



PRODUCT STRATEGY IN A START-UP

Des Traynor (@destraynor)
Co-founder of Intercom (@intercom)

Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory.
Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.



SAS SproutSocial ArgyleSocial SocialReport Campalyst Unilyzer Curelate Pinfluencer
SimplyMeasured socialbakers PostRocket Adaptly Reachli LittleBird Sparked Shift Traackr
FanBridge HootSuite Morcova prosodic Swix Venueseen Monstro Twimbow Buzznumbers
TrendKite Sociero Youscan TunkRank Echnobot SocialAppsHQ Vaktarrin Beevolve Mention
Buzzware GovSM Casaplanca SocialLogix Morcova ZocialInc BrandFractal ejenic
Croakun StatFly SocialKnow position2 Hubspot minilytics tweetreach socialoomph sodash
Decooda Teezir motivequest SocialFactz Kantar iMonitoring Meltwater Engagon
infoFactory NetBreeze NutshellMail BoomSonar ReviewIQ AtInternet Daumsoft Infospeec
Wool.Labs Actionly SocialPointer Zelist Telligent GoogleAnalytics ReputationObserver
Wildfire TodayLaunch ethority ChatterBeacon Katapedia Blogmeter ReputationToo
Webfluenz Scup Netbase Finchline Trendiction Digitalmr Brandreact Mutualminc
Semioboard ebuzzconnect Memonews Internet911 Informant.se twentyfeet Social360
Replise Geofeedia Looxi SocialTalk Clipit Spredfast Rightnow Topsy Imooty Tealium
EarlyDetection Mindlab.de TipTop Tracebuzz Brandtology Thoughtbuzz JamiQ Insttstant
Tweetlytics Overdrive Mentionapp Repumetrix Socialscape eWatch Cision Digiminc
Samepoint Buzzstream Vocus Attensity Buzzlogic Factiva eCairn Jive Mediamiser
Moreover Onalytica Reputation.com StartPR.com UberVu Lithium VisibleTechnologies
Spiral16 CollectiveIntellect NetworkedInsights Backtype nminsight Trendrr SocialMention
Monittor linkInfluence nms CrimsonHexagon VisibleMeasures CustomScoop Attentic
Tweetbeep Collecta Tweetfeel SocialRadar Synthesio YackTrack Brandwatch Addictomatic
Echometrix SentimentMetrics ExactTarget HowSociable MediaVantage SearchMonitor
Kana Postling PeopleBrowsr Twitalyzer EdgerankChecker Vrank Brandify PageLever
Crowdbooster Tweeb SiteTrail Kyoo Sysomos BuddyMedia



Your Product

Your Strategy

Your Vision

Measure & Improve

Staying Lean

The Product You Build

The Jobs That You Build For

Your Mission

Your Vision



What road do I take?

Well where are you going?

I don't know

Then it doesn't matter. If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.



Vision: What changes do you see coming

What's changing in your target domain?

Project Management:

A rise in remote working. Face-to-Face meetings the exception, not the rule. PM tools must account for this.

A decrease in the importance of project deliverables, prototypes replacing PDFs

Old codified practices (e.g. PRINCE2) being skipped over for more agile and ad-hoc approaches

Music:

No longer a concept of music "ownership"

Average music fan listens to more artists now than ever

Rise in indie artists, due to new platforms

Far less dependency on labels, brands and distribution

Old revenue sources are spent, new revenue sources being discovered

Marketing:

Shift towards personal & personalised

Closed Loop Return on Investment Vital

Analytics & Numbers driven

Advertisements become conversation starters

Conversions override clicks in terms of importance.

The background is a solid blue color with numerous white circles of varying sizes scattered across it. A horizontal grey bar is positioned in the middle of the image, containing the text.

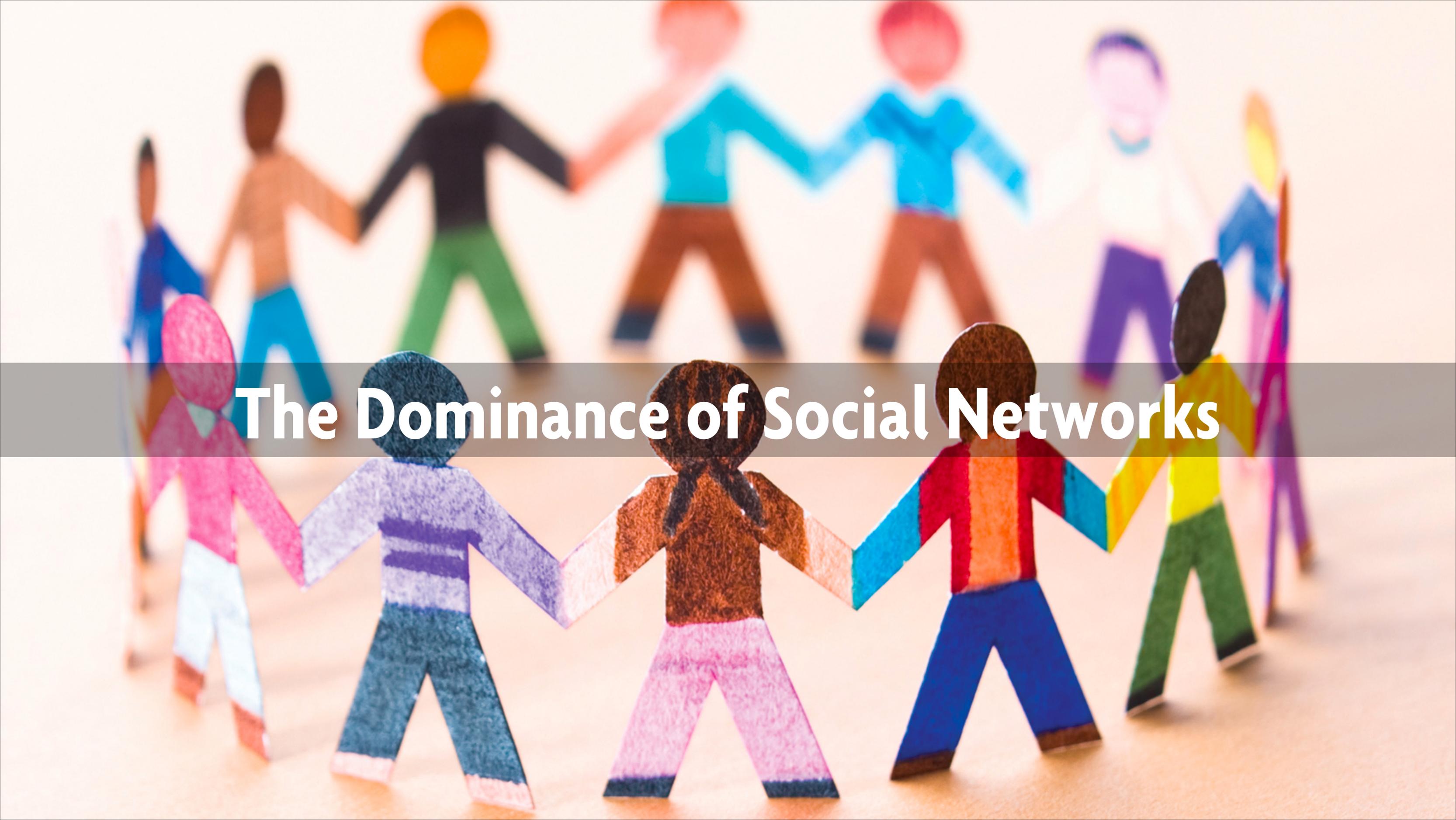
What technological trends should you bet on?

A man with dark hair and glasses is looking down at a smartphone he is holding in his hands. He is wearing a light-colored, vertically striped button-down shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A semi-transparent grey horizontal bar is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "The phone as the primary device" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

The phone as the primary device



Wearable devices

A group of colorful paper cutouts of people holding hands in a circle, symbolizing social networks. The cutouts are made of various colored paper and are arranged in a line, holding hands. The colors include pink, purple, blue, brown, red, yellow, green, and white. The background is a light, neutral color.

The Dominance of Social Networks



Des Traynor

All software is turning into social software.

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · Today at 9:52



Heavybit and 15 others like this.



Seen by



View 8 more comments

How all software is now social software



Declan James McGrath Fantastic!

23 hours ago · Like



Eoin Hennessy Amazing!

13 hours ago · Like



Write a comment...

Your
Vision

=

What your
domain looks
like in X years

+

What software
looks like in X
years

x = distance of your vision

Why do you exist, other than to make money?

Mission Statement

The image features three 3D rectangular blocks of increasing height and color gradient from left to right. The first block on the left is yellow, the middle one is orange, and the tallest one on the right is red. A semi-transparent grey horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the blocks, containing the text.

Missions have nothing to do with goals or targets



They're not about being #1 or 'top 10'

A high-resolution satellite-style image of the Earth from space, showing the Western Hemisphere. The continents of North and South America are clearly visible in the lower-left quadrant, surrounded by the deep blue of the oceans and swirling white clouds. The rest of the globe is shrouded in a dark, deep blue twilight, with some faint cloud patterns still discernible.

“How will the world be any different, if you succeed?”



**let app developers spend their time on their application code, not
managing servers, deployment, ongoing operations, or scaling**



to help individuals and companies, public and private, to write better code, faster



**to give every developer state of the art automated
testing and continuous integration tools**

stripe

We want to increase the GDP of the internet

Measure & Improve

Staying Lean

The Product You Build

The Jobs That You Build For

Your Mission

Your Vision



The customer rarely buys what the company thinks it sells

Your business has many hypotheses

**Are consumers currently
doing this?**



**Can I create a product
that will improve upon it?**



**Can I address the market
successfully?**

TESTED BY

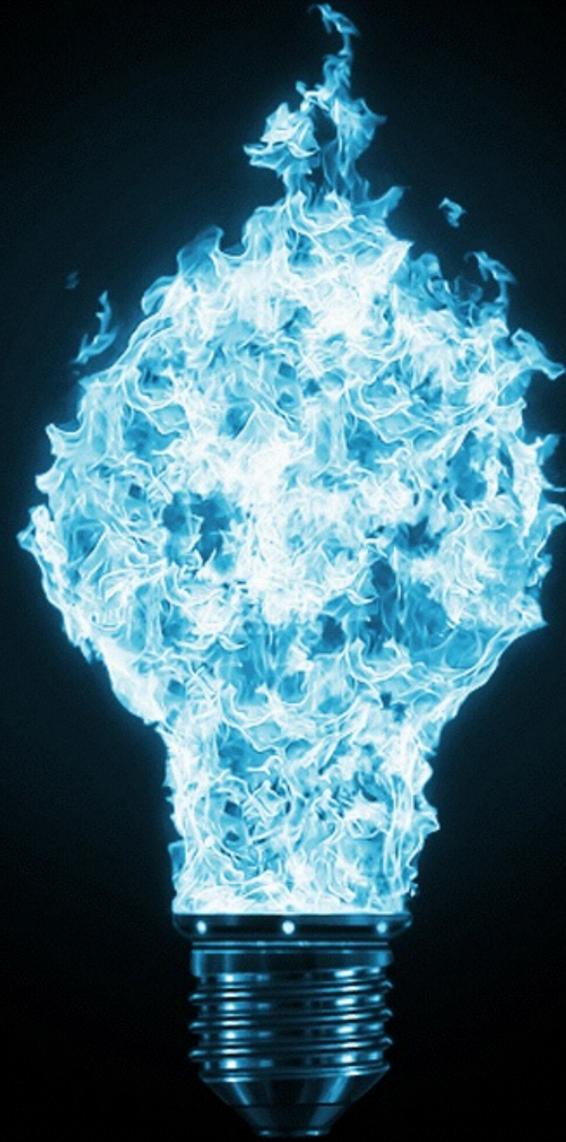
**Evidence
of investment**

TESTED BY

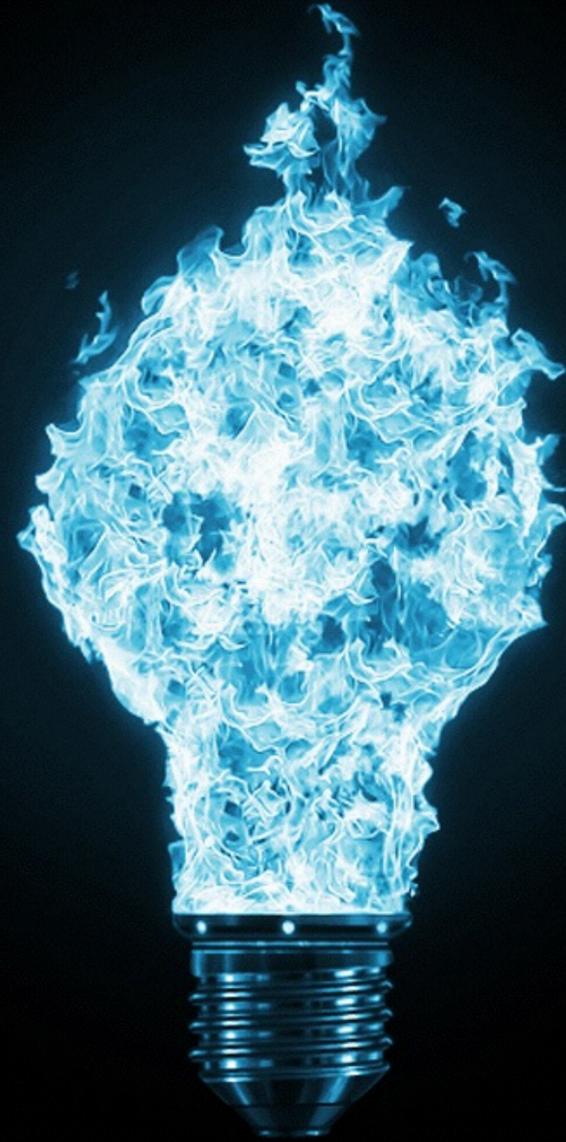
**Product Market Fit
for your MVP**

TESTED BY

**Analytics for
Marketing Experiments**



Customers don't buy “product categories”



Customers don't purchase your product because of their demographics



Search bar with a magnifying glass icon

Supportive - des@intercom

Mail

Navigation icons: back, forward, search, refresh, archive, trash, more

Compose

- Inbox
- Starred
- Important
- Sent Mail
- Drafts
- All Mail
- Circles
- AngelList
- Blog Ideas
- BugComments
- engineering@
- FailedPayments
- Followers

Re Website

Inbox x



Jenny Client Hey Des, I'd like to revisit the file: v14-final.pdf, I'm not sure if... Oct 6 ☆

8 older messages

Des Traynor Hey Jenny, if you made changes to the PDF, you'll need to recirculate... Oct 21 (4 days ago) ☆

Johnny Client 3:33 PM (7 hours ago) ☆

to me

I've added another 3 contractors onto our development team. Can you please forward them all the relevant emails, and the latest copy of the sitemap. I made some adjustments.

Thanks

Des

New Hangout

Jeff Rubin, M...

Click here to Reply or Forward

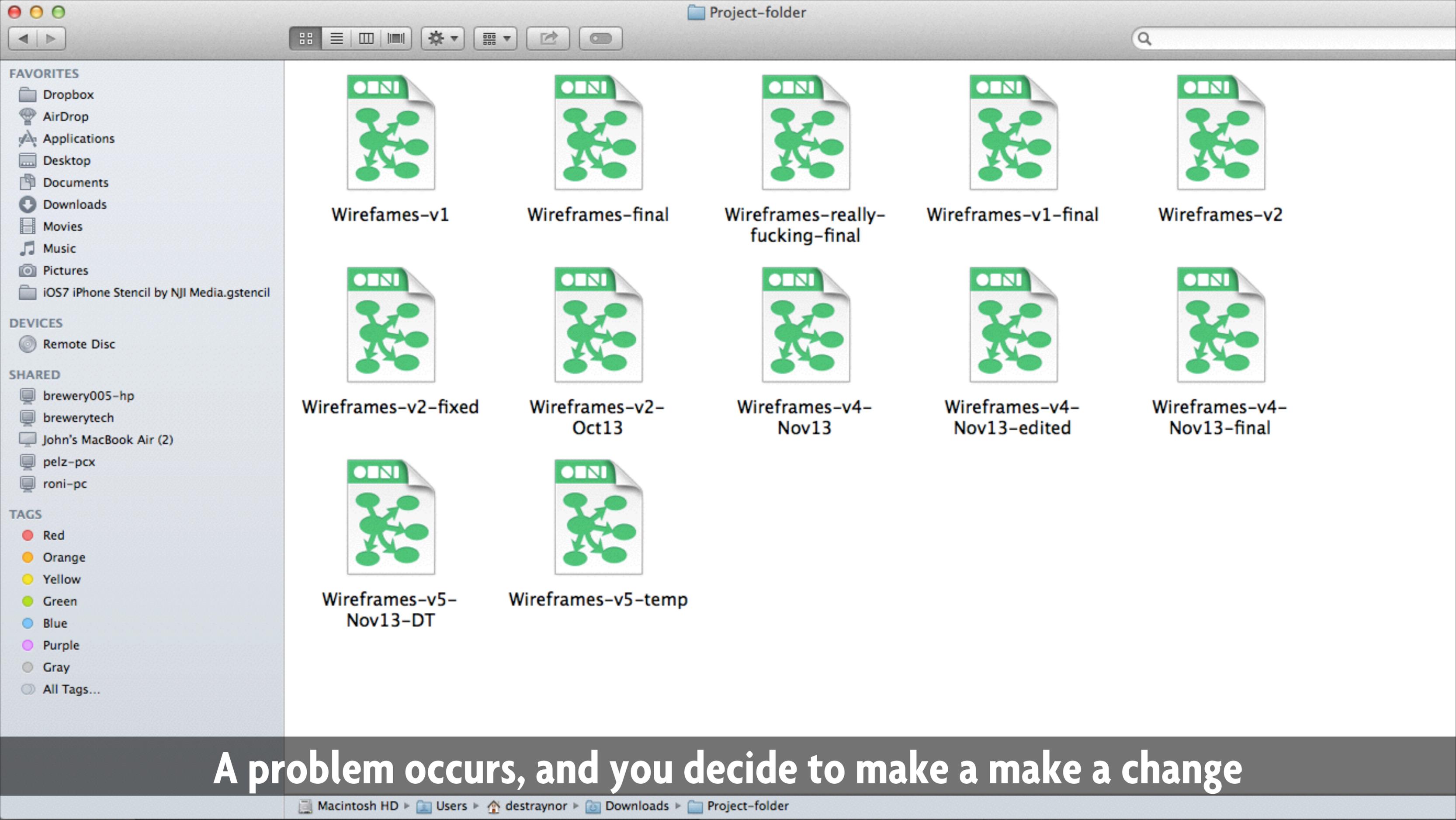
Des T



Head of...

- Twitter
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Google+
- YouTube
- Reddit

A problem occurs in their life that causes them to need a solution



A problem occurs, and you decide to make a make a change

```
3. ~/rails_projects/sample_app (bash)
[sample_app (static-pages)]$ bundle exec rspec spec/
F

Failures:

  1) Static pages Home page should have the content 'Sample App'
     Failure/Error: expect(page).to have_content('Sample App')
       expected there to be text "Sample App" in "StaticPages#home Find me in ap
p/views/static_pages/home.html.erb"
     # ./spec/features/static_pages_spec.rb:9:in `block (3 levels) in <top (requ
ired)>'

Finished in 0.25114 seconds
1 example, 1 failure

Failed examples:

rspec ./spec/features/static_pages_spec.rb:7 # Static pages Home page should hav
e the content 'Sample App'

Randomized with seed 35298

[sample_app (static-pages)]$
```

There is some trigger, that causes you to go looking

See how Bluebottle Freemail stacks up against some of the leading free email providers.

	bluebottle	hotmail	yahoo	gmail
Spam Free Email	✓	✗	✗	✗
Attachment Size	10mb	10mb	10mb	20mb
POP3/SMTP	✓	✗	✓	✓
Challenge/Response	✓	✗	✗	✗
Virus Protection	✓	✓	✓	✓
No Graphic Ads	✓	✗	✗	✓
Trusted Delivery	✓	✗	✗	✗

Over 10 Years in business and One of The Best Shopping Cart Providers



Local search rank tracking, Organic Local Analysis, Local Directory, Local Search, Social Search, Microsoft Visualization and Management Solutions vs. VMware vSphere

Tool	Authority Labs	BrightLocal	Chattmeter	Acxone	DIYSEO	GetListed.org	LocalSearchTool	Marches	Placester	ReviewPush	ReviewTrackers	SweetIQ
Authority Labs	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
BrightLocal	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chattmeter	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acxone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DIYSEO	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GetListed.org	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LocalSearchTool	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Placester	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ReviewPush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓
ReviewTrackers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓
SweetIQ	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓

It's not about checklists, categories or competitors

- Best Award winning Solution
- Recognized for Customer Service, Innovation and Overall Product Offering
- 100% Credit & Fraud Secured (PCI Certified)
- Knowledge and Experience of 10,000+ Online Business Owners
- Premium Hosting, included in all packages, with 99.99% guaranteed uptime
- Free 24/7/365 Live Support
- Local Store Builder™
- Online Product View with 3D™
- Integrated Vendor Management
- SmartBatch Technology™
- Self Admin Cart
- Multi Store Discounts
- Advanced Language Settings

Checklist

Tool	Price/Fee	Pricing	Resolution	Resolution	Warrior	USB	Auto	Video	Video	Cost*
Authority Labs	\$49-\$499/month	Subscription (2 packages)	3.2 MP	1024 x 768	5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$600-699
BrightLocal	\$14.99-\$44.99/month	Subscription (2 packages)	2 MP	1600 x 1200	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$599
Chattmeter	from \$29.99/month	Subscription (per location)	850K	1024 x 768	5	Yes	Yes	No	No	\$650
Acxone	from \$29.99/month	Subscription (per location)	1.3 MP	600 x 600 TV	5	No	Yes	No	No	\$692
DIYSEO	\$29/month	Subscription (per location)	2 MP	1280 x 1024	3	No	Yes	No	No	\$569
GetListed.org	Free	Per campaign	850K	1280 x 1040	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$519
LocalSearchTool	Free	N/A	1.3 MP	1024 x 768	5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$695
Marches	on request	N/A	850K	600+ TV	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$1,719
Placester	\$147 (1 off)	Subscription (per location)	850K	1024 x 768	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$956-1,065
ReviewPush	\$19-\$34/month	1 off fee	850K	1024 x 768	5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849
ReviewTrackers	from \$29/month	Subscription (per location)	850K	1024 x 768	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849
SweetIQ	on request	Subscription (per location)	850K	1024 x 768	5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849
Tracker	from \$29/month	Subscription (per location)	850K	1024 x 768	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849
URL	\$24-\$249/year	Subscription (per location)	850K	1024 x 768	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849
WordAds	on request	Per campaign	850K	1024 x 768	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849
Whisper	\$29-\$100/month	Subscription (per location)	850K	1024 x 768	5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849
Yipit	\$29/month to \$299/year	Per campaign	850K	1024 x 768	5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$849



Don't confuse correlation, with causation



Focus on what causes the need

**To test if your product is needed,
you study the job that it does.**

The Job

=

The
Problem

+

Situational
Context

+

Success
Criteria

The Job

=

The
Problem

+

Situational
Context

+

Success
Criteria

Define the problem your users experience

Understand where the negative impact is

Keep asking “but **why is that a problem”**

“I don’t know what everyone is working on”



“I can’t tell who is free to take on a new project”



“I can’t plan our roadmap because of that”

“I don’t know what everyone is working on”



“I can’t tell who is free to take on a new project”



“I can’t plan our roadmap because of that”

“Jenkins has fallen over again”



“We have to spend time & energy fixing it again”



“We’re not investing in product, we’re yak-shaving”



Test: Until you show me a check, you haven't shown me a customer

The Job

=

The
Problem

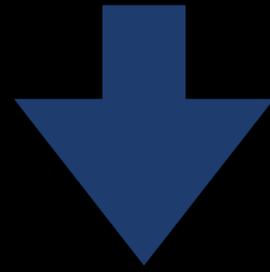
+

Situational
Context

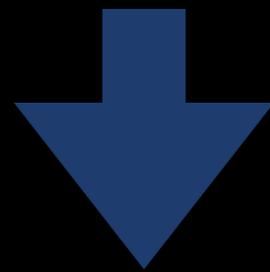
+

Success
Criteria

When does this problem occur?



What's the event that triggers it?



What are the invariants around this event?

Refine the invariants of the situation

The more precise the better

Studying the Job

Studying the Customers

Adding more context refines a situation and makes it easier to craft a solution



When I want something to eat...

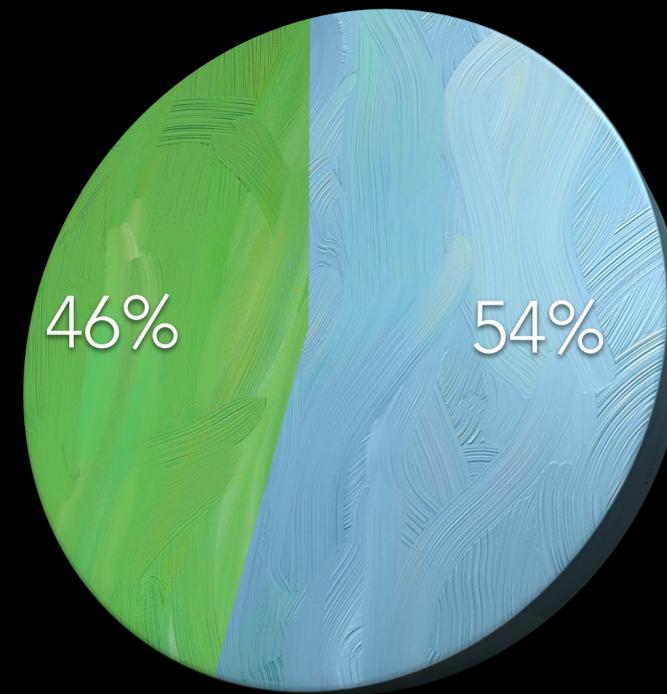
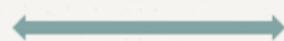
When I'm in a rush and want something to eat...



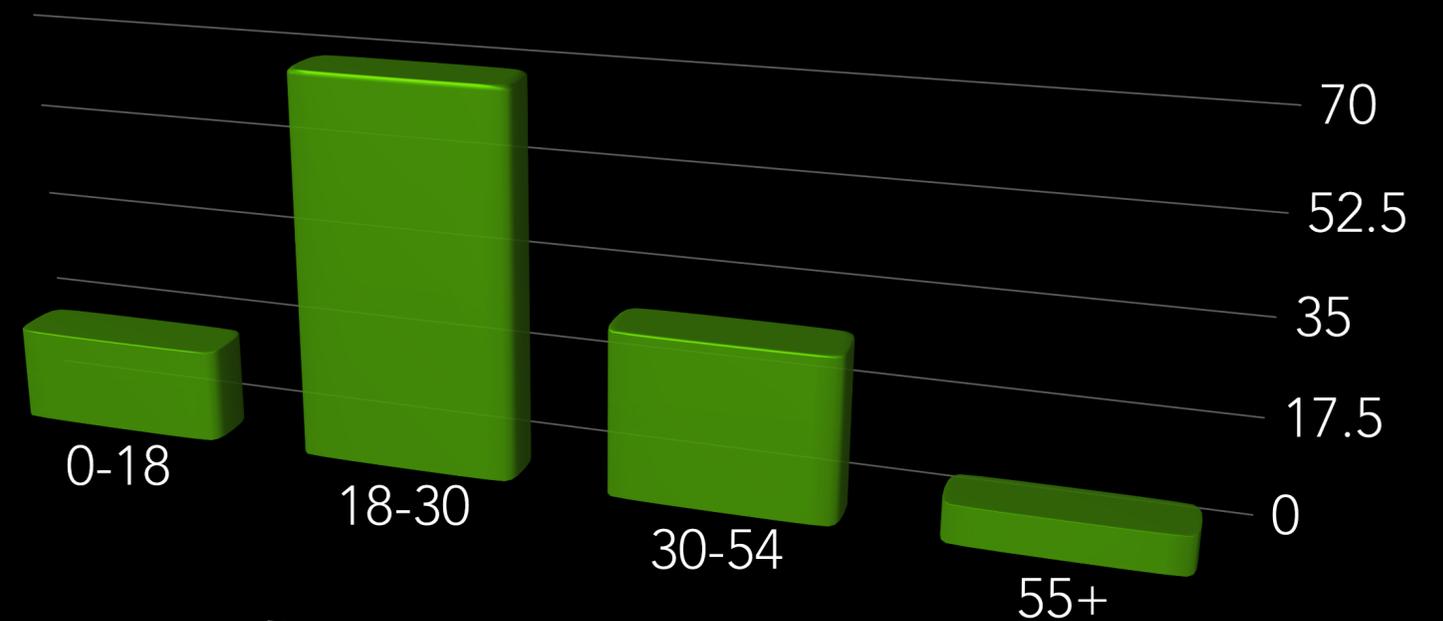
When I'm in a rush,

I'm starving and want something to eat...

When I'm in a rush, starving, need something I can eat with one hand while 'on the go', am not sure when the next time I'll be able to eat. ...



Primarily Male



Primarily 18-30

**The demographics correlate with the situation,
but they don't cause it.**



Barak Obama eats pizza.



Google

Signature or Initials Checkbox Date Signed Aa Textbox 12

Cancel

Save and Attach to Email

Tip
Drag and drop the buttons above onto the document.

HelloSign for Gmail

The easiest way to sign documents online

“When someone emails me a PDF that I need to sign”

1. Add some text below:

2. Add your signature

- Christina Cas
- Drew Dizen
- Fiona Somer
- Jennifer Guill
- Joan Fragas
- Lori Emerson
- Nick Nesbitt
- reqall
- Anne Cong-h
- Annie Shing
- bill stagg

Sales History

Pipeline Flow

Current Quarter

Monthly Sales Trend

This report shows the amount of deals closed by month. We hardly close anything in the first month of a quarter.

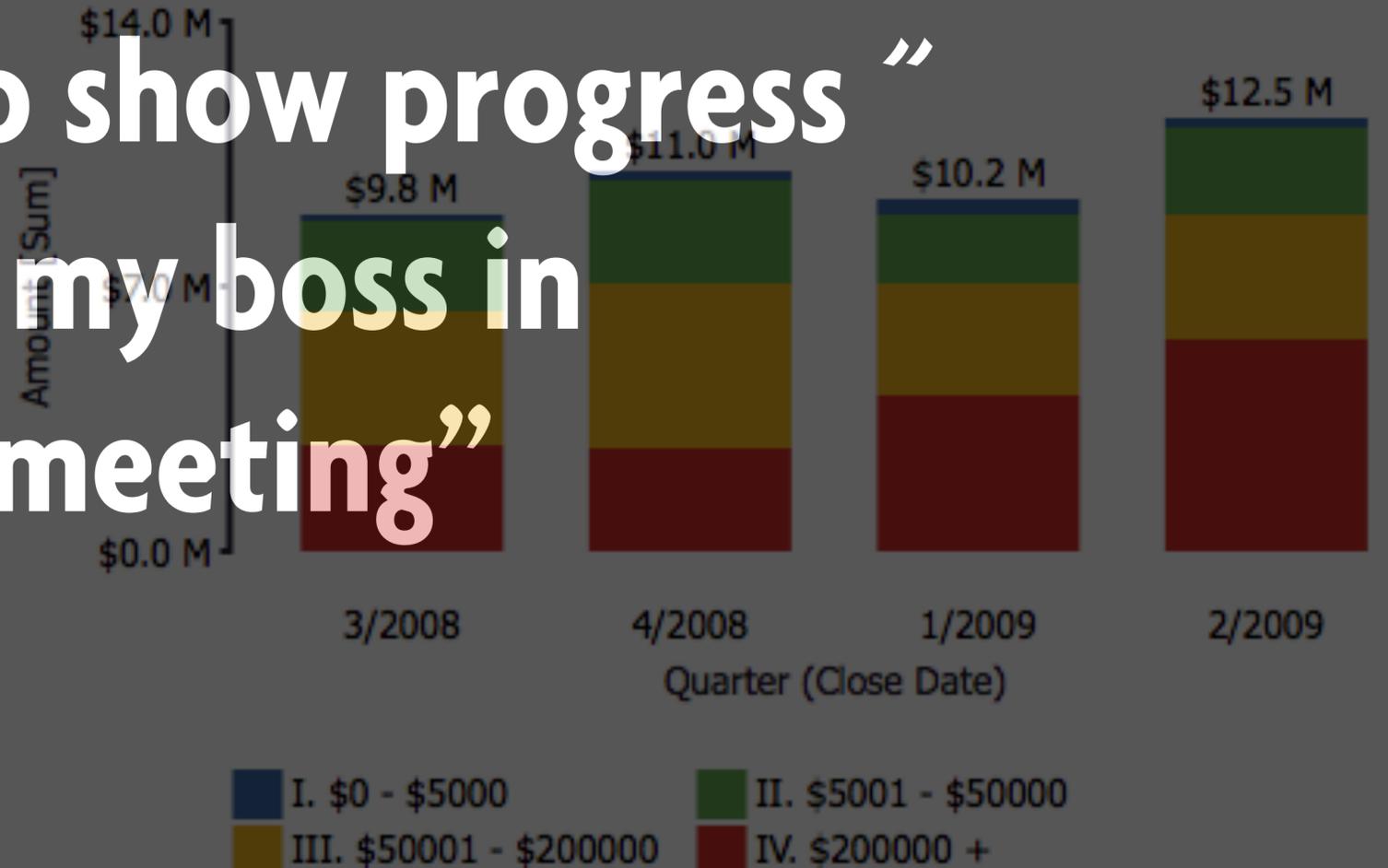
Monthly Sales Trend by Amount



Sales by Quarter and Deal Size

Tier IV deals made our quarter. We need to make sure we have enough large opportunities in the pipeline to maintain this growth.

Sales by Quarter by Deal Size



“When I need to show progress to impress my boss in our next meeting”

Last Quarter's Opportunities

Composition of Last Quarter Sales



Test: Show me the chain of events that undeniably **causes the problem**

The Job

=

The
Problem

+

Situational
Context

+

Success
Criteria

Consideration Set



Success Criteria

Winner

Secure

High Quality

Cheap

**Works On
Mobile**

Fast

Interoperable

What matters to the actual users?

**Clear &
Simple**

**Easy
To Use**

Multi-lingual

Reliable

**Prints
Well**

HTML5 Based

Built on Rails

Real Time

**Android
focussed**

Don't confuse it with what's cool for developers

**Linux
compatible**

**“ground up”
rewrite**

**Fully
refactored**

#4 on Dribbble

iOS7 Inspired

**Award
Winning**

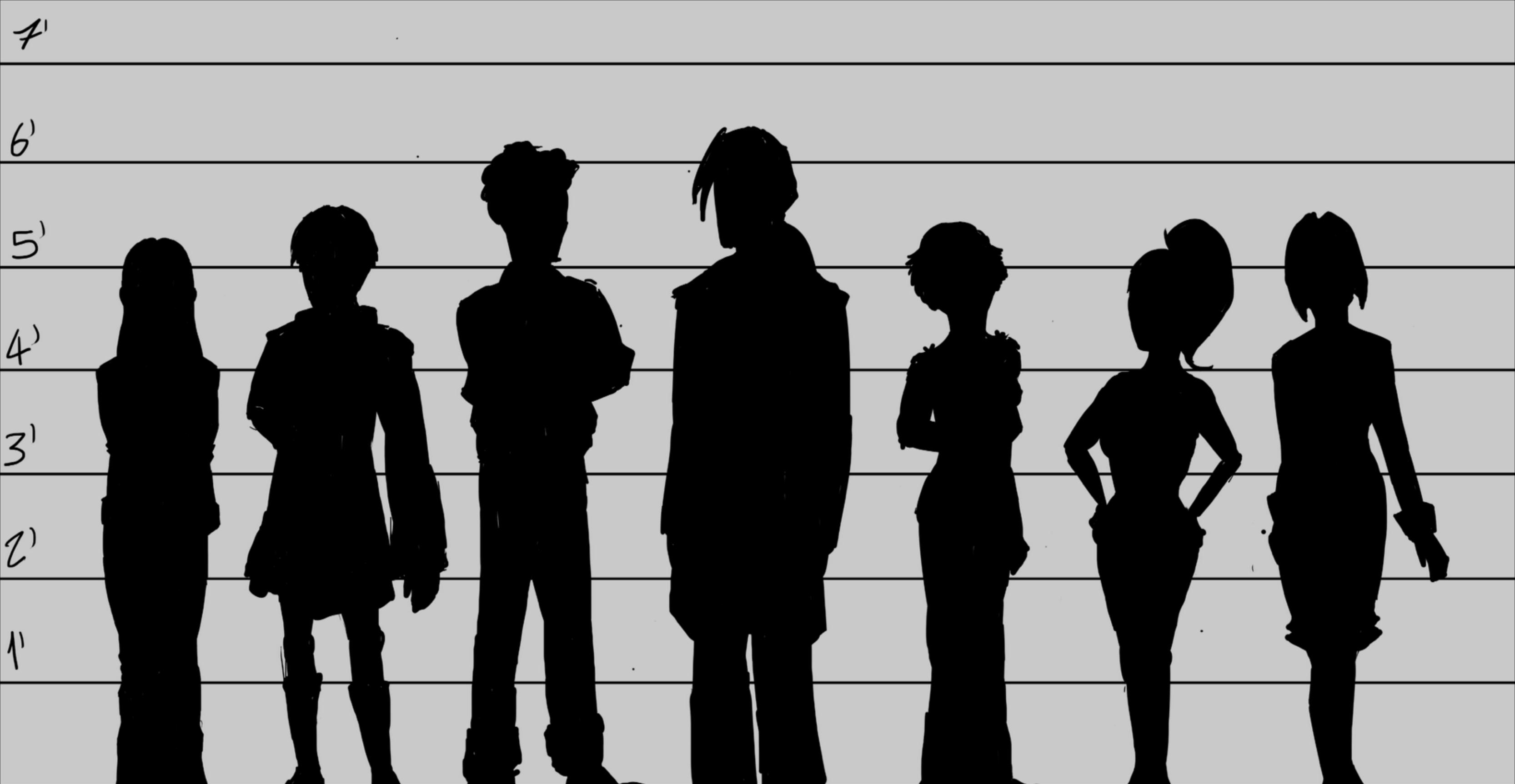
Flat Modern

Don't confuse it with what matters to Designers

**12 Column
Grid**

asd

**Typographically
Stunning**



Test: Can you successfully pick the winning product from a line-up?

Recap

The
Problem

+

Situational
Context

+

Success
Criteria

TESTED BY

**Evidence of paying
customers already solving
the problem**

TESTED BY

**A specific circumstance or
chain of events that will
guarantee to cause the
problem**

TESTED BY

**Understanding the 'hiring
criteria' for customers. Can
you successfully predict
their purchase?**

The jobs people do rarely change

The products change frequently

JOBS ARE TIMELESS

JOBS TRANSCEND TECHNOLOGIES

JOBS BEAT CATEGORIES

JOBS ARE TIMELESS

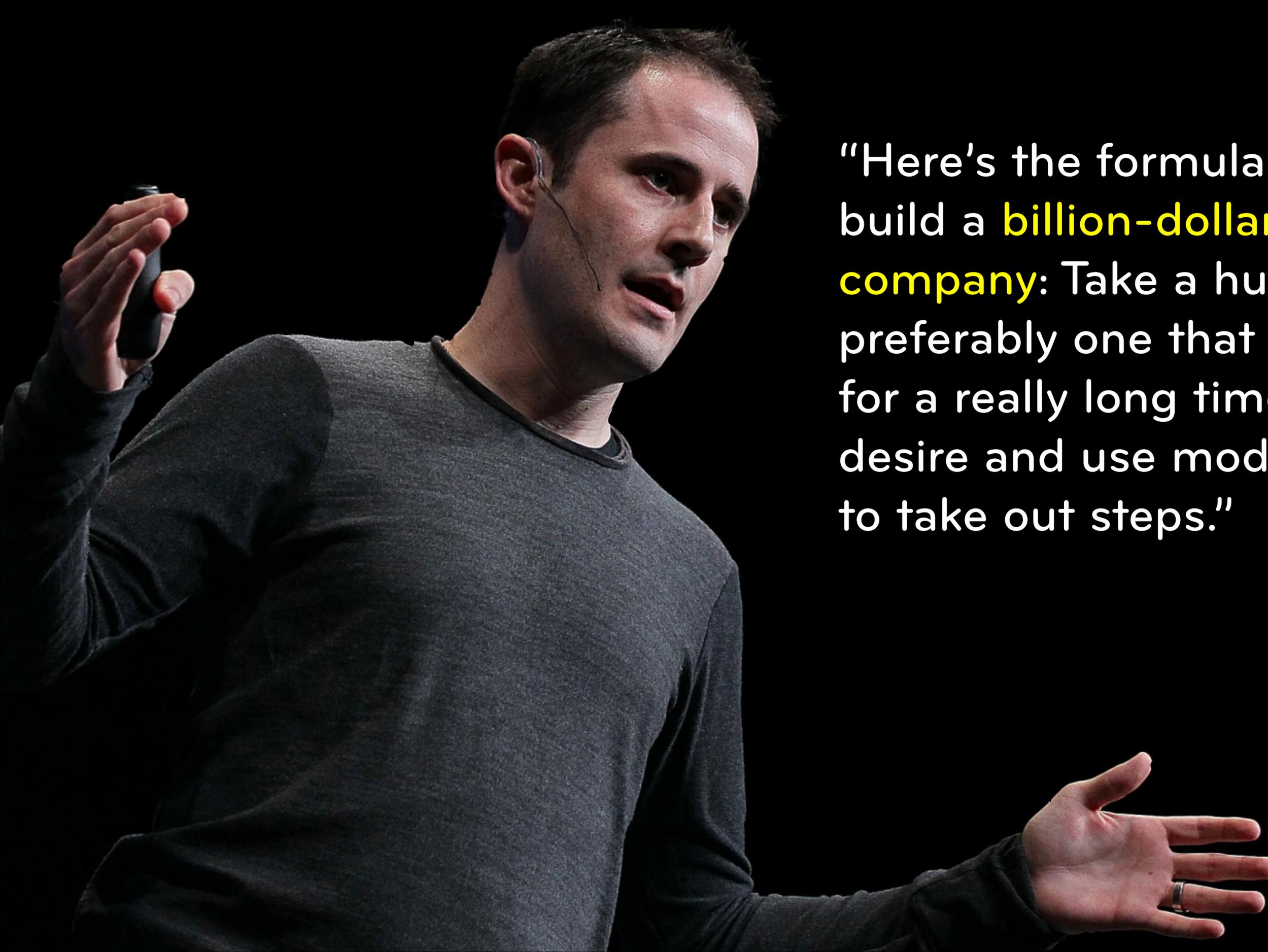
JOBS TRANSCEND TECHNOLOGIES

JOBS BEAT CATEGORIES



Same job, different everything.





“Here’s the formula if you want to build a **billion-dollar internet company**: Take a human desire, preferably one that has been around for a really long time... Identify that desire and use modern technology to take out steps.”



Photo sharing 1.0

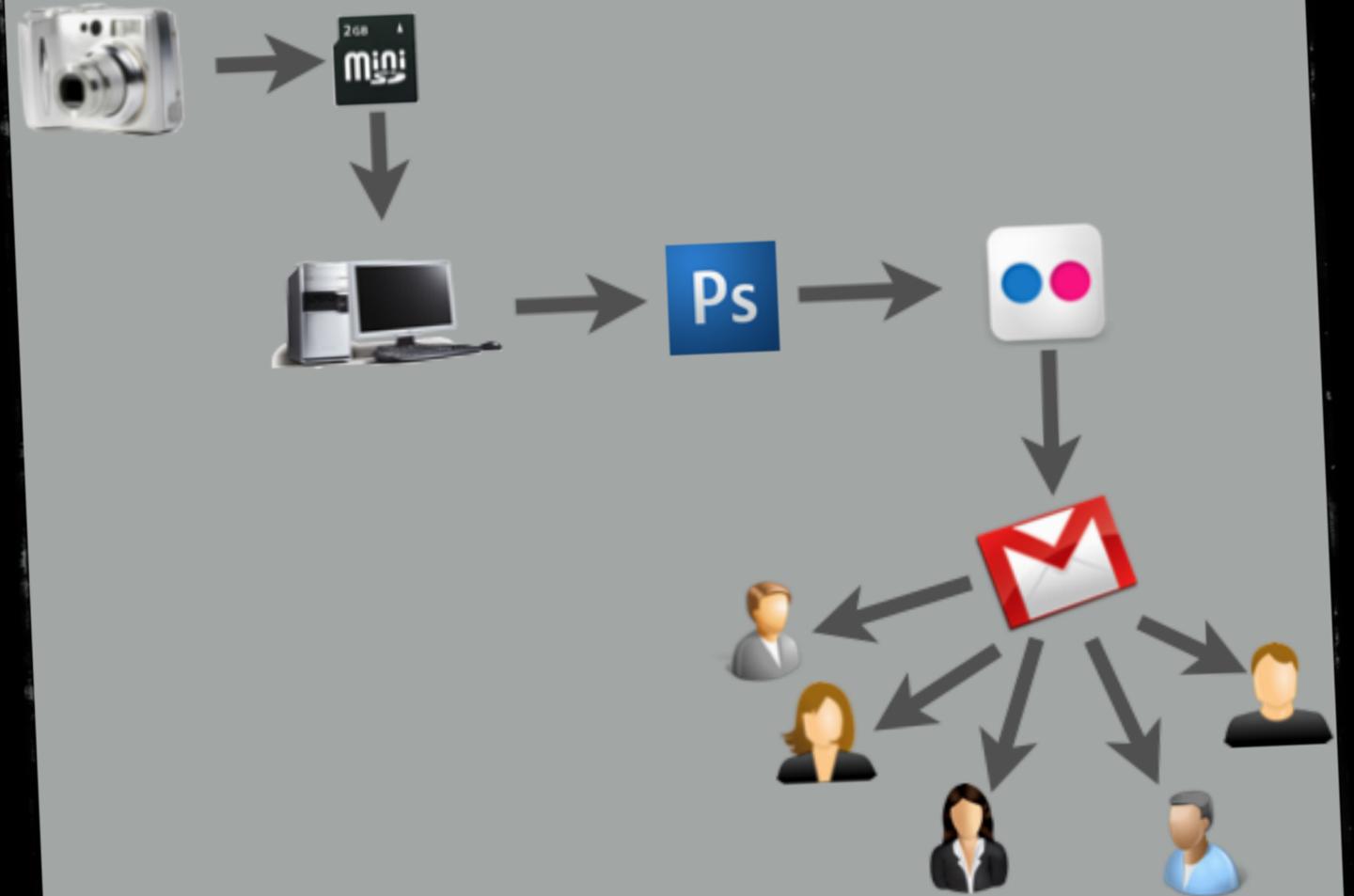
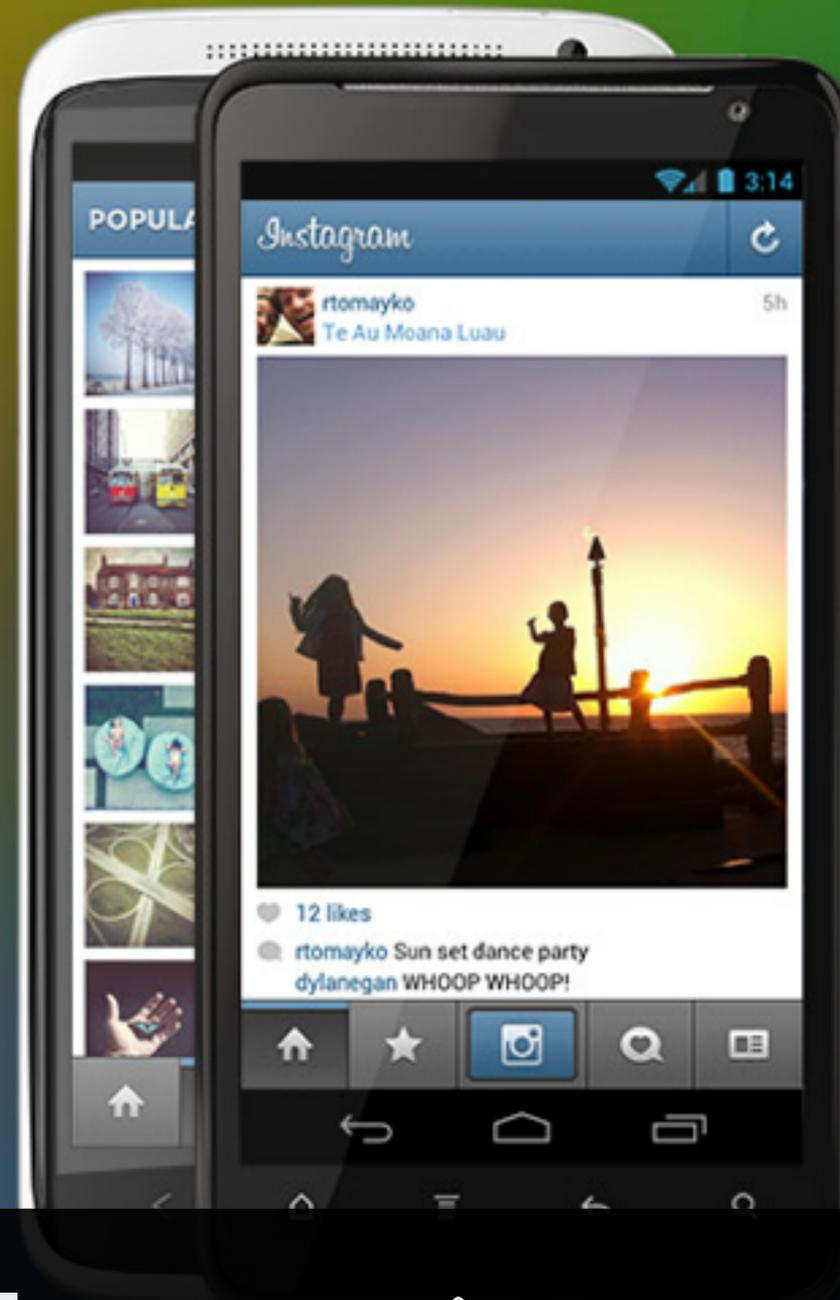


Photo sharing (Web 2.0 era)

Instagram



An old job with steps improved or removed

You don't sign up, you just send an email.

1

Example Email

To: alycia4545@gmail.com

Cc: cash@square.com

Subject: \$450

Here's some money for your textbooks. I hope your first week of classes goes well!

— Mom

2

Link your debit card

You'll receive a reply from Square asking you to link a debit card.



3

Cash Sent!

The recipient will be emailed a link to easily deposit their cash to their bank.



Square Cash: old jobs, steps removed or improved

M

Medium

A better place to read and write. [Learn more.](#)

Read our [top posts from last month.](#)

POSTS

COLLECTIONS

The Leverage of Being a Good Person



Relationships are leverage. If you give value to someone else first, you have leverage.

Trending · Gary Vaynerchuk in I.M.H.O. · 2 min read

The Secret to Designing the Right Product



I will tell you how to build the best product.

Trending · Matt Schlicht in Product Design · 5 min read

One Shot at a Warlord



If you had the resources to accomplish something great in the world,

Old Job, some steps removed or improved.

JOBS ARE TIMELESS

JOBS TRANSCEND TECHNOLOGIES

JOBS BEAT CATEGORIES

Your job isn't tied to a desktop, laptop, tablet, phone, or watch

Just like a newspaper's "job" wasn't tied to ink on wood

And like Microsofts Word's job wasn't tied to Windows

And phone networks job wasn't tied to SMS

And Garmin's job wasn't tied to a SatNav

And a University's job isn't to tied to a building



Think about the job first, and product second.

JOBS ARE TIMELESS

JOBS TRANSCEND TECHNOLOGIES

JOBS BEAT CATEGORIES



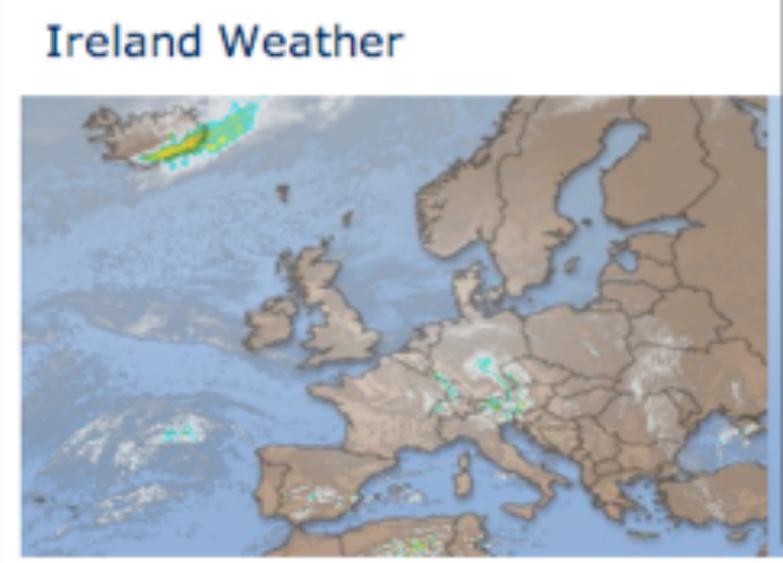
These guys were obsessed with being in the
“Newspaper” Industry



Their customers just wanted something to read

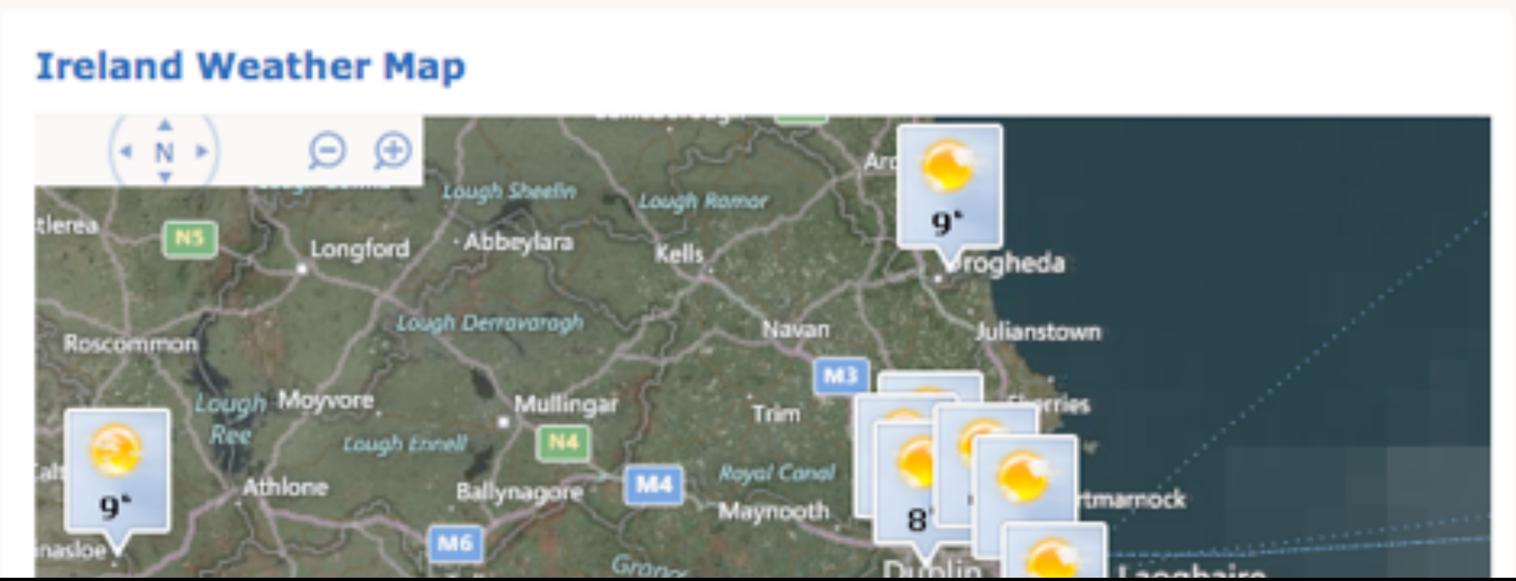
Ireland WEATHER Wicklow, IE LOCAL WEATHER

Home Radar & Maps News & Video Climate Social

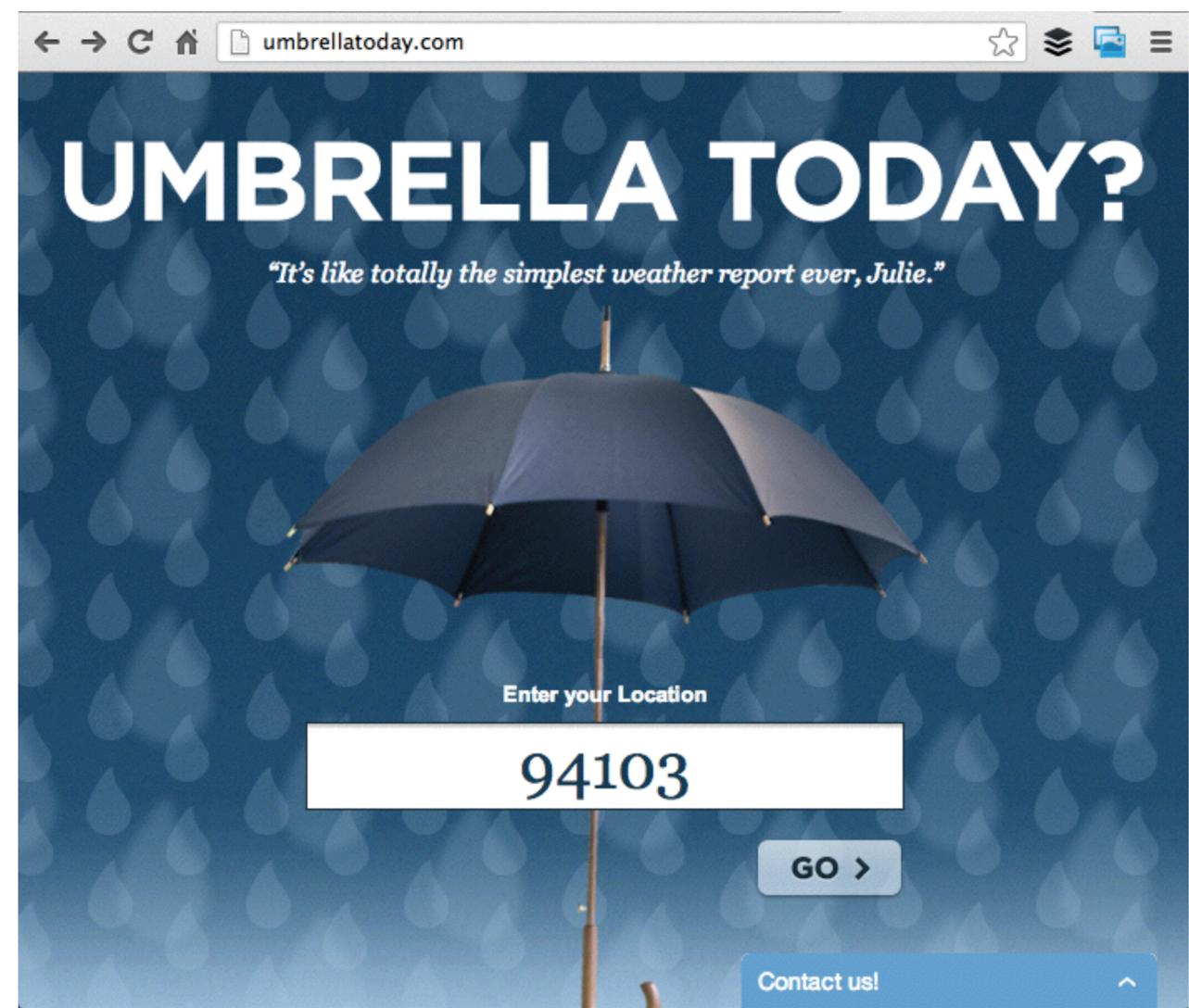
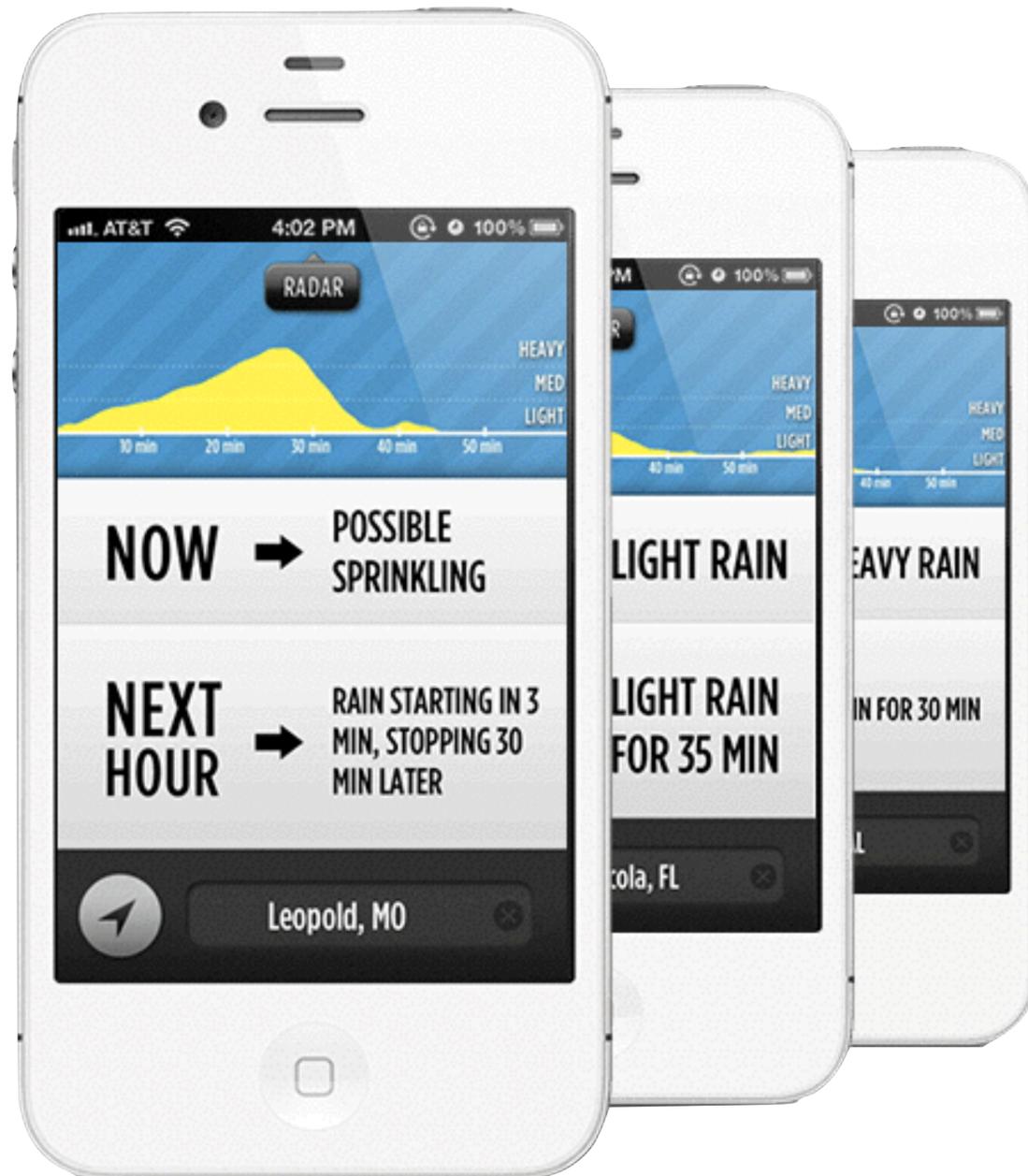


Local Weather

Wicklow	Mostly Sunny	8° RealFeel® 3°
New York	Mostly Sunny	26° RealFeel® 28°
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	27° RealFeel® 29°



Weather sites obsess about being “Weather Sites”



But customers just want to know if it's gonna rain



FILTERS

11701 users Loading (2500/11271)



USER

- NAME
- RELATIONSHIP
- EMAIL
- LAST SEEN
- SESSIONS

COMPANY

- NAME
- LAST SEEN
- CREATED AT
- PLAN
- CONVERSATIONS
- INSTALLED_AT
- TRACKED_USERS



We thought we had built a map

FILTERS

11701 users Loading (2500/11271)



USER

- NAME
- RELATIONSHIP
- EMAIL
- LAST SEEN
- SESSIONS

COMPANY

- NAME
- LAST SEEN
- CREATED AT
- PLAN
- CONVERSATIONS
- INSTALLED_AT
- TRACKED_USERS



We wondered why it was so popular?



Freckle
@letsfreckle

Follow

In the land of Freckle, the sun never sets!
pic.twitter.com/aS5igD4P

Reply Retweet Favorite Buffer More



4 RETWEETS 2 FAVORITES

10:58 PM - 13 Sep 12 Flag media

Brian Daly
@_briandaly

Follow

I've only seen about 7 presentations at the @500startups demo day...and I think 3 of them have showed @intercom 's user map! Go Intercom!

Reply Retweet Favorite Buffer More

4 RETWEETS

9:51 PM - 17 Jul 12

If you think it's a "map"

Geographical accuracy

Precise filtering

Clustering of segments

Drag to zoom for regions

Accurate scales & distances

But, to look impressive...

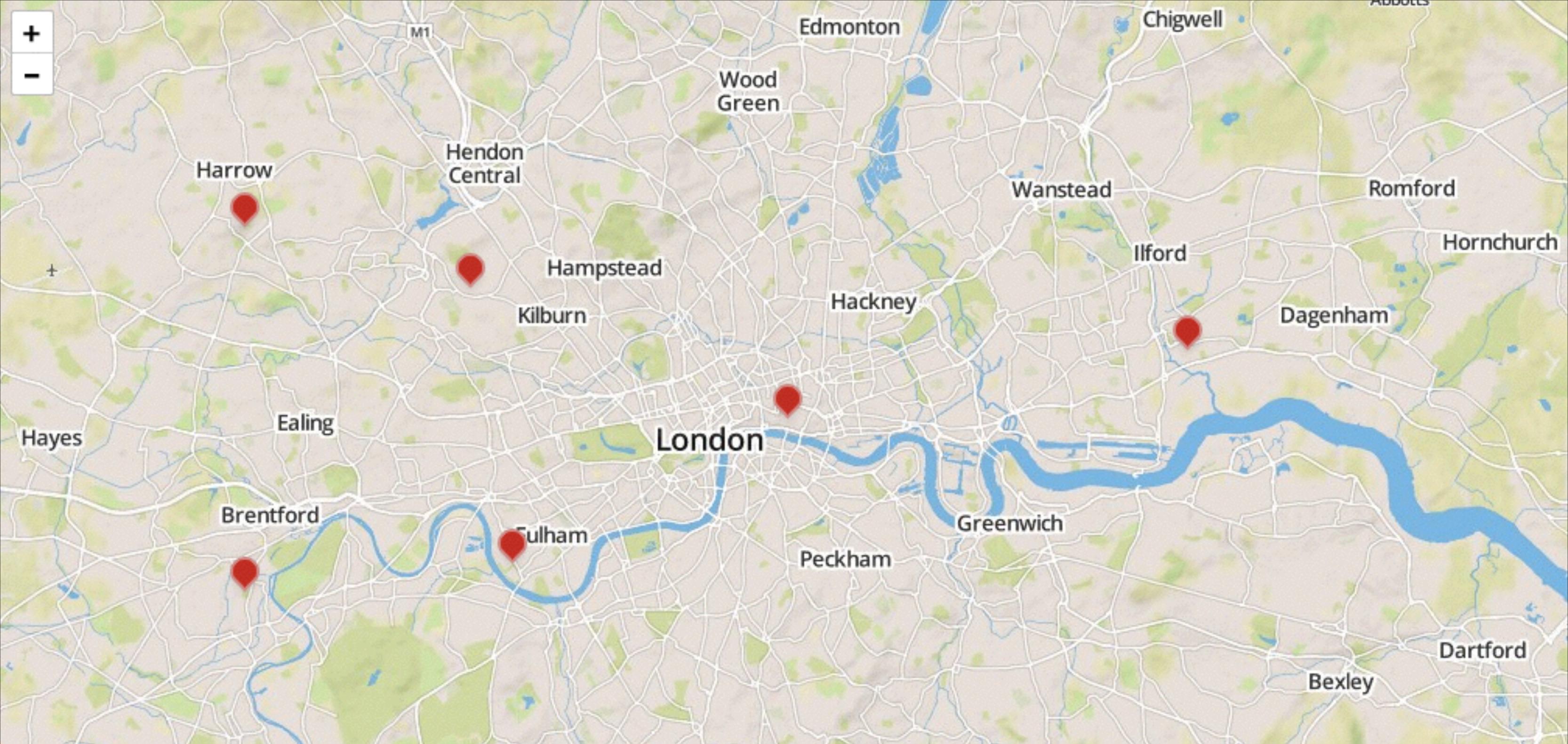
A beautiful map

Animated with live action

Full screen version

Hide sensitive data to share

Download as a keynote slide



A worse “map”, does a better job

TECHNOLOGY WITHOUT A JOB FAILS



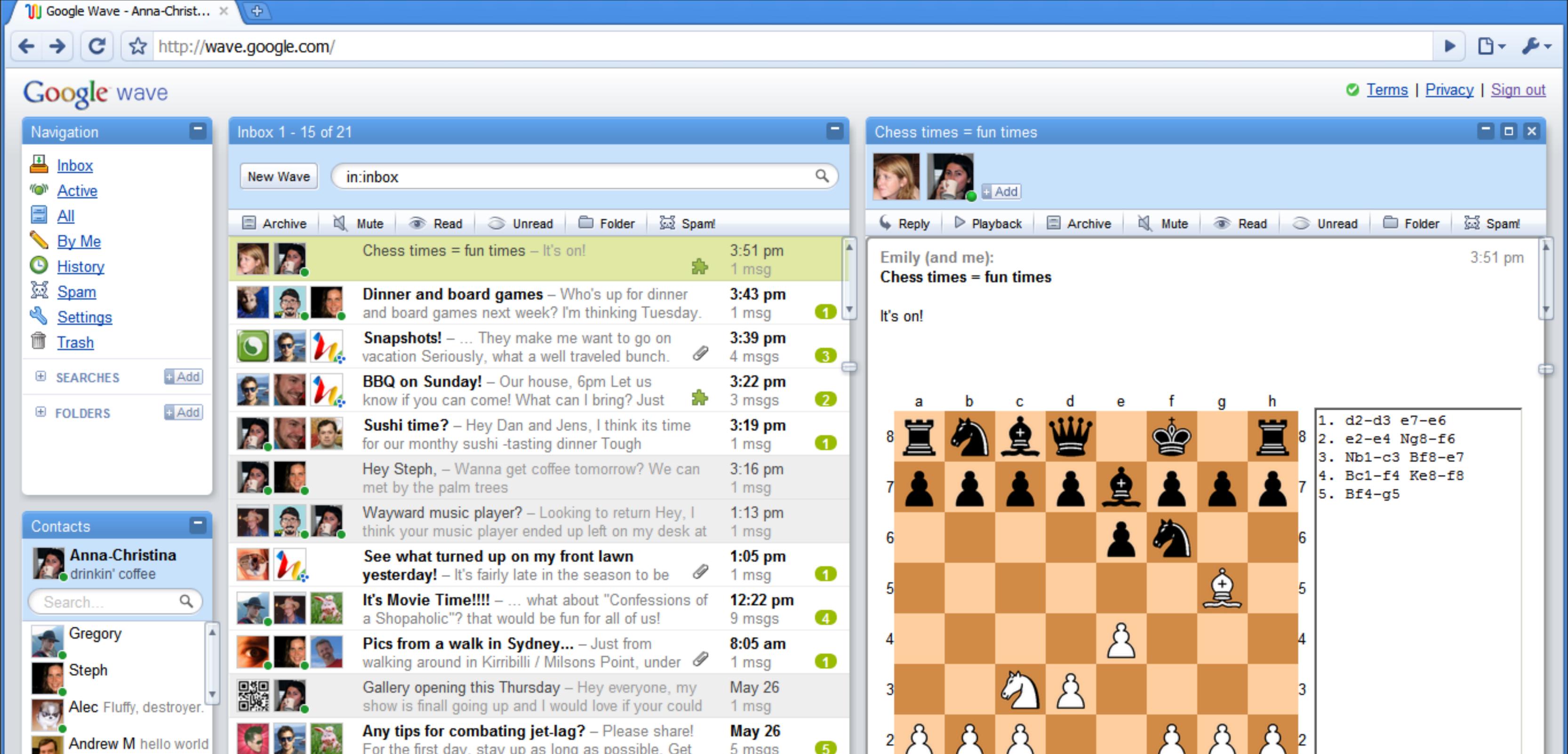
Segway was technology in search of a job



It found a part time job for tours & airport police



Google Glass is currently in search of a job

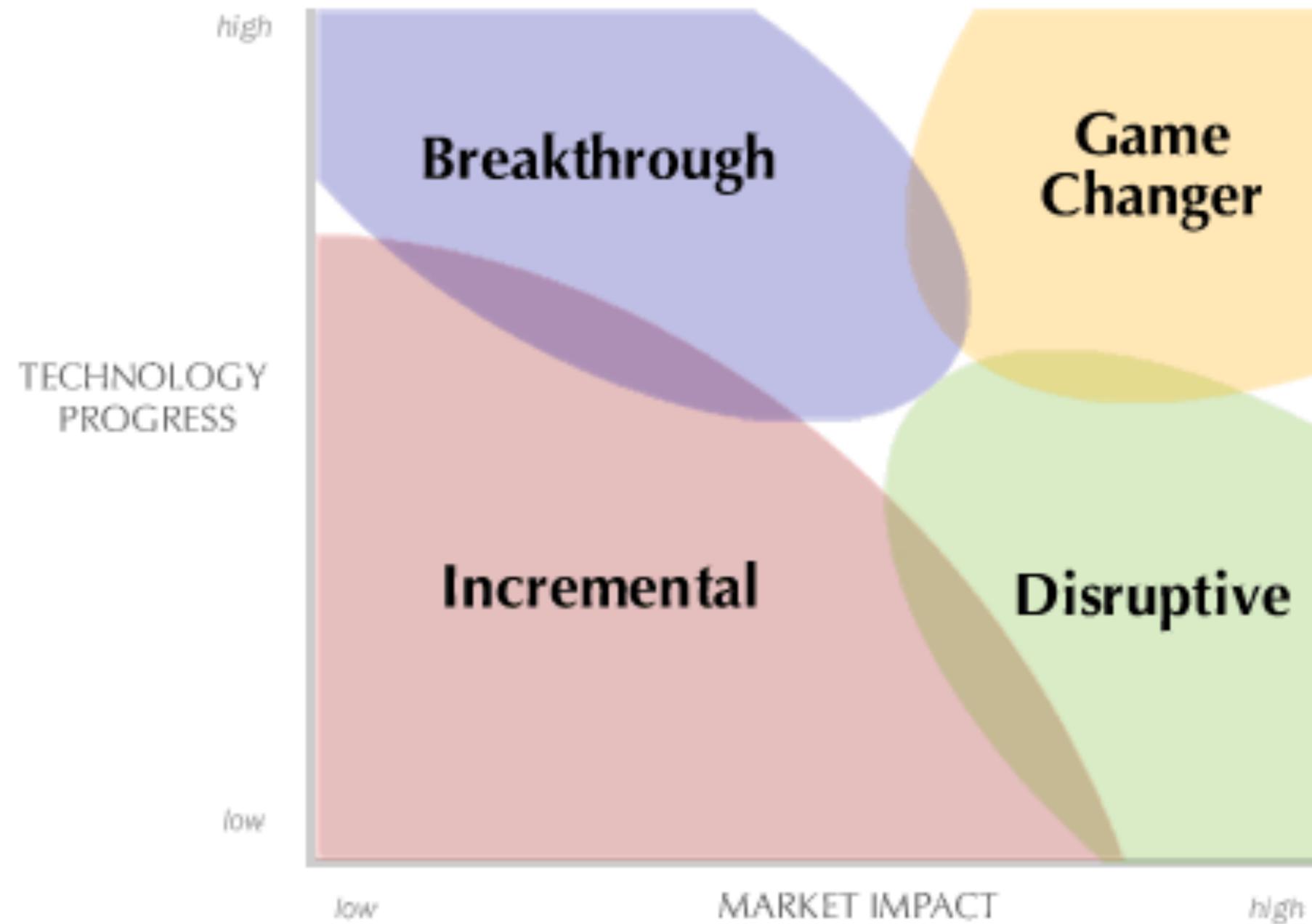


Google Wave Never Found a Job

SAS SproutSocial ArgyleSocial SocialReport Campalyst Unilyzer Curelate Pinfluencer
SimplyMeasured socialbakers PostRocket Adaptly Reachli LittleBird Sparked Shift Traackr
FanBridge HootSuite Morcova prosodic Swix Venueseen Monstro Twimbow Buzznumbers
TrendKite Sociero Youscan TunkRank Echnobot SocialAppsHQ Vaktarrin Beevolve Mention
Buzzware GovSM Casaplanca SocialLogix Morcova ZocialInc BrandFractal ejenio
Croakun StatFly SocialKnow position2 Hubspot minilytics tweetreach socialoomph sodash
Decooda Teezir motivequest SocialFactz Kantar iMonitoring Meltwater Engagor
infoFactory NetBreeze NutshellMail BoomSonar ReviewIQ AtInternet Daumsoft Infospeed
Wool.Labs Actionly SocialPointer Zelist Telligent GoogleAnalytics ReputationObserver
Wildfire TodayLaunch authority ChatterBeacon Katanedia Bloometer ReputationTool

Everyone is building products to fit into “categories”

EarlyDetection iMindTap.de iip iop iTracebuzz Brandology iNoughnbuzz JamiU Insttstant
Tweetlytics Overdrive Mentionapp Repumetrix Socialscape eWatch Cision Digimind
Samepoint Buzzstream Vocus Attensity Buzzlogic Factiva eCairn Jive Mediamiser
Moreover Onalytica Reputation.com StartPR.com UberVu Lithium VisibleTechnologies
Spiral16 CollectiveIntellect NetworkedInsights Backtype nminsight Trendrr SocialMention
Monittor linkInfluence nms CrimsonHexagon VisibleMeasures CustomScoop Attentio
Tweetbeep Collecta Tweetfeel SocialRadar Synthesio YackTrack Brandwatch Addictomatic
Echometrix SentimentMetrics ExactTarget HowSociable MediaVantage SearchMonitor
Kana Postling PeopleBrowsr Twitalyzer EdgerankChecker Vrank Brandify PageLever
Crowdbooster Tweeb SiteTrail Kyoo Sysomos BuddyMedia



Breakthrough usually means “technology” has preceded “job”



You can recognise the pioneers by the arrows in their back



Measure & Improve

Staying Lean

The Product You Build

The Jobs That You Build For

Your Mission

Your Vision

Your product will tackle one or more jobs, likely more.

e.g. Some jobs project managers do:

- 1. Update the client**
- 2. Review Progress & Report**
- 3. Share new information with the team**
- 4. Start a new project with a new client**
- 5. Review an individuals contributions**
- 6. Estimate completion date**

...

Your product's goal is to capture some of that behaviour

MVP

‘that version of the product that enables a full turn of the Build Measure Loop with a minimum amount of effort, and the least amount of development time’



**A 'concierge' MVP only tests if there is real demand
It doesn't tell if you your end product will satisfy it**



**A product MVP will test if the smallest subset of the workflow
can be aided/improved/replaced with software**

Tracking Time

Create
Project



Enter
Hours



Generate
Report



Making Money

Send
Invoice

Mark as
Paid

Your Product

Another Product

You have to draw a line somewhere

Where does your product start, and stop



Basecamp starts when the project starts, usually after the first meeting and ignores sales calls, payments, contracts, etc.



Keynote starts when you're done brainstorming and are ready for slides, and Keynote sticks around until your presentation is done.



Skype starts when you know who you want to call, it does not help you make friends or build a profile such that people want to call you

Where to start?

Start at the first step in the workflow where you can add unique value, and work out how to make the transition from the previous step seamlessly.

START

Product: Organise your travel plans for you

1. User shops around multiple sites for flights
2. User finds cheapest flight with minimal connection
3. User shares flights with other friend on trip
4. User books flights, enters credit card details
5. User receives email and forwards it to friend
6. User enters itinerary in their calendar & shares it
7. Users adds friends to calendar
8. ...

Product: Track your time and bill accordingly

1. User has discussion with client and agrees work
2. User does first piece of work
3. User posts message to Basecamp
4. User starts new spread sheet and enters client
5. User enters number of hours and corresponding Basecamp thread.
6. User waits to hear from client
7. ...

The All-in-One Travel Organizer

Sign up for TripIt

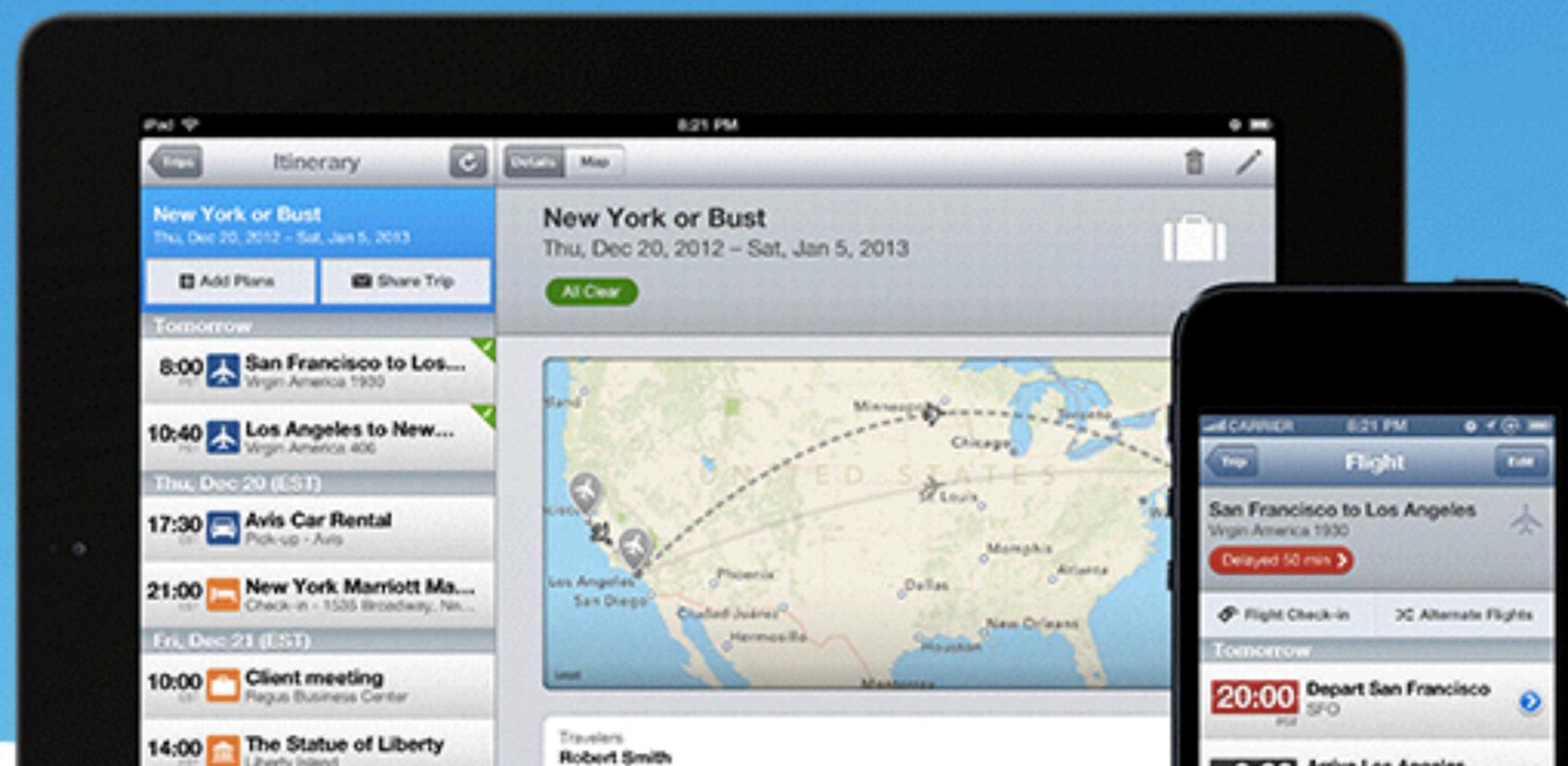
Sign in

Email Address

Create Password

Sign up - it's free!

Or, sign up with...



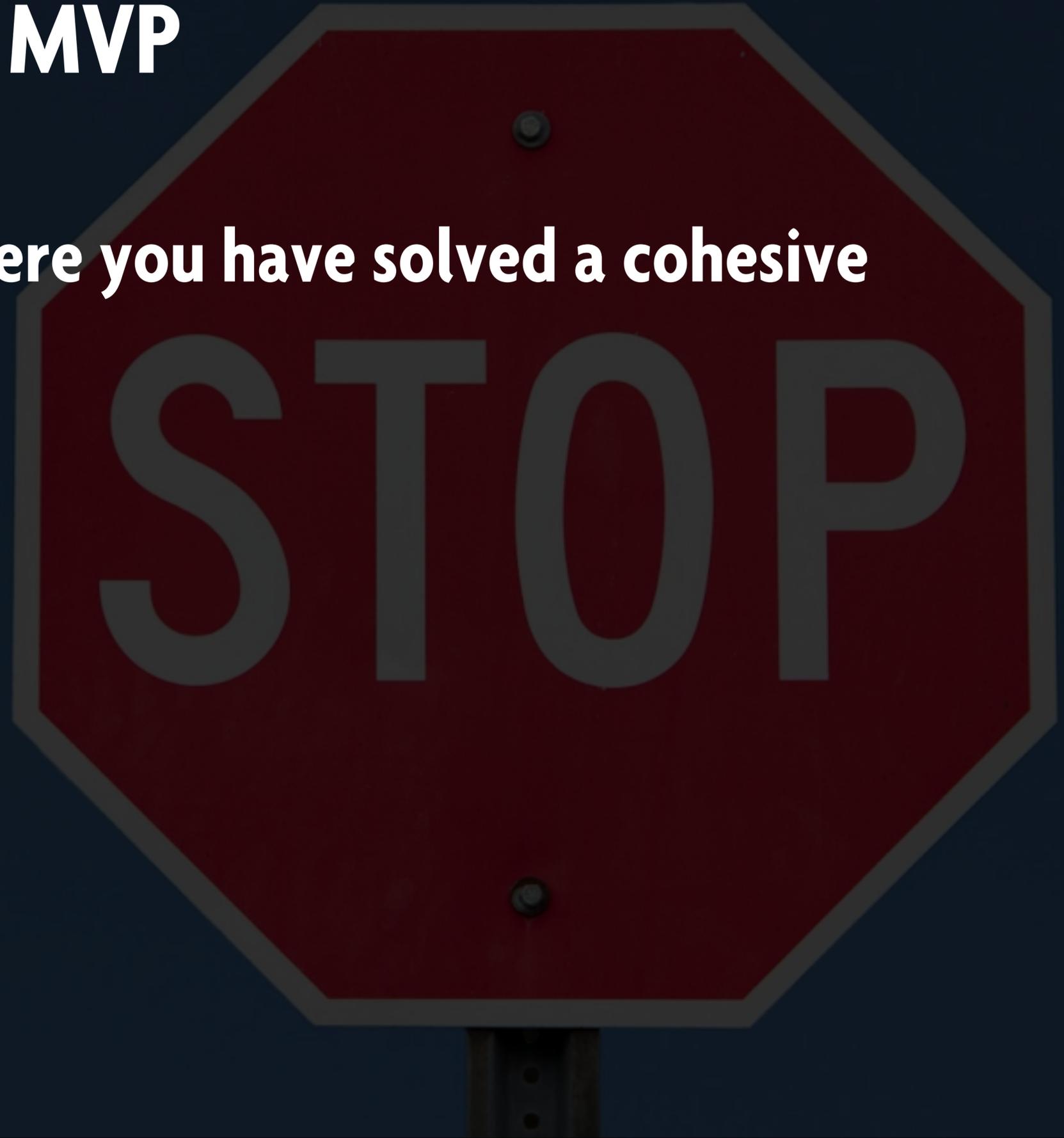
TripIt starts the second you've booked a flight.

Where to stop?

- 1. has a well defined market leader (and you don't want to compete) For example: PayPal, Amazon, eBay, Tumblr, etc**
- 2. is completed in various different ways (e.g. transferring money, creating a report presentation, sending an invoice, etc)**
- 3. is something you can't deliver any value. (e.g. if the next step is "they phone their customer", do you want to build VOIP?)**

Where to stop in an MVP

The first place you can, where you have solved a cohesive problem for the user



Gall's Law

A complex system that works is invariably found to have evolved from a simple system that worked.

A complex system designed from scratch never works and cannot be made to work. You have to start over, beginning with a working simple system

The Scopi-locks principle for MVP



Not too big (or no one can adopt it)“

Not too small (dismissed as a feature, not a product)“

Just right

Measure & Improve

Staying Lean

The Product You Build

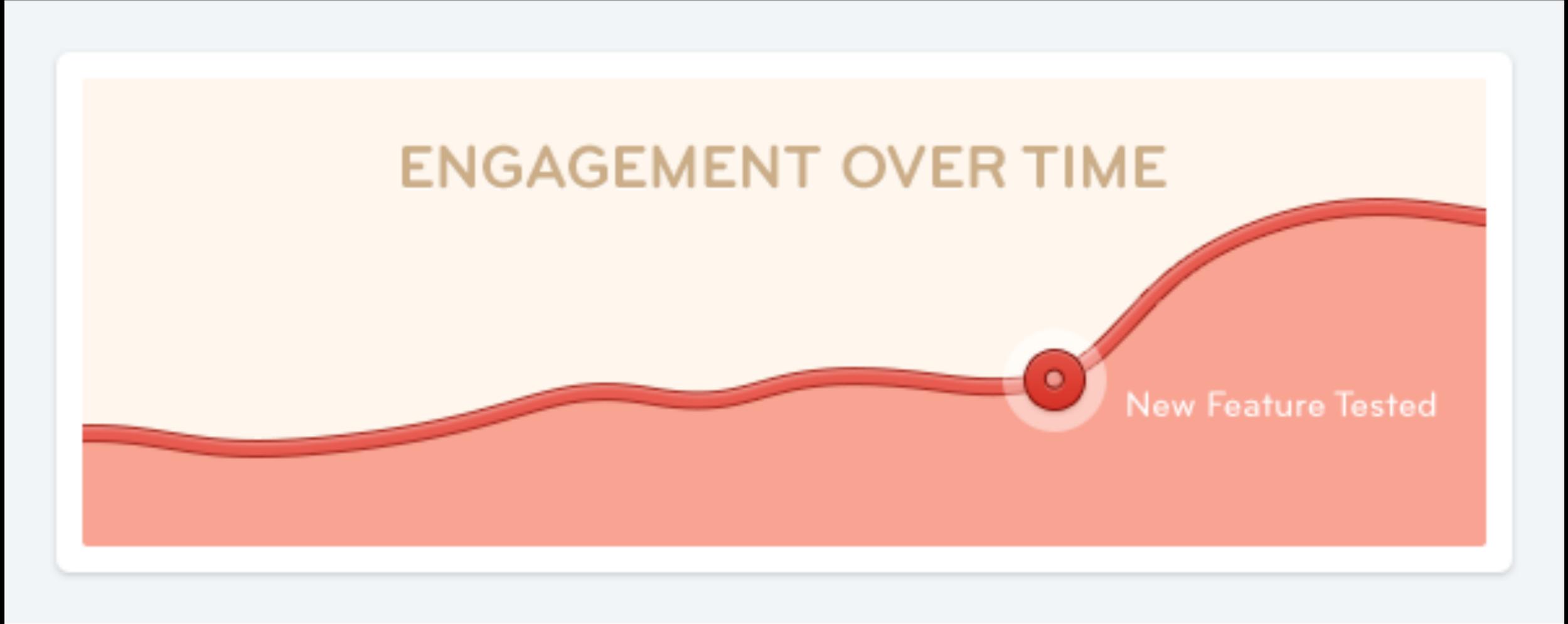
The Jobs That You Build For

Your Mission

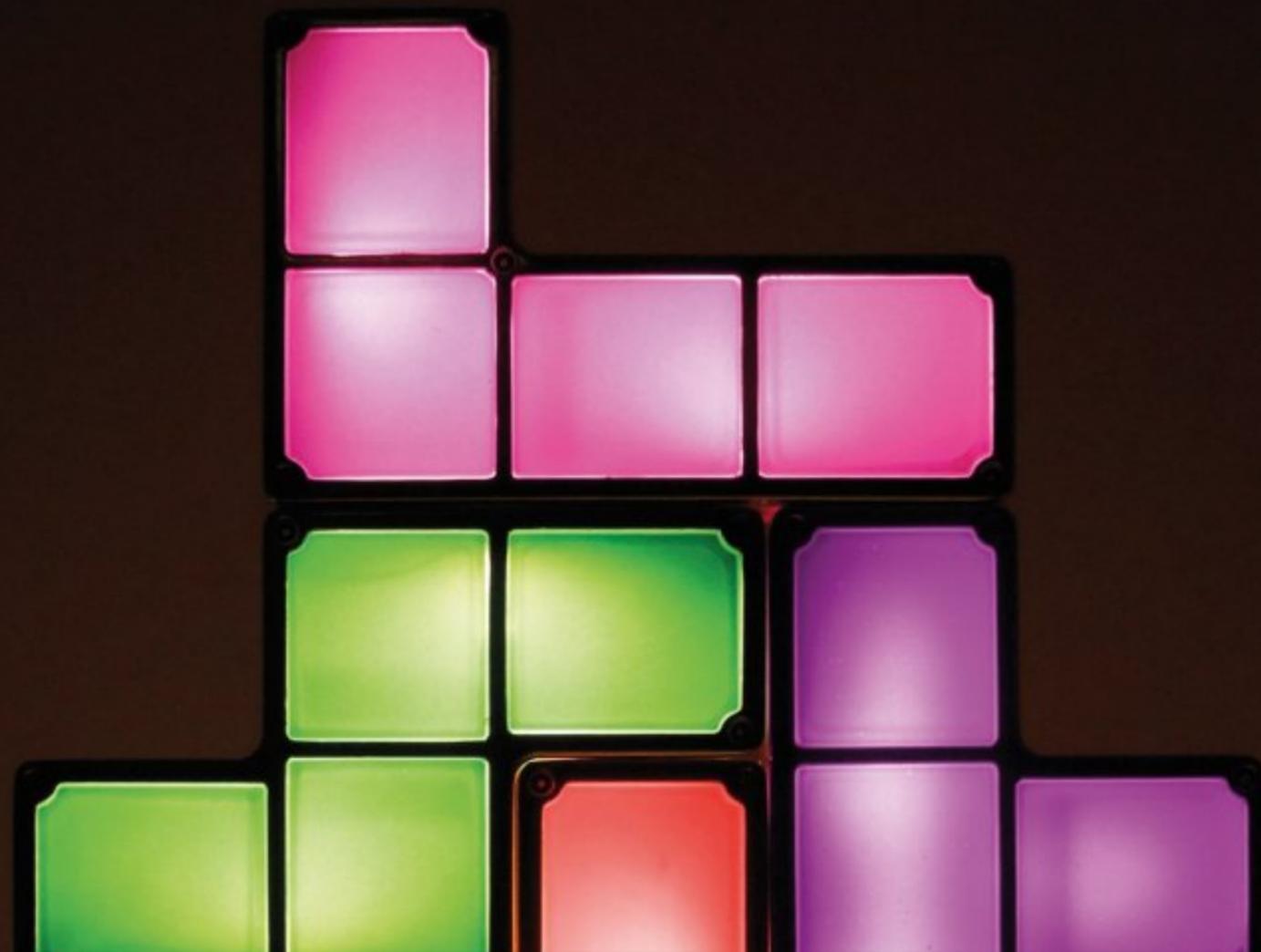
Your Vision

**There are literally hundreds of “good” reasons
to add features to your MVP.**

You have to say no to all of them.



But Look at the Engagement We Get



Is it the Right Type of Engagement?

But it's a pretty small feature

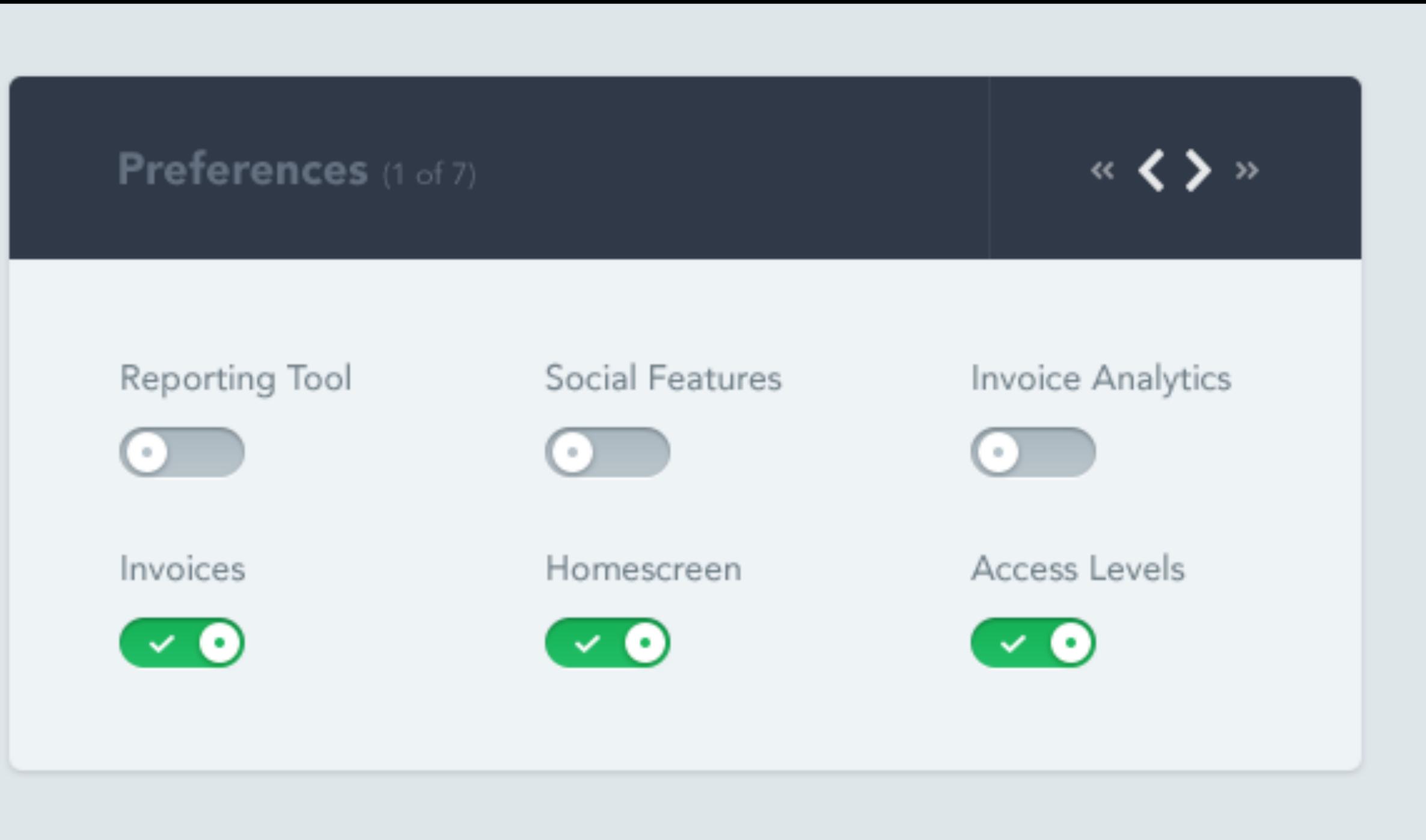
ESTIMATED COST OF A SMALL FEATURE



BLACKMAIL

But this customer is threatening to quit!

But we'll make it optional





But we've nothing else to do..



If You have
Time to Lean,
You have
Time to Clean

Downtime is
Clean-up Time!!

ADMIN FEATURES



Reports



Projections



Distribution



Metrics



Alerts



You look at competitors and think:

"We Need To Copy All These!"

Before you let a feature creep into your MVP

Does it fit your vision?

Is it a forward step along the way?

Does it belong in the workflow for the majority of users?

Is it necessary to achieve product market fit?

Will all customers use it in the same way?

Measure & Improve

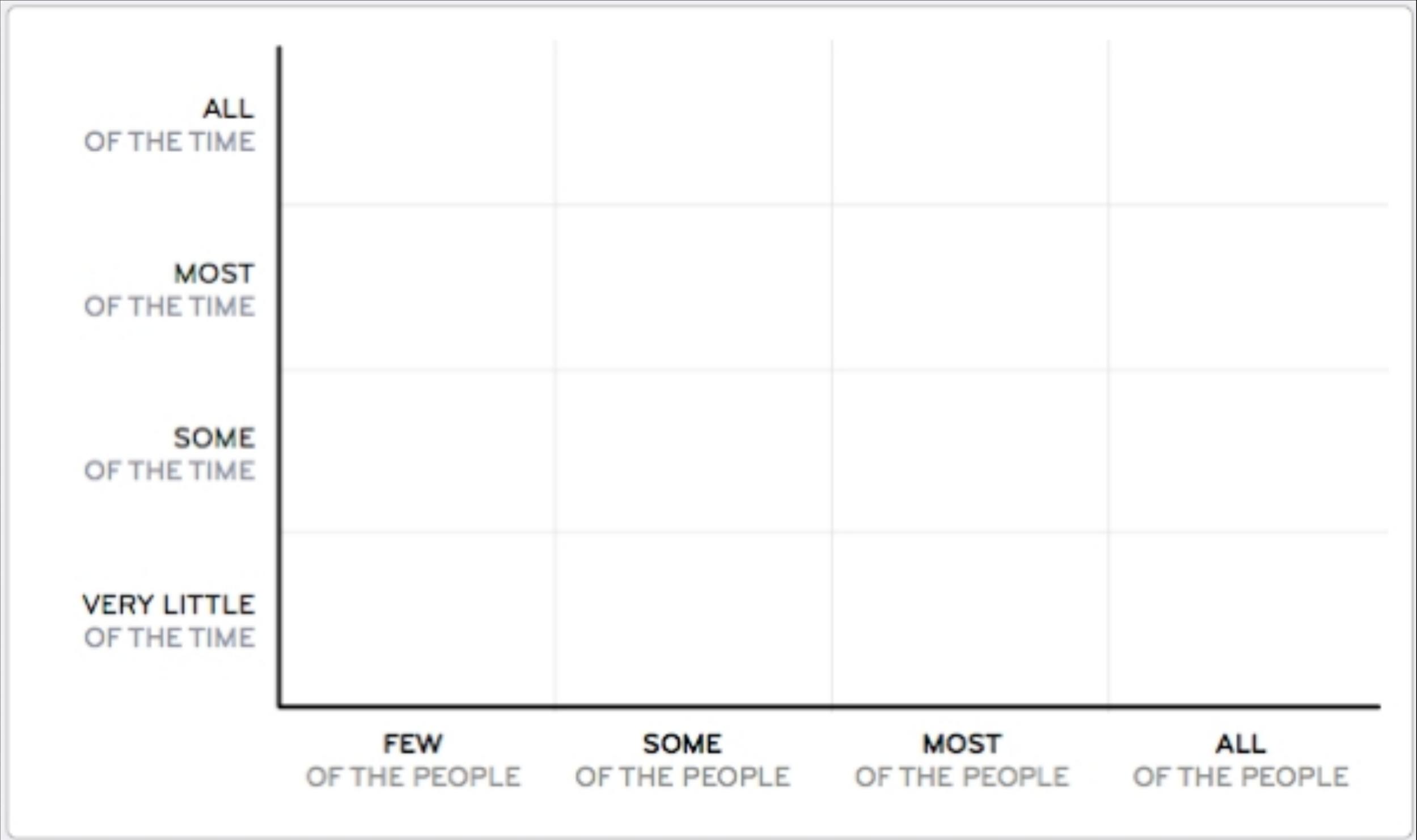
Staying Lean

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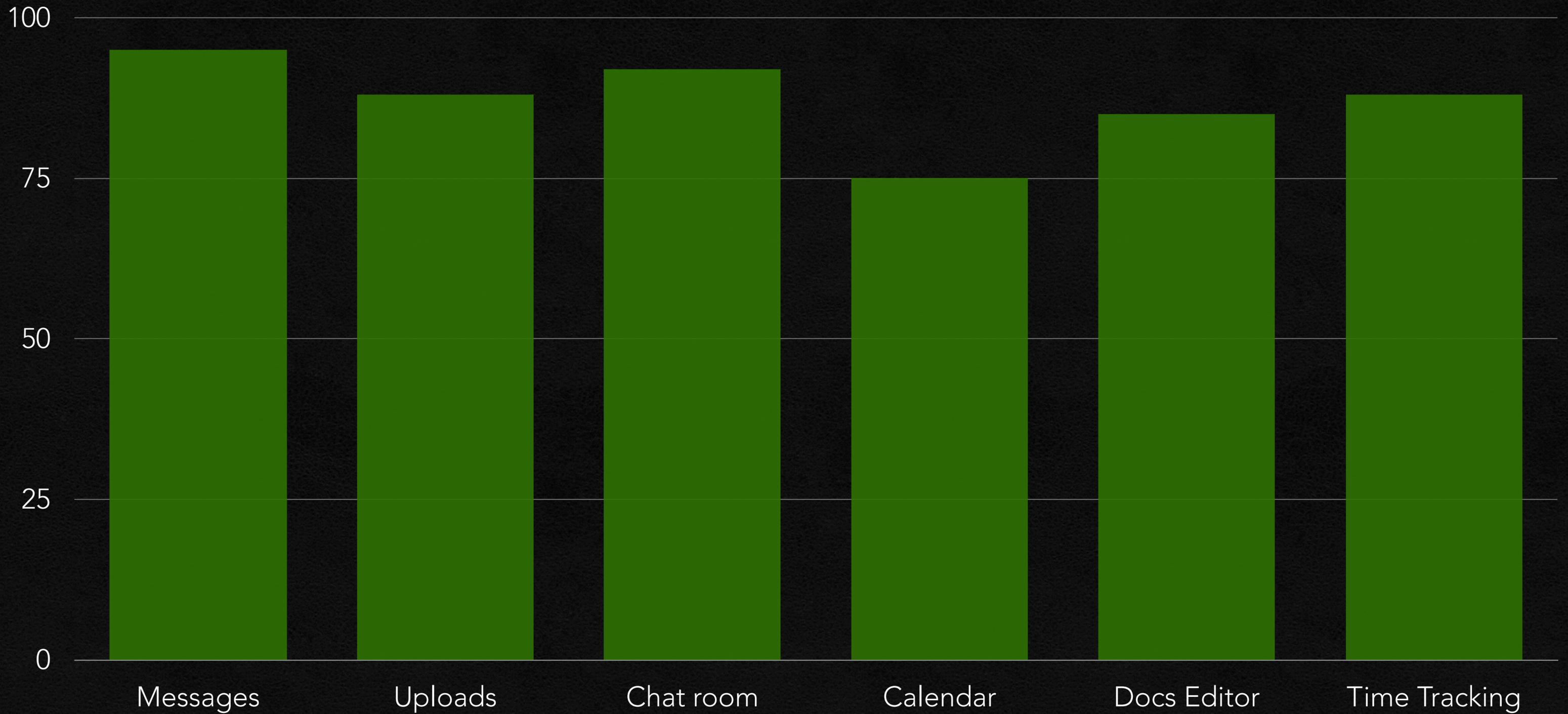
Product Strategy 101: How many people use each feature?

ALL OF THE TIME	Track time	Enter milestones	Post message/reply Create Project Add/Complete Tasks	
MOST OF THE TIME	SMS Alert	Search for files Search for people	View Dash Schedule meeting	
SOME OF THE TIME		Use calendar Import ICS	Add team/company Archive project Change permissions	
VERY LITTLE OF THE TIME		Setup Time Tracker	Account settings Edit project Merge projects	
	FEW OF THE PEOPLE	SOME OF THE PEOPLE	MOST OF THE PEOPLE	ALL OF THE PEOPLE

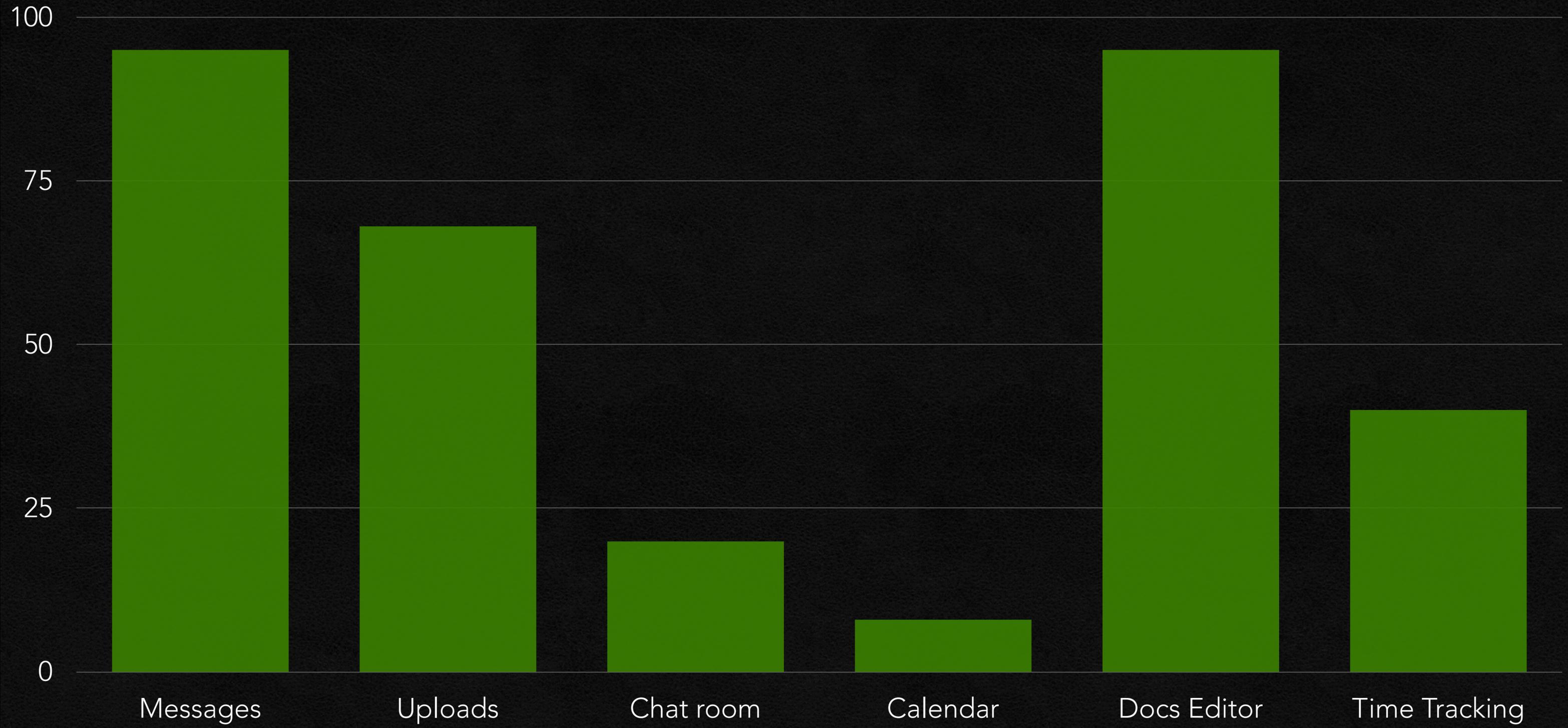
Example: Project Management



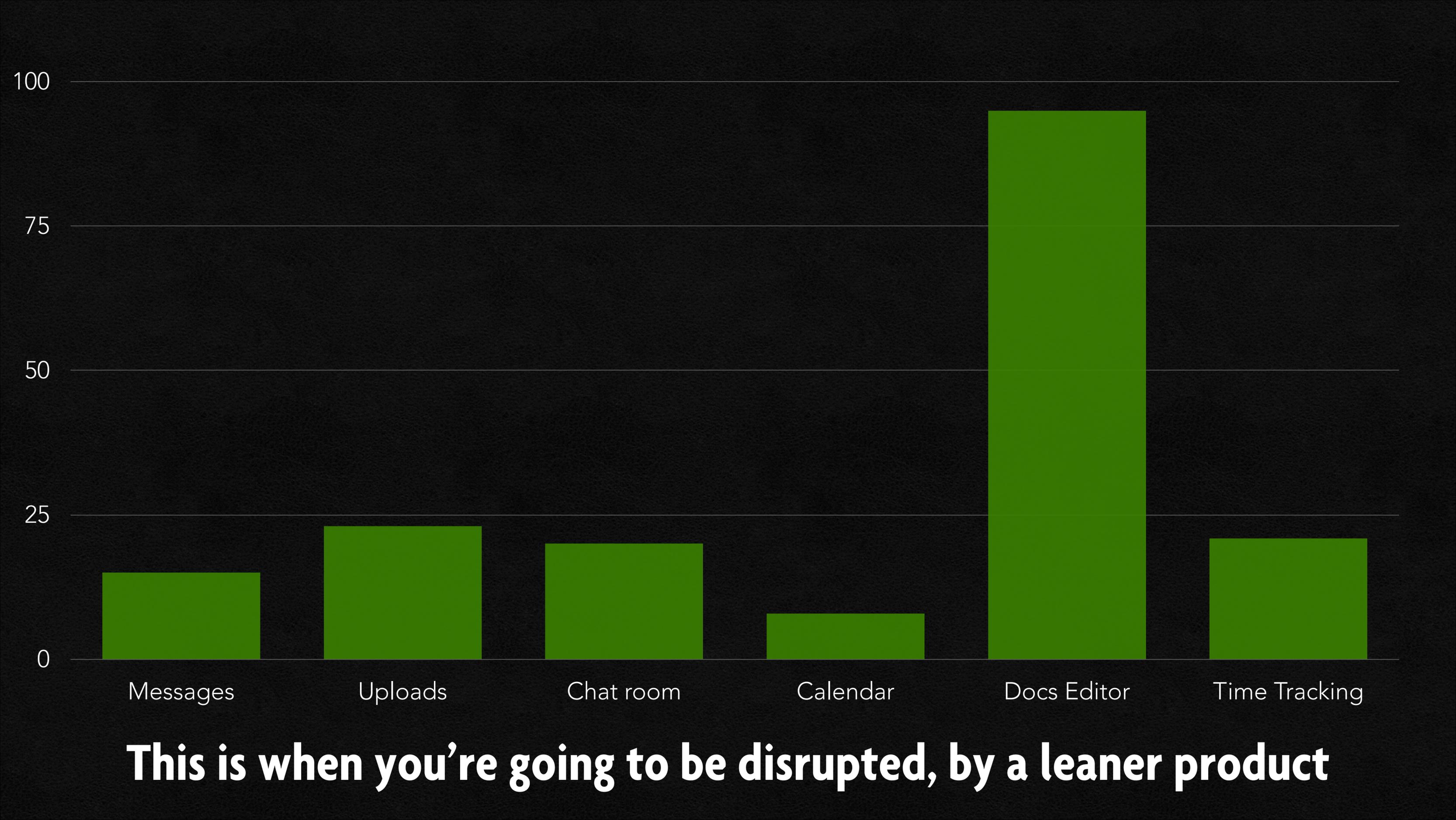
This is how you should see them as your product evolves



This is the dream app. No one gets this.



This is a more typical application



This is when you're going to be disrupted, by a leaner product

When you are vulnerable to disruption

Is there a large group of customer who use **only** one or two particular features or workflows?

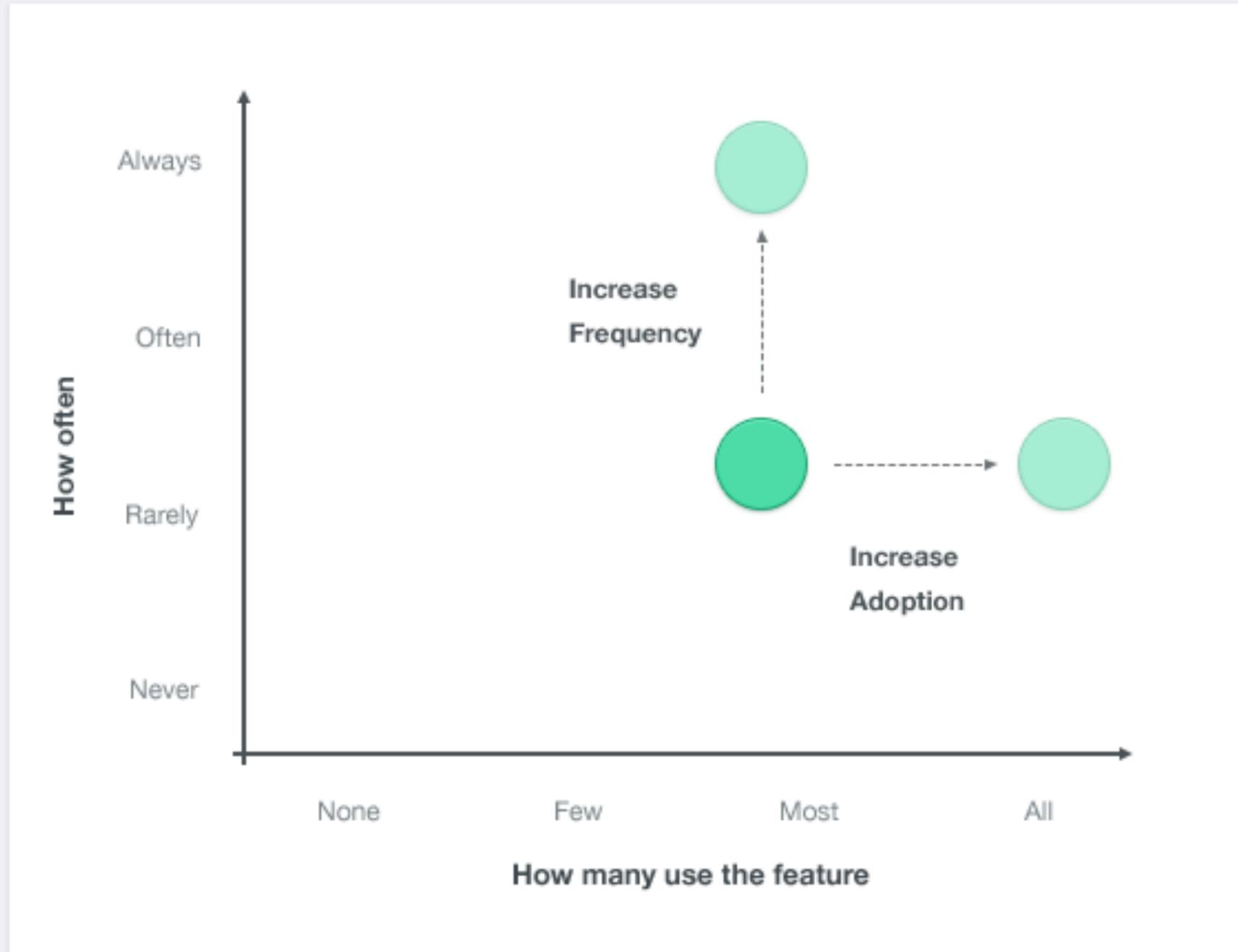
For these given workflows, are the better* ways to accomplish them when you ignore all the rest of the application?

***better: Cheaper, Simpler, More Convenient**

How to stay lean

Limit your improvements to one of the following

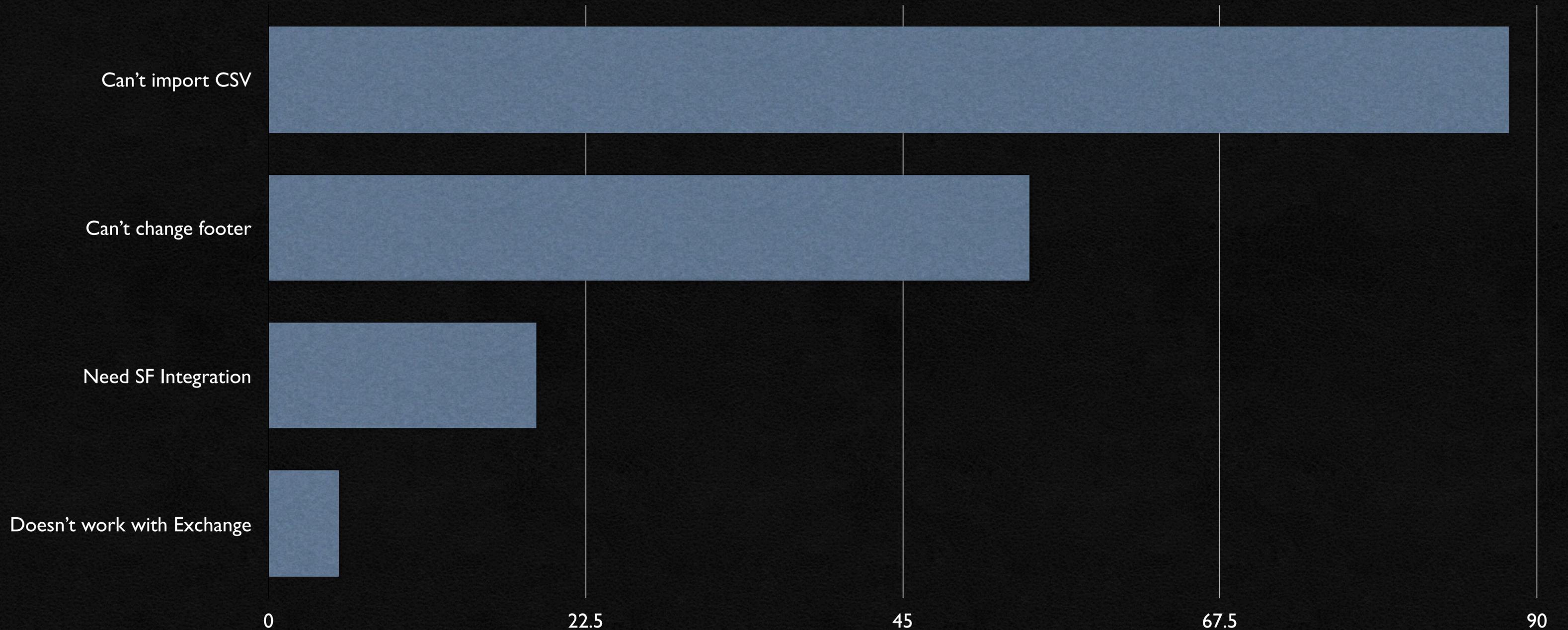
- 1. Adoption Improvements**
- 2. Frequency Improvements**
- 3. Deliberate Improvements**



**Either get more users doing it
or get users doing it more**

When users won't adopt your product/feature

Rank & Resolve barriers to usage based on customer study and data





Ask Why 5 Times to Understand the Root Cause

No one uses Reports

Why...

No one sees them

Why...

People don't see the value

Why...

The UI is too confusing

Unclear UI

Low Contrast

Never Announced

Can't show to boss

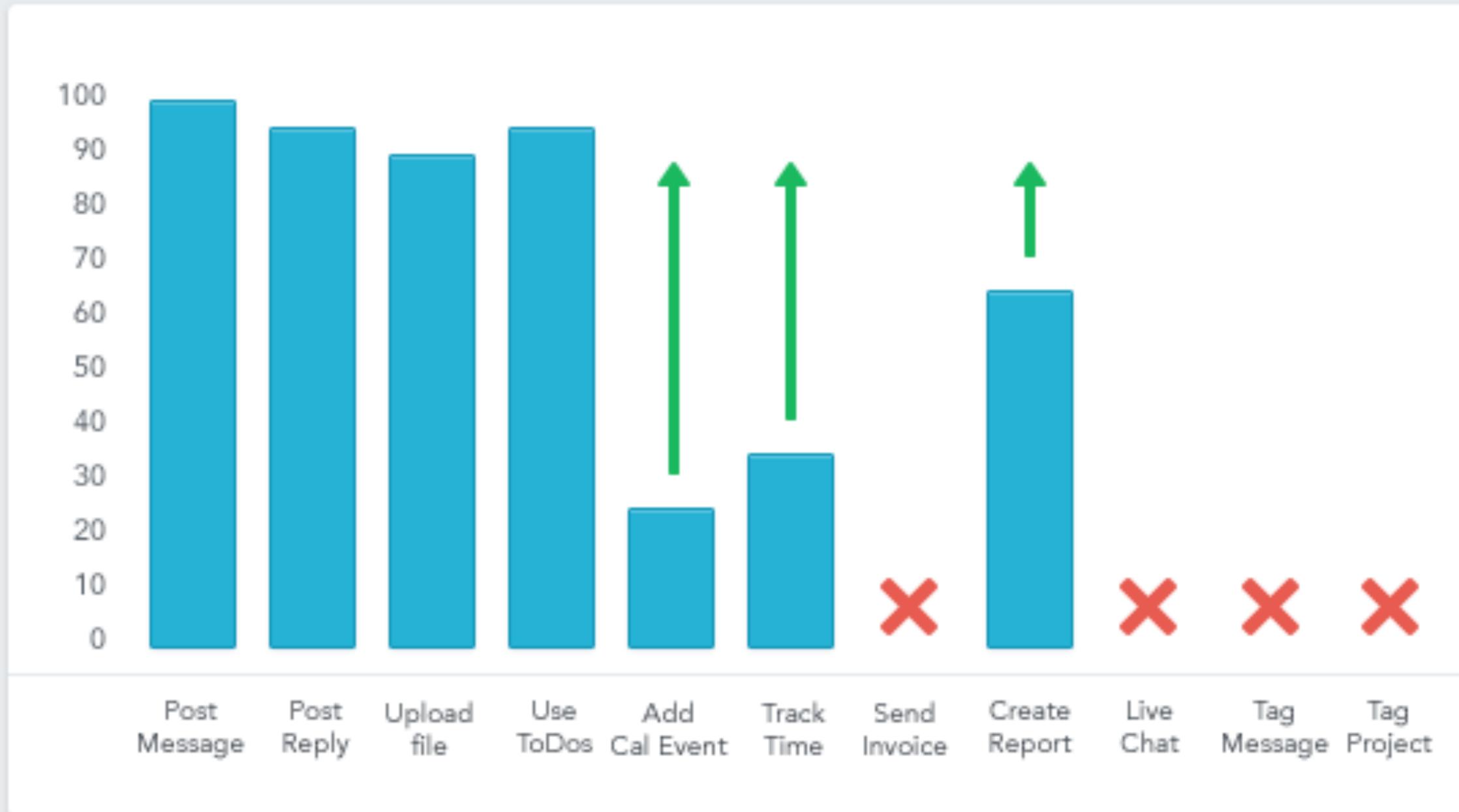
Too much work involved

Easier to do in Excel

No Data Visuals

Don't understand "Merge"





**See features as “hypotheses”
Eliminate the ones you can’t grow adoption for**

How To: Frequency Improvements

“What are the smallest changes we can make that will get people using a feature more”

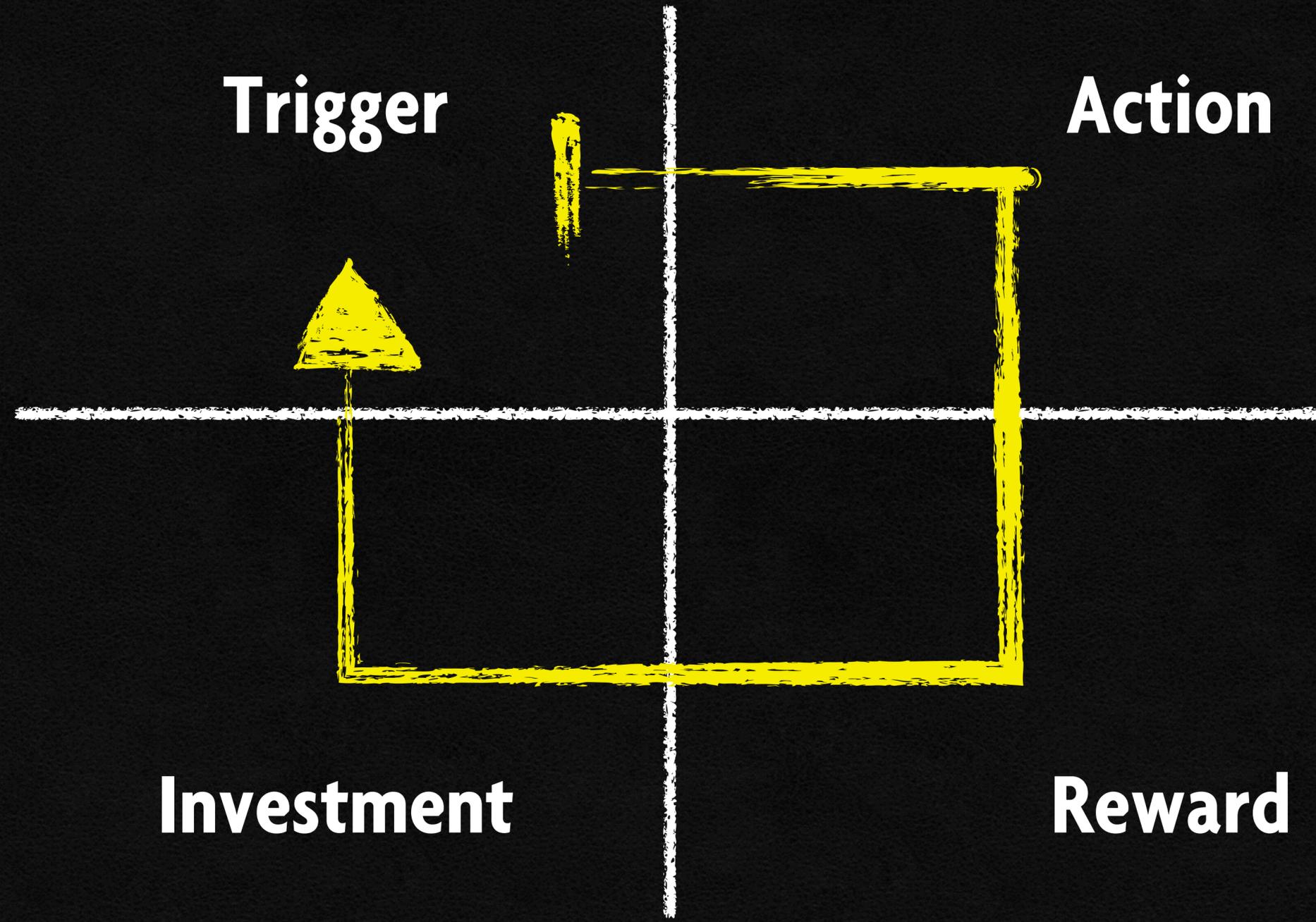
Facebook: More activity feed items. More notifications

Google: More options to search.

Basecamp: Use notifications to pull people back to the product

Google Analytics: More report options & daily mails

Bank Website: Daily Reports & spend breakdown



Measure & Improve

Staying Lean

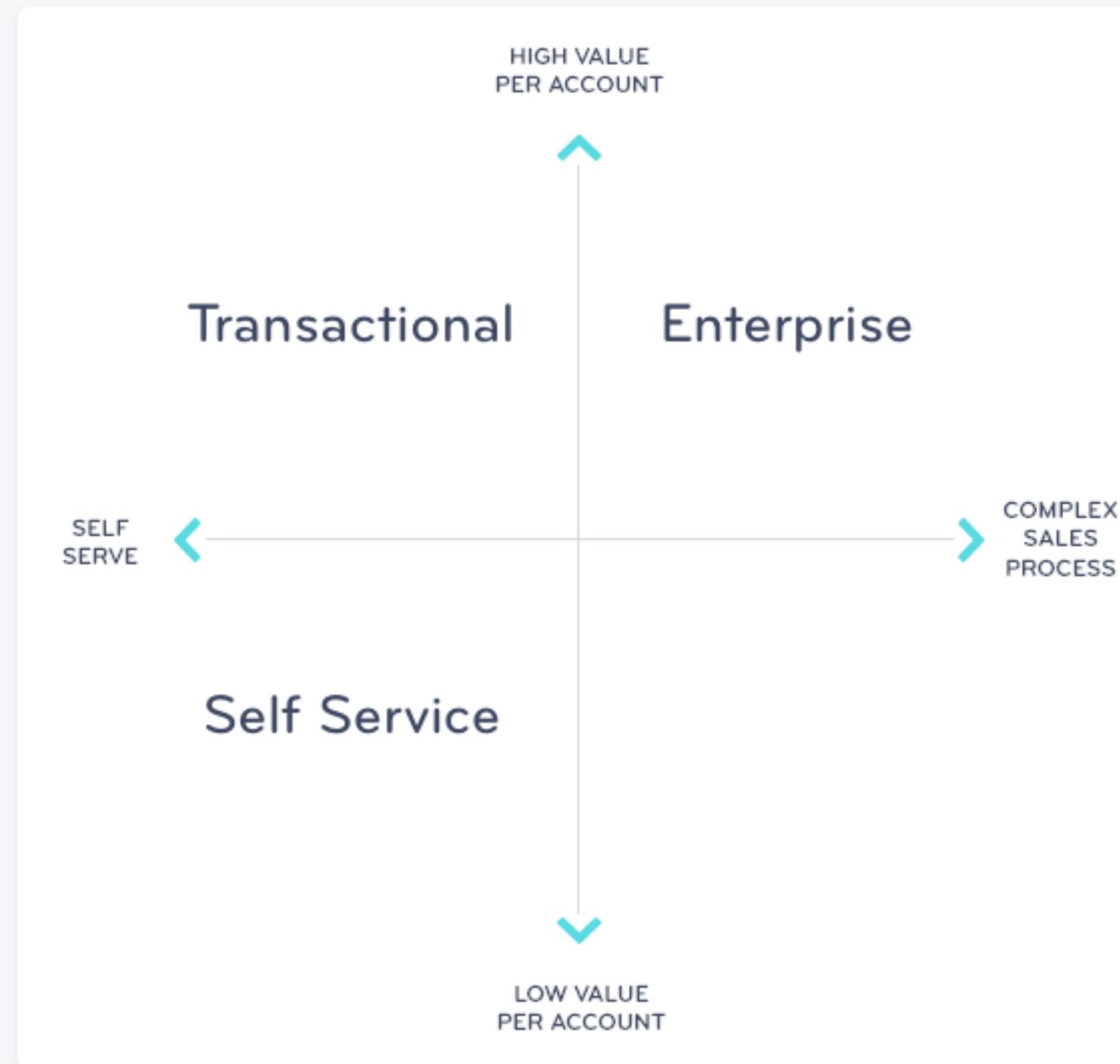
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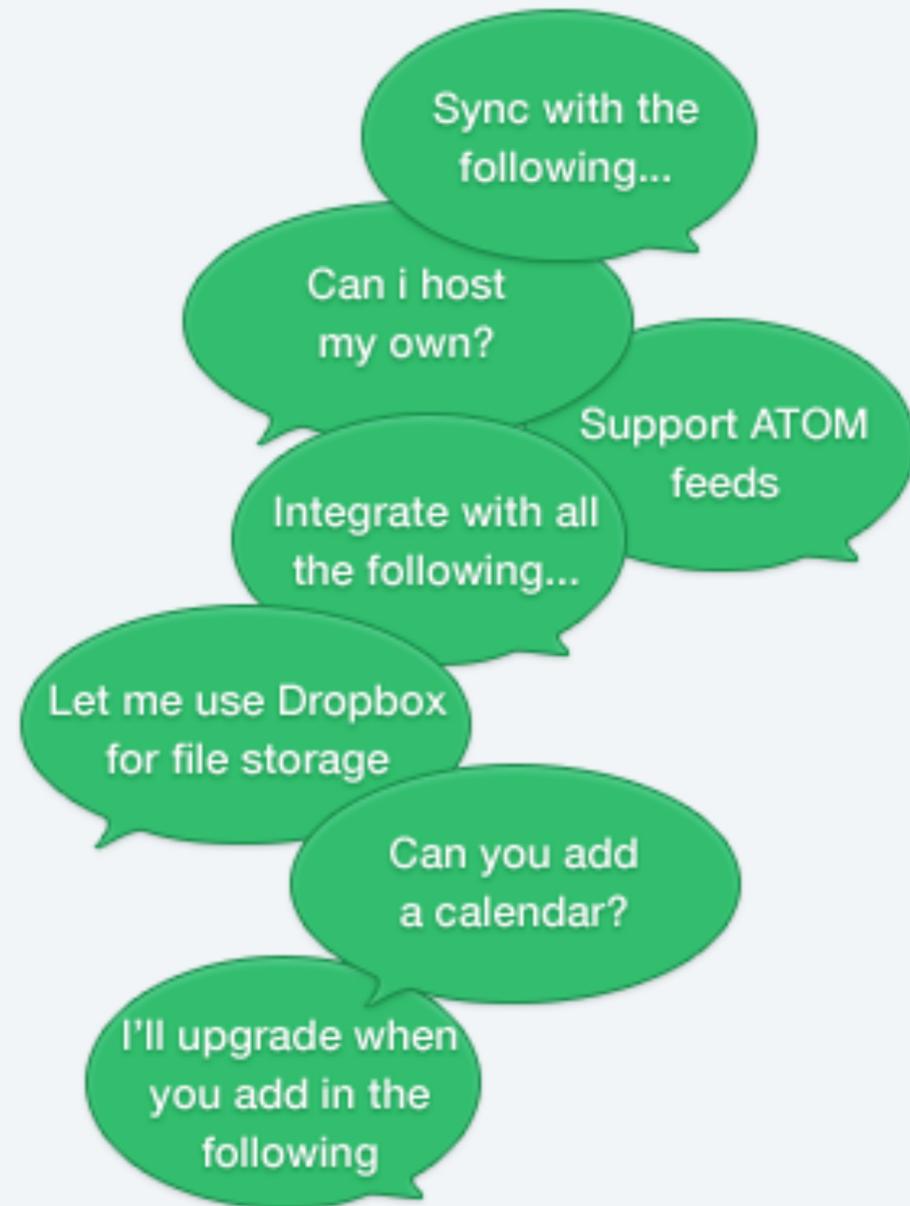
Your Vision

Quick thoughts on pricing?



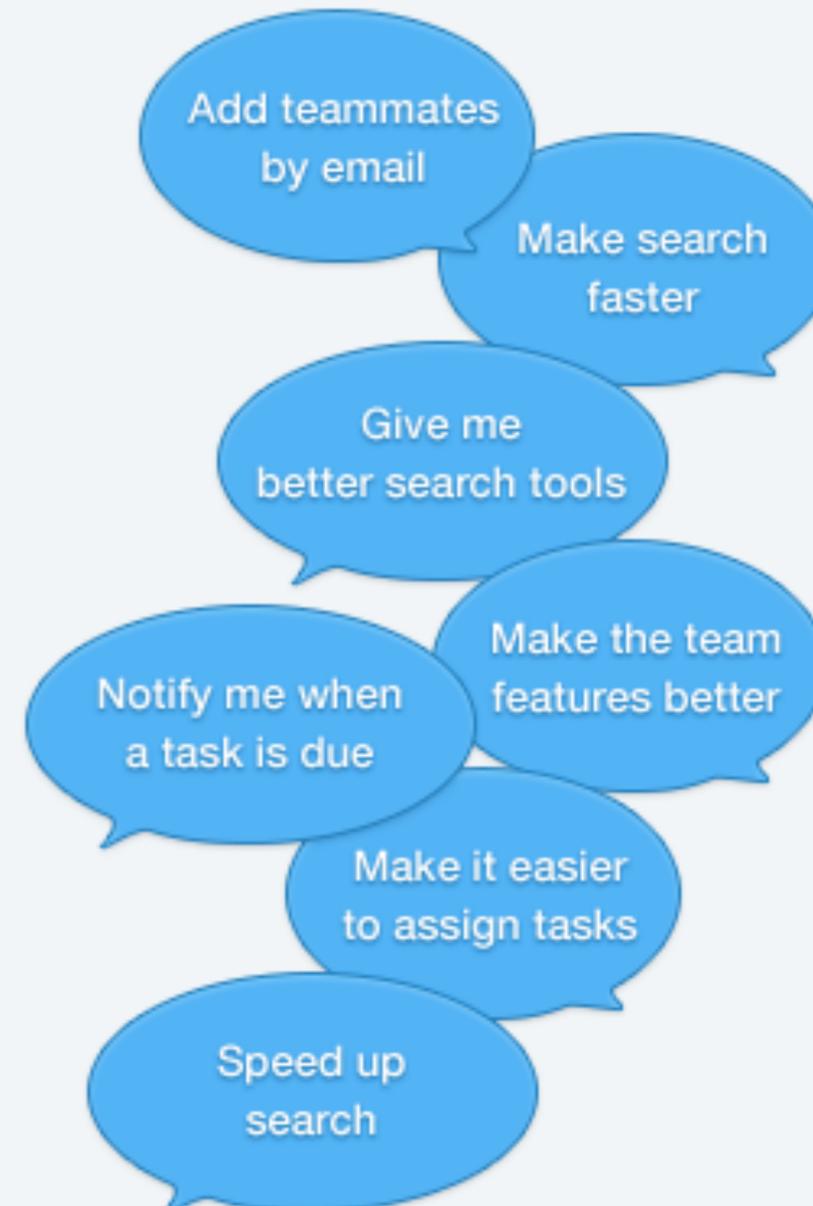
Avoid the graveyard (lower right)

FREE USERS



Free users ask for new features

PAYING USERS



Paying users ask for improved features

Charge earlier than you think you should

Employees

James Dawson	\$4100
Jennifer Hyson	\$5050
Michael Kimble	\$4800
Joe Smith	\$4200

Office

Rent	\$1400
Cleaning	\$200

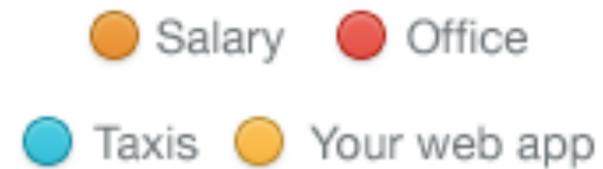
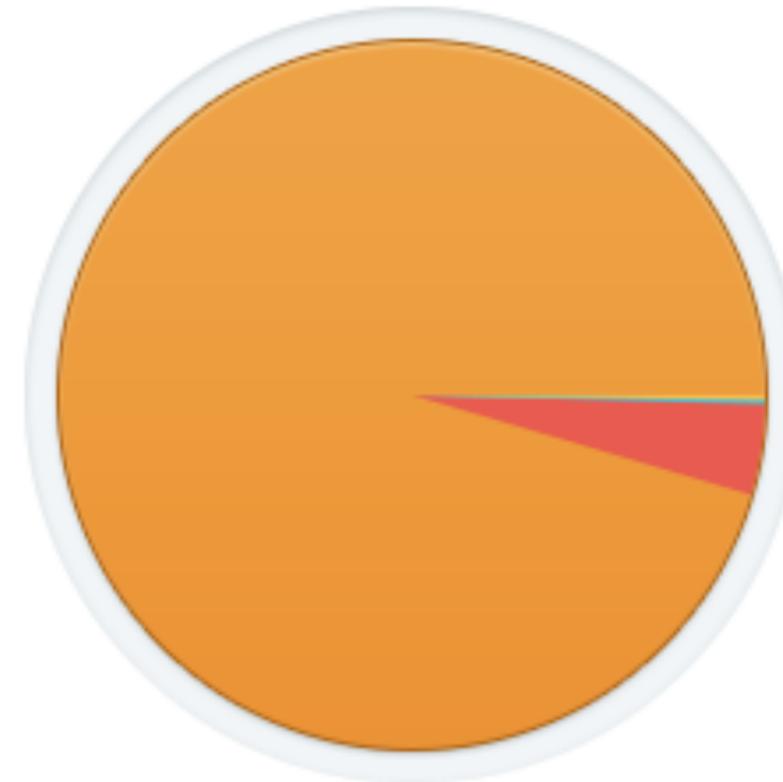
Travel

Taxi's	\$80
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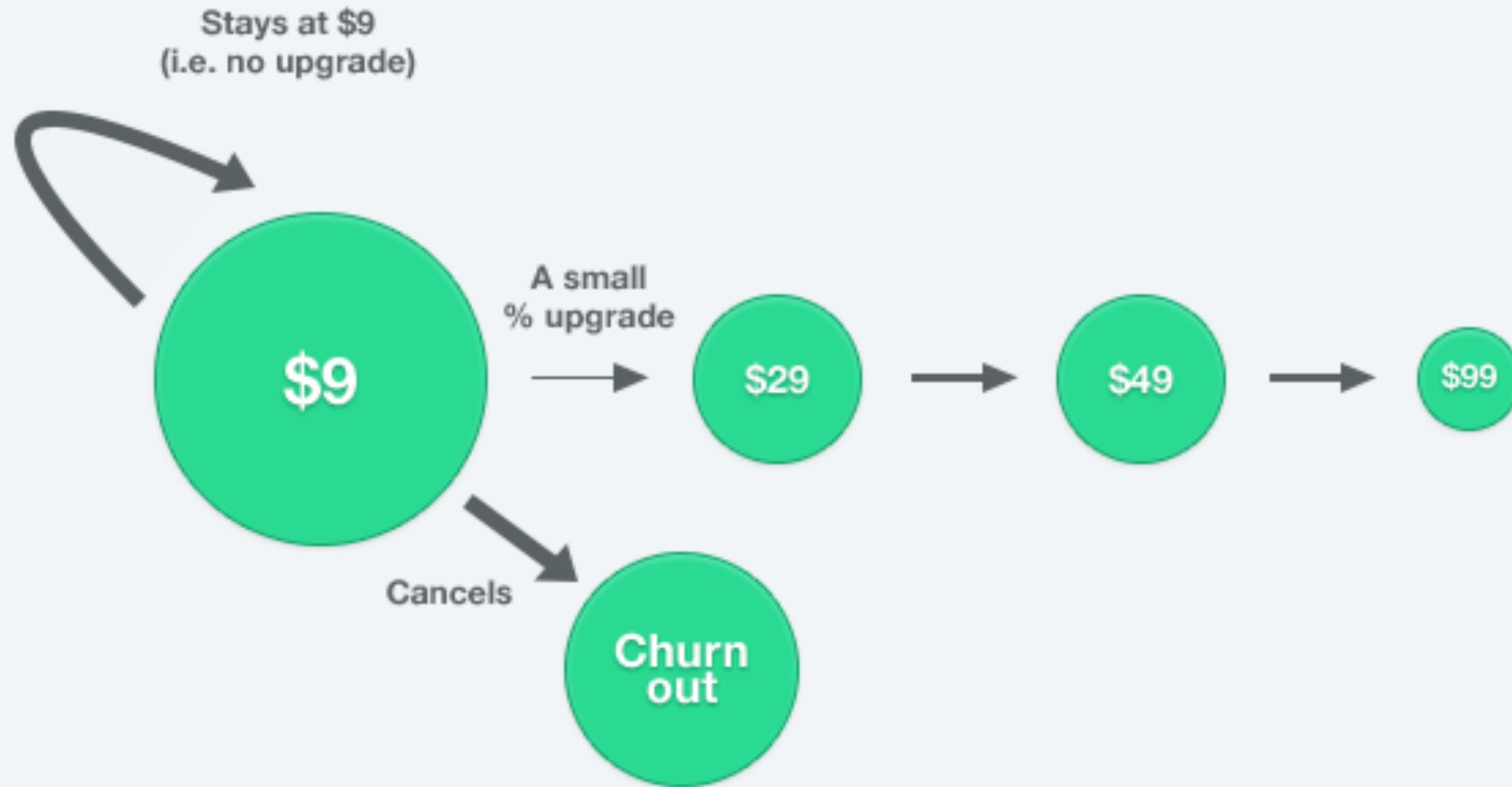
Software

Some new App	\$19
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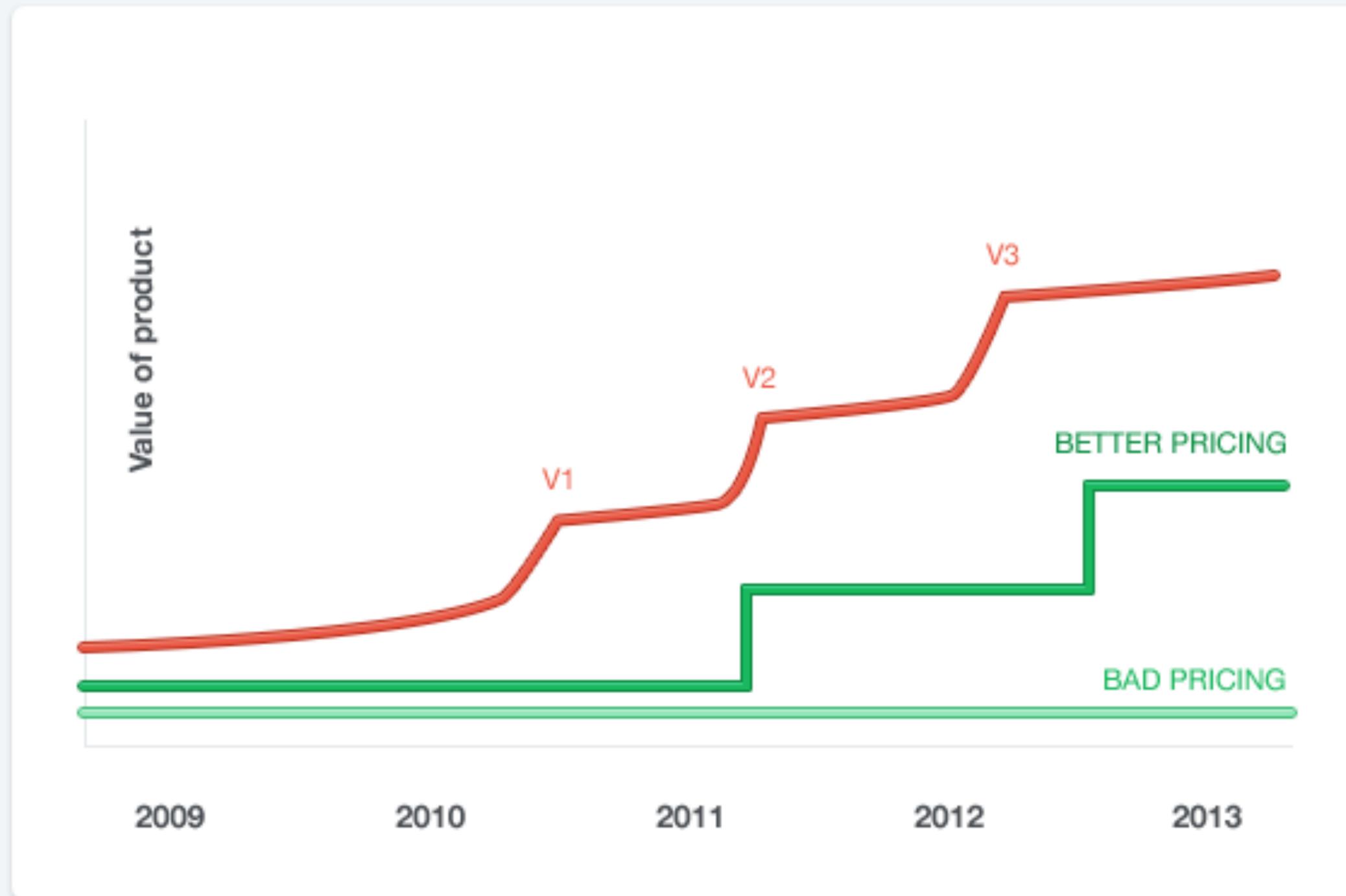
Total	\$19849
--------------	----------------



Charge more than you think you should



If you can't run a business off your lowest plan, kill it



Plan & Remember to “Refresh” your pricing



Q: Can we get the slides

Of course. Mail me des@intercom.io

Q: Where can I read more?

Our blog :) & slides have reference material

Q: Who are you, again?

Des Traynor @destraynor

Product: <http://intercom.io>

Blog: <http://insideintercom.io>