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Attendee Resource Packet

May 1, 2025

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The 4th Annual Wisconsin Digital Symposium is your gateway to mastering digital transformation and driving product-led growth amidst the latest trends like AI-powered automation, generative AI democratization, and the rapid evolution of digital ecosystems. Thank you for being with us.

This resource packet will provide some introductory content for our time together and give you a better sense of who will be in the room with you. Please read on. Our work matters because you matter. Unlocking the potential of our organizations with digital innovation requires your skills and focus. Together, we can meet the future more ready and confident.

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Today's Agenda

The program takes place on Thursday, May 1, 2025. All times are listed in CST.

8:00 am: *Breakfast and Networking*

8:30 am: Welcome – Doug Barton

8:35 am: Keynote – Overcoming the Challenges of AI Value Creation with Michael Proksch, Ph.D.

9:25 am: Accelerating into the Future: Transforming Business Capabilities with AI and Automation with FarWell

9:35 am: Keynote – Digital Relativity: Designing at the Intersection of Technology, Hardware, and Humanity with Cortney Rowan and Matt Seitz

10:25 am: How SAP Uniquely Delivers Embedded AI to Drive Business Impact

10:35 am: *Break and Gallery*

10:50 am: Distinguished Executives Panel: Designing and Leading Successful Innovation

12:00 pm: *Lunch*

12:30 pm: Luncheon Lightning Talks

- Jelena Diakonikolas, School of Computer, Data & Information Sciences
- David Dwight, Wisconsin School of Business
- Arissa Sato, People and Robots Laboratory

1:00 pm: *Adjourn to Gallery*

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Michael Proksch

Global AI & Data Expert, Author, and Chief Scientist at AccelerEd

Dr. Michael Proksch is a distinguished AI and Data Executive with a track record of driving large-scale AI transformations and delivering multi-million-dollar business impact through cutting-edge innovations. As a recognized thought leader in the field, he has worked with Fortune 500 companies and currently serves as Chief Scientist, leading AI and data initiatives at AccelerEd, where he spearheads AI-driven transformation for the University of Maryland Global Campus on a global scale. Dr. Proksch is also a bestselling author of The Secrets of AI Value Creation, co-written with Nisha Paliwal (MVP, Capital One) and Dr. Wilhelm Bielert (CIO, Premier Tech), providing strategic insights into AI's role in business success.

Cortney Rowan

EVP, Strategy & Design, Delve

Cortney Thompson Rowan is an accomplished innovation executive and strategist, renowned for driving human-centered digital transformations and delivering significant business impact through intelligent and connected products and services. With extensive experience leading innovation initiatives across diverse industries, including roles as Managing Director for Accenture's North America Smart Connected Products practice and currently serving as Executive Vice President of Strategy & Design at Delve, Cortney has successfully spearheaded multimillion-dollar innovation strategies and transformations for Fortune 100 companies and high-profile organizations such as NASA and the U.S. Marine Corps.

Event Hosts and Graphic Recorder

Doug Barton

Director, UWEBC

As Director of the UWEBC, Doug Barton provides strategic leadership and operational oversight for this premier university-industry partnership involving 80+ companies across diverse industries. Doug manages practice directors and teams in event and member services, marketing, communications, and sales to ensure the high-quality delivery and continuous improvement of UWEBC's offerings, including peer-to-peer learning forums and advisory services designed to advance thought leadership, innovative business strategies, and emerging technologies.

Matt Seitz

Director of the AI Hub, UW–Madison

Matt Seitz is a leader with a passion for driving growth through technology and AI. A recognized thought leader in artificial intelligence, data analytics, and digital transformation, Matt brings 30 years of experience helping organizations solve business challenges through technology. Matt leads initiatives to advance AI research while fostering industry partnerships and preparing students for AI leadership roles. He also authors a widely-read newsletter on AI and regularly delivers keynote presentations on technology and AI for business.

Lin Wilson

VP of Information Design at LINK, a creative group that untangles complexity, designs change and delivers impact

Lin Wilson tames information chaos with art. He has visually clarified complexity for brands like Trek Bikes, Gates Foundation, and dozens of ad agencies. For live events and meetings, Lin draws pictures of speaker presentations with a service called "graphic recording". These visuals capture the memorable and takeaway points of conference speakers and has done this for companies, a few of the big 4 consultants, Ted Talks and at the Knowledge Summit in Dubai.

Distinguished Executives Panel

Shane Achterberg

Director, IT Innovation, Automation and Architecture, Schneider

In his current role at Schneider, Shane Achterberg leads AI and RPA initiatives that transform logistics operations. He spearheaded Schneider's enterprise automation platform and predictive ETA models, integrating cloud-based AI to enhance service and efficiency. Achterberg also activates innovation culture through The Grove, a purpose-built innovation center driving cross-functional collaboration.

Michele Kaiser

Chief of Staff and Portfolio Manager, ISG, John Deere

Michele Kaiser leads the John Deere's tech stack R&D strategy. She oversees the Startup Collaborator program, driving external innovation aligned with Deere's 2030 Leap Ambitions. A seasoned engineer and executive, she has directed global teams and multi-million-dollar portfolios to deliver sustainable, precision-ag solutions.

Andrea McGill

GM - Global Order Operations, GE HealthCare

Andrea McGill leads global digital transformation initiatives at GE HealthCare. She implemented a unified trade compliance platform that improved visibility across 145+ sites and cut broker costs by 20%, building on prior roles where she led global compliance at Wolverine Worldwide and modernized export processes at Rockwell Automation. Known for integrating people, process, and technology, Andrea drives operational excellence through scalable, data-driven innovation.

Paul Ryan

Chief Digital Officer, Kohler Co.

Paul Ryan leads global digital, data, and shared services transformation initiatives. He is architecting innovations in IoT-enabled products, enterprise automation, and omnichannel commerce to drive measurable business value. With prior CIO roles at Mars and PepsiCo, he brings decades of experience scaling technology and talent for competitive advantage.

Lightning Talk Speakers

Jelena Diakonikolas

School of Computer, Data & Information Sciences, UW–Madison

Jelena is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Computer Sciences and, by courtesy, the Department of Statistics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and an affiliate of the Data Science Institute. Her research focuses on large-scale optimization and its applications in machine learning and networked systems. Jelena is a recipient of the prestigious NSF CAREER Award for her work on optimization and learning with changing distributions.

David Dwight

Erdman Center for Technology Strategy and Product Management, Wisconsin School of Business

David Dwight is the Director of the Erdman Center, where he teaches MBA and undergraduate courses in technology strategy, product management, and business process improvement. He brings extensive executive experience, having led teams across sales, supply chain, engineering, and operations with a focus on innovation and profitability. David is known for driving sustainable growth, enhancing customer satisfaction, and transforming underperforming business units.

Arissa Sato

People and Robots Laboratory,UW–Madison

Arissa is a Research Associate (Postdoc) in the People and Robots Lab, working with Professor Bilge Mutlu, and the Research Coordinator for the INTEGRATE NSF Research Traineeship Program. Her research focuses on designing AI-powered systems to enhance group interaction, educational interfaces, and remote collaboration with robots. She recently explored how AI agents can support intergenerational co-creation between grandparents and grandchildren through programming workshops.

Who's Attending Today

As you explore today's digital innovation sessions, take full advantage of the opportunity to connect with a vibrant mix of professionals—seasoned leaders, up-and-coming changemakers, and forward-thinking solution partners. Whether you're sparking new ideas, trading insights, or discovering synergies, every conversation is a chance to grow your network and elevate your perspective. From fellow attendees to speakers and sponsors, the people here today share a common goal: driving meaningful progress. Here's a look at the organizations represented—each one bringing their unique lens to the future of digital transformation.*

AccelerEd
Accuray
Alliant Energy
Alto Shaam
Amcor
American Family Insurance
AprilAire
AriensCo
Associated Bank
Baker Tilly
Blain Supply
Blain's Farm and Fleet
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Colony Brands, Inc.
Compeer
Connective Consulting
Customertimes
Decision Spot
Delve
Department of Employee Trust Funds
Douglas Dynamics
Expedient
FarWell
Findorff
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Moraine Park Technical College
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Northwestern Mutual
nvisia
Oshkosh Corporation
PKWARE
Placon
Promega
Regal Rexnord
Rehlko
Reserve Advisors
Rockline Industries
Rural Mutual Insurance
Sargento Foods
Schneider National Inc.
Spectrum Brands
Strategis
Sub-Zero Group
Tanduo Technical Partners Inc.
Thermo Fisher Scientific
TruStage
Turnpoint Services
UW Credit Union
UWEBC
Vollrath
Werner Electric Supply
Wisconsin School of Business

*as of 4/24/25

Thank you to everyone who made this event possible!

Thank you to our steering committee, sponsors, campus and community partners for all you've done to make this event a success.

Steering Committee

Talal Butt
EVP and
Chief Information Officer
Generac Power Systems Inc.

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SVP and CTO
TruStage

Kusum Rawat Verma
CIO - Employee Experience
GE HealthCare

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women in technology
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Visit go.wisc.edu/digital-symposium for additional information about this event.

Continue Your Learning Journey

Your journey doesn't end here—it's just the beginning. Staying ahead in the digital age means continuously building on what you've learned. Use the energy and insights from today as a springboard to dive deeper into new concepts, sharpen your skills, and expand your impact. Below, you'll find a curated selection of opportunities designed to help you keep growing long after the event wraps up.

Open Innovation: Collaborating Beyond Organizational Boundaries

May 13, 2025, In person at Fluno Center in Madison, WI, or Live Online
The most innovative breakthroughs often come from beyond organizational boundaries. Join us for a dynamic cross-functional event exploring Open Innovation - a strategy that empowers teams to collaborate with partners across the organization to co-create solutions, and unlock new growth opportunities. *For UWEBC members only – Non-members may contact us at info@uwebc.wisc.edu for a guest pass!*
Learn more: go.wisc.edu/open-innovation

More than Authority: Emotional Intelligence in Leadership

June 3, 2025, Online
Join us for this insightful session, where we'll explore real-world examples of emotionally intelligent leadership in action. You'll gain practical strategies to enhance your self-awareness, improve team dynamics, and lead with greater impact. Whether you're a seasoned executive or an emerging leader, this discussion will provide the tools you need to strengthen your emotional intelligence (EQ) and drive meaningful change. Register today and take the next step in evolving your leadership approach! *For UWEBC members only – Non-members may contact us at info@uwebc.wisc.edu for a guest pass!*
Learn more: go.wisc.edu/emotional-intelligence

Tools and Tactics to Recover Troubled Projects

June 17-18, 2025, In person at the Pyle Center in Madison, WI, or Live Online
More often than not, projects do not go according to plan. And, in fact, particularly for complex projects, they can deviate dramatically from the originally required schedule and/or budget. In some of these situations, failure is not an option – often other projects are dependent on the troubled one. In these cases, it is important to have techniques for recovery in your management toolbox. This course provides the student with these tools.
Learn more: go.wisc.edu/troubled-projects

Global Leadership for Technical Teams

August 19-20, 2025, In person at the Pyle Center in Madison, WI, or Live Online
Company leadership, at any level, is today often global in nature. Furthermore, after the COVID pandemic, development teams have been asked to manage these teams with less travel and face-to-face interaction. This course provides the student with all the necessary skills to effectively manage technical teams that span global locations, cultures and languages.
Learn more: go.wisc.edu/global-leadership

27th Annual Business Best Practices & Emerging Technologies Conference

September 30, 2025, In person at Monona Terrace or Live Online

This year's event will feature five distinct tracks, strategic briefings, and remarkable keynote speakers, all delivering knowledge to equip you for the future of business and technology. Our speakers will share insights on emerging trends, challenge industry norms, and energize everyone to rethink what's possible in their fields. The passion and enthusiasm at this event create a one-of-a-kind learning experience.

Learn more: go.wisc.edu/uwebc2025

Data Analytics for Technical Leaders

March 2-5, 2026, Online

This course is focused on providing attendees with the methods to drive more effective decisions and actions through data analytics in an industrial setting. The course will emphasize the use of visual methods to achieve this. Course discussion will cover applied use of descriptive, causal, predictive, and prescriptive analytics.

Learn more: go.wisc.edu/data-analytics

These courses are just a small sampling of what's available on the UW–Madison campus. UWEBC members receive an exclusive discount on many courses. Visit https://uwebc.wisc.edu/special-offers/ for the full list and to access the discount code.

Interested in becoming a UWEBC member?

UWEBC members are world-class companies from a broad range of industries who come together in our collaborative community to learn best practices, explore emerging technologies, and develop new competencies in their employees.

Join this vibrant community of world-class companies to experience all the benefits of membership, including more than 60 peer group events a year across five practice areas: customer service, human resources, marketing, supply chain, and technology.

Membership costs are tax-deductible gifts to the university. This contribution gives all of your employees access to our regular peer group learning events as well as our Advisory services throughout the year.

Learn more about UWEBC membership: https://go.wisc.edu/uwebc-membership

Appendix A: Bonus Content from Dr. Michael Proksch

Dr. Michael Proksch is a distinguished AI and Data Executive with a track record of driving large-scale AI transformations and delivering multi-million-dollar business impact through cutting-edge innovations. As a recognized thought leader in the field, he has worked with Fortune 500 companies and currently serves as Chief Scientist, leading AI and data initiatives at AccelerEd, where he spearheads AI-driven transformation for the University of Maryland Global Campus on a global scale. Dr. Proksch is also a bestselling author of The Secrets of AI Value Creation, co-written with Nisha Paliwal (MVP, Capital One) and Dr. Wilhelm Bielert (CIO, Premier Tech), providing strategic insights into AI's role in business success.

Dr. Proksch is a sought-after speaker at industry conferences, sharing insights on AI strategy, innovation, and value creation.

As organizations explore the transformative potential of artificial intelligence, understanding how to strategically unlock AI's value becomes critical. To support your learning journey at the Digital Symposium, we've an essential resource authored by Dr. Michael Proksch.

The **AI Value Creation Cheat Sheet** is a concise, visual reference that outlines the key types of AI value creation, common challenges, and the core capabilities needed for success. It breaks down feasibility and adoption risks, highlights strategic entry points, and provides a high-level snapshot of how organizations can build trust, foster an AI-ready culture, and manage the lifecycle of AI initiatives.

The AI VALUE CREATION CHEAT SHEET

Factors & Types of AI Value Creation

AI Business Opportunity

Business Opportunity impacted by potential positive financial outcomes and expenses/investments of use case, end-to-end estimation critical for evaluation

AI Feasibility Risk

Feasibility Risk impacted by technical feasibility, data availability, resources constraints, regulatory and compliance challenges as well as scalability and integration

AI Adoption Risk

Adoption risk encompass challenges related to resistance to change and cultural transformation; critical to contemplate value creation for all stakeholders involved

AI-driven Process Optimization

Low hanging fruit use cases with lower opportunity and lowest feasibility and adoption risk

AI-driven Decision Making

AI Decision Augmentation

Generation of actionable insights for human decision making, lower risk and some opportunity

AI Decision Automation

AI's decision making with optimization of actions taken, very high risk and high potential opportunity

AI Products & Services

Highest business opportunity as not limited to costs of operation, however, highest feasibility and adoption risk to create market fit

The Challenges of AI Value Creation

Collecting Valuable Data

Identifying valuable data by going from wisdom to knowledge, to information, to data

Creating Actionable Insights

Output-based selection, output adaptation, automation

Building Stakeholder Trust

Show benevolence, integrity, and ability to create trust

Managing AI's Decision Making

Explaining AI's decision making and understand its limitations, focus on simplicity

AI-Centric Elements

Understanding of the nuances of those elements are critical to unlock AI business opportunities and reduce the feasibility and adoption risks of AI value creation.

- AI-Centric Data
- AI-Centric Business & Domain Knowledge
- AI-Centric Stakeholder Motivation
- AI-Centric Algorithmic

AI Enterprise Integration

Crafting an AI Strategy

AI strategy has to align with an organization's aspiration and business focus areas. To be executable, it has to address value creation approaches, required capabilities, and management systems to support the AI initiative.

Leading Successful AI Projects

Successful AI projects have to consider full project lifecycle and different project development approaches. Most AI projects follow a more agile development approach to work under uncertainty.

Cultivating an AI-friendly Culture

Consider the various layers of culture and addresses ways to foster an environment that embraces innovation, adapts to AI integration, and supports continuous learning and development to facilitate AI adoption throughout the enterprise.

AI Capabilities

Technology

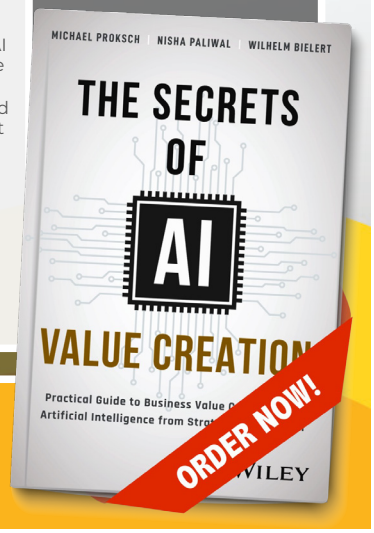
Technological requirements for successful AI implementation, range from critical hardware to software elements. AI pipeline serves as framework including AI algorithm development and deployment. Consider the various technology requirements of building a specific AI solution. Strongly influences feasibility risk.

Data Management

Effective data management is critical for the development of AI solutions. Data management includes data governance, data storage, processing, security, and ensuring data quality and accessibility for AI applications. Failure of successful data management can significantly influence feasibility risk.

Talent

The human resource aspect of AI initiatives focused on having the right talent, including skills development, team building, and the roles necessary for AI project success. The requirements are not only technical and require soft skills that are not always obvious for the success of AI initiatives. Failure in understanding all talent requirements can significantly influence business opportunity, feasibility and adoption risk.



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Yesterday
Individual Category Articles
All Categories
AI Value Potential
Company/Product
NVIDIA Joins Forces with EPRI for AI-Powered Grid Revolution
Today

Appendix B: Bonus Content from Cortney Rowan

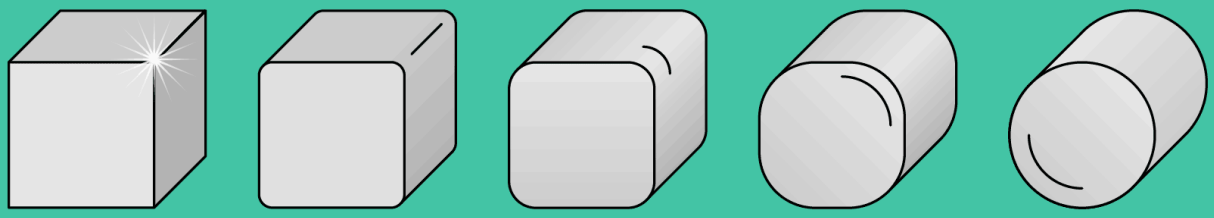
Cortney Thompson Rowan is an accomplished innovation executive and strategist, renowned for driving human-centered digital transformations and delivering significant business impact through intelligent and connected products and services. With extensive experience leading innovation initiatives across diverse industries, including roles as Managing Director for Accenture's North America Smart Connected Products practice and currently serving as Executive Vice President of Strategy & Design at Delve, Cortney has successfully spearheaded multimillion-dollar innovation strategies and transformations for Fortune 100 companies and high-profile organizations such as NASA and the U.S. Marine Corps.

As a respected thought leader, Cortney's insights have been featured in publications such as Harvard Business Review, MedCity News, and Fast Company, and she has delivered impactful TEDx presentations highlighting the transformative power of empathetic, user-centric design. Her expertise in leveraging digital platforms, AI, and IoT to create breakthrough product and customer experiences positions her as a sought-after speaker at leading industry events.

Designing What's Next: Insights from Delve

In today's fast-paced innovation landscape, launching a successful version one is just the beginning. The real impact—and staying power—comes from how organizations evolve their products beyond that initial launch. To complement the thought leadership you'll hear from keynote speaker Cortney Rowan, we're excited to include this insightful piece from her team at Delve, a leading innovation and design consultancy.

"Innovation Is Ongoing: Next-Gen Product Design Strategies" unpacks the often-overlooked challenges and opportunities of next-generation product development. Drawing from real-world case studies, the article explores how companies can refine user experiences, respond to market feedback, outpace "fast followers," and leverage new technology for deeper customer impact. It's a compelling reminder that the journey of innovation doesn't end with the first release—it evolves through intentional iteration. Whether you're in product design, strategy, or innovation leadership, these insights provide a timely and practical perspective on building long-term relevance through design.



Innovation Is Ongoing: Next-Gen Product Design Strategies

Version one of a new product is what gets people excited, but versions two and three are what will really establish you as a successful innovator.

Insights & Strategy | Design Strategy | Design | Industrial Design

Taking an existing product to its next generation often has a greater impact on a company's long-term success than the initial innovation. But only if you respect next gen design as its own unique challenge.

Product Development is Complex

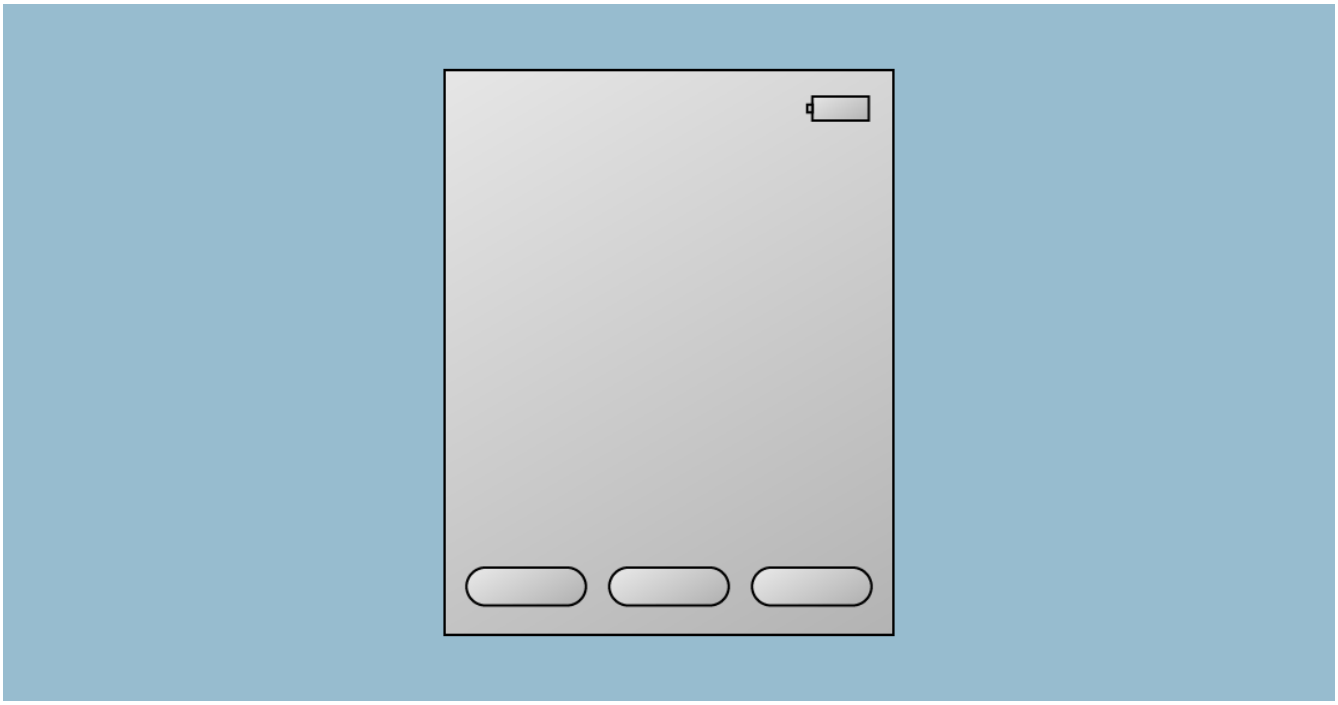
Delve

Why Go Next Gen?

For many companies trying to push the edges of what a product can do, simply getting something to market is an enormous effort. The Minimum Viable Product strategy (MVP) has a lot going for it, but it's rare that an MVP on its own is going to hold market share for very long.

Competition is the most obvious reason to update. If sales numbers on your initial product are slumping, but competitors' are doing well, that's a good argument for a refresh, whether through improved tech, new functions (that users actually want), or a more refined aesthetic — especially if your MVP looks like it was released in a hurry.

Here are some compelling reasons to go next gen:



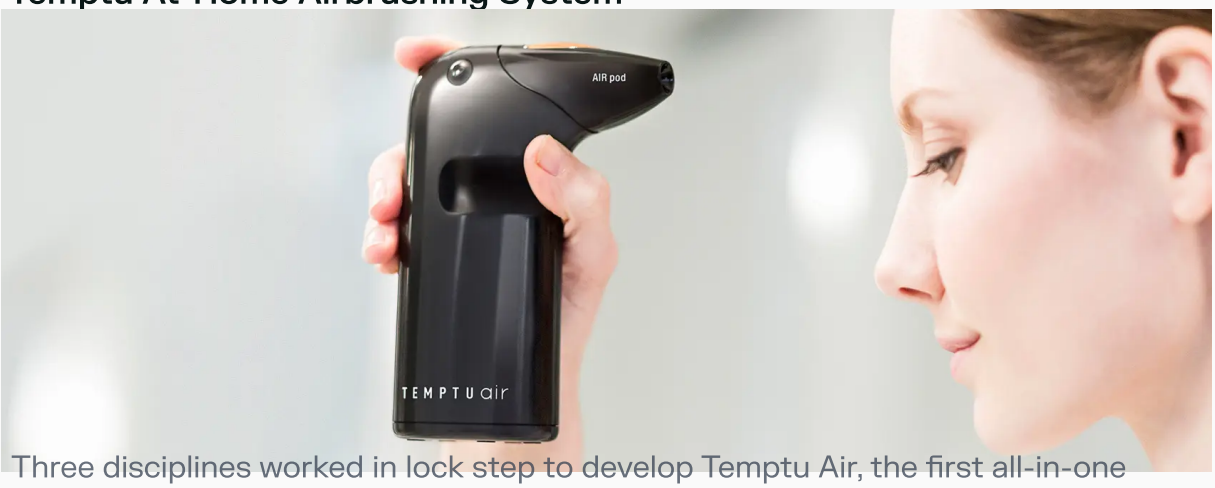
Delve

1. Technology Advancements

Technology is always improving, offering a steady stream of possibilities for your product: reducing size, extending battery life, cutting costs, or adding features. All of these expand a product's appeal, moving it beyond the domain of early adopters and into the mainstream.

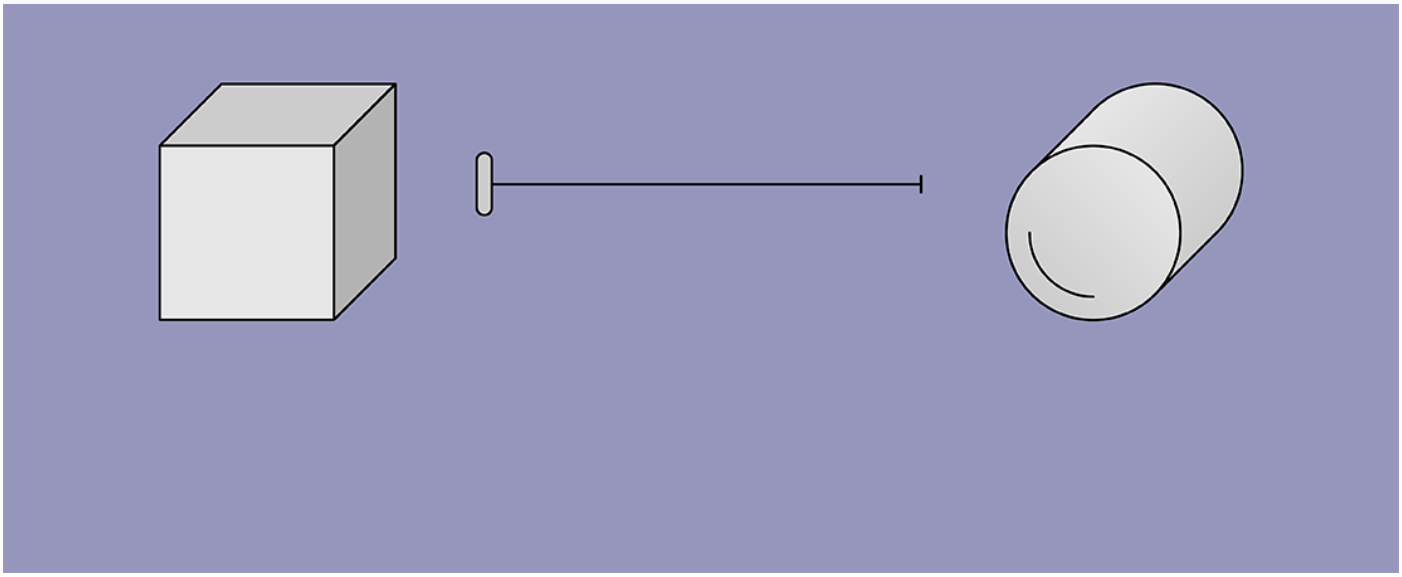
When Delve redesigned **Temptu's cosmetic airbrush system**, for example, we were able to take a unique product with niche appeal and make it more portable, intuitive, and easy to use, opening it up to a much wider range of customers. Pump and battery technology advancements made this possible.

Temptu At-Home Airbrushing System



Three disciplines worked in lock step to develop Temptu Air, the first all-in-one airbrushing device that makes applying foundation anywhere quick and easy.

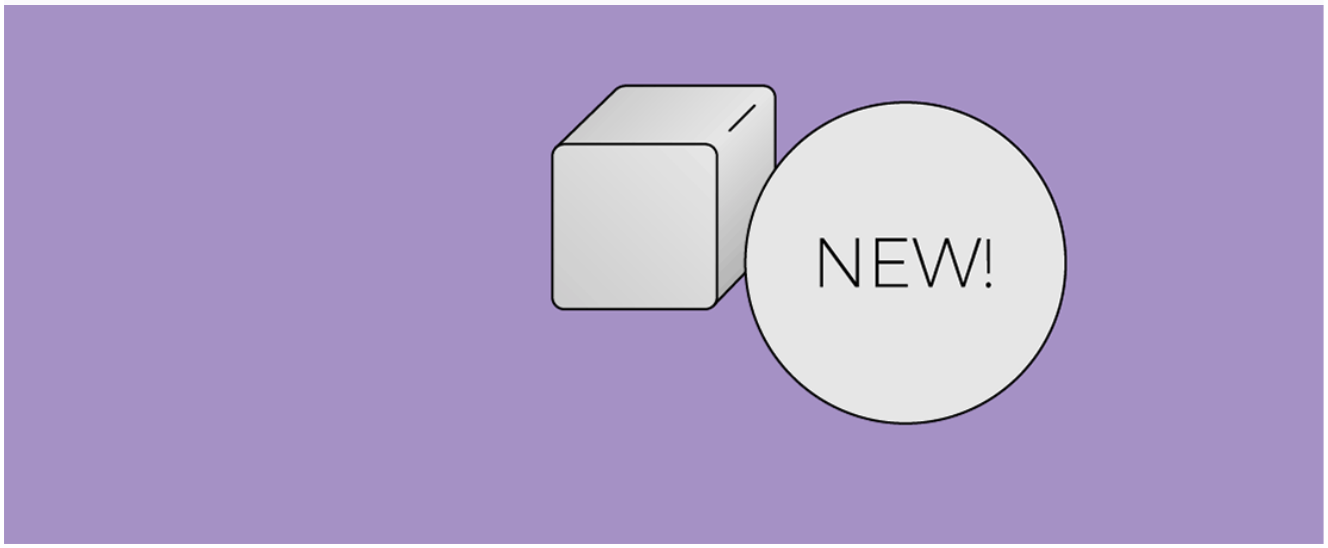
Learn more →



2. First Gen Failed To Resonate

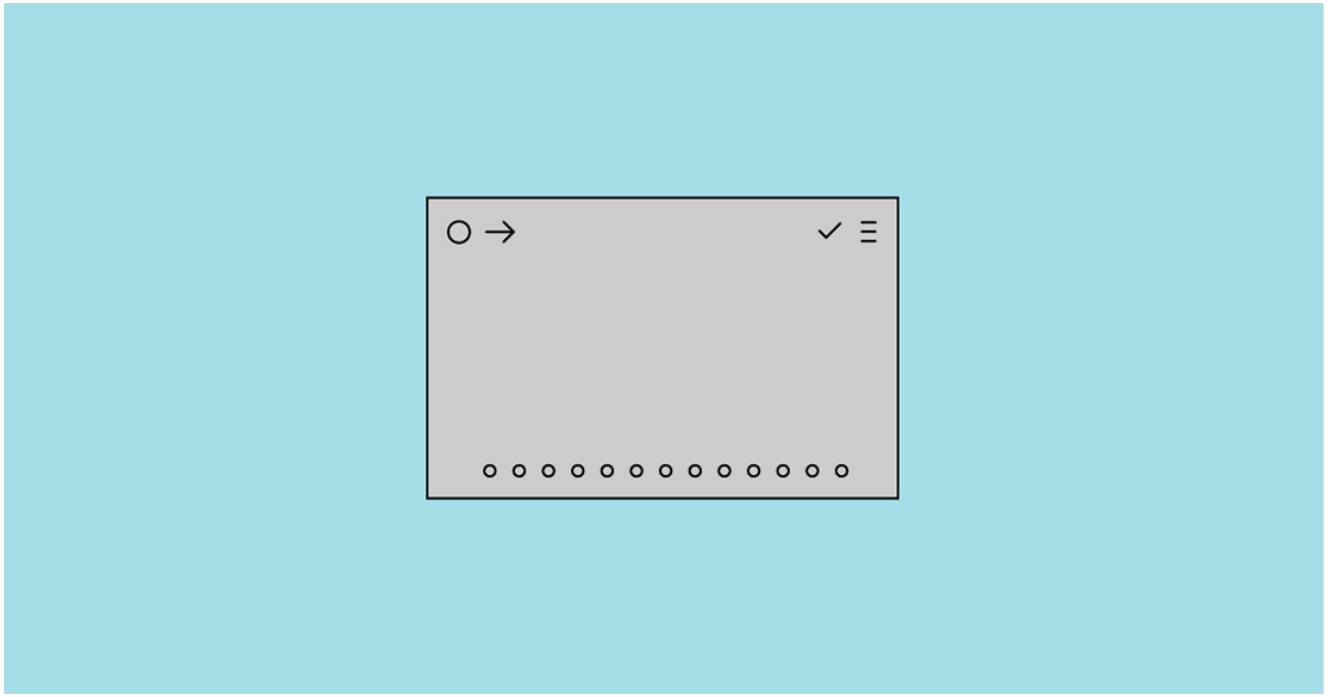
In some cases, a truly innovative product may look or work so differently from what's on the market that it fails to resonate with customers. Early versions of the **Honda Insight**, for example — the world's first production hybrid car — were so high-tech looking that people felt self-conscious driving them. It took another couple of years for the **Toyota Prius** to come along, with its just-different-enough aesthetic, and truly break the market open.

As an innovator, you have the unique advantage of getting to watch firsthand how people react to and use your initial product. With a little well-directed user research, you can learn an awful lot about how to improve the experience it delivers, what features users might want in a second version, and what can be pared down or removed. Implementing these changes is a relatively low-cost, low-risk way of providing a UX that earns real love.



3. To Scoop “Fast Followers”

“Fast follower” products can be a headache: plenty of companies have done well for themselves by waiting for others to innovate, then swooping in with a cheaper, slightly more mature product a few months later. Developing your own next gen product can help stave this off.



Delve

4. To Improve User Experience

The best reason for a next gen design might be an improved user experience (UX). Rachio, a smart sprinkler system manufactured by a startup that Bresslergroup has worked with for several years, offers a good example.

Rachio's first generation was a classic MVP, offering some unique functions (a smart, Web-connected sprinkler system that could adapt to changing weather) in a no-frills package. The initial product was a hit with early adopters, willing to accept certain functional limitations and a nearly non-existent interface in exchange for a truly game-changing product.

Looking closely at what those early adopters were doing with their Rachio units, and what they wished they could do, gave some clear ideas on how to improve the UX in the next round. Rachio's version two allowed direct control of the unit (not just via app), an easier installation process, and greater WiFi reach — and sold dramatically better than version one.

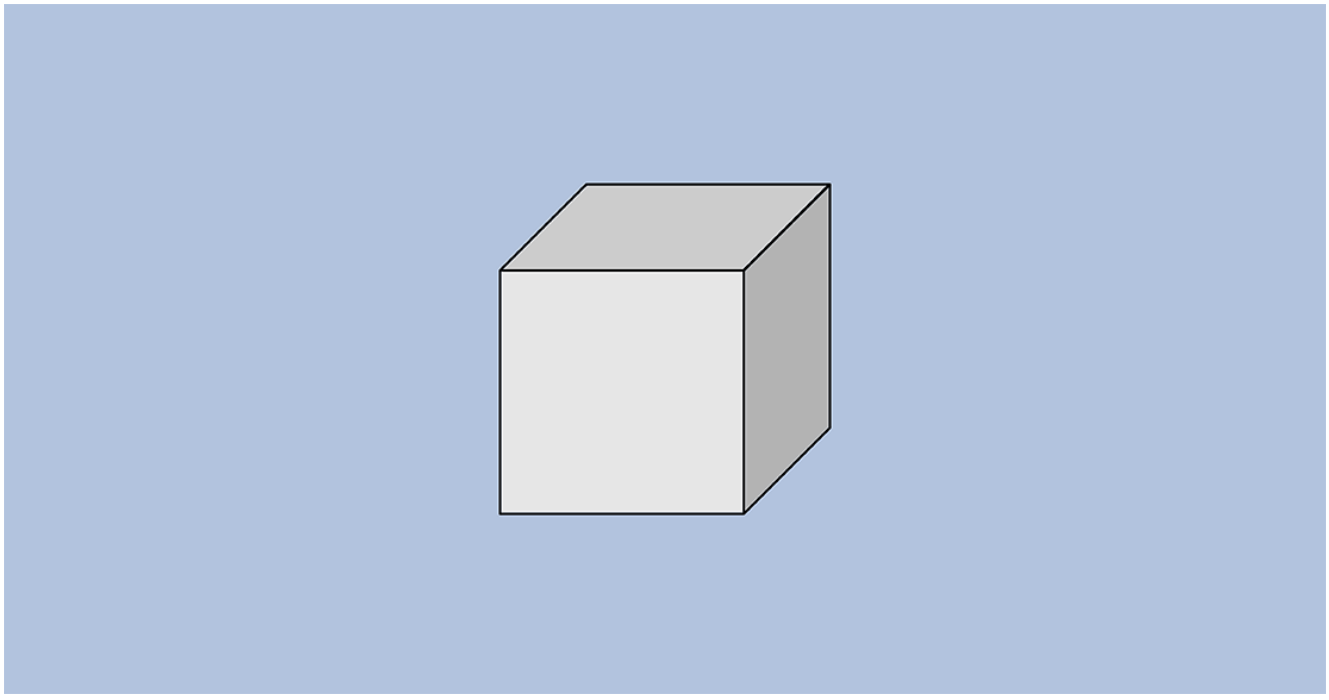
Case Study: Rachio Generation 2 Smart Sprinkler Controller

We worked with a Colorado-based startup to take their first-generation IoT product and redesign it for lower cost, larger volumes and better performance.

The approach was so successful, in fact, that Rachio now has a dedicated User Research team on staff — an unusual investment for a small startup, but one that's yielded huge returns, especially now that version three is on the market.

How To Approach Next-Gen Product Design

Evolving a product to make it more competitive can take many different forms, but in our experience, most next-gen redesigns fall into a few common categories, each with its own advantages.



1. Give It A New Look

A new form factor is an obvious place to start. The technology inside makes the product work, but the external form is what people touch and see. Updating that

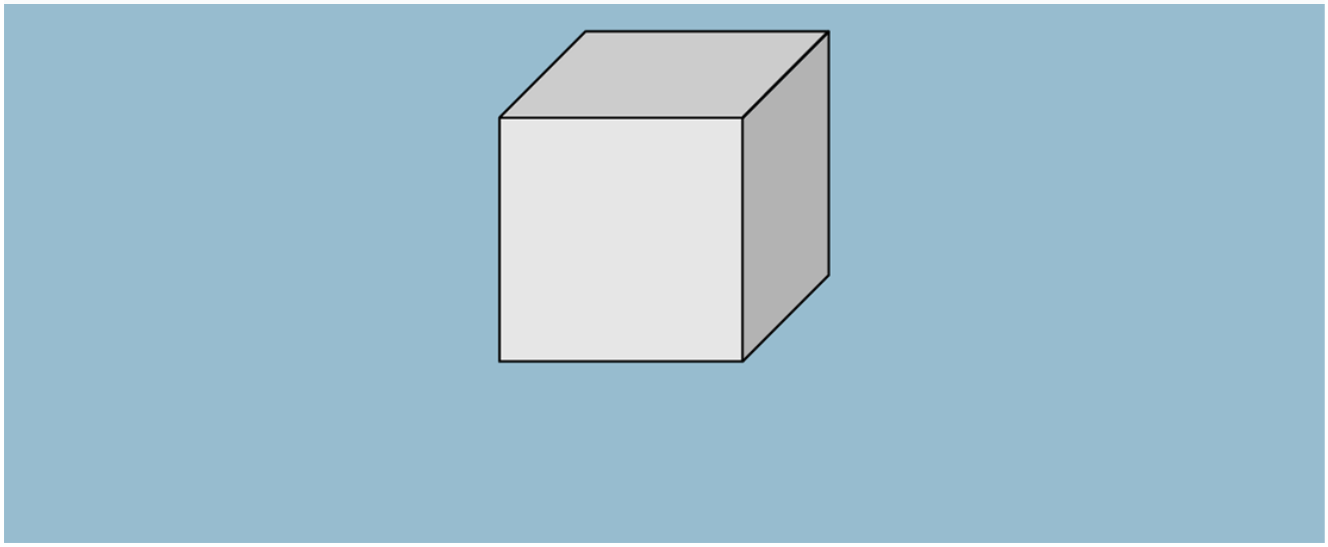
An aesthetic redesign can also help bring a new product into line with a coherent visual brand language, something Bresslergroup has done numerous times for clients including BD and PetSafe.

Case Study: BD Diagnostics

Strategic, actionable branding guidelines bring BD Diagnostics into the future and provide a roadmap as they develop and acquire more products.

Learn more →

A coherent visual brand can create a network effect, adding legitimacy to each product in the line, and inviting one product's customers to embrace another as their needs grow.



2. Refresh the Electronics

Refreshing the electronics can serve as both a cost-saving measure and a way of adding function, especially given the speed with which off-the-shelf components are improving.

Trice Medical's mi-eye+ arthroscopic probe, for example, got an update from Bresslergroup that switched out its custom display for a modified Surface tablet. This not only cut manufacturing costs significantly, it also opened up software options that let us improve the UI and expand the device's capabilities.

Case Study: A Needle You Can See With

Delve helped Trice Medical take their innovative camera technology and develop it into a straightforward, fully integrated solution.

Learn more →

As products age, companies are often forced to switch out individual electronic or physical components in manufacturing, to replace obsolete ones or take advantage of price reductions. At a certain point, this can actually become more expensive than redesigning the entire product with new components in mind. Knowing when that tipping point is reached is crucial to long-term product success, and in our experience, companies are more likely to wait too long than redesign too early.

3. Redesign the App

Since so many products these days also have a digital component, redesigning the app can be a relatively quick, low-cost way of refreshing a product. Customers have gotten accustomed to apps that update every month or two, so last year's digital experience (on a smartphone or the device itself) can make a product feel dated.

A redesigned app offers another advantage as well: it's a way of field-testing new features, UI elements, or visual designs. The rapidly changing landscape that makes users expect frequent updates also makes them fairly comfortable with digital change, so you can use an app as a kind of design sandbox, then take cues from it later on when you're ready to commit to a physical redesign. For many products, two to three rounds of app update per physical redesign is a ratio that works well.

Innovation Is Ongoing

Innovation is an ongoing process, and the truly successful innovators are those who view a new product not as the end of a design process, but as the beginning of a refinement process.

We'll always love reading about what's new and novel in products, but when it comes time to open our wallets, we're more likely to go for the product that's benefitted from time and careful improvement.

This article was written by Mark Clark.

Our Product Design and Development Expertise

Delve's experts in insights, strategy, design, and engineering can guide you through an end-to-end innovation process that delivers results

Learn more →

Appendix C: Wisconsin School of Business AI Hub Resources

Contributed by Matt Seitz, Director of the AI Hub at UW–Madison

This snapshot from the Wisconsin School of Business AI Hub offers a glimpse into some of the engaging content and thought leadership coming out of UW–Madison, including a bite-sized AI newsletter and an upcoming webinar series. As a trusted partner, we're excited to connect you to these insights—and we're here to help you get the most value from them.

Join the weekly "explAIn it like I'm busy" newsletter here: **go.wisc.edu/explAIn-newsletter**

Appendix D: Resources for Innovation

Innovation thrives on continuous learning and fresh perspectives. To help you extend the insights shared during today's discussions, our distinguished executive panelists have curated a list of websites they personally recommend as valuable resources for staying at the forefront of innovation. We invite you to explore these tools, publications, and thought leadership platforms as you continue to drive transformation within your organization.

- **40 Chances | Book by Howard G Buffett, Howard W. Buffet**
  40 Chances is an inspiring manifesto...both an informative guidebook and a catalyst for igniting real changes (Booklist) in the struggle against world hunger.
- **TRANSFORMED: Moving to the Product Operating Model**
  Transform your product organization to the product operating model used by the world's most innovative tech companies.
- **Acquired Podcast**
  Acquired goes behind the scenes of the biggest tech IPOs and acquisitions of all time. Hosted by Ben Gilbert and David Rosenthal.
- **Zero to One by Peter Thiel, Blake Masters**
  Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future is a 2014 book by the American entrepreneur and investor Peter Thiel co-written with Blake Masters.
- **The AI Daily Brief**
  A daily news analysis show on all things artificial intelligence. NLW looks at AI from multiple angles, from the explosion of creativity brought on by new tools like Midjourney, ChatGPT and AutoGPT to the potential disruptions to work and industries as we know them to the great philosophical, ethical and practical questions of advanced general intelligence, alignment and x-risk.
- **ThursdAI - all the best AI news from the last week**
  There are a million new AI tools, updates, open source models that are better every week, APIs, and startups.

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Michael Proksch

Global AI & Data Expert, Author,
and Chief Scientist at AccelerEd

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Overcoming the Challenges of AI Value Creation

Presentation @ UWEBC 2025
May, 1st 2025

Dr. Michael Proksch
& Doug Barton
& You

About Dr. Michael Proksch

Renowned transformation and AI expert, mentor for Fortune 500 organizations, bestselling author of “The Secrets of AI Value Creation” together with Nisha Paliwal (MVP Capital One) and Dr. Wilhelm Bielert (CIO Pemier Tech), Scott Hallworth (CDO HP), Das Dasgupta (CDO Starbucks), and many more…

Professional Experience:

- Chief Scientist, leading Data Management & Data Science at AccelerEd, spearheading AI transformation for University of Maryland Global Campus
- Developed AI Solutions for Fortune 500 companies and led Consulting, Engineering, and Data Science teams globally
- Managed Data & AI operations globally

Educational Background:

- Doctoral Degree in Economics
- Master's Degree in Business Administration

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00

Who is Artificial Intelligence?

The Definition of AI from AI Achievers

"Some people call this artificial intelligence, but the reality is this technology will enhance us. So, instead of artificial

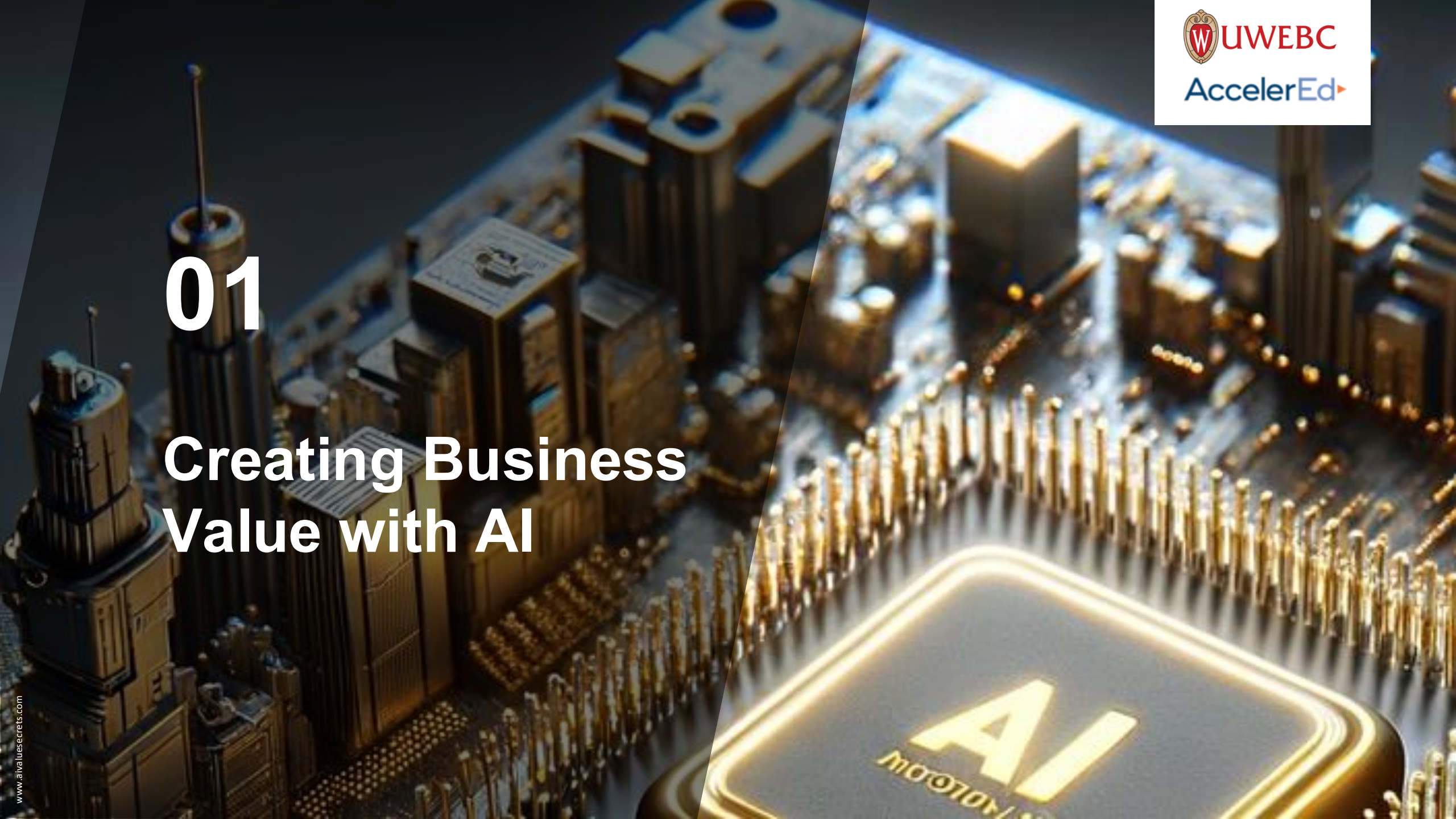
almost a humanities discipline. It really is an attempt to understand human intelligence and human cognition." - Sebastian Thrun (German innovator, entrepreneur and computer scientist)

Musk (Inventor, Investor, CEO & CTO of SpaceX, CEO of Tesla Inc.)

YOUR MINDSET MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

AI is a human-like partner in decision making and as integral part of the daily life of the employees of their organization

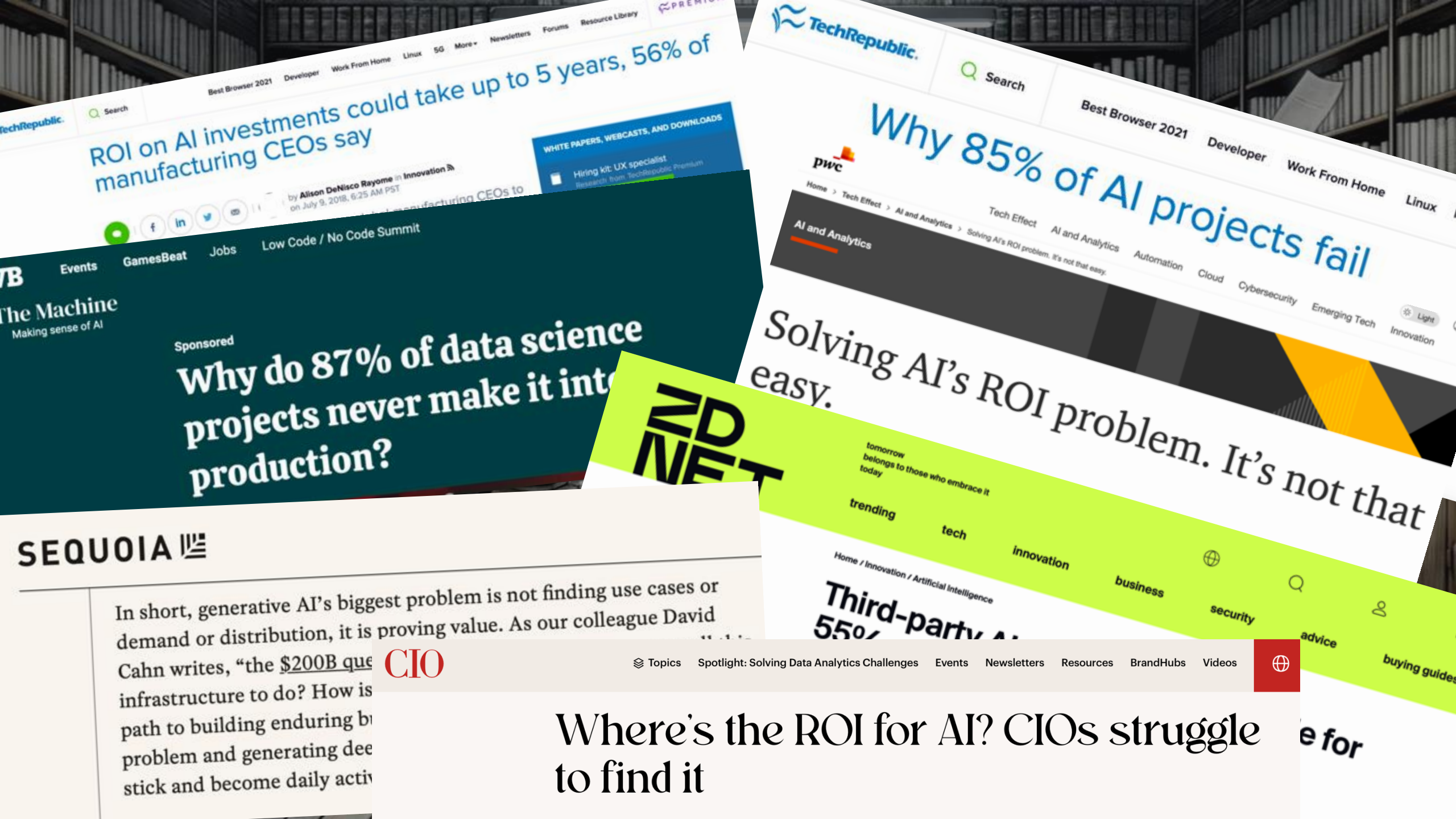
Who or What is AI, and Why Am I Hiring It?



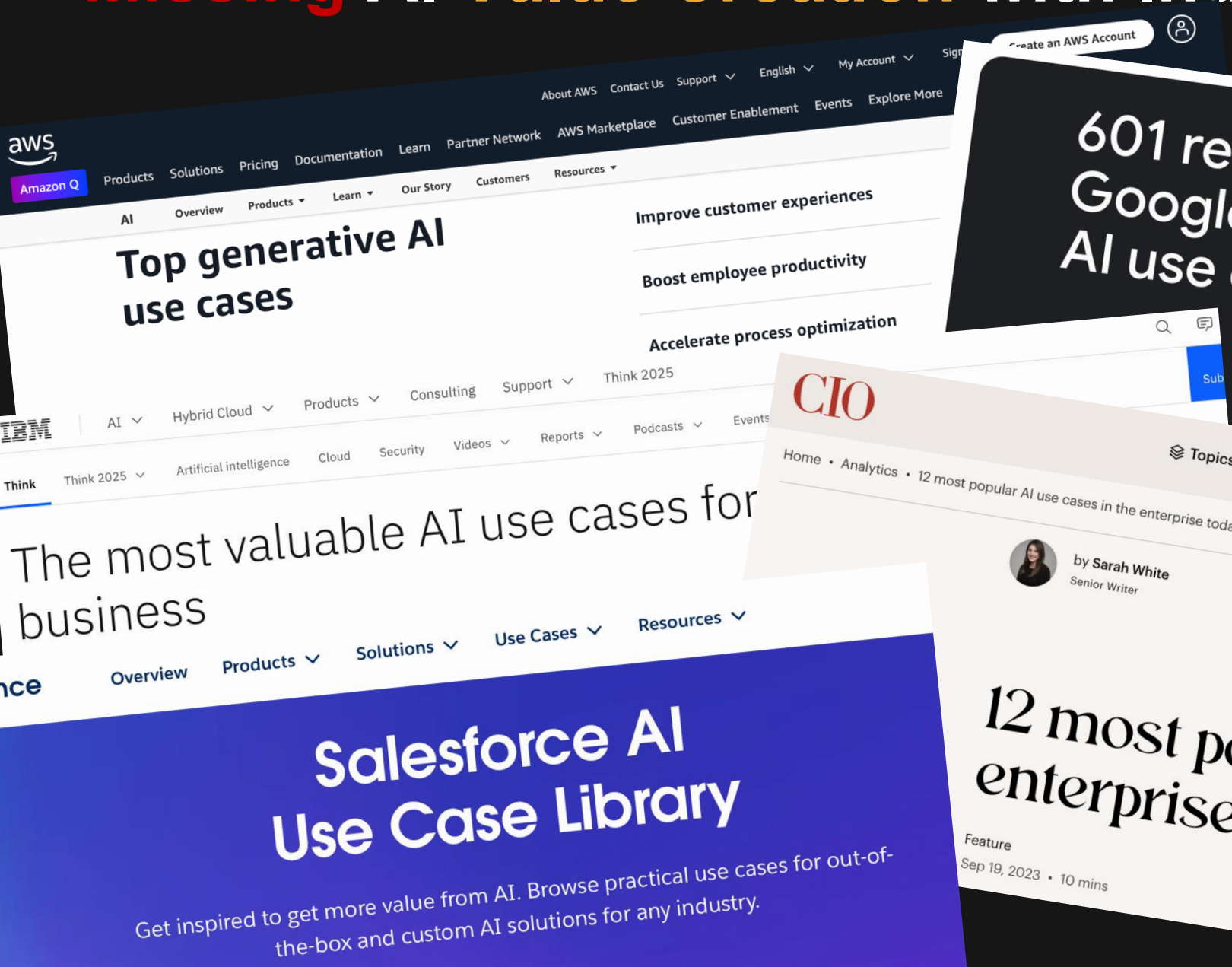
01

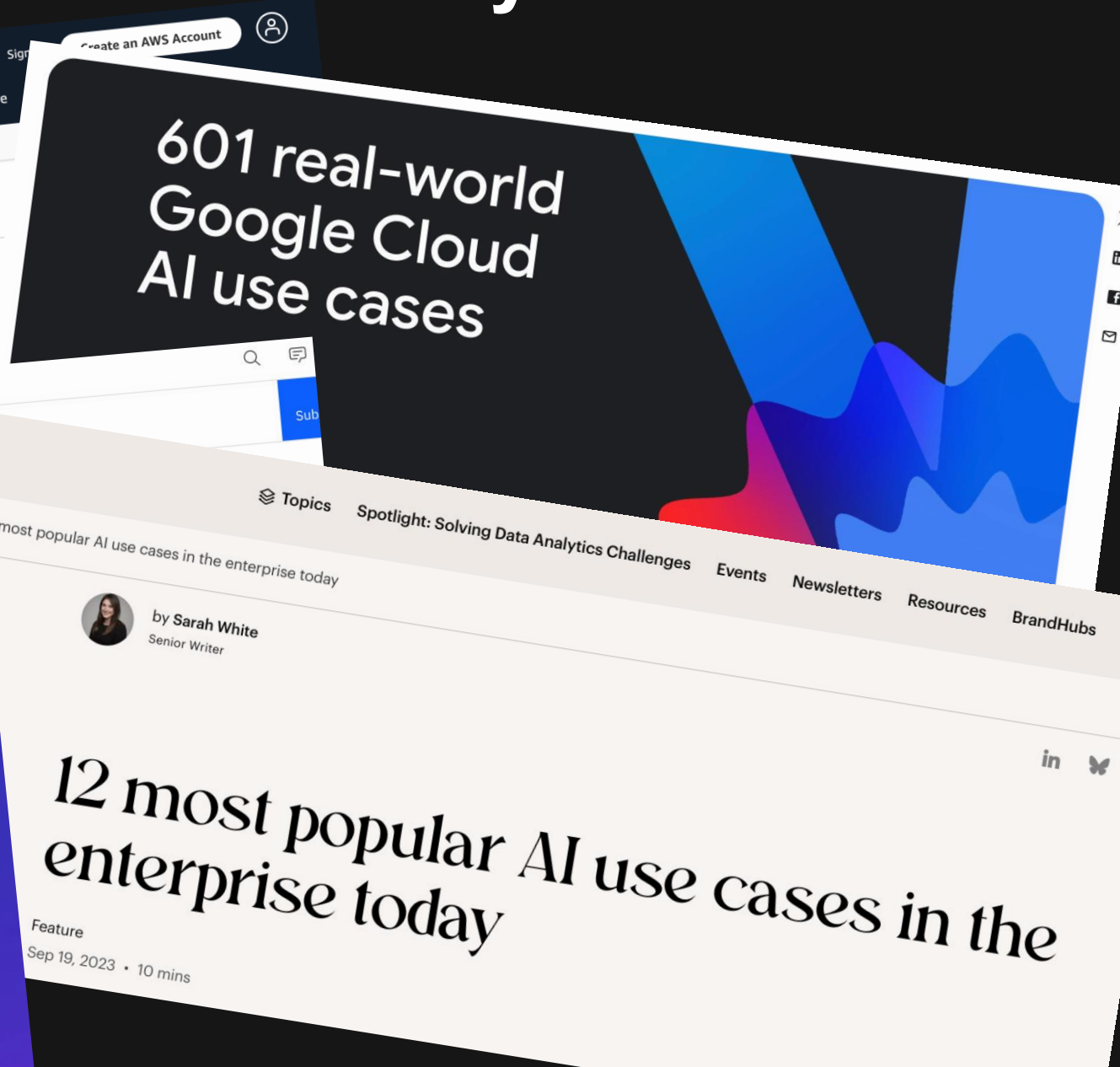
Creating Business Value with AI

www.aivaluesecrets.com


TechRepublic
Search
Best Browser 2021
Developer
Work From Home
Linux
5G
More
Newsletters
Forums
Resource Library
ROI on AI investments could take up to 5 years, 56% of manufacturing CEOs say
by Alison DeNisco Rayome in Innovation
on July 9, 2018, 6:25 AM PST
WHITE PAPERS, WEBCASTS, AND DOWNLOADS
Hiring kit: UX specialist
Research from TechRepublic Premium
VB
Events
GamesBeat
Jobs
Low Code / No Code Summit
The Machine
Making sense of AI
Sponsored
Why do 87% of data science projects never make it into production?
TechRepublic
Search
Best Browser 2021
Developer
Work From Home
Linux
Why 85% of AI projects fail
pwc
Home > Tech Effect > AI and Analytics > Solving AI's ROI problem. It's not that easy.
Tech Effect
AI and Analytics
Automation
Cloud
Cybersecurity
Emerging Tech
Innovation
Light
AI and Analytics
Solving AI's ROI problem. It's not that easy.
ZDNET
tomorrow belongs to those who embrace it today
trending
tech
innovation
business
security
advice
buying guides
Home / Innovation / Artificial Intelligence
Third-party AI
55%
SEQUOIA
In short, generative AI's biggest problem is not finding use cases or demand or distribution, it is proving value. As our colleague David Cahn writes, "the $200B que
infrastructure to do? How is
path to building enduring b
problem and generating dee
stick and become daily activ
CIO
Topics
Spotlight: Solving Data Analytics Challenges
Events
Newsletters
Resources
BrandHubs
Videos
Where's the ROI for AI? CIOs struggle to find it
e for

Missing AI Value Creation with Industry Use Cases

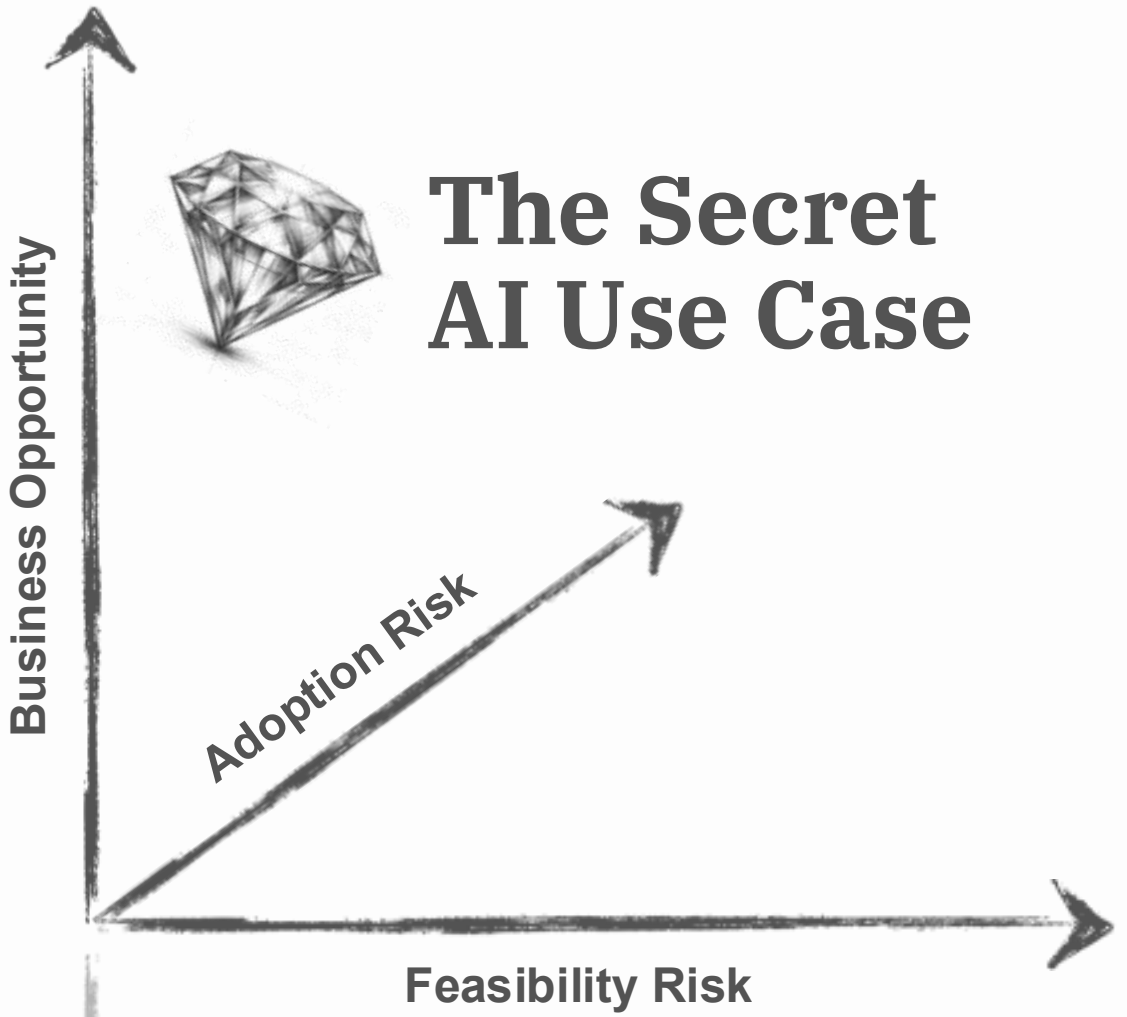




The 3 Factors of AI Value Creation

The AI Value Factor Approach:

- Evaluates AI use cases by balancing potential future business opportunities against risks that might diminish their potential
- It involves considering AI business opportunity, AI adoption risk, and AI feasibility risk.
- Sustainable value creation in AI involves creating a balanced portfolio of use cases, including both low-risk, low-opportunity cases and high-risk, high-opportunity visionary cases



Proksch, M., Paliwal, N., Bielert, W. (2024). *The Secrets of AI Value Creation.*

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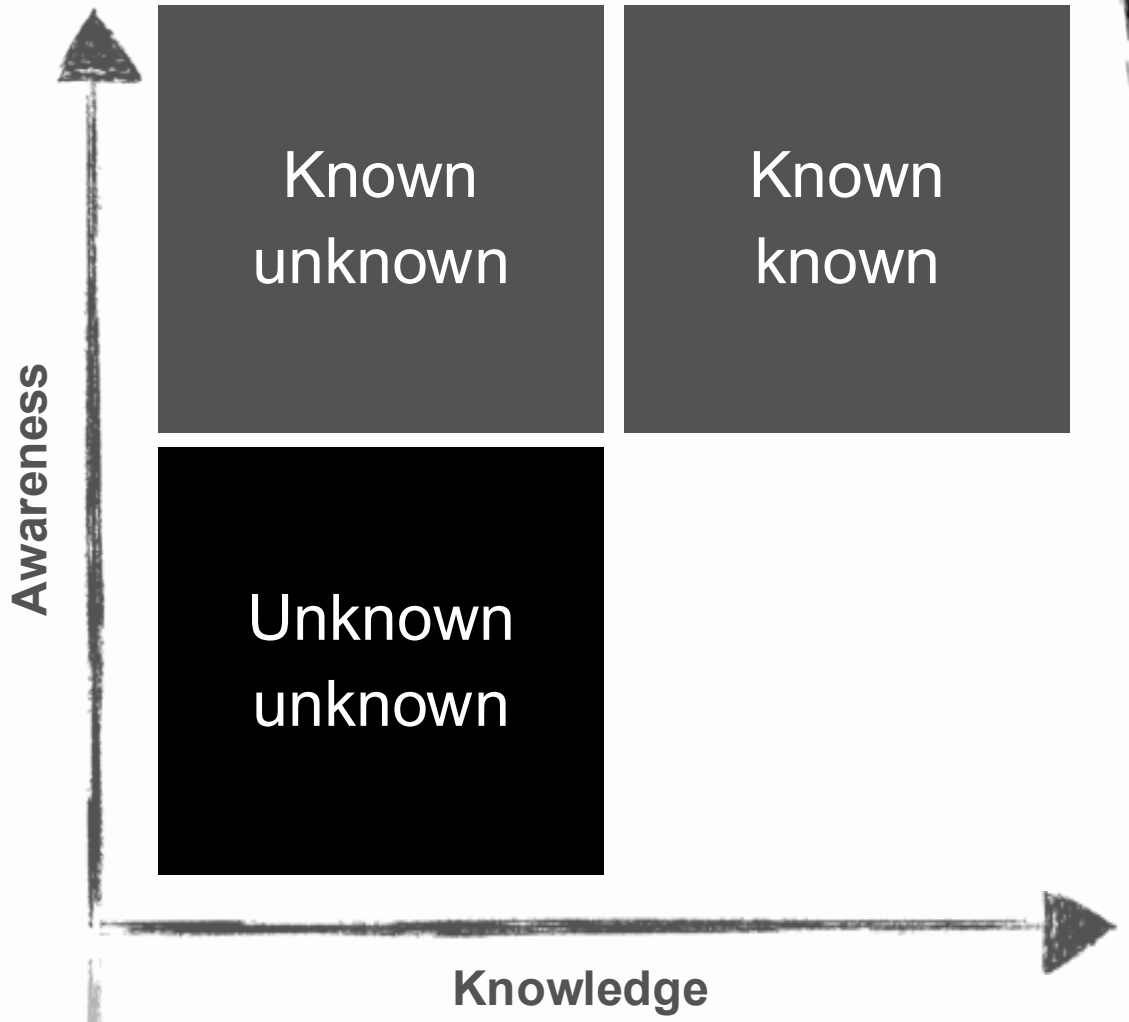
02

Overcoming the Challenges of AI Value Creation

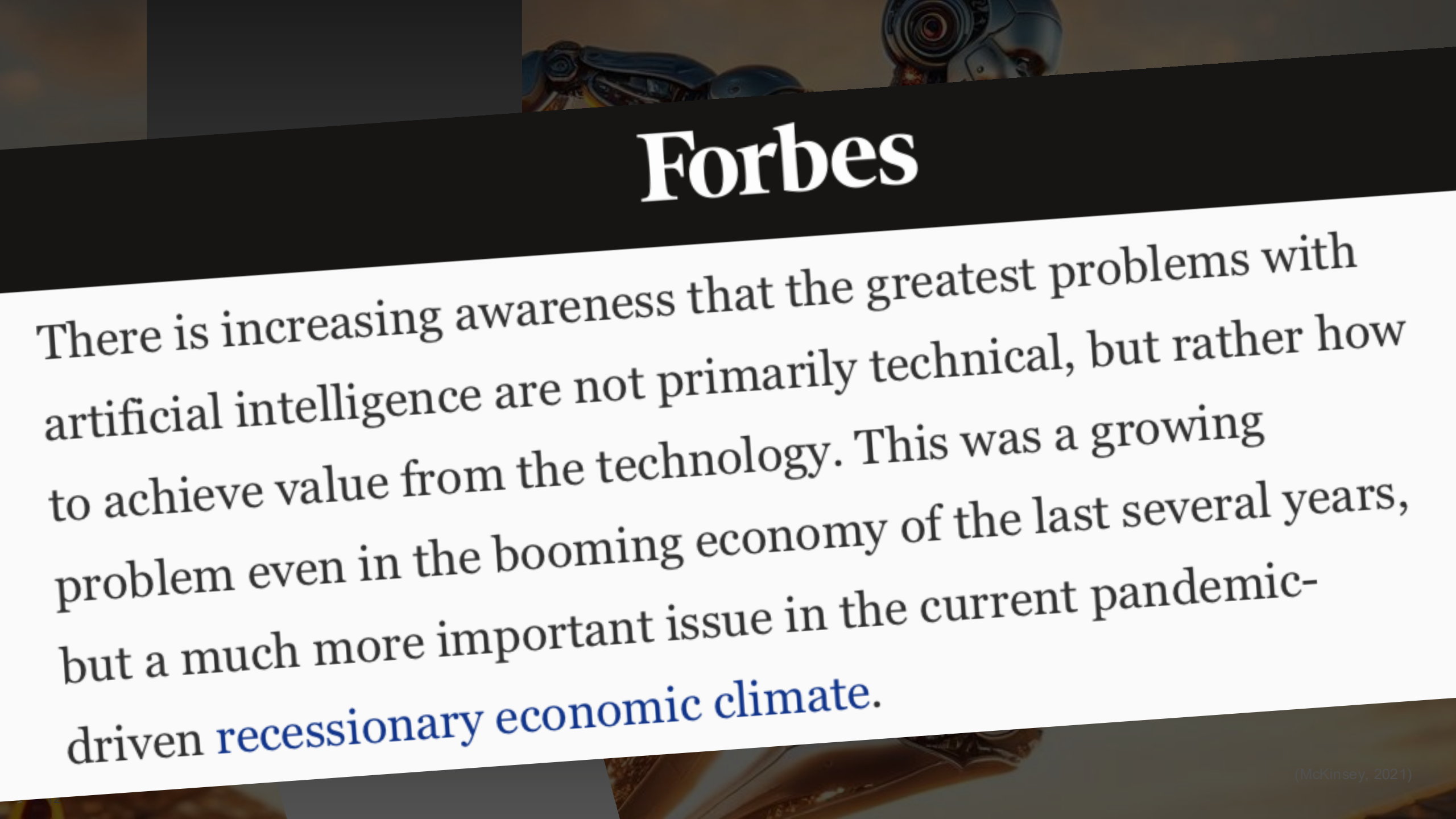
www.aivaluesecrets.com

AI - the unknown Partner



"There are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we do not know we don't know."

Donald Rumsfeld, former US Secretary of State of Defense

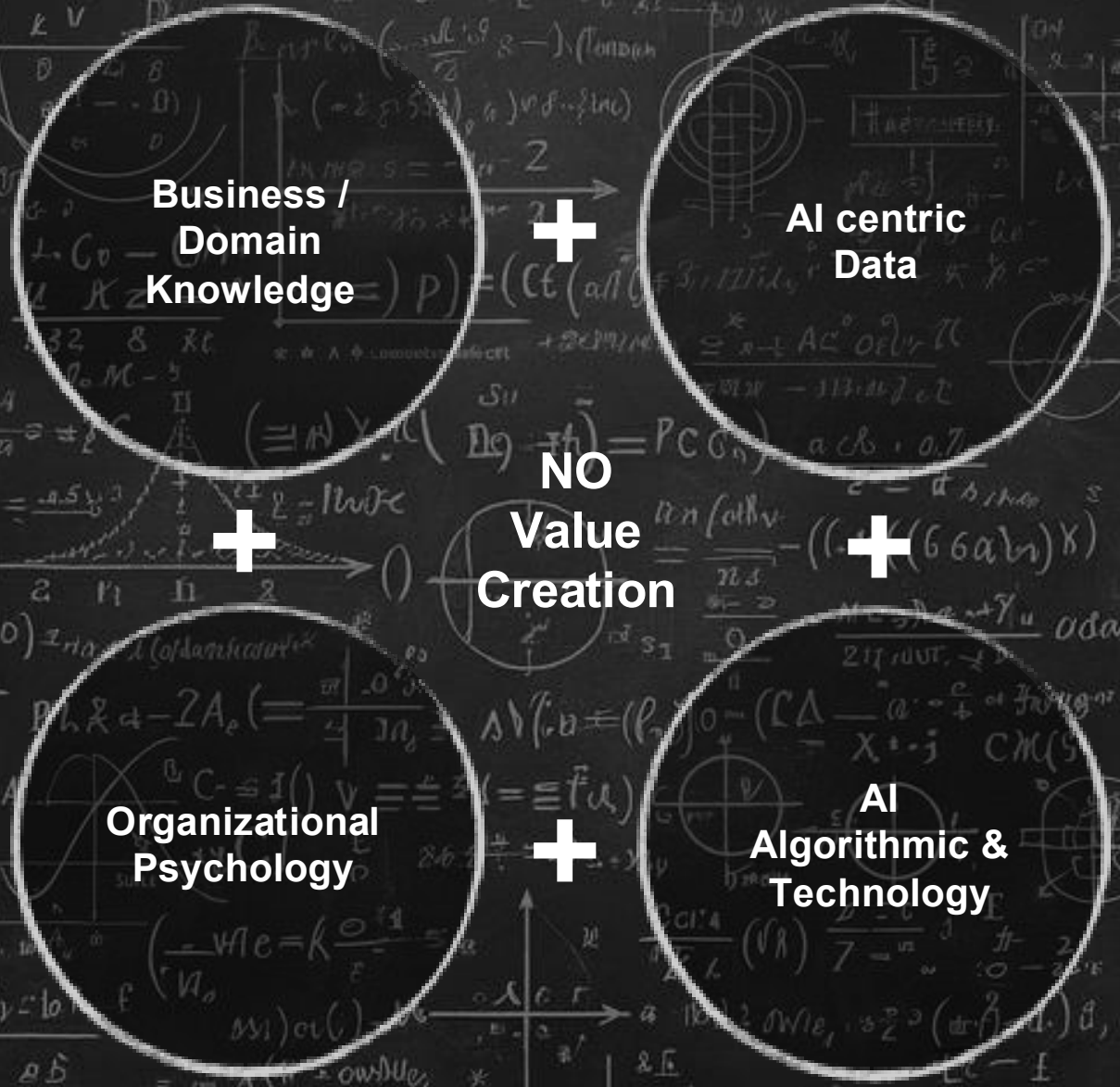


Forbes

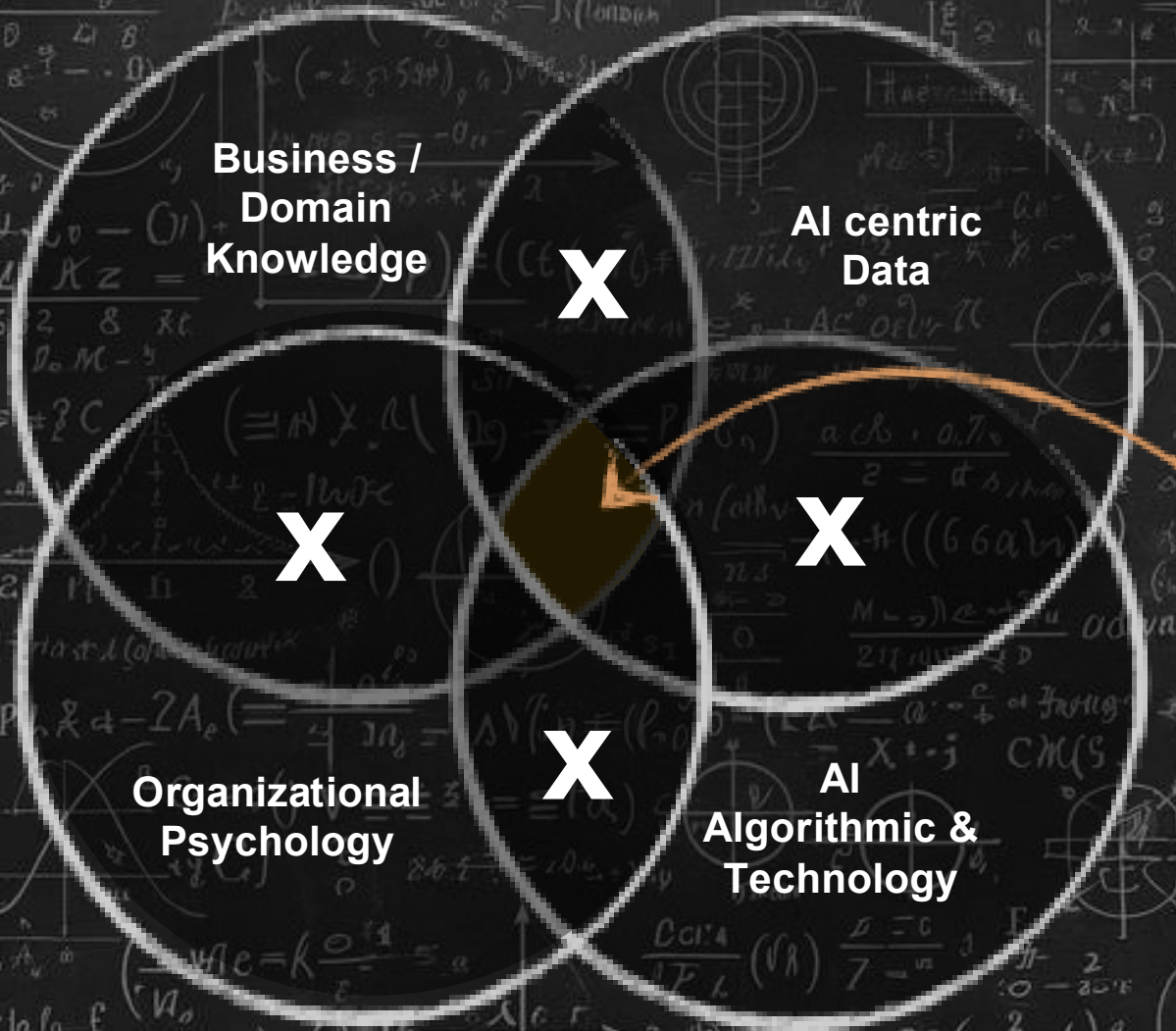
There is increasing awareness that the greatest problems with artificial intelligence are not primarily technical, but rather how to achieve value from the technology. This was a growing problem even in the booming economy of the last several years, but a much more important issue in the current pandemic-driven recessionary economic climate.

(McKinsey, 2021)

The Formula behind AI Value Creation



The Formula behind AI Value Creation



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The Steps of Your AI Journey

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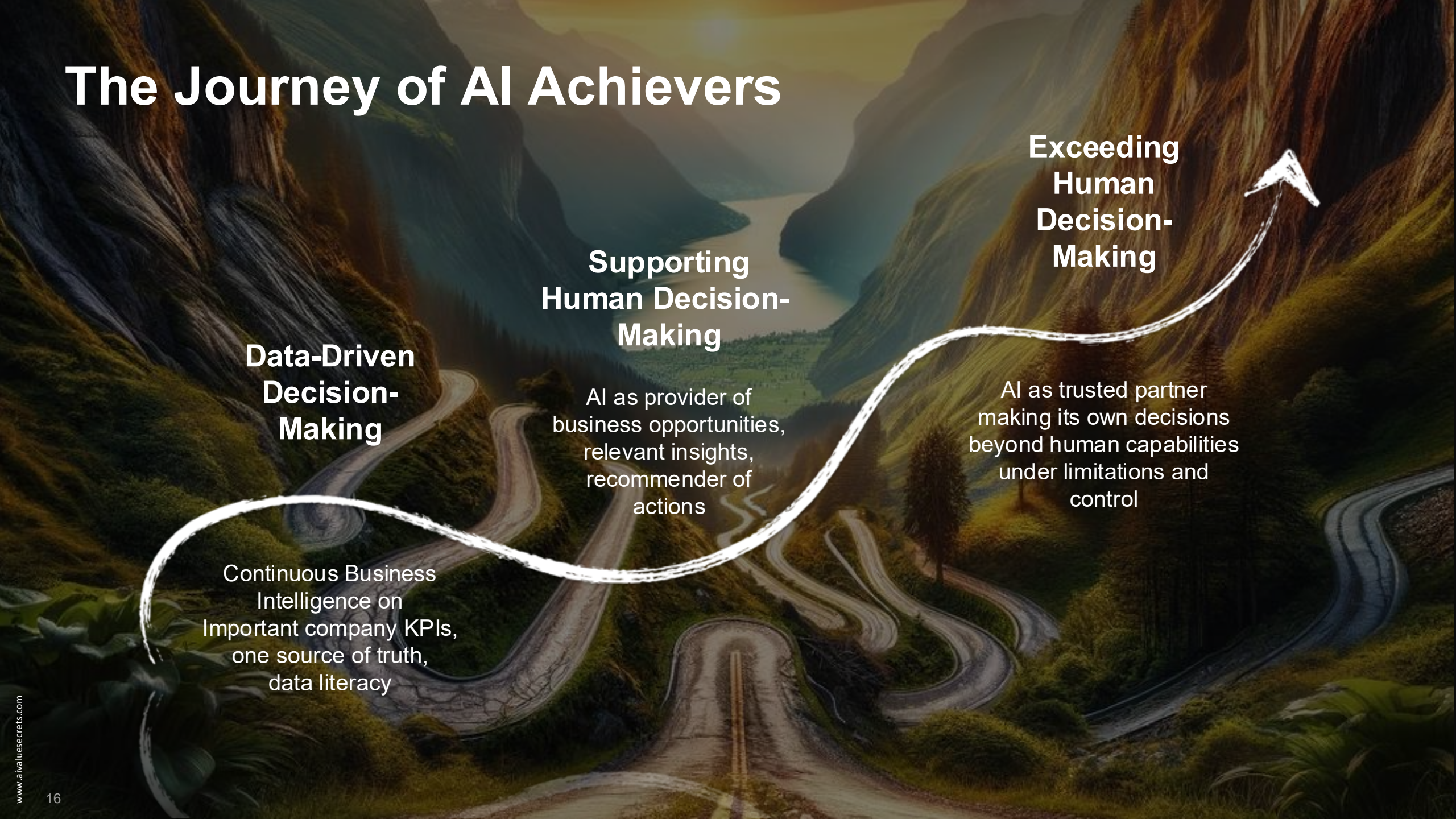
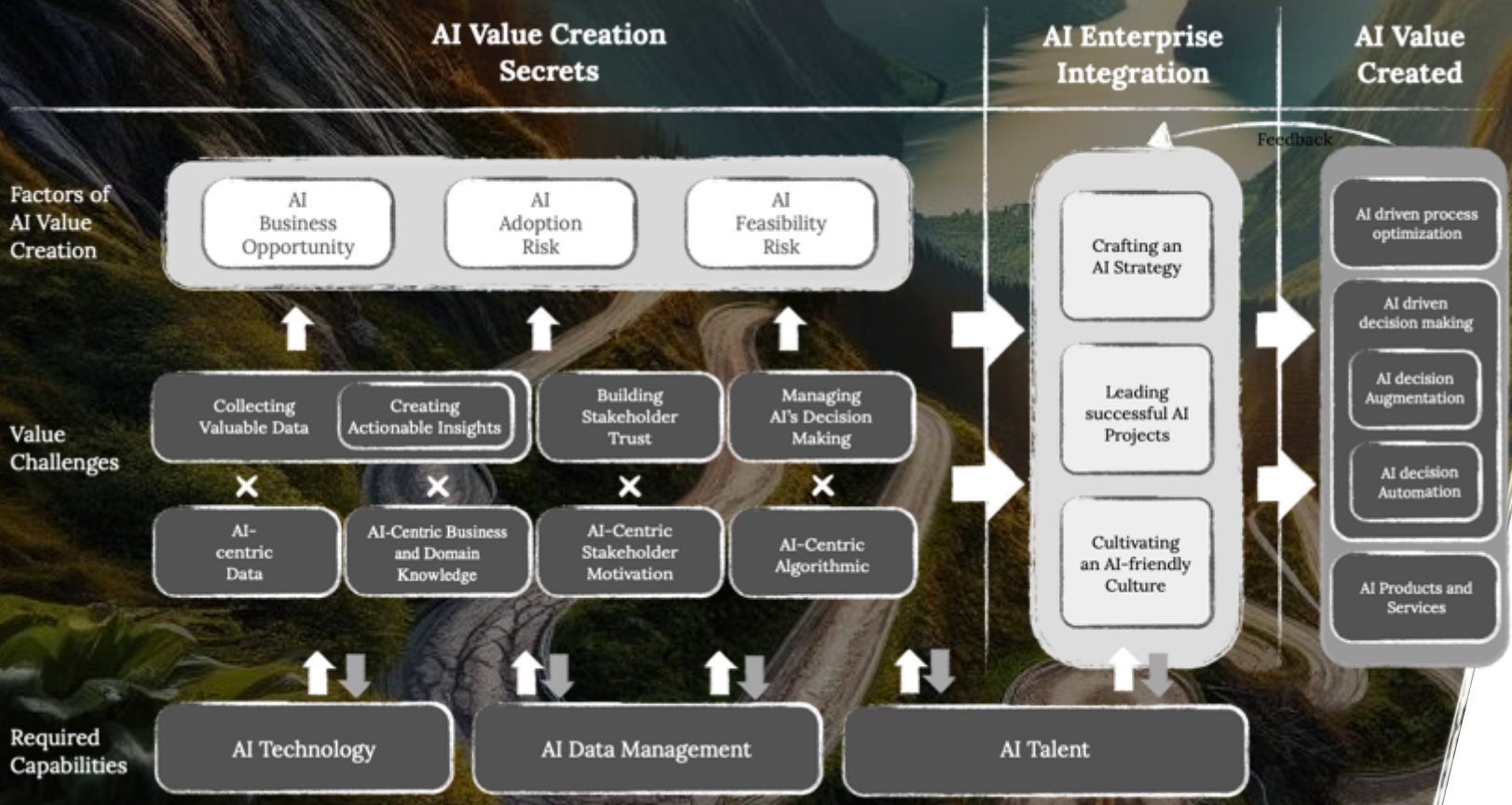
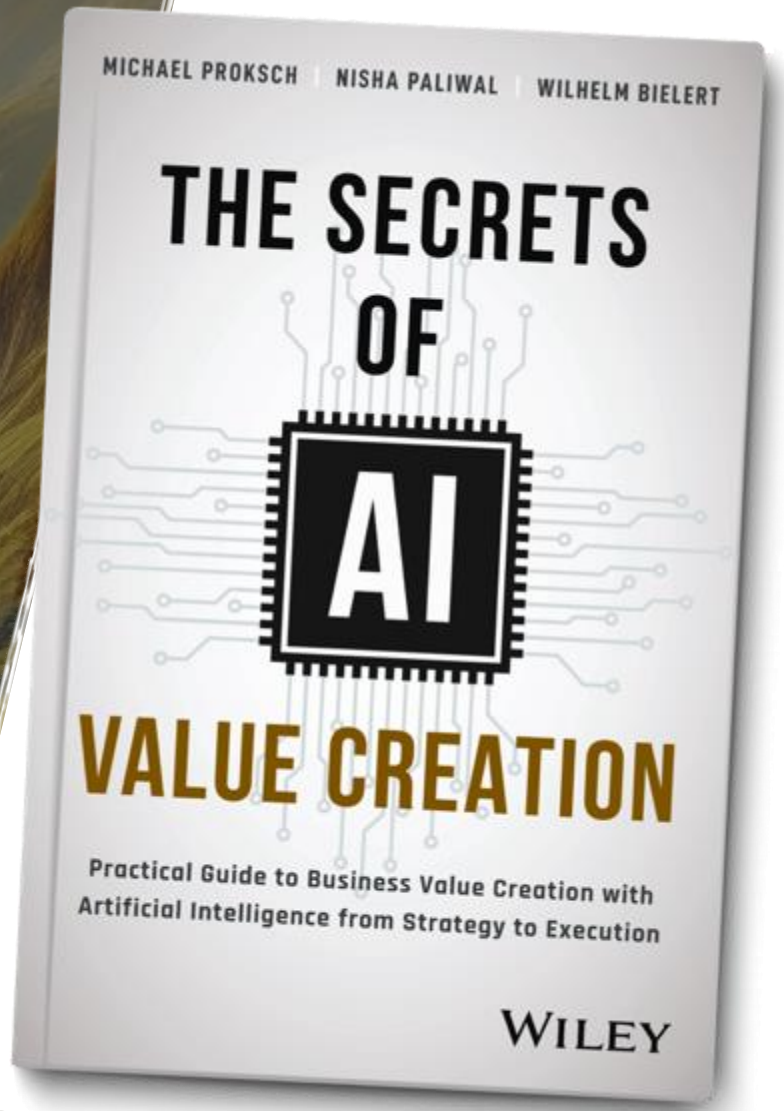
The Journey of AI Achievers



Your AI Journey Success Framework





Thank You!

Visit www.aivaluesecrets.com to get access to AI Value News, additional Material, and via invitation to enterprise Trainings, Mentoring, an AI Community and many more…

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Keynote Speaker

Cortney Thompson Rowan

EVP, Strategy & Design, Delve

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Digital
Relativity
Cortney Rowan
Executive Vice President of
Strategy & Design at Delve

Digital is Meaningless

Hardware + ~~Digital~~ + Human

Intelligence
Perceptibility
Adaptability

Value is at the Intersections…

Failures at launch

We do not operate in a combinatory fashion!

Org Structures Drive Separate Behaviors

Marketing

Digital

Hardware

Finance

This is all that really matters

Fused Innovation Model

Products developed by truly integrated teams achieved 32% higher revenue growth in their first year and were 3.4 times more likely to maintain market leadership positions after three years

(McKinsey Global Innovation Survey, 2023).

3 Things Stop Us

Incentives

Learn, act balance

Experimentation vs. expectation

What literature & Chat GPT is telling us

→ 45% Faster

Integrated Leadership
Companies with cross-functional delivery leaders see 45% faster time-to-market for new products. (e.g., Microsoft's "product trilogy" teams)

→ 38% More Innovation

Collaborative Metrics
Organizations that weight team success over individual achievement show 38% higher innovation rates.

→ 61% Less Issues

Agile Integration: Disciplined Flexibility
Companies requiring Design, Vision, and Functionality sign-off at each development stage see 61% fewer post-launch issues.

Perspective Training: Building Empathy
Teams that undergo regular cross-disciplinary empathy training

All that matters

2 Mental Models: Creativity + Rigor

Innovation Orchestrators: From Envision to Reality

Impact Obsessed: Chemistry over Control

It starts here…

Not an organizational effort, an innovation effort

Pick people carefully, expect to be challenged

HW + Intelligence + Human… always

Track and measure – the only path to believability

Delve

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Karen Semonson

Senior Advisor at FarWell

Accelerating into the Future:
Transforming Business Capabilities with AI and Automation

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ACCELERATING INTO THE FUTURE: TRANSFORMING BUSINESS CAPABILITIES WITH AI & AUTOMATION

UWEBC DIGITAL SYMPOSIUM

Presented by FarWell Project Advisors LLC

Karen Semonson

Senior Advisor

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AI VALUE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

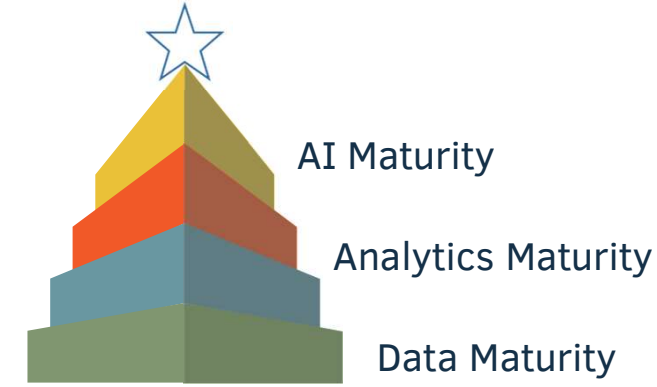
70% of the success of your AI Deployment has nothing to do with technology

Definitions	Value-Driving Factors	FarWell Strategy to Execution Services
The tangible and intangible business benefits gained by implementing and leveraging AI technologies. Organizations are optimizing their operations, enhancing decision-making and customer experience, and gaining a competitive advantage.	BUSINESS VALUE	Strategy Management & Planning Enterprise Architecture Business Architecture Business Process & Data Analysis Business Process Optimization
The uncertainty or challenge of successfully building and deploying an AI project, considering factors like available resources, time, technical expertise and necessary infrastructure and support.	FEASIBILITY RISK	Portfolio, Program & Project Sponsor & Stakeholder Management Technical Architecture and Operations Talent Development and Training
The extent of the stakeholder's motivation to embrace an AI solution. The ability to overcome resistance with an understanding of the motivation and the creation of value – benefits and risks - for all stakeholders.	ADOPTION RISK	Organizational Change Management Communications Strategies

Source: Adapted from The Secrets of AI Value Creation

AI VALUE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK | GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Ask “Why?”
2. Develop your AI Strategy
3. Think **big**, start **small**, **scale** quickly
4. Choose your technology partner or accelerator
5. Pace yourself



It’s All About the Data

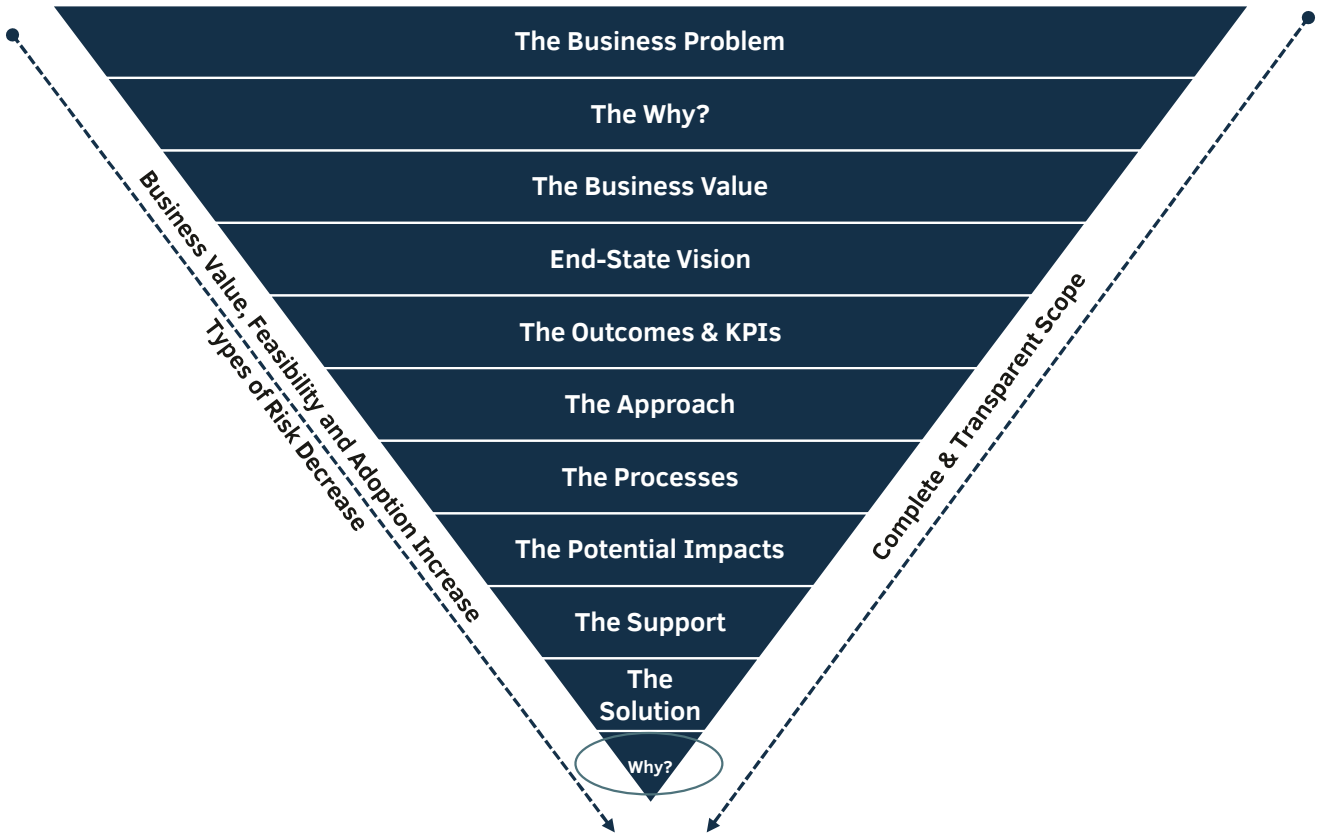
1. Data Maturity: How to effectively manage and utilize data.
2. Analytics Maturity: Early stages are about the “what;” advancing to predictive analytics uncovers the “why.”
3. AI Maturity: The pinnacle of the journey. Leveraging AI to automate processes, personalize customer experiences, increase productivity & efficiency, and uncover insights.

AI VALUE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK: SIX STEP APPROACH

Source: Adapted from Your AI Survival Guide

AI VALUE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK | PREPARATION & DESIGNING

The AI Pyramid of Scope

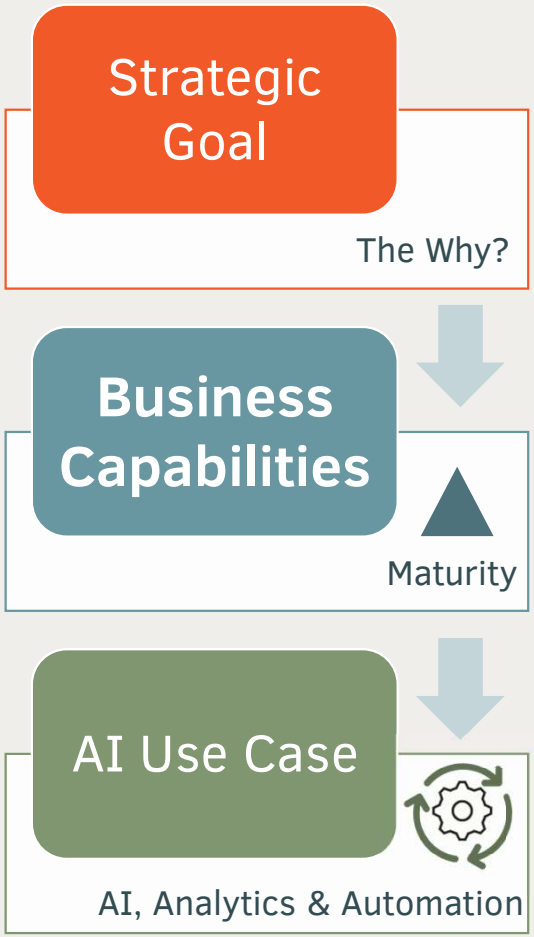


AI Essentials Playbook & Blueprint

The AI Essentials Playbook is a comprehensive list of the most critical considerations for your project and is used along with the AI Pyramid of Scope as the basis for the Solutioning Blueprint.

The biggest opportunity with AI projects is to make sure to accurately scope the project.

AI VALUE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK | VALUABLE OUTCOMES



Blueprint

Yes! Business Value Created

- Efficiency Gains
- Revenue Growth
- Data-Driven Insights
- Competitive Advantage

Yes! Feasible

- Technical Complexity
- Data Availability & Quality
- Regulatory & Compliance
- Infrastructure Requirements

Yes! Adopted

- User Acceptance & Trust
- Human Change Management
- Cost vs. ROI
- Security & Privacy Concerns

LET'S CONNECT

Karen - LinkedIn

FarWell - LinkedIn

FarWell - Website

https://gofarwell.com/

Karen Semonson
Karen.Semonson@gofarwell.com

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Sponsor Briefing - SAP

Sara Stasila

Head of Enterprise Architecture (Midwest) at SAP

How SAP Uniquely Delivers Embedded AI to Drive Business Impact

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Delivering Business Impact with SAP Business AI

SAP

2025

Up to

4.4 trillion $

in potential savings for a company of 20,000 employees.

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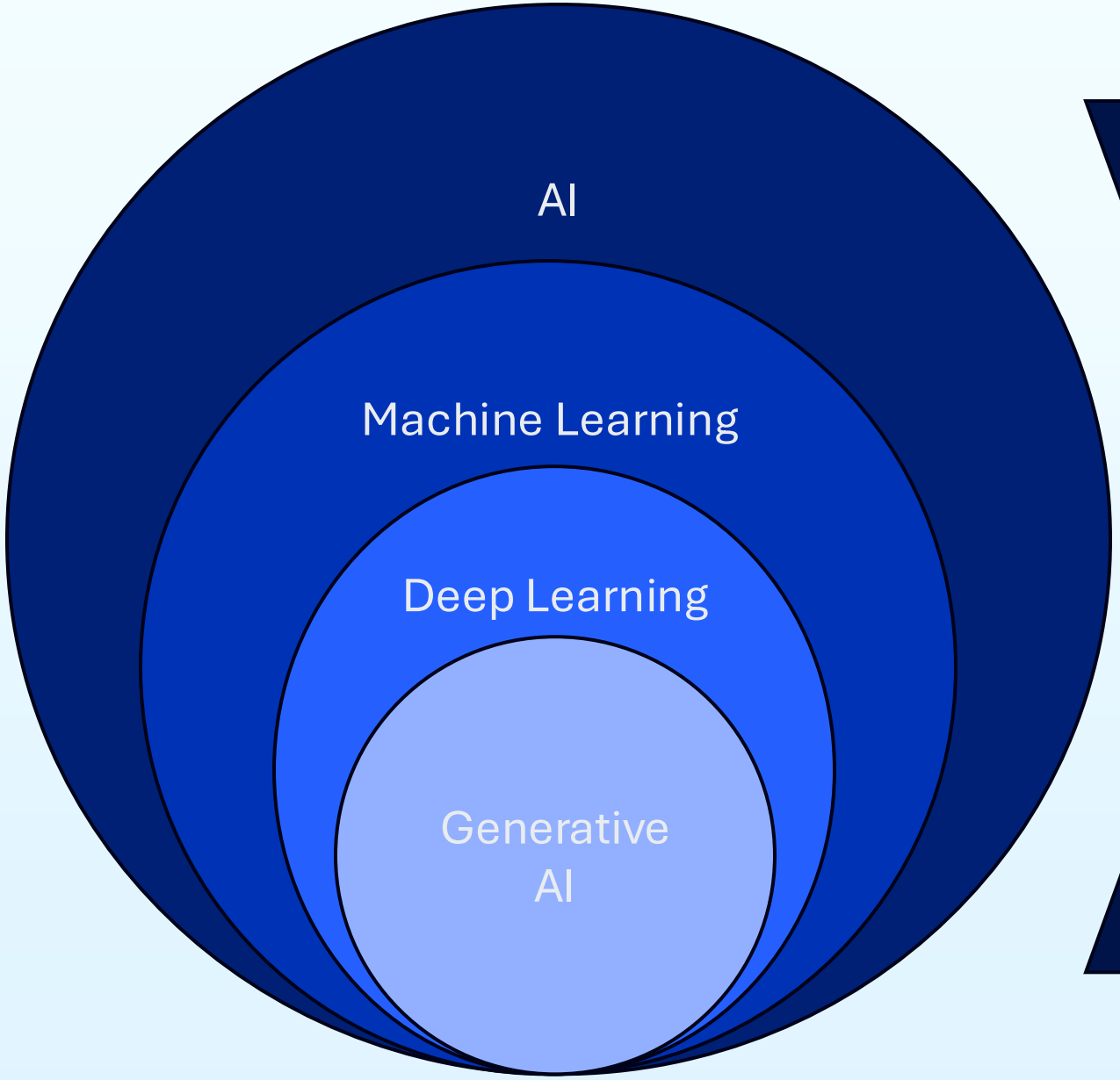

SAP Business AI

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technology
data
processes

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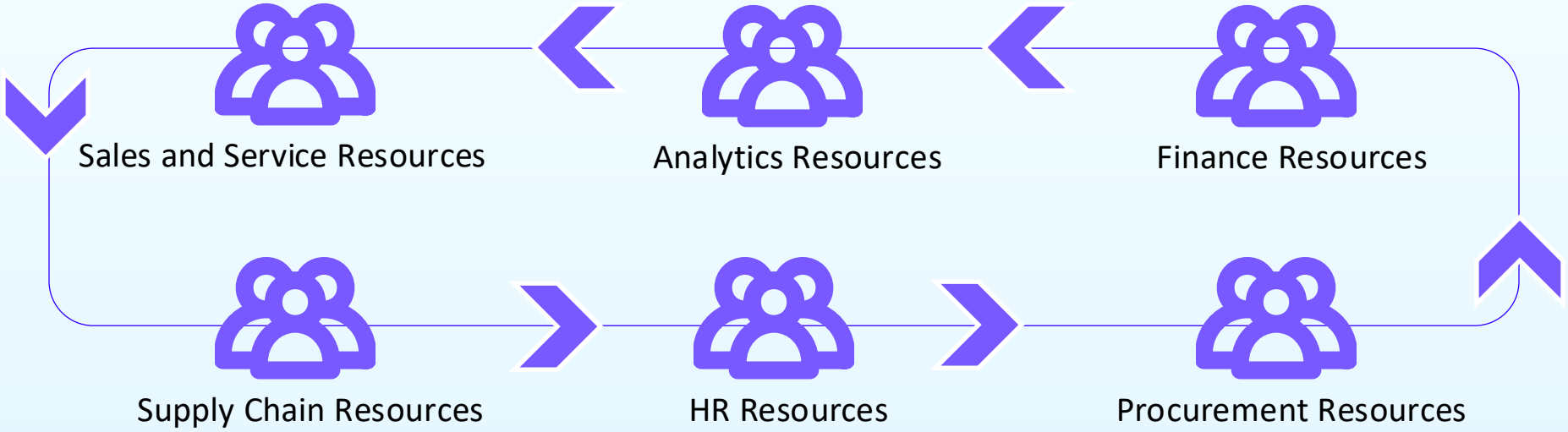

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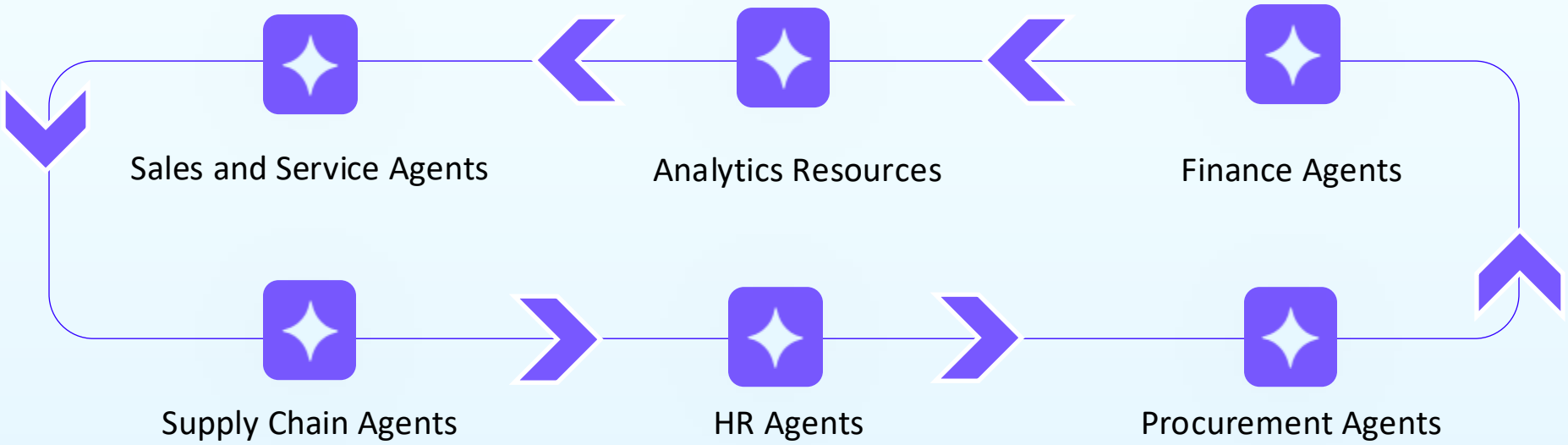

30% Efficiency Increase

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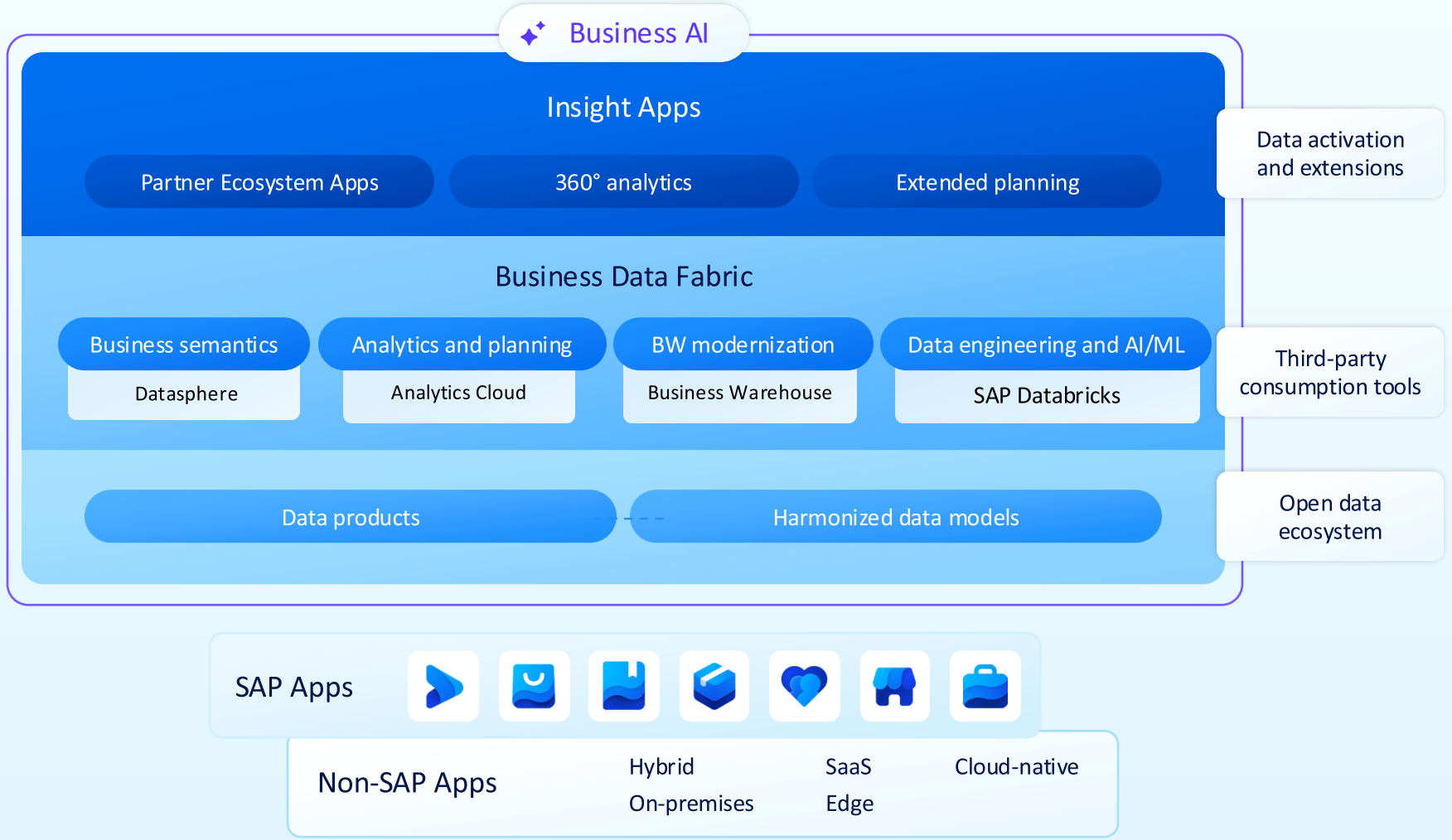
But. . .

SAP Business Data Cloud's comprehensive strategy for enterprise data

Delivering the Best TCO with a Clear Path Forward for all SAP Customers



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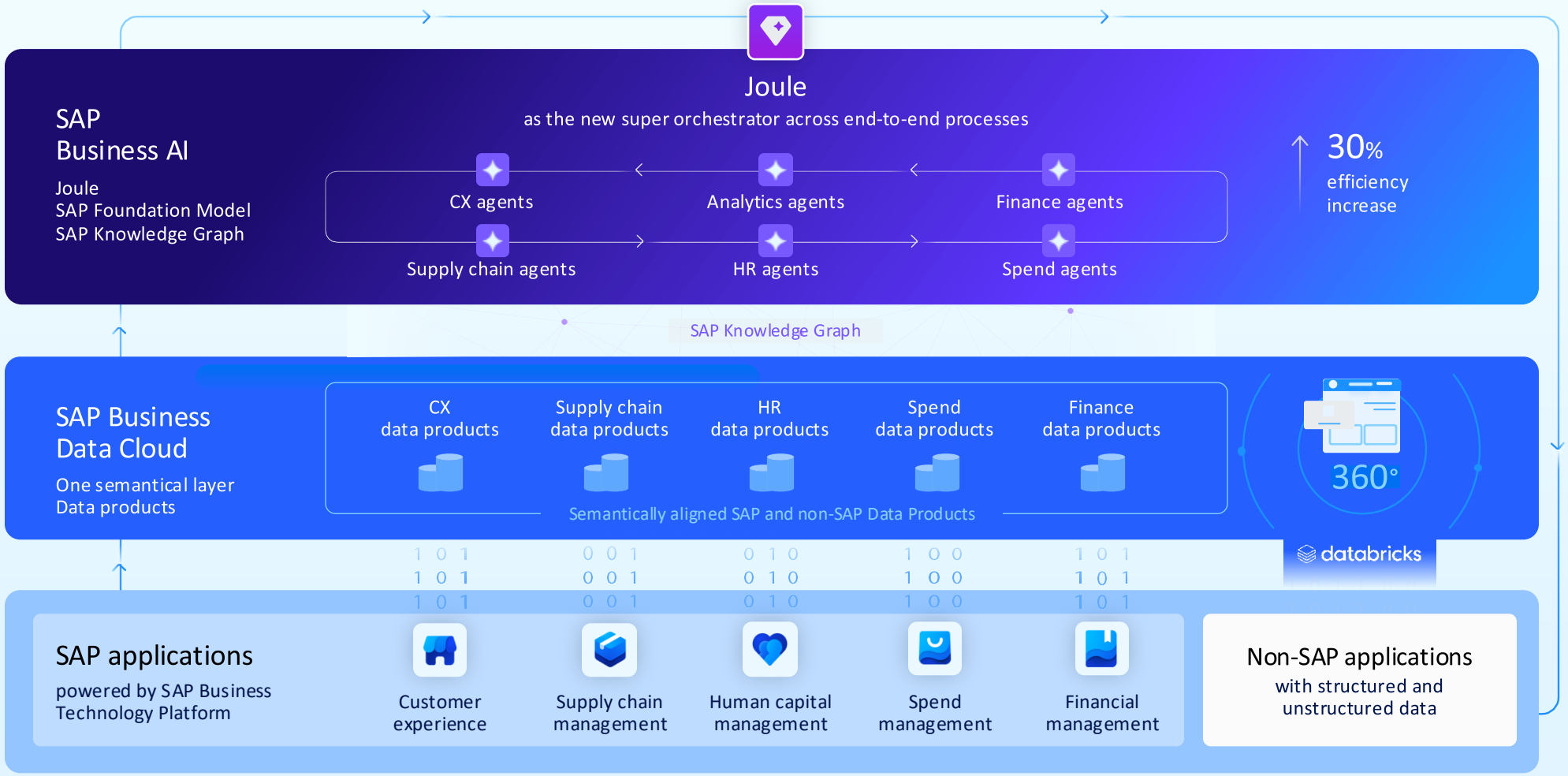
AI first and Suite first

SAP delivers market making innovation with SAP Business Suite



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Lightning Talk

Arissa Sato

People and Robots Laboratory,
UW–Madison

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INTEGRATE: Integrating Robots into the Future of Work

UWEBC Lightning Talk
May 1, 2025

Arissa Sato, Research Coordinator

INTEGRA Integrating Robots into the Future of Work") trains STEM duate students on the **technical** and **human-centered challenges** in the integration of robots into authentic work environments.

Our Vision of the Future of Work

Approaching technical challenges using advanced robotics, AI, and sensing technologies

Understanding human-centered challenges faced by stakeholders

Integrating Robots into the Future of Work requires…

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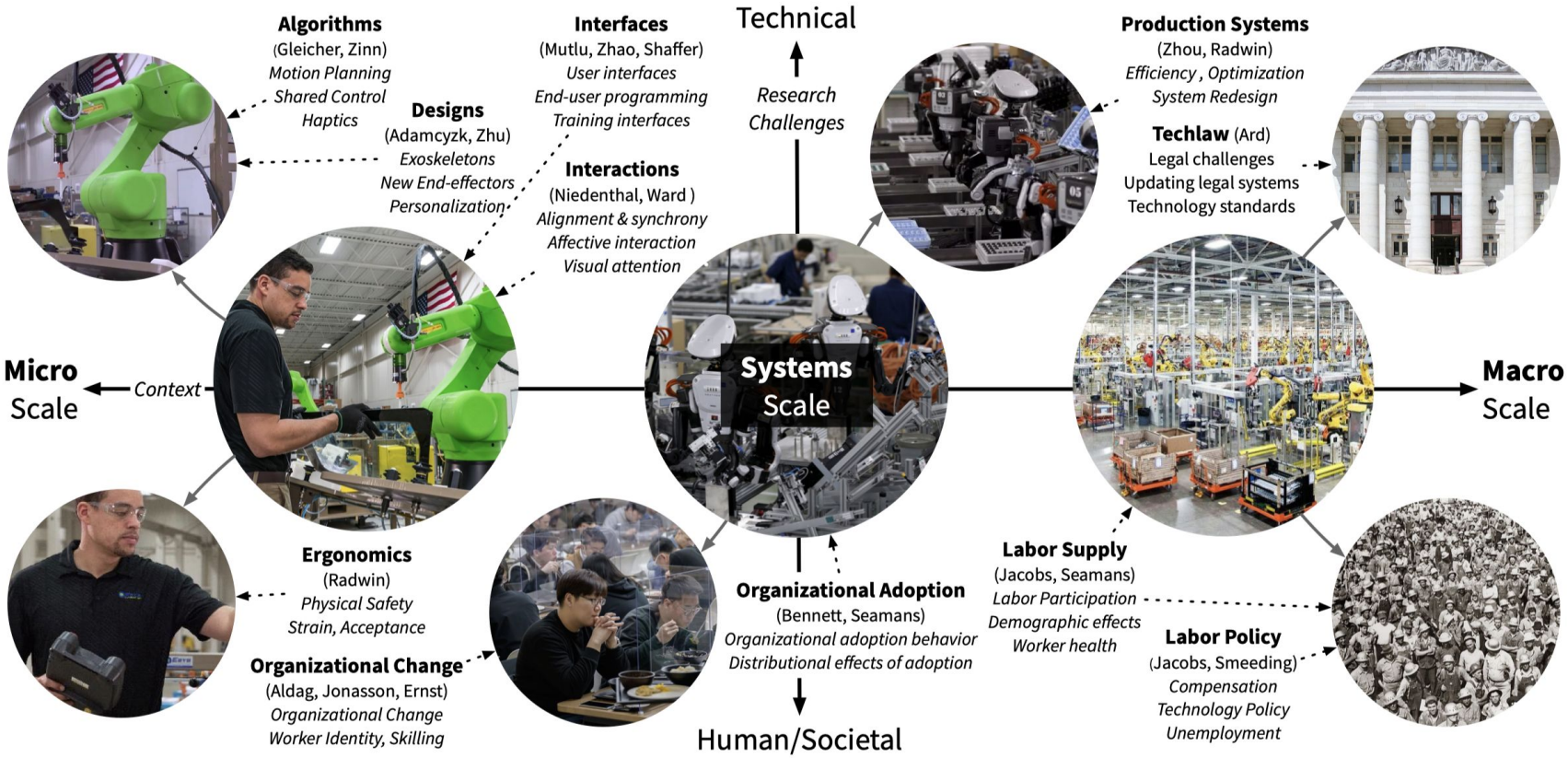
- **Technical advances** to create sufficiently capable robots
- **Advances in human-centric** challenges, e.g., how individuals interact with robots, how societies are affected by automation
- **Interdisciplinary teams** to effectively identify, design, develop, and operationalize
- **Collaboration with industry partners** to better understand authentic practices grounded in end user values

Research Challenges

INTEGRATE
An NSF Research Traineeship



Using a Human-centered Design Approach

Observation → Ideation → Prototyping → User Feedback → Iteration → Implementation

Human-Robot Interactions: Case Study Examples

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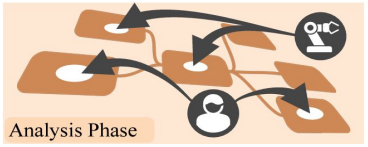
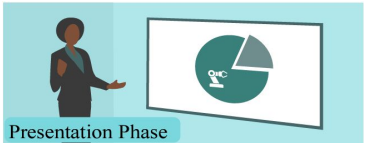
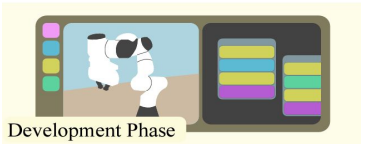
Making Informed Decisions
(Sullivan et al., 2024)

Designed by Freepik

Exploring Human-Robot Teaming
(Hagenow et al., 2024)







Investigating Robot Integration in Construction Environment
(on-going)

Human-Robot Interactions: Case Study Examples

INTEGRATE
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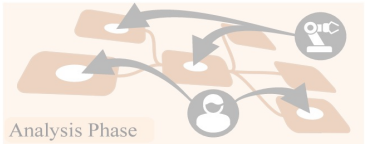

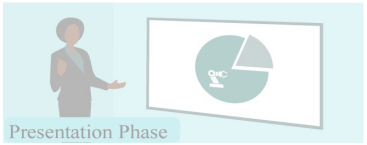

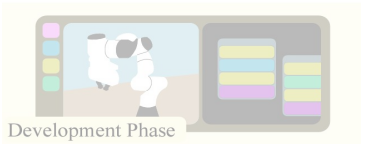

Investigating Robot Integration in Construction Environment
(on-going)

Ongoing INTEGRATE Projects

Findorff BUILDING & BEYOND

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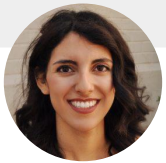
How **comfortable** are workers when working with construction robots?


Michelle Marji

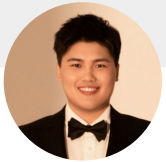
Mya Schroder

Christine Lee

Rob Spenceley

How can robots **adapt to human movement** in construction settings?

Carter Sifferman


Liqun Xu

Noah Schmidt

Aakash Yadav

Hunter McCormick

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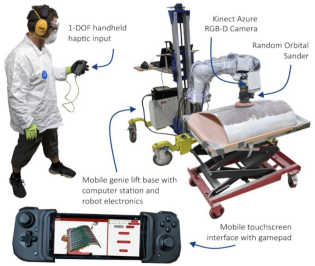
INTEGRATE:

Integrating Robotics into the Future of Work



Exploring Human-Robot Teaming
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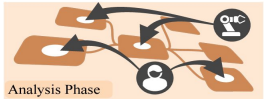

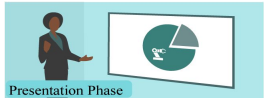

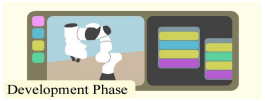

Investigating Robot Integration

Interested in collaborating? Please scan here!

Arissa Sato (asato@wisc.edu)
Research Coordinator

Lightning Talk

David Dwight

Erdman Center for Technology Strategy and Product Management, Wisconsin School of Business

UW E-BUSINESS CONSORTIUM
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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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Go far. Do well.

Lightning Talk: **Product Management**

David Dwight

Who I Am and Why I'm Here

David Dwight:

- 2nd year leading the Erdman Center for Operations and Technology Management
- >30 years industry experience
- MBA from Colorado-Boulder
  - Technology and Innovation Management
- BSME from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy, NY
- Born in Massachusetts and lived in MA, NJ, CO, NY, WI, SC, IN, PA, and WI again

Erdman Center:

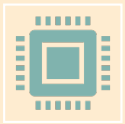
- Home of the Technology Strategy & Product Management (TSPM) MBA
- Curriculum Designed for Product Management

Segmentation and Targeting (aka why you are here)

Does Product Management Pertain to Me?

Software Tech (the software is the product)

Software Tech (the software is internal to value stream)



Tech-Powered Hard Goods (100% of them have a software, IOT, advanced manufacturing …)

YES, if you are in the business of technology powered products and services

Success is In the “Product Team”

Product Teams should be dedicated and durable

- Focused on Risks to: Value, Viability, Usability, and Feasibility
- Minimum three People but can be much larger
- Product designer, engineers, and the product manager

The product manager:
Responsible for the value and viability risk and is overall accountable for achieving the products outcomes.

The product designer:
Responsible for the usability risk and is overall accountable for the products experience—every interaction your user and customers have with the product.

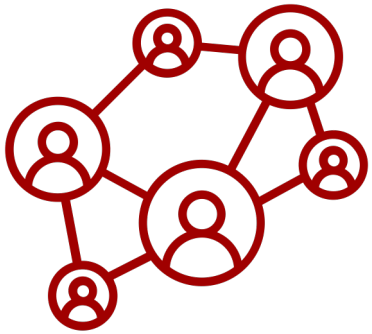
The engineer:
Responsible for the feasibility risk and his overall accountable for the products delivery.

“Team of missionaries not mercenaries” – John Doerr

Product Manager Leads the Product Team

Product Teams are:

- Unsung heroes **driving innovation and solutions**
- Aligned, manage requirements, **balance tradeoffs**
- Deeply understand **customers' & business needs**
- Orchestrate product **lifecycle**
- Navigate challenges, maintain user-focus
- **Blend** design, engineering, and business objectives



The Product Manager is the Chairperson

Product/Market Fit, Technical Feasibility, Business Needs

The Product Manager is the New GM

Product Management is distinct from other disciplines

LIKE A GM/CEO, THE PRODUCT MANAGER MUST DEEPLY UNDERSTAND ALL ASPECTS OF THE BUSINESS

WINNING SOLUTIONS DON'T JUST COME FROM USERS, CUSTOMERS OR SALES

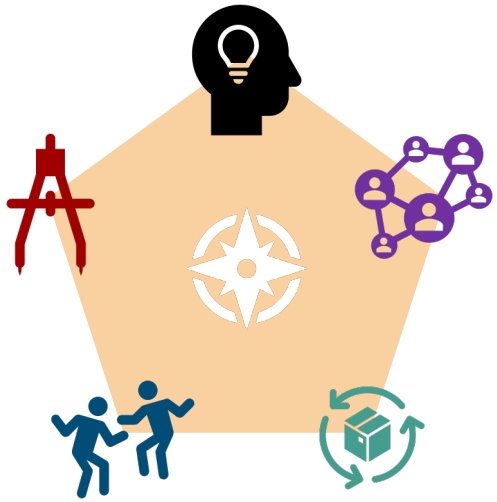
GREAT PRODUCTS REQUIRE A COMPREHENSIVE LIFECYCLE APPROACH AND CLOSE COLLABORATION ACROSS DESIGN, ENGINEERING, MARKETING, AND OPERATIONS TEAMS:

IDEATION, DEVELOPMENT, LAUNCH, ADOPTION, AND RETIREMENT – FOCUSED ON CUSTOMERS AND OUR BUSINESS.

TRUE LEADERSHIP IS A BIG PART OF WHAT SEPARATES THE GREAT PRODUCT PEOPLE FROM THE MERELY GOOD ONES.

Product Managers are NOT Project Managers with Business Acumen

The Product Manager isn't a Job it's a Career



Evolution of General Management Model

Product Visionaries

- Focused on Customers
- Delivering Business Needs
- Missionaries Not Mercenaries

Cross Functional

Leadership by Influence

Diminished Focus on Projects

Focus on Products that Meet Customer Needs and Business Objectives

Diminished Focus on Planning

Focus on Performance, Vision, and Agility for the Lifespan

This is the Journey we will foster with the Product SIG at UW-EBC

David Dwight

Learn More about The Erdman Center and the Technology Strategy & Product Management MBA

Follow Us on the Erdman Center LinkedIn Page

Erdman Center Web Page

TSPM MBA Program Web Page

Learn More About Us

Lightning Talk

Jelena Diakonikolas

School of Computer, Data & Information Sciences (CDIS), UW-Madison

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Optimization Theory and Algorithms for Machine Learning

Jelena Diakonikolas (Computer Sciences, UW-Madison)

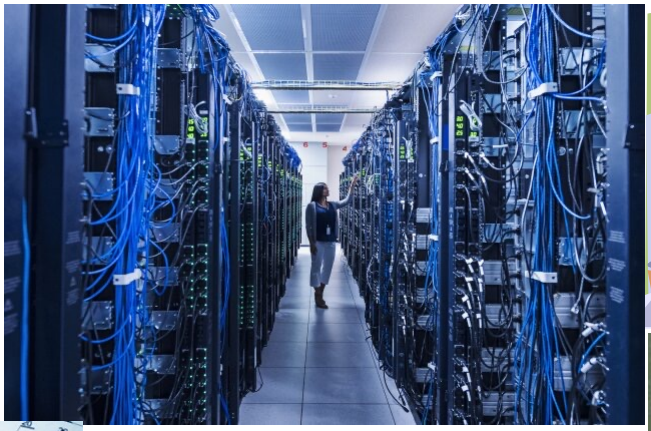
Wisconsin Digital Symposium, May 2025

objective function
(loss/cost/model misfit)

$$\min_{x \in \mathcal{X}} f(x)$$

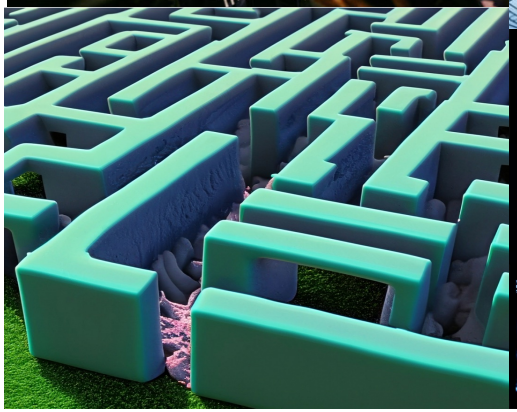
feasible set
(encoding "meaningful" solutions,
typically in a high-dimensional space)

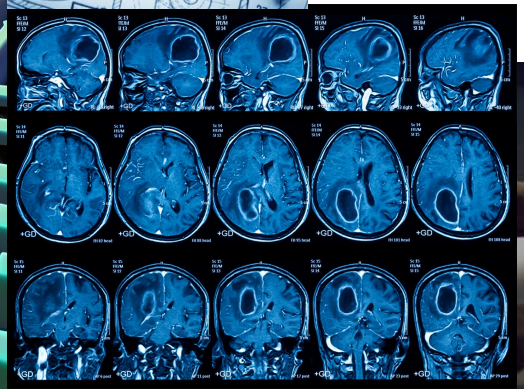
GOOG -0.23%
NASDAQ:AAPL +1.36%
NASDAQ:MSFT +1.54%
3%
2%
1%
0%
-1%
-2%
-3%

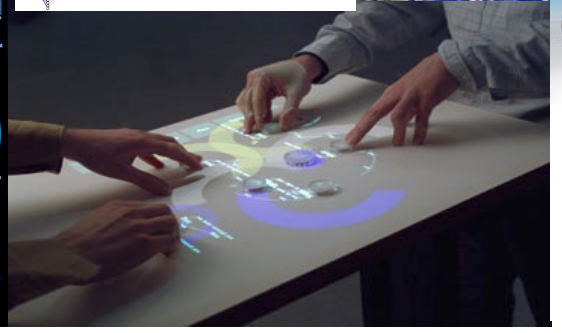


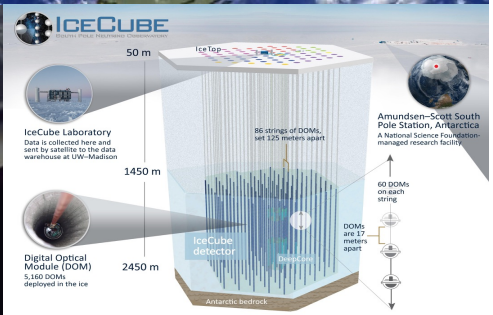
$$\min_{x \in X} f(x)$$

Houston
Galveston
New Orleans
Mobile
Panama City
Tampa
Brownsville
Tampico
Merida
Cancun
Havana
THE WEATHER CHANNEL

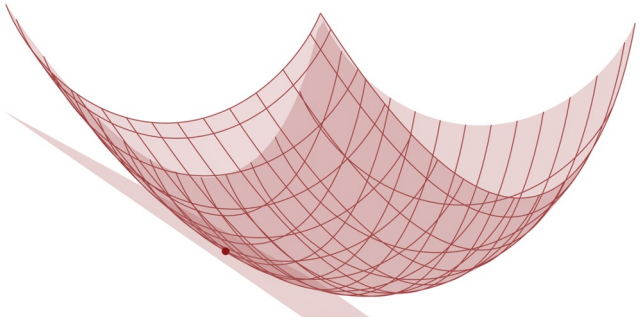


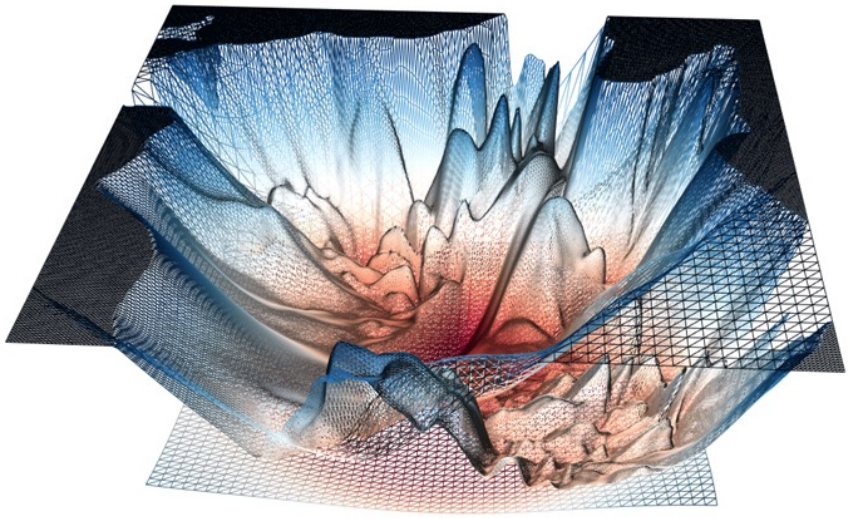




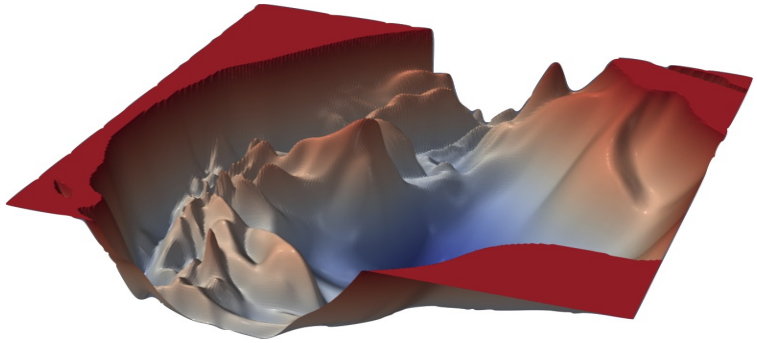

ICECUBE
50 m
IceCube Laboratory
Data is collected here and sent by satellite to the data warehouse at UW–Madison
1450 m
Digital Optical Module (DOM)
5,160 DOMs deployed in the ice
2450 m
IceCube detector
Amundsen–Scott South Pole Station, Antarctica
A National Science Foundation-managed research facility
60 DOMs on each string
Antarctic bedrock

Some problems are easy…





…but some problems are really hard!



Optimization Questions I Study

What kind of optimization problems are "easy" or "hard"?

What kind of algorithms are the "right" ones to use?

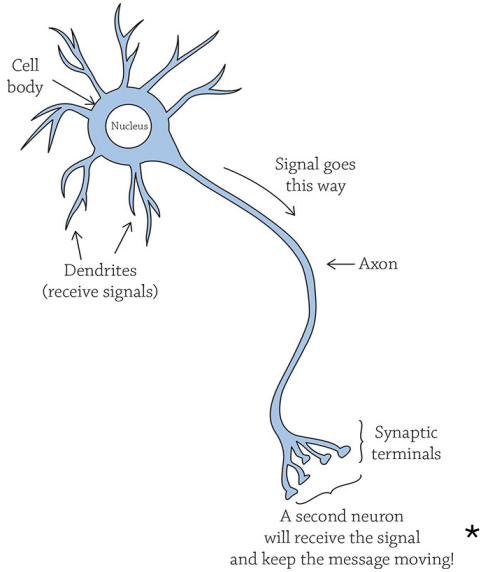
How data/computation efficient are those algorithms?

Are they robust to noise/errors?

A "Simple" Example

Learning a Single Neuron

Learning a Neuron (One Hidden-Layer Neural Network)



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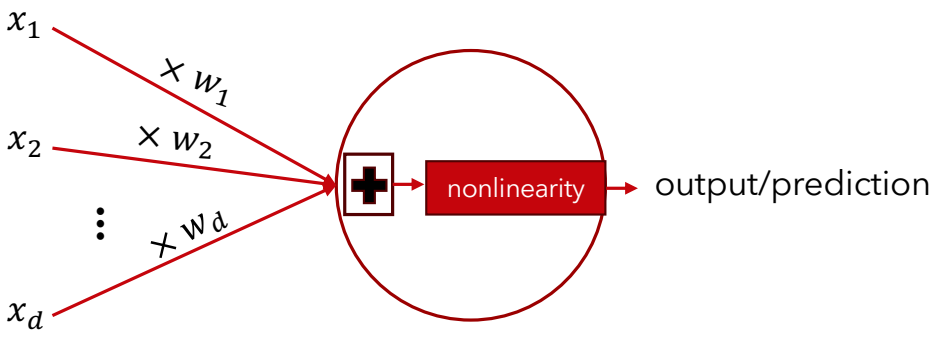


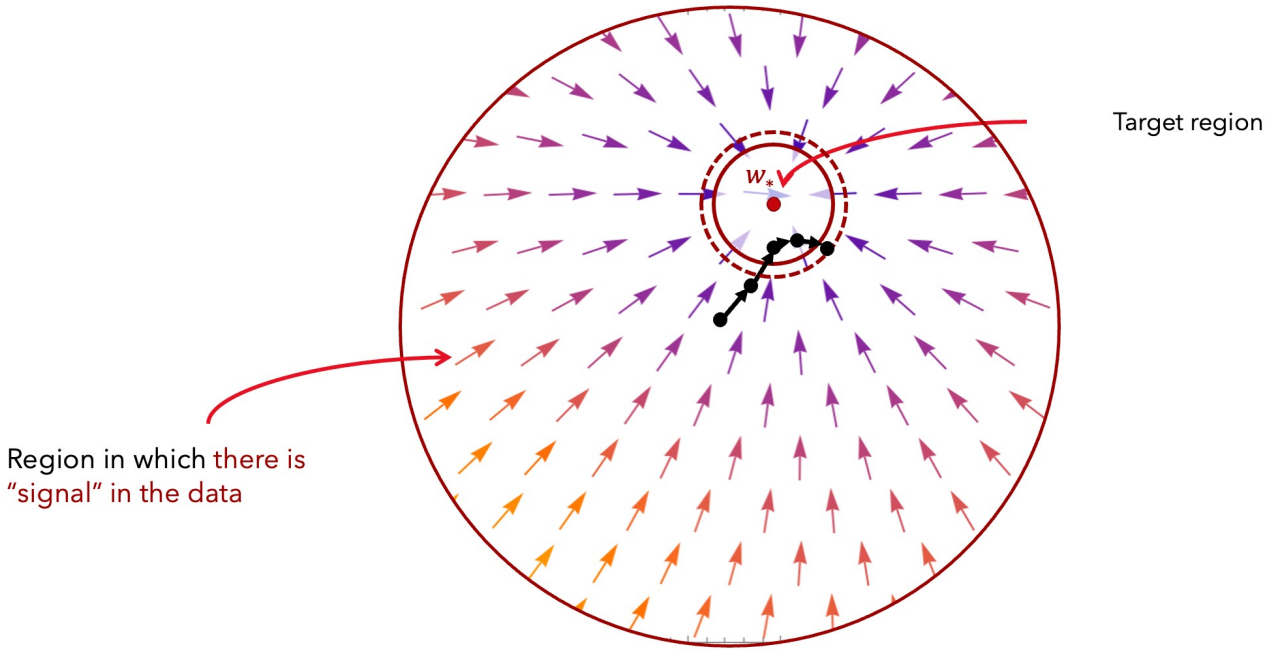
We train huge neural networks, with many neurons, every day.

But strong impossibility results telling us we cannot learn such models in general. What's the deal?

*image credit: https://erenow.org/exams/must-know-high-school-biology-2nd-edition/27.php

Problems We Tend to Solve are NOT Worst-Case

- Data is not arbitrary; it is structured
- What does that tell us about mathematical structures? What are the implications on algorithm design and analysis?



Impact on Education

How to prepare the next generation of researchers?

Removing Barriers to Entry

- Lots of advanced mathematics behind the theory of machine learning
- Too many math courses required to catch up

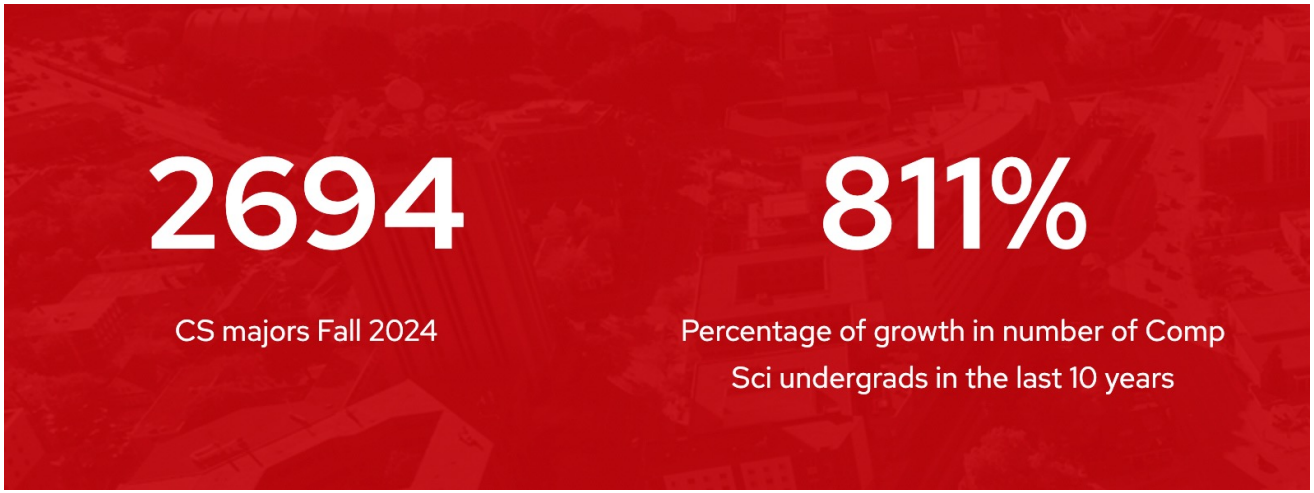
New course: CS 541: Theory & Algorithms for Data Science

Students learn about things like:

- Why can we learn from data? What makes is predictable?
- What is crazy about high dimensions? ("mass" concentrates on the surface, exponentially many vectors can be "near-orthogonal")
- How much data do we need to solve learning problems?

How to Get Involved?

An unmet demand for research and applied projects



# of core faculty?

~50

*from https://www.cs.wisc.edu/

→ Lots of unmet demand for research and "real" projects

Wisconsin Science and Computing Emerging Research Stars (WISCERS)

A research-focused mentorship program for undergraduate students

https://wiscers.cs.wisc.edu/

Get in Touch

jelena@cs.wisc.edu

https://www.jelena-diakonikolas.com/

Thank you!

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