rules out. There is no pool of pending Stardance rows waiting for a date: zero Stardance rows have a null approved date. And Stardance projects are not leaking to other program names in volume: about 50

ship-certified Stardance projects were approved under Macondo, Horizons, Boba Drops, Stasis or beest, and Stardance-shipping users hold roughly 1,000 approvals under other programs for other projects, which is expected for a summer umbrella and is not double counting.

6 Stardance pipeline and weekly dynamics

Table 7: Stardance pipeline as of 9 September (non-deleted projects)

Stage	*Projects*	*Hours*
A. In unified DB (approved)	982	7,340 approved
B. Ship-certified, YSWS-reviewed, waiting on the unified pass	2,173	16,664 original (18,343 at ship; 22,845 now)
C. Ship-certified, in YSWS review queue	333	8,852 original (9,259 at ship; 12,291 now)
D. Ship-certified, returned by YSWS review	3	19
E. Submitted, awaiting ship certification	241	5,045
F. needs_changes (returned by ship cert)	1,595	16,253 (8,483 active in last 30 d)
G. Draft with >= 1 h	6,077	70,085 (31,192 active in last 14 d)
Expected new ships Sep 9-30	~1,740	~29,000

"Original" hours are original_minutes on the latest YSWS review, which is what the reviewer adjusted from. Current hours keep growing after ship, so three bases are shown for stages B and C.

Table 8: Stardance weekly dynamics

Week of	*Users*	*Devlog h*	*Ships*	*Ship h (now)*	*Cert dec.*	*YSWS rev.*	*Unified*	*Appr. h*
Jun 1	14,904	6,290	236	1,460	251	0	0	0
Jun 8	8,232	8,360	234	2,152	512	3	0	0
Jun 15	5,227	9,182	432	5,865	797	3	0	0
Jun 22	3,899	9,253	428	4,818	840	8	0	0
Jun 29	2,364	10,834	485	4,945	1,139	59	28	102
Jul 6	3,706	11,607	333	4,120	641	193	0	0
Jul 13	3,014	10,268	373	4,957	686	232	28	279
Jul 20	2,510	9,435	333	3,748	782	194	103	708
Jul 27	2,195	10,051	368	4,553	697	404	58	443
Aug 3	2,107	11,490	368	6,521	822	446	46	384
Aug 10	3,329	11,392	356	5,642	678	884	77	329
Aug 17	2,735	11,846	426	5,999	1,470	394	255	1,262
Aug 24	2,445	12,337	431	5,462	1,519	555	335	3,298
Aug 31	1,907	11,500	402	6,117	1,223	644	36	361
Sep 7*	879	4,127	144	2,811	361	113	16	175

* Sep 7 week is partial (Monday to Tuesday 14:00 UTC). Newly shipped = first ship event on the project. Unified approvals are rows in approved_projects by approved_at.

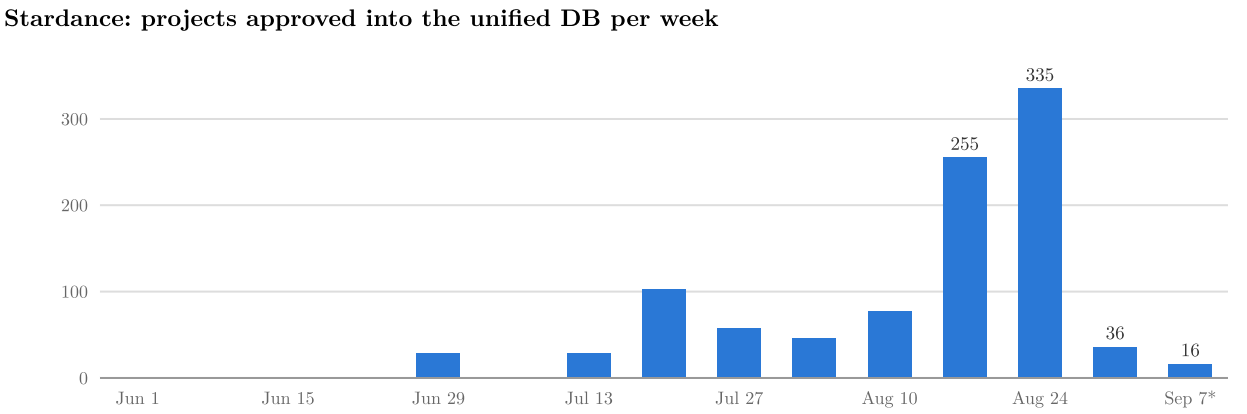


Figure 6: Stardance projects approved into the unified DB per week (week starting Monday).

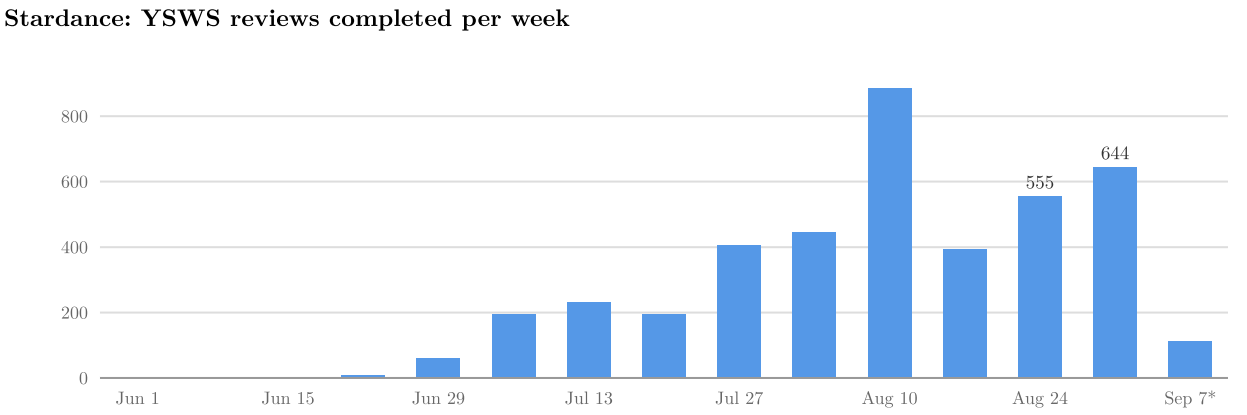


Figure 7: Stardance YSWS reviews completed per week. Reviews feed the backlog waiting on the unified pass.

Student output is steady: 400 to 440 newly shipped projects and 11,000 to 12,300 devlog hours per week through August. Ship certification kept pace at 1,200 to 1,500 decisions per week in the last three full weeks, and YSWS reviews reached 555 and 644 per week. Unified-pass approvals peaked at 335 in the week of 24 August, then fell to 36 and 16. The reviewed-but-not-landed backlog grows by roughly 500 projects a week.

7 Cost

Spend comes from the YSWS true-spend ledger (HCB data pulled 10 September 2026). True spend is money that left the program's HCB org tree for the outside world; transfers into personal author funds, intra-tree transfers and returns to HQ are excluded. Table 9 shows the composition. The unified DB's own total_spend figures ($355k, $412k, $469k) are gross outflows and overstate Summer of Making in particular, because $87k of its outflow went into personal author funds.

Table 9: True spend and its composition

Component	*Summer of Making*	*Flavortown*	*Stardance (to 10 Sep)*
Direct external spend (card, ACH, wire, check)	$150,360	$263,558	$288,847
Card grants to makers (incl. unspent balances)	$99,829	$97,240	$96,447
Other external payments (Column ACH, bank, Wise)	$1,945	$29,153	$2,487
Internal payments for real costs (postage, fulfillment)	$13,271	$15,021	$68,120

Component	*Summer of Making*	*Flavortown*	*Stardance (to 10 Sep)*
Fines swept to central account	$0	$668	$1,118
True spend	**$265,405**	**$405,639**	**$457,019**
Excluded: transfers into personal author funds	$86,816	$0	$1,876
Excluded: intra-tree transfers (netted)	$0	$2,138	$270,500
Excluded: returned to HQ, inter-org, wash	$2,859	$6,032	$9,424
Remaining balance in org tree	$64,838	$3,655	$31,680
Card grants still unspent	$7,417	$18,810	$20,344

Table 10: Stardance spend by HCB org

Org	*True spend*	*Share*	*What it is*
Stardance Hardware (sub-org)	$262,896	57.5%	GPU and hardware prizes, Alibaba, JLCPCB, shop fulfilment; $140,651 in July alone
Stardance (main org)	$187,661	41.1%	card grants to makers, flyers (137,500 printed), envelopes, stickers, catering, HQ postage clearinghouse
Stardance Marketing Campaign	$6,462	1.4%	

Table 11: Stardance true spend by month

Month	*True spend*
April 2026 (pre-launch)	$39,442
May 2026	$75,734
June 2026	$61,496
July 2026	$152,002
August 2026	$107,955
Sep 1-10 2026	$20,391

Program launched 30 May. $115k had been spent before launch, mostly hardware and print. Spend in the last six full weeks averaged $21,400 per week.

7.1 Cost per weighted hour

Because weighted projects are approved hours over ten, cost per weighted hour is the comparable unit; cost per weighted project is ten times it. The earlier programs spent most of their money after day 102 on prize fulfilment, so their day-102 cost per hour is low and rises to the final figure. Stardance bought its hardware up front and its day-102 figure of $62 reflects $457k spent against 7,340 hours landed. What happens to that number depends on how much of the pipeline lands and how much more is spent on fulfilment.

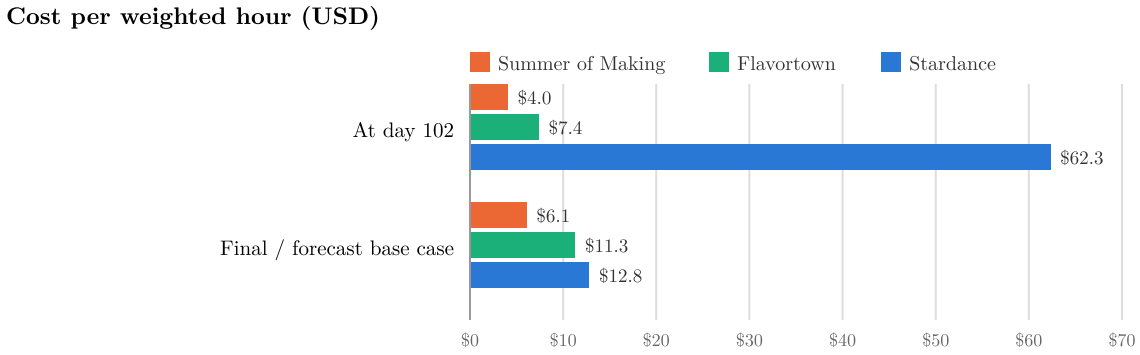


Figure 8: Cost per weighted hour in US dollars at day 102 and at final state (Stardance: base-case forecast at $585k spend).

Table 12: Cost per weighted hour and per weighted project under alternative outcomes

Scenario	*True spend*	*Approved hours*	*Weighted*	*Per weighted hour*	*Per weighted project*
Summer of Making, final	$265,405	43,810	4,381	$6.06	$61
Flavortown, final	$405,639	35,952	3,595	$11.28	$113
Stardance today	$457,019	7,340	734	$62.29	$623
Stardance, base case, spend $585k	**$585,000**	**45,762**	**4,576**	**$12.78**	**$128**
Stardance, base case, spend $500k (fulfilment tapers)	$500,000	45,762	4,576	$10.93	$109
Stardance, base case, spend $650k (fulfilment surge)	$650,000	45,762	4,576	$14.20	$142
Stardance, no YSWS adjustment (5,579 weighted), $585k	$585,000	55,790	5,579	$10.49	$105
Stardance, unified pass at 300/week (2,500 weighted), $585k	$585,000	25,000	2,500	$23.40	$234
Stardance, unified pass at 30/week (910 weighted), $585k	$585,000	9,100	910	$64.29	$643

Remaining Stardance spend is estimated from the last six weeks' average of $21,400 per week over the six weeks to 21 October, giving about $128k more and $585k total; $500k and $650k bracket a taper and a fulfilment surge. Card grants still unspent ($20k) are already inside true spend.

8 Forecast

8.1 Model

Each pipeline stage is carried forward to approved hours with the rates below, then divided by ten. The unified pass is a 100 percent pass-through.

- **Unified pass:** 100 percent of projects, hours unchanged. Spot-check eliminations after landing have run at 6.4 percent of rows and are not deducted.
- **YSWS-review hour adjustment:** 79.3 percent of originally logged hours survive (7,312 of 9,220 on landed projects). Applied to every stage not yet reviewed, and to stage B because its adjusted hours are not visible in the warehouse until the row lands.
- **Ship-certification pass:** 74.6 percent of decided shipped hours (47,690 certified of 63,943) and 68.4 percent of projects (3,461 of 5,056). Applied to stage E and new ships.
- **Hours at ship vs. current hours:** 0.80 (18,343 / 22,845 on stage B); 0.90 for late ships that have little time to accrue.
- **needs_changes resubmission:** 3.3 percent.
- **New ships, 9 to 30 September:** two weeks at the last-four-week average (404 projects, 5,805 hours) plus a final week at 2.3x projects and 3.0x hours, between the Summer of Making (2.7x / 3.7x) and Flavortown (1.9x / 2.7x) final-week multipliers: about 1,740 projects and 29,000 hours. Cross-check: the last three weeks contributed 27.5 percent (SoM) and 33.5 percent (Flavortown) of all shipped hours, which applied to Stardance implies 26,000 to 35,000.

Table 13: End-of-program shipping surge in the earlier programs

Program	*Projects first shipped in last 3 weeks (share)*	*Their hours (share)*	*Final week projects / hours*	*Fi*
Summer of Making	932 (21.5%)	20,433 (27.5%)	437 / 10,772	
Flavortown	834 (25.3%)	19,840 (33.5%)	350 / 9,849	
Stardance (assumed)	~1,740	~29,000	~930 / ~17,400	

8.2 Base case

Table 14: Base-case forecast by pipeline stage

Stage	*Approved hours*	*Approved projects*	*Weighted*
A. Already approved	7,340	982	734
B. YSWS-reviewed backlog, passes through	13,216	2,173	1,322
C. YSWS review queue	7,020	333	702
E. Awaiting ship certification	2,396	165	240
F. needs_changes resubmissions	340	52	34
G. New ships Sep 9-30 (incl. final-week surge)	15,451	1,188	1,545
Total	**45,762**	**4,894**	**4,576**

Stage D (3 projects returned by YSWS review) is dropped. Draft hours enter only through the new-ship estimate. Average weight across the forecast is 0.94, up from 0.75 so far, because the backlog and late ships are larger projects than the early approvals.

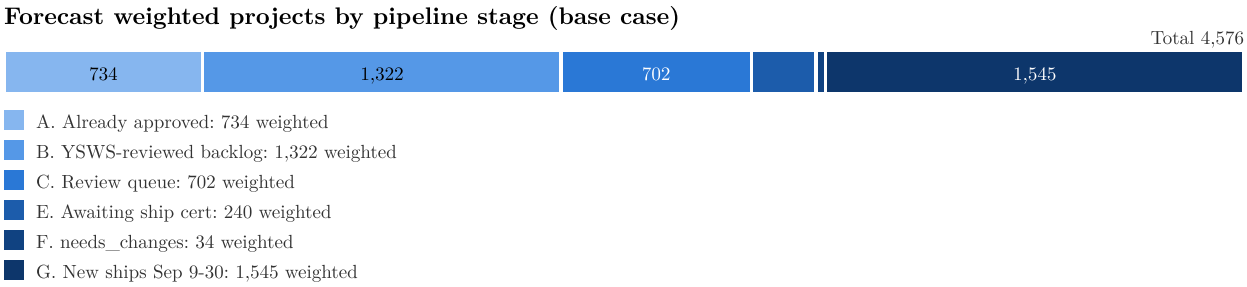


Figure 9: Base-case weighted projects by pipeline stage.

8.3 Sensitivity

Table 15: Sensitivity of the forecast to single-assumption changes

Scenario	*Weighted*	*Approved projects*
Base case (final pass 100%, YSWS-review adjustment 79%)	**4,576**	**4,894**
No YSWS-review hour adjustment (hours = original logged)	5,579	4,894
YSWS-review adjustment 73% (hours-at-ship basis)	4,271	4,894
No final-week surge (3 x 5,805 h new ships)	3,958	4,894
New ship hours 34,000 (Flavortown last-3-week share)	4,841	4,894
Final pass approves only 85% (revision 1 assumption)	4,000	4,307

Revision 1 of this report assumed the unified pass approved 85% of projects and cut hours; that combination is shown last for comparison.

9 Throughput constraint

The forecast assumes the pipeline drains. Unified-pass approvals in the last four weeks were 255, 335, 36 and 16. Summer of Making and Flavortown both kept approving for three weeks past program end, so the comparable deadline for Stardance is about 21 October, six weeks from the data pull.

Table 16: Outcome by sustained unified-pass throughput over six weeks

Approvals per week	*Projects added*	*Weighted by ~21 Oct*	*Cost per weighted hour at $585k*
30 (pace of last 2 weeks)	+180	~910	$64
150	+900	~1,620	$36
300 (August peak)	+1,800	~2,500	$23
650 (needed to clear the pipeline)	+3,900	~4,580	$13

Uses the blended forecast average of 9.8 approved hours per remaining project. The 650-per-week row is the base case.

Because the pass is a check for pipeline bugs rather than a review, the practical question is whether it can be batched. The 2,173 projects in stage B are already reviewed with adjusted hours attached; landing them as a batch would move Stardance from 734 to about 2,060 weighted immediately and from $62 to $22 per weighted hour with no new spend.

10 Final analysis

Output. Measured at the stages students control, Stardance is the largest of the three programs by a wide margin: 60,326 accounts against 24,180 and 12,283; 139,683 tracked hours on surviving projects at day 102 against 89,167 and 51,472; 5,355 shipped projects against 3,768 and 2,217. Its weakness at those stages is depth per signup, not volume: the raffle and partner campaigns brought in 45,587 people new to Hack Club, and 12 percent of signups tracked an hour. In absolute terms it still has more than twice Flavortown's engaged users.

Conversion. Stardance converts shipped work into certified work less well than the earlier programs (65 percent of shipped projects certify, against 79 and 83 percent) and its YSWS review trims hours harder (79 percent survive, against 98 percent in Flavortown). Those two effects together cost it roughly a quarter of its shipped hours relative to Flavortown's pipeline. They are real, but they are second-order next to the unified pass, where 2,506 projects and about 25,000 reviewed hours are waiting.

Forecast. With the unified pass as a pass-through, Stardance lands about 4,576 weighted projects, above Summer of Making's 4,381 and Flavortown's 3,595, from roughly 4,900 approved projects. The range of 3,958 to 5,579 is driven by two inputs: whether the end-of-program shipping surge materialises (the earlier programs shipped 22 to 25 percent of their projects in the last three weeks) and whether YSWS review keeps adjusting hours at 79 percent.

Cost. Stardance will be the most expensive of the three in absolute terms, at roughly $585k against $265k and $406k, because it bought hardware up front and ran a large print and marketing campaign. Per weighted hour it lands near $12.78 in the base case, twice Summer of Making and about 13 percent above Flavortown. That figure is entirely contingent on the pipeline draining: the money is already spent, so every project that does not land raises the unit cost. At the current pace the same spend yields $64 per hour, ten times Summer of Making.

What matters now. The single lever is unified-pass throughput. Clearing the 2,173 already-reviewed projects as a batch would land about 1,320 weighted projects at no marginal cost; sustaining 650 approvals a week through 21 October lands the rest. Two smaller levers exist upstream: the 1,595 needs_changes projects (16,253 hours) almost never return, and the 1,604 active draft projects with 31,192 hours are the pool the final-week surge has to draw from. Nothing in the spend data changes this ordering; the cost question is decided by the same bottleneck as the count question.

11 Methodology and data notes

11.1 Sources

- Hack Club data warehouse, `airtable_unified_ysws_projects_db.approved_projects` joined to `approved_projects__ysws_name`; fields hours_spent, override_hours_spent, override_hours_spent_justification, ysws_weighted_project_contribution, approved_at, code_url, record_id. `ysws_programs` for signups, dates and program totals. `eliminated_projects` for spot-check removals.
- `summer_of_making_2025`: users, email_signups, projects (is_deleted), devlogs, ship_events, ship_certifications (judgement, updated_at), ysws_review_submissions.
- `flavortown`: users, funnel_events, user_identities, projects (deleted_at), posts, post_devlogs, post_ship_events (certification_status, hours).
- `stardance`: users, materialized_all_signups, projects (ship_status, duration_seconds, deleted_at), posts, post_devlogs, post_ship_events (certification_status, hours_at_ship, hours_at_payout), certification_ship_reviews (decided_at), certification_ysws_reviews (original_minutes, approved_minutes, reviewed_at, returned_at, airtable_synced_at, in_unified_db, summary_justification), project_memberships.
- Spend: `ysws-true-spend.duckdb` (YSWS true spend, HCB data pulled 10 September 2026 16:33 UTC), tables programs, program_orgs and spend_transactions with counted_as_spend = true. Category labels from the warehouse's `ysws_spend_ledger`.

11.2 Definitions

- **Day 102 cut:** program start_date from ysws_programs plus 102.6 days (Stardance's elapsed time at the pull): Summer of Making 26 September 2025 14:00, Flavortown 31 March 2026 14:00. Each stage counts only events timestamped at or before the cut; hours are devlogs created at or before the cut. Spend at day 102 is cumulative through elapsed week 14.
- **Tracked hours:** devlog duration_seconds on non-deleted devlogs; "surviving projects" further excludes projects deleted in the app.
- **Shipped project:** non-deleted project with at least one ship event. Shipped hours are the project's devlog hours.
- **Ship-certified:** approved judgement (Summer of Making), approved ship event (Flavortown, Stardance).
- **Approved, weighted:** rows in approved_projects with the program's ysws_name; weighted = sum of ysws_weighted_project_contribution = hours_spent / 10.
- **True spend:** the true-spend ledger's definition: external spend plus card grants to makers plus internal payments for real costs, excluding personal author funds, intra-tree transfers, returns to HQ and wash transactions.

11.3 Caveats

- Repo-URL matching leaves 2 percent of Stardance, 8 percent of Flavortown and 14 percent of Summer of Making unified rows unmatched. Unmatched rows are in all unified totals and absent only from per-stage hour ratios.
- Flavortown has no certification timestamp, so its ship-certified count cannot be cut at day 102.
- Stardance's approved_minutes is empty in the warehouse, so the YSWS-review adjustment is inferred from landed rows. The sensitivity table brackets 73 to 100 percent.
- The final-week surge is the least certain input. Stage C averages 27 original hours per project and is carried at the same rates as stage B.
- Remaining Stardance spend is a run-rate estimate. Stardust balances not yet redeemed in the shop are a liability the ledger does not show; if redemptions cluster after program end, spend runs toward the $650k case.
- Approved dates in the unified DB sometimes precede the YSWS review date for the same project, so weekly approval counts by approved_at may not reflect when the pass happened.

Model: `model_v2.py`; page generator: `build_site.py`; spend file: `ysws-true-spend.duckdb`; all in `/root/projects/stardance-forecast/`. Revision 1 (9 September) assumed an 85 percent unified pass with hour cuts and forecast 3,860; revision 2 (9 September) introduced the day-102 comparison and the pass-through model; revision 3 adds cost, stage definitions and the final analysis. A PDF of this page is available.