

# How Tech Communicators Can Help Businesses



# An Origin Story with a Point

- Worked in tech since 2001
- Started in engineering roles, moved into project and then product management, and found my home in marketing in 2008
- From 2005 to 2017, helped Sandvine extend into new customer verticals, expand into every global market, and grow into the industry leader before being acquired
- Through experience, conversations with other marketers, and extensive research, I recognized some major challenges facing today's B2B companies:
  - The start-up to scale-up marketing gap
  - A shortage of strategic technical marketers
  - The painful reality of slow execution
  - The digital dilemma
  - Fractured, inconsistent messaging

**Talking\* about technology is hard.**

# What Companies\* Do

## Shout about their products and technologies

- Using their own proprietary language (e.g., product names, problem terminology, etc.)
- While assuming that everyone outside the building already knows what the products do and which company builds them, and has typed either the product name or the company name into Google (i.e., organic search)...
- Or while overpaying for paid search campaigns that direct people straight to the product material

### Content

Publish a product datasheet detailing speeds, feeds, and other low-level stuff; expect customers to do the work of connecting the dots

### Thought Leadership

Release a thin, transparent veil around “*We think our product is amazing, and you should, too!*”, usually in the form of a stat or self-aggrandizing ‘commentary’; expect that people care by default

### Public Relations

Announce new product, which tautologically proves amazingness; assume that this news is interesting to people outside the building

# What Frequently Happens

Companies shout about their products and technologies

- Using their own proprietary language (e.g., product names,

Content

Publishes a product datasheet detailing speeds, feeds, and other low-level stuff, expecting customers to do the work of connecting the dots

**Notice the assumption that everyone outside the building knows as much about your stuff as you do.**

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- Or while overpaying for paid search campaigns that direct people straight to the product material

Public Relations

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# Fact: Companies Have Many Audiences

<b>Customers</b>	
<b>Partners</b>	
<b>Employees</b>	
<b>Investors</b>	
<b>Analysts</b>	
<b>Media</b>	

# Fact: Different Audiences Have Different Needs

Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Can you solve my problem?</b></li><li>• How do you solve it?</li><li>• What makes your solution better?</li><li>• How about all these non-functional considerations?</li></ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Can you help us sell more of our stuff?</b></li><li>• How (e.g., by filling a gap, by extending our reach, etc.)?</li><li>• What makes your solution better?</li></ul>
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Why should I work for you?</b></li><li>• What kinds of things do you build?</li><li>• What makes them interesting?</li><li>• What will I learn?</li></ul>
Investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Will investing in you provide a great return?</b></li><li>• What markets are you targeting?</li><li>• Why will you succeed?</li><li>• What makes your solution better?</li></ul>
Analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Where do you fit in my artificially limited model of the world?</b></li><li>• How are you different than your competitors on criterion X, criterion Y, etc.?</li></ul>
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Is your story interesting enough to capture eyeballs?</b></li><li>• What makes your story interesting?</li></ul>

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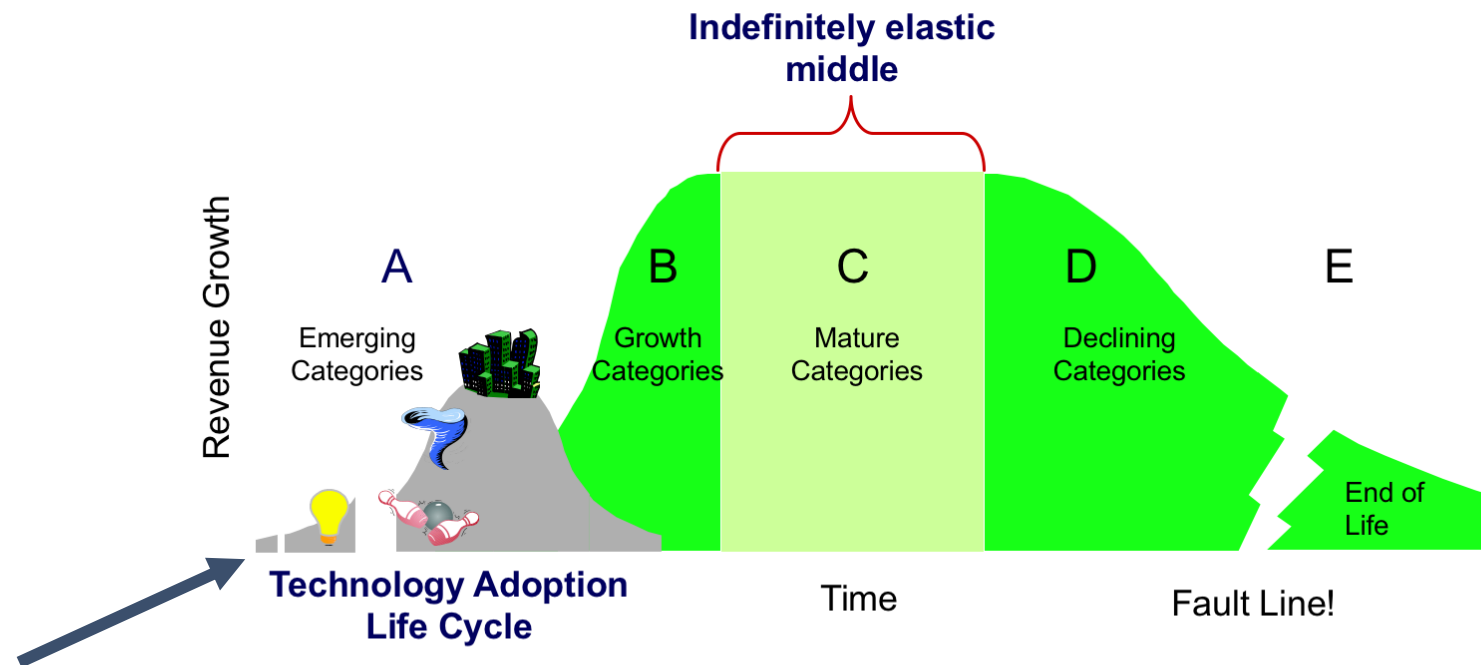
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**Note: none of them asked, “*Can you please yell in my face about your product and/or technology?*”**

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# Let's Acknowledge an Exception

There's (at least) one audience who knows enough about the subject to use your product and/or technology as the starting point.



From Geoffrey Moore's [Escape Velocity - Illustrations](#) resource

**The Innovators** → An important segment of the technology adoption life cycle.

# Who or what is **CROMULENT MARKETING**?

A boutique marketing agency specializing in crafting messaging, creating content, and managing public relations for B2B technology companies.



## Messaging

Tell your story and quickly convey valuable information about your company, solutions, products, technologies, and other important elements



## Content

Gain an edge over the competition by satisfying your customers' information needs with rich content tailored to each stage of your sales cycle



## Public Relations

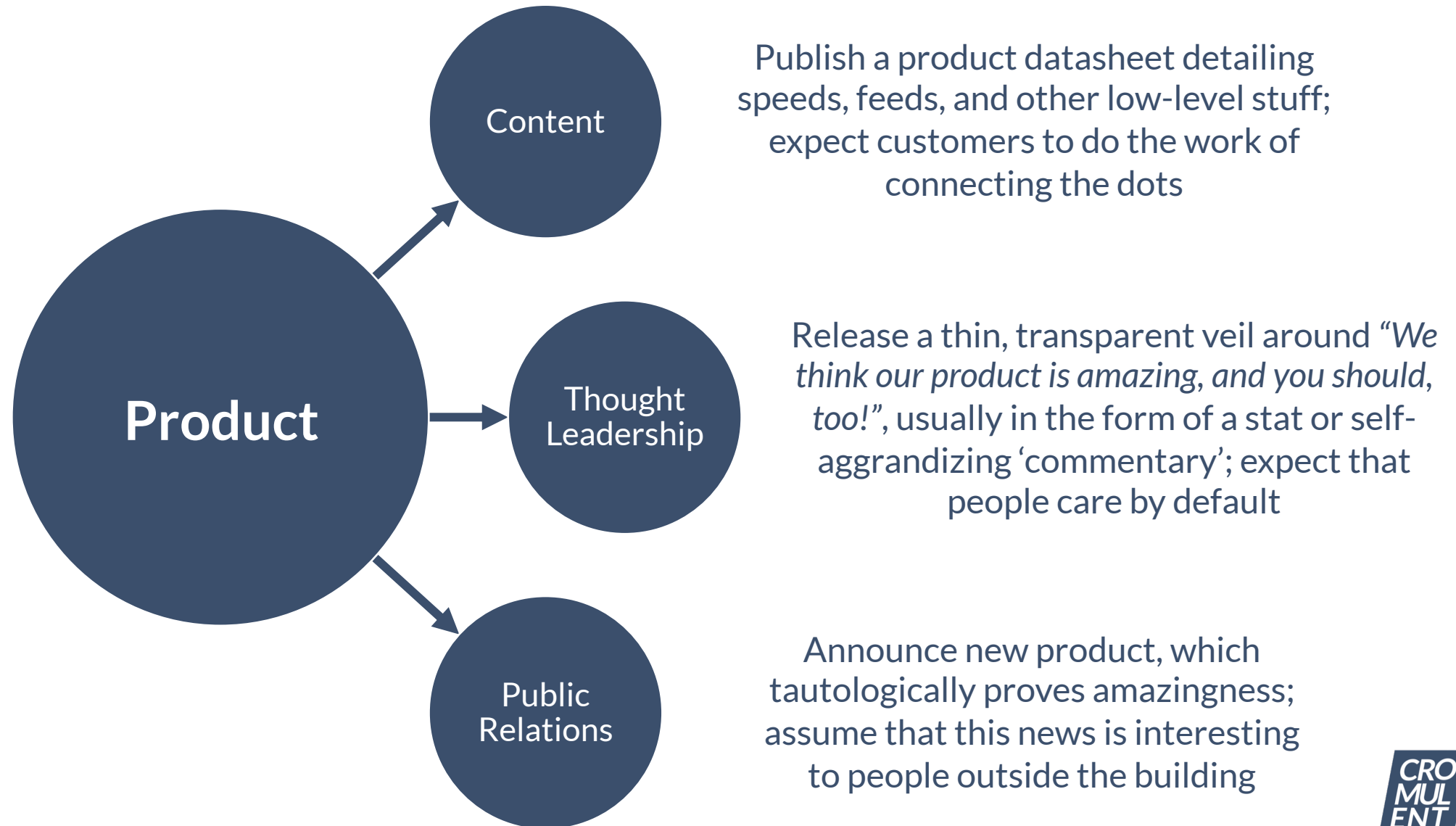
Create and control conversations by telling your story, your way, in pursuit of your organization's long-term objectives



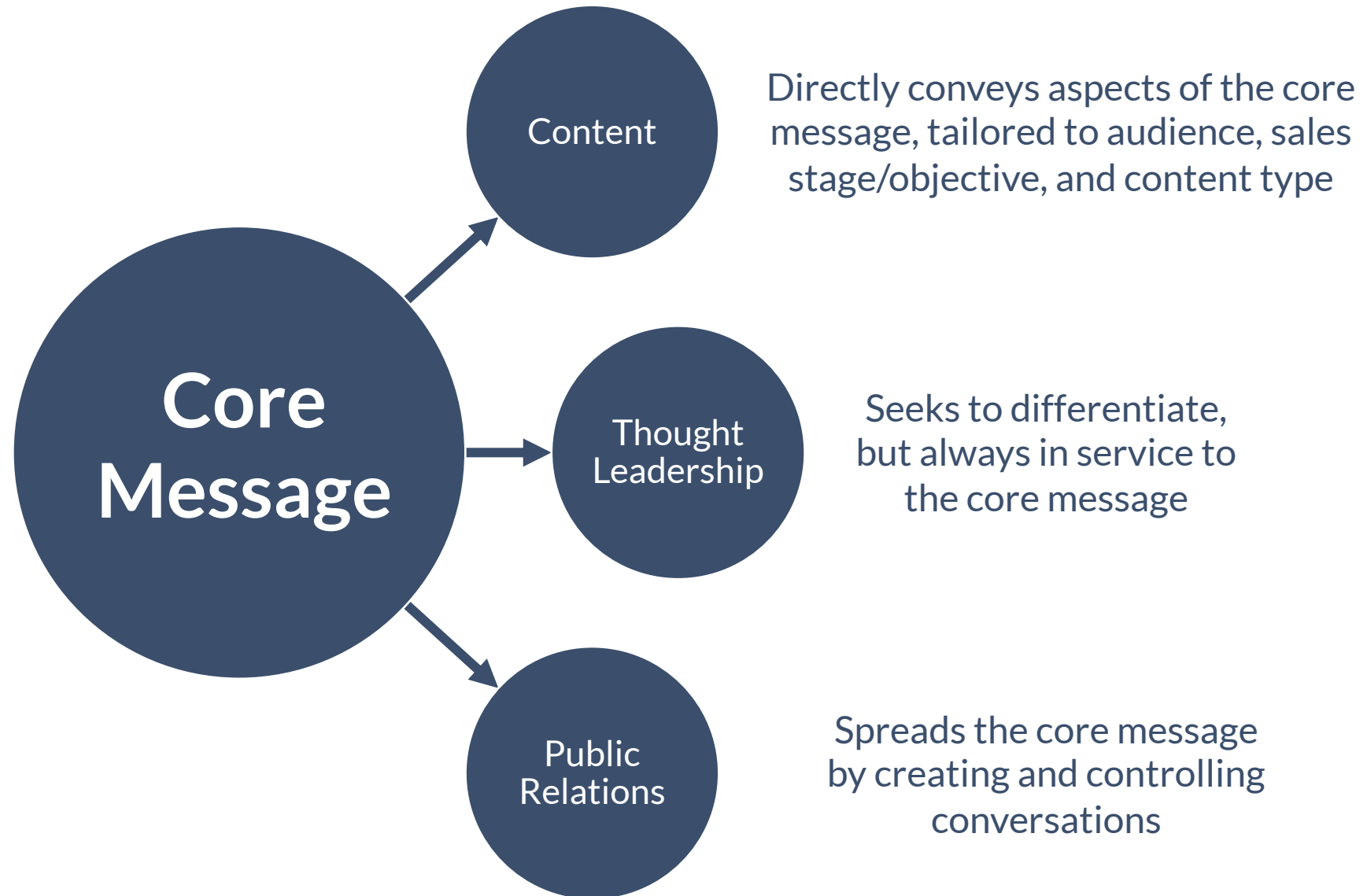
## Thought Leadership

Stand out from the crowd by establishing and demonstrating your authority within a narrow area of expertise or across the entire spectrum of a domain

# What Companies Do



# What Should Happen



# What is the Core Message?

Your core message is crafted to appeal to different audiences to achieve different results, and your outbound marketing efforts exist to serve and to spread your core message.

Different types of content and different activities support different goals by communicating slightly different pieces of your core message.

Different audiences receive slightly different aspects of your core message.

Your core message must answer perhaps the most important question in business:

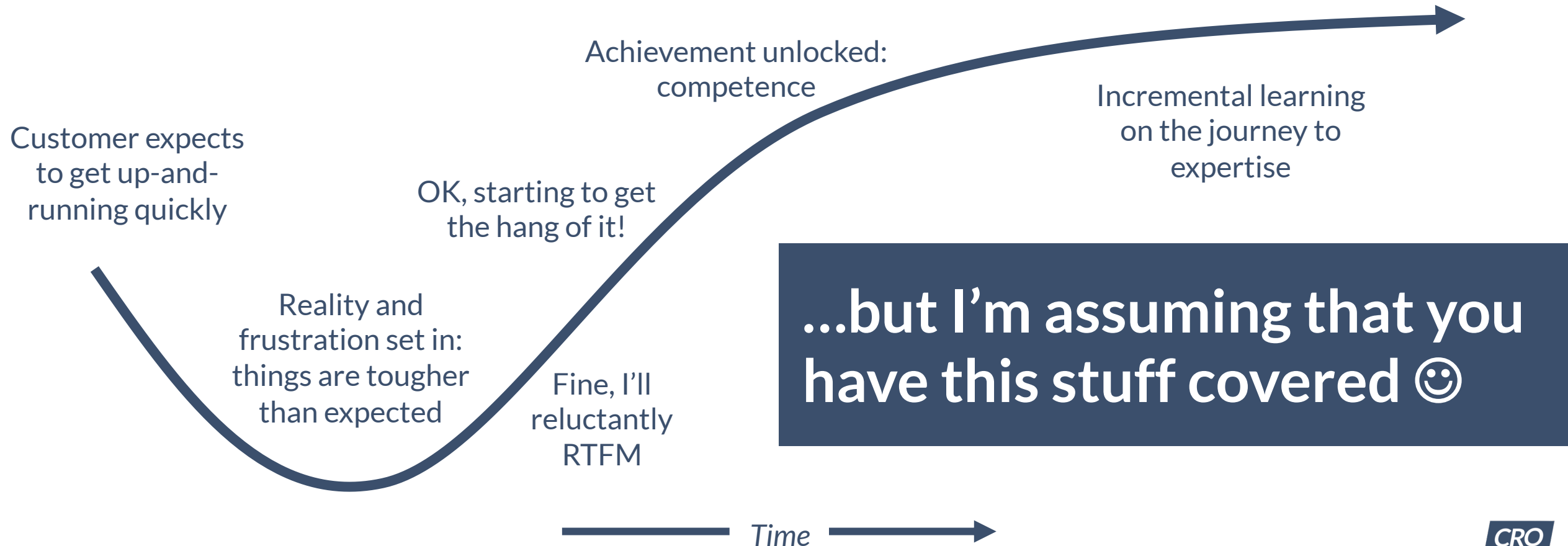
**“Why should I choose you?”**

**As we’ll see, talking\* about technology often plays a role, and often causes problems.**



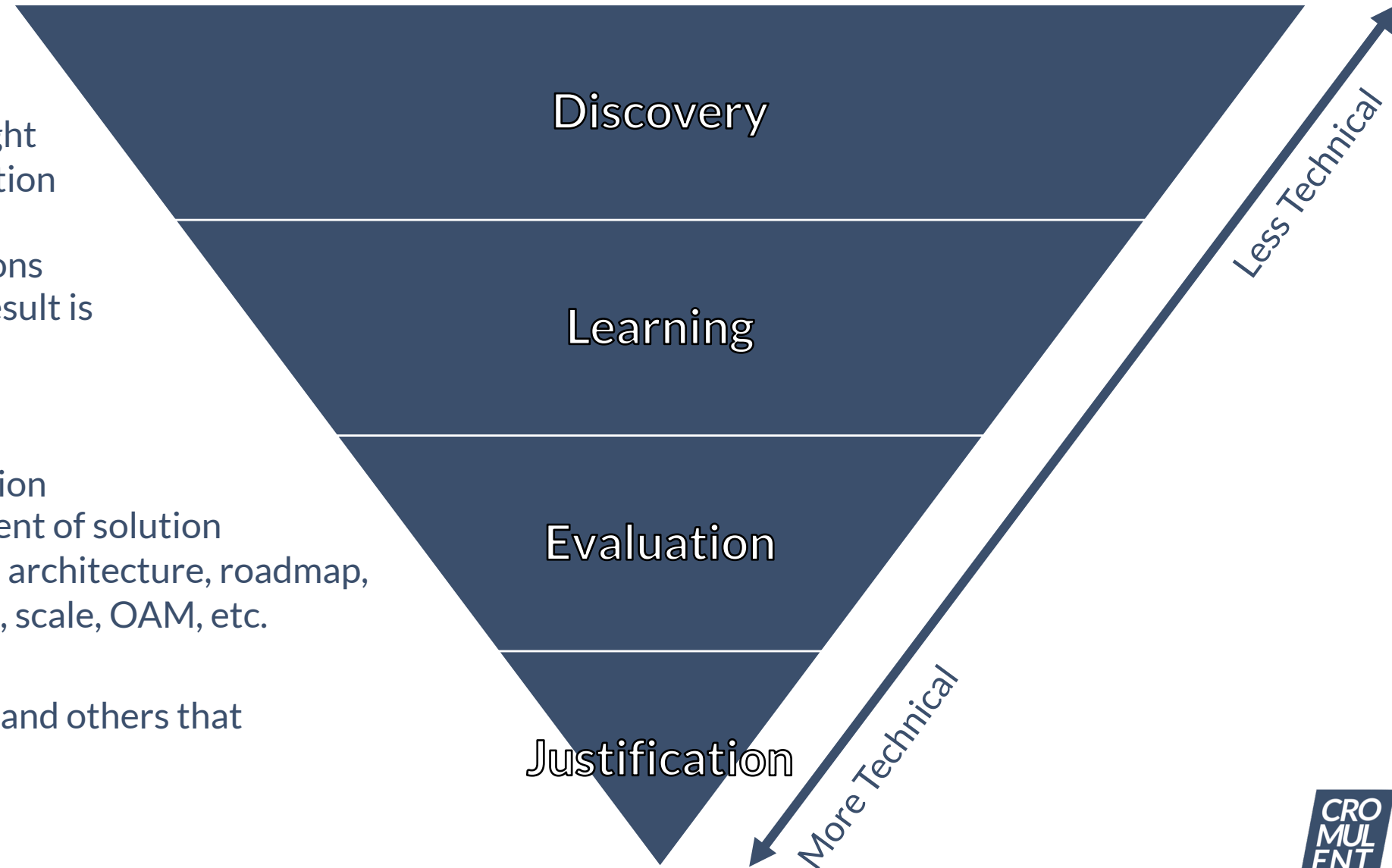
Let's look at a customer's buying journey...

# What happens after the purchase?



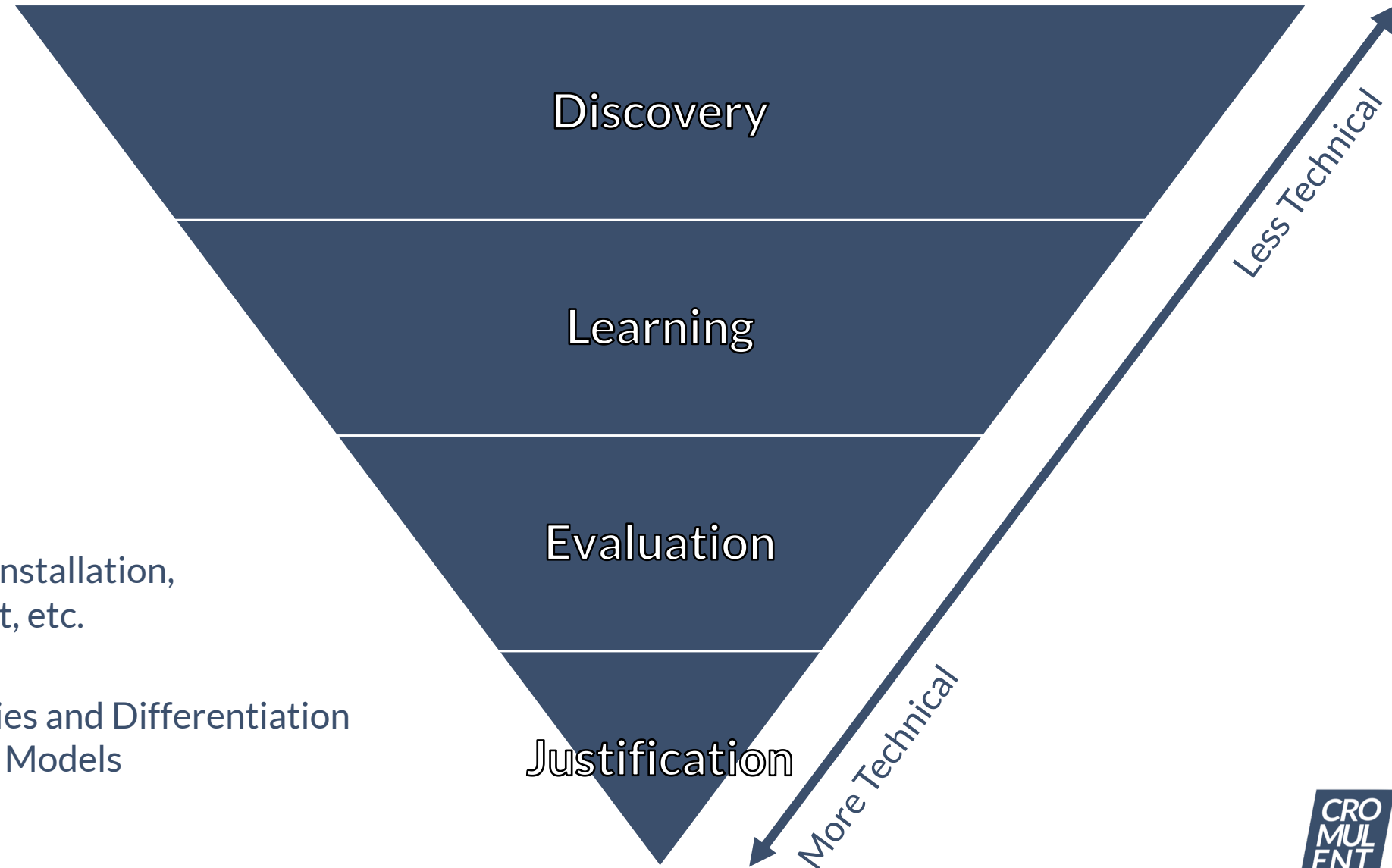
# The Buyer's Journey

- Potential user looking for a solution to a problem
- Knows the problem well, might have a notion about the solution
- Investigates potential solutions
- Starts to look into *how* the result is achieved, and *by what*
- Technical evaluation of solution
- Business case / ROI assessment of solution
- Assessment of other factors: architecture, roadmap, interoperability, deployment, scale, OAM, etc.
- Tries to prove to themselves and others that this solution is the “best”



# Different Content for Different Needs

- Market Problems
- Industry Issues
- Solutions and Use Cases
- Reference Customers
- Use Cases
- Success Stories
- Products and Features
- Proprietary Technologies
- Architecture
- Roadmap
- Interoperability, Scalability, Installation, Operations and Management, etc.
- (Deep) Technology Capabilities and Differentiation
- Return-on-Investment (ROI) Models
- Roadmap



# Different Buying Roles/Audiences

Economic	Technical	Functional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Owns the budget</li><li>• Might not know anything about the problem, potential solutions, or other factors</li><li>• Will (might) listen to other evaluators</li><li>• Under pressure from procurement to keep costs low</li><li>• Given any real choice, will always go for the cheapest option (i.e., strongly in favour of “good enough”)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compliance</li><li>• Assesses how a solution fits with a longer-term technical strategy</li><li>• Concerned about deployment and installation, interoperability, alarming, support, etc.</li><li>• Might not know much about the specific problem or the proposed solutions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Either feels the problem directly or has been tasked by someone else to solve the problem</li><li>• Cares more than anyone else about the problem and solution</li><li>• Probably has a reasonable grasp of the problem, but might overestimate expertise</li><li>• Probably has an idea about potential solutions, but very likely overestimates expertise</li></ul>

# Different Buying Roles/Audiences

Economic	Technical	Functional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Owns the budget</li><li>• Might not know anything</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compliance</li><li>• Assesses how a solution fits</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Either feels the problem directly or has been tasked by</li></ul>

**In small organizations, all three roles/audiences might be the same person.**

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# Audiences and Resources: A Partial Guide

Resource	Economic	Technical	Functional
Market Problems	Cares		
Industry Issues	Cares		
Solutions and Use Cases			Really Cares
Success Stories			Cares
Products and Features			Really Cares
Proprietary Technologies		Might Care	Cares
Architecture		Cares	Somewhat Cares
Roadmap		Cares	Cares
Interoperability, OAM, installation, etc.		Really Cares	Might Care
ROI Models	Really Cares		
Deep Technology Capabilities Differentiation		Might Care	Cares

# Recall the Problem...

Many companies – especially tech companies – love talking\* about their products, features, and technologies.

But the problem is that no one\* hears, because people are looking for solutions to problems.

You need to earn the opportunity to have the product conversation.

How do you do that?

By addressing sequential needs with different pieces of content, all the while conveying your core message to answer that all-important question.



# Addressing Sequential Needs

I want to...

So I need...

# Addressing Sequential Needs

I want to...	So I need...
...Stay on top of what's happening in the industry.	Industry material
...Learn about issues facing my market.	Market problems
...Find solutions to this urgent, expensive problem.	Solutions and use cases
...Validate that you're not full o'crap.	Success stories and case studies
...Learn how you actually solve the problem.	Product and feature guides
...Find out what, if anything, makes you special.	Introductory technology summaries
...Figure out if it's worth it.	ROI calculators
...Make sure I'm not buying a dead product.	Roadmap
...Find out if it'll work with my other systems.	APIs, installation, OAM, etc.
...Justify my decision.	Deep technical expositions
...Learn how to use the product I just bought.	User guides, tutorials, videos, etc.

# Addressing Sequential Needs

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**These are all ~~problems~~ of opportunities for communication**

...Find out what, if anything, makes you special.	Introductory technology summaries
...Figure out if it's worth it.	ROI calculators
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# Bridging the Gaps: The Basics

- **Solution Overviews** and associated **Use Case Guides** that demonstrate clearly what market problems you solve
- **Product Overviews** and deeper **Product Guides** that provide detailed information about how you solve market problems
- **Platform Overviews** and deeper **Platform Guides** that often take a more technical approach and address things like standards, interoperability, deployment models, scalability, and other specifications
- **Technology Briefs** that shine a spotlight on a particularly important piece of your solution
- **Success Stories** that provide evidence of your ability to solve problems in the real-world

**Without these basics, companies miss out on opportunities.**

**Moreover, when luck strikes and an opportunity arises, companies spin their wheels manually answering the same questions over and over (harming scale), while customers grow frustrated that they can't self-serve or otherwise quickly get answers to basic inquiries.**

# Bridging the Gaps: Specialty Content

- **Blog Content:** for many companies – especially those relying on self-service discovery and purchase – blogs are a crucial element of an effective content strategy because they let you quickly grow a content library through commentary, updates, news, tidbits, tips and tricks, and much more
- **Whitepapers:** material that explores a problem or subject in general, in a very academic and objective manner, usually to build awareness and credibility in a domain
- **Technical Showcases:** material that explores your technological solution in detail, ideally relating it to considerations or requirements explicated in a related whitepaper
- **Case Studies:** deeper versions of the relatively lightweight Success Stories, that might include data analysis, ROI calculations, technical diagrams, etc.
- **Position Papers:** documents and presentations that explain your company's position regarding some matter of importance (e.g., government regulation, a controversial or misunderstood industry subject, an over- or under-hyped new technology, etc.)

Your company probably thinks your company is pretty awesome, but that doesn't matter.  
What matters is what others think.

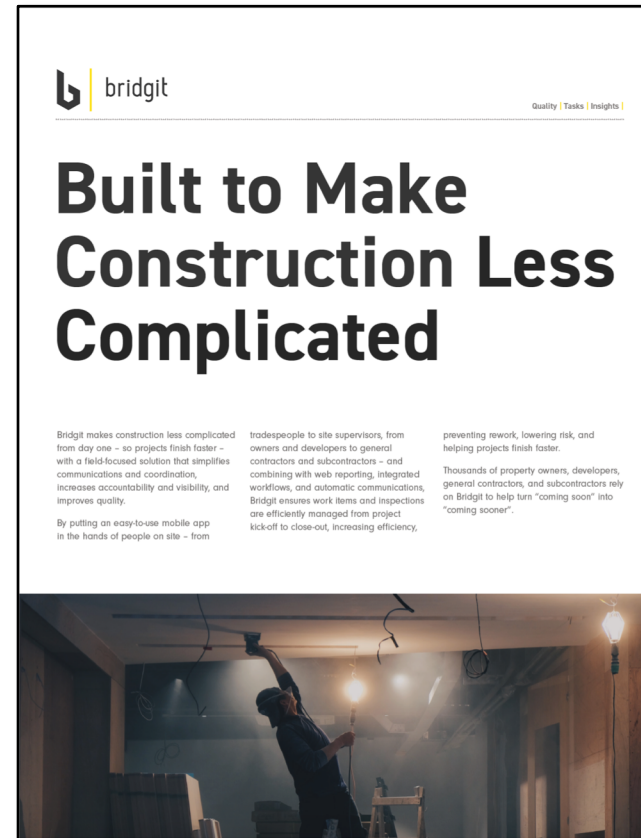
Specialty content like these examples, and others including research programs, elevate your company in the eyes of potential customers (and other audiences) and fill vital gaps.

Let's look at some examples...

# Product Overview Brochure



- Explains what Bridgit's products do
- Not especially technical, but still needs to relate features to real-world customer problems
  - Features are described in everyday language
  - More *what* or *why* than *how*
  - Tip: every time you write a feature description, ask yourself, "So what?"
- Debuted the **Making Construction Less Complicated** messaging



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2018-10-18

WW

Bridgit | Solutions

## Insights

03

Quality | Tasks | Insights |

### Features

**Task Status Report:** Always know what's going on, with a clear report showing the overall project status

**Open Task Aging Report:** Identify bottlenecks and other potential issues by looking at the age of open tasks; filter by company to further diagnose issues or spot high performers you'll want to bring to your next project

**Company Task Breakdown Report:** See which companies have what tasks outstanding; ensure things are moving in the right direction or quickly identify potential problems by using the web app to compare to the previous week

**Quality Insights Report (with Bridgit Quality):** Monitor project quality with two actionable reports:

- Inspection Breakdown Report: track overall progress by monitoring each Inspection Type (e.g., concrete pour, plumbing, electrical, drywall, finishing, etc.); assess work quality by tracking how many issues were discovered in each Inspection Type
- Inspection Progress by Location: track progress by location (e.g., floor-to-floor, building-to-building) to determine when to schedule trades

**Download Reports:** Download reports (in PDF) to share with stakeholders

**Historical Reports:** Explore past reports to better understand status, progress, and potential emerging issues

Bridgit Insights is all about keeping you up-to-date with project information.

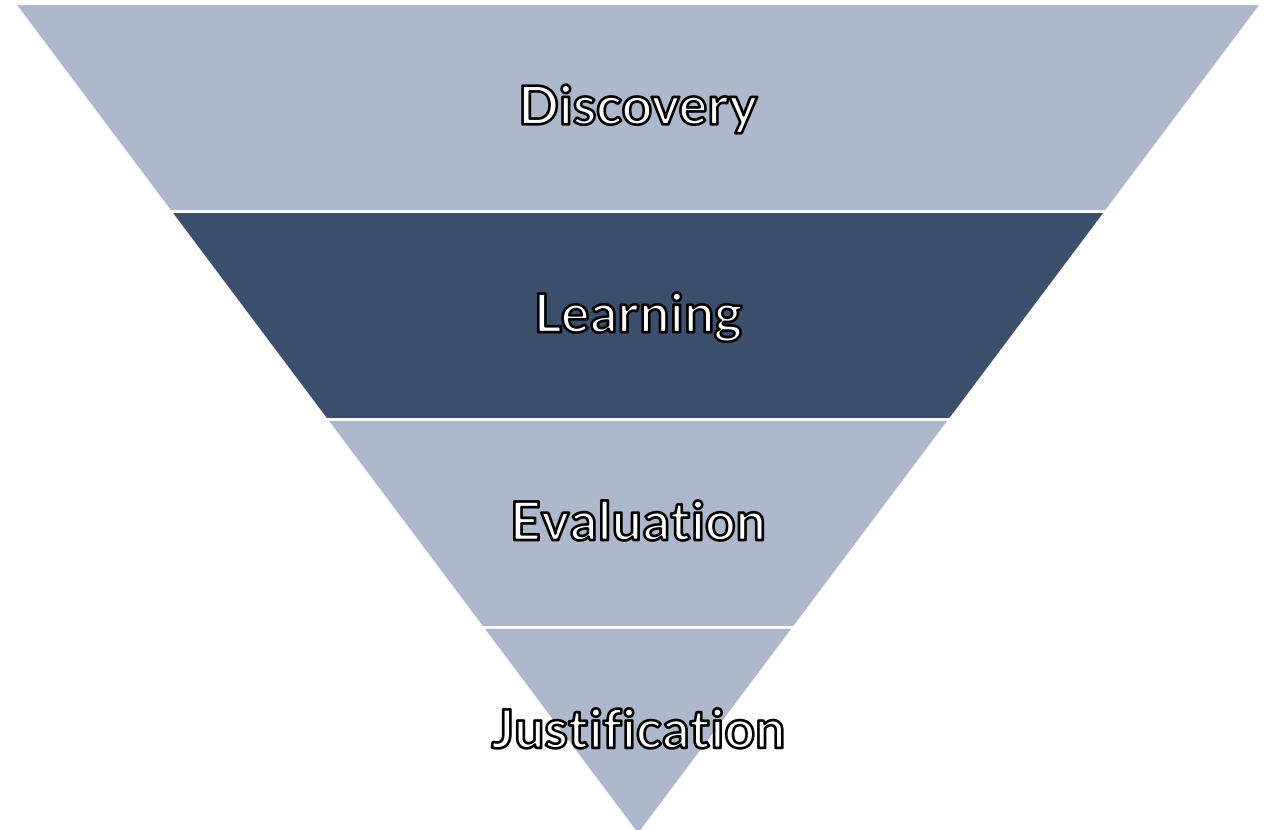
Stay informed - anytime, anywhere, on any device.



# Product Overview Brochure



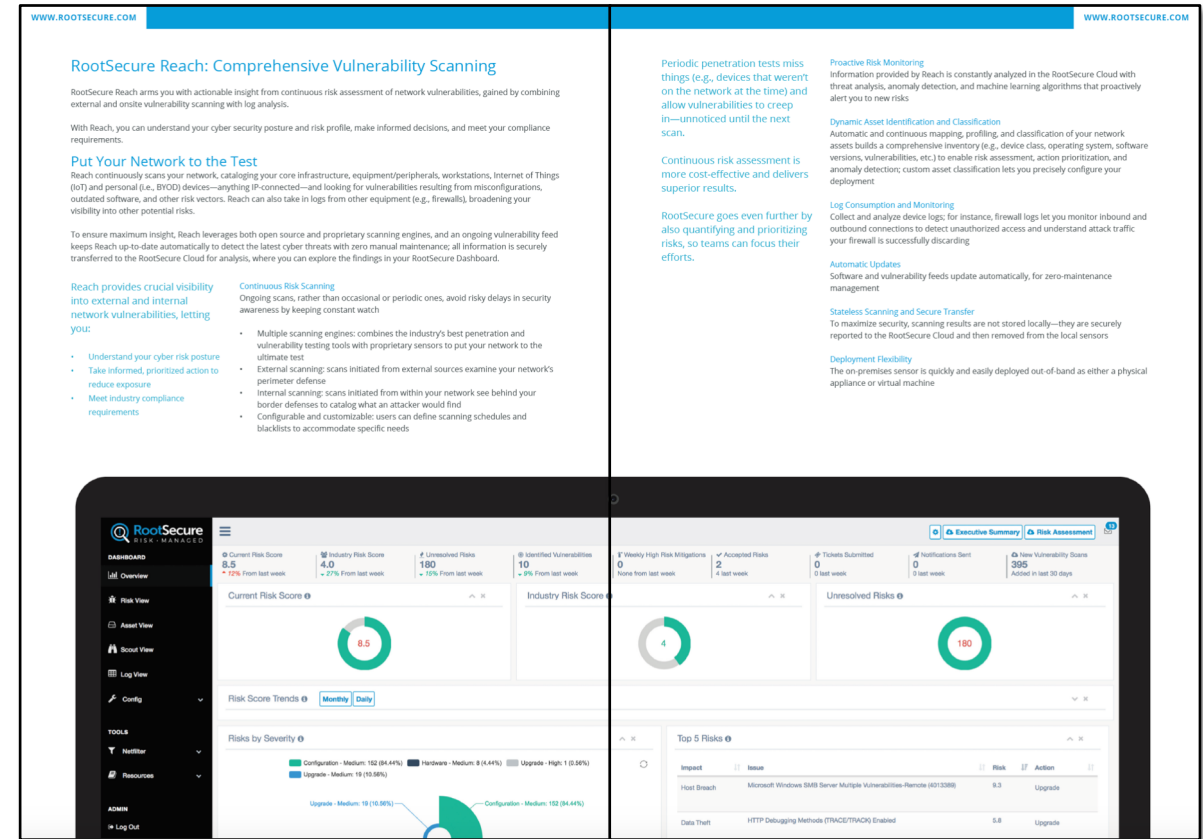
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# Solution Overview Brochure



- Considerably more technical
  - Because the functional user (the likely reader) is more technical, so we can presume higher technical literacy
  - Because the products are solving technical problems, and we need to demonstrate an understanding
  - Includes *what* and *how*, because the reader has questions about both
- Still relates features to real-world customer problems (i.e., answer “So what?”)
- Supports a new consolidated company message



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WWW.ROOTSECURE.COM

**Periodic penetration tests miss things** (e.g., devices that weren't on the network at the time) and allow vulnerabilities to creep in—unnoticed until the next scan.

**Continuous risk assessment is more cost-effective and delivers superior results.**

**RootSecure goes even further by also quantifying and prioritizing risks**, so teams can focus their efforts.

**Proactive Risk Monitoring**  
Information provided by Reach is constantly analyzed in the RootSecure Cloud with threat analysis, anomaly detection, and machine learning algorithms that proactively alert you to new risks

**Dynamic Asset Identification and Classification**  
Automatic and continuous mapping, profiling, and classification of your network assets builds a comprehensive inventory (e.g., device class, operating system, software versions, vulnerabilities, etc.) to enable risk assessment, action prioritization, and anomaly detection; custom asset classification lets you precisely configure your deployment

**Log Consumption and Monitoring**  
Collect and analyze device logs; for instance, firewall logs let you monitor inbound and outbound connections to detect unauthorized access and understand attack traffic your firewall is successfully discarding

**Automatic Updates**  
Software and vulnerability feeds update automatically, for zero-maintenance management

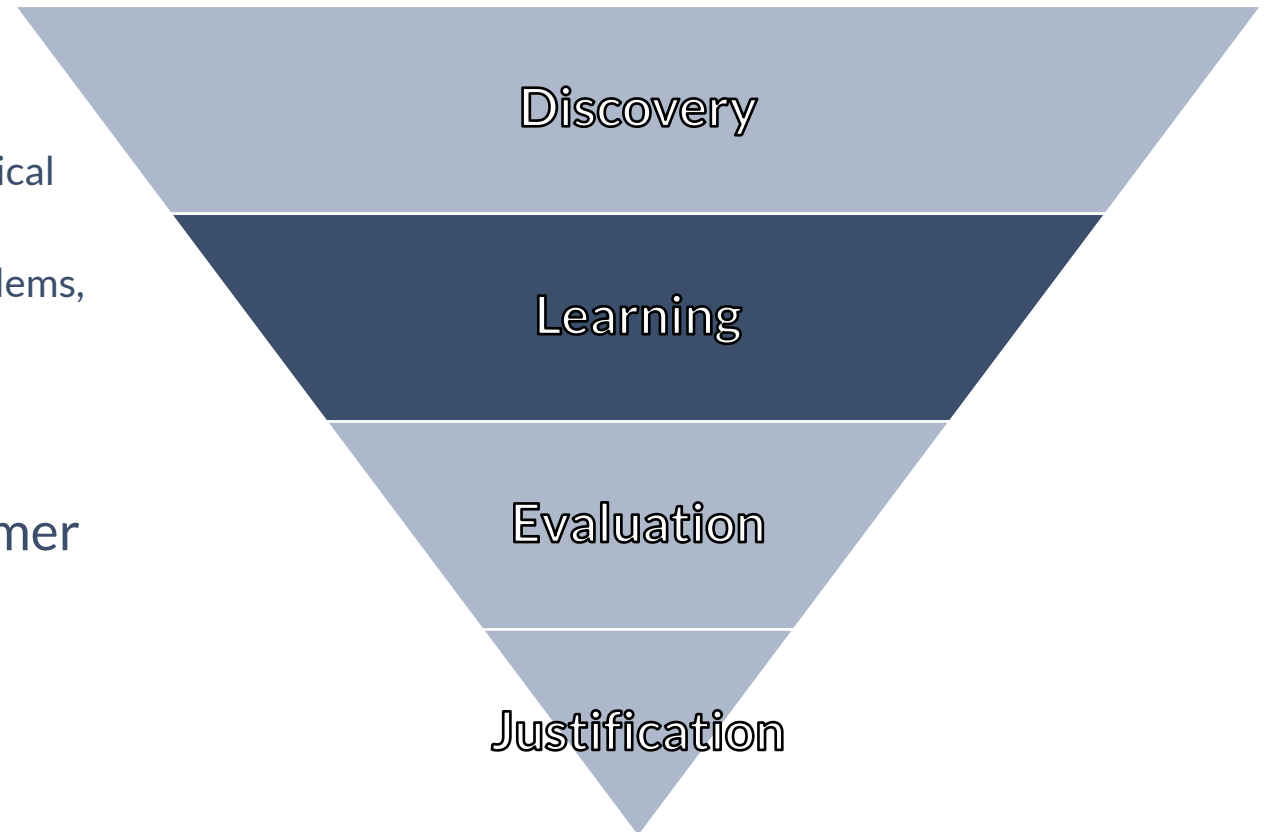
**Stateless Scanning and Secure Transfer**  
To maximize security, scanning results are not stored locally—they are securely reported to the RootSecure Cloud and then removed from the local sensors

**Deployment Flexibility**  
The on-premises sensor is quickly and easily deployed out-of-band as either a physical appliance or virtual machine

# Solution Overview Brochure



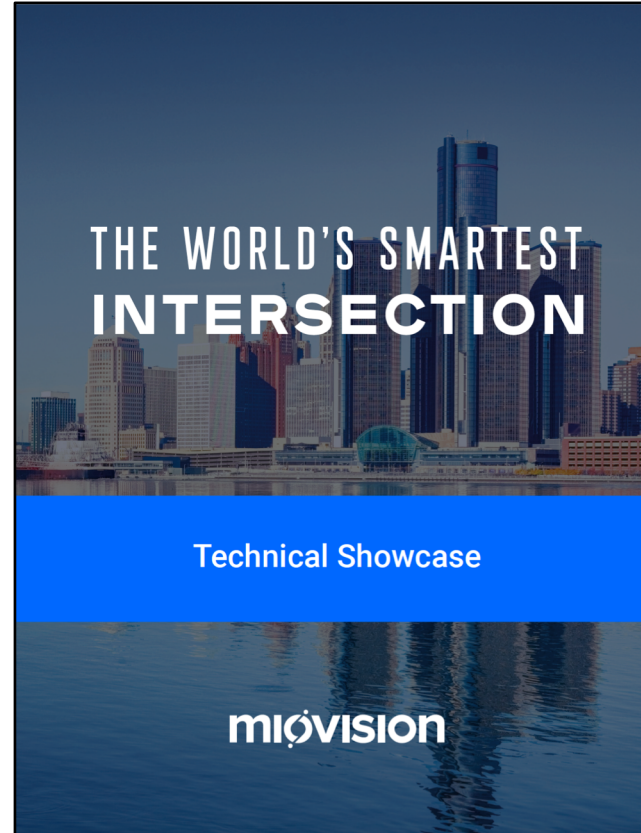
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# Technical Showcase



- Goes behind-the-scenes of *The World's Smartest Intersection*
  - Introduces the architecture
  - Shows how the pieces work together to implement use cases in the real world
  - Wherever possible, provides results
  - Explains important related concepts
  - Suggests how use cases could be modified or extended
- All the while, supports the high-level Smart Cities message





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## Use case: Active safety measures

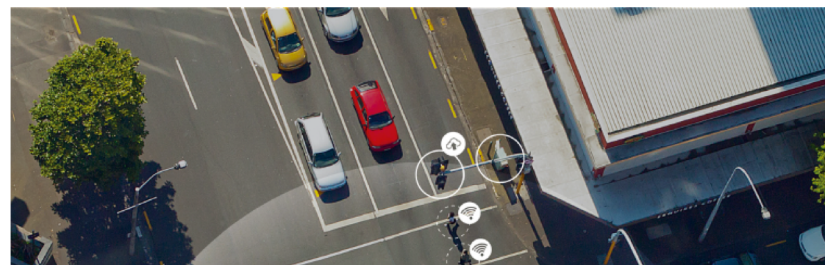
While sensor-laden connected vehicles are an important part of the connected future, to maximize safety traffic infrastructure itself needs to be able to identify hazards in real-time: 'active safety' means that the intersection itself is aware of its surroundings and changes its behavior dynamically to maximize safety.

### **Pedestrian safety via Vehicle to Infrastructure (V2I) notifications**

In this example, the intersection detects that someone hasn't yet exited and broadcasts that status information to smart vehicles via V2I:

1. SmartView 360 provides complete visual monitoring of the intersection
2. SmartLink connects the SmartView 360 video feed and the intersection controller to the SmartSense edge processing system
3. Computer vision algorithms within SmartSense continuously determine the presence of vehicles and pedestrians
4. SmartLink and the RSU continuously alert connected vehicles via V2I to the presence information and the signal phasing and timing (SPaT)

In effect, the intersection continuously broadcasts information about what's happening inside it to all nearby connected vehicles, giving them advanced warning of potential safety issues and augmenting the driver's own observations.



### **Edge computing with SmartSense**

When it comes to safety, milliseconds matter.

Even with ultra-fast mobile networks, the latency incurred by sending information to the cloud and waiting for instructions is too much for truly real-time applications.

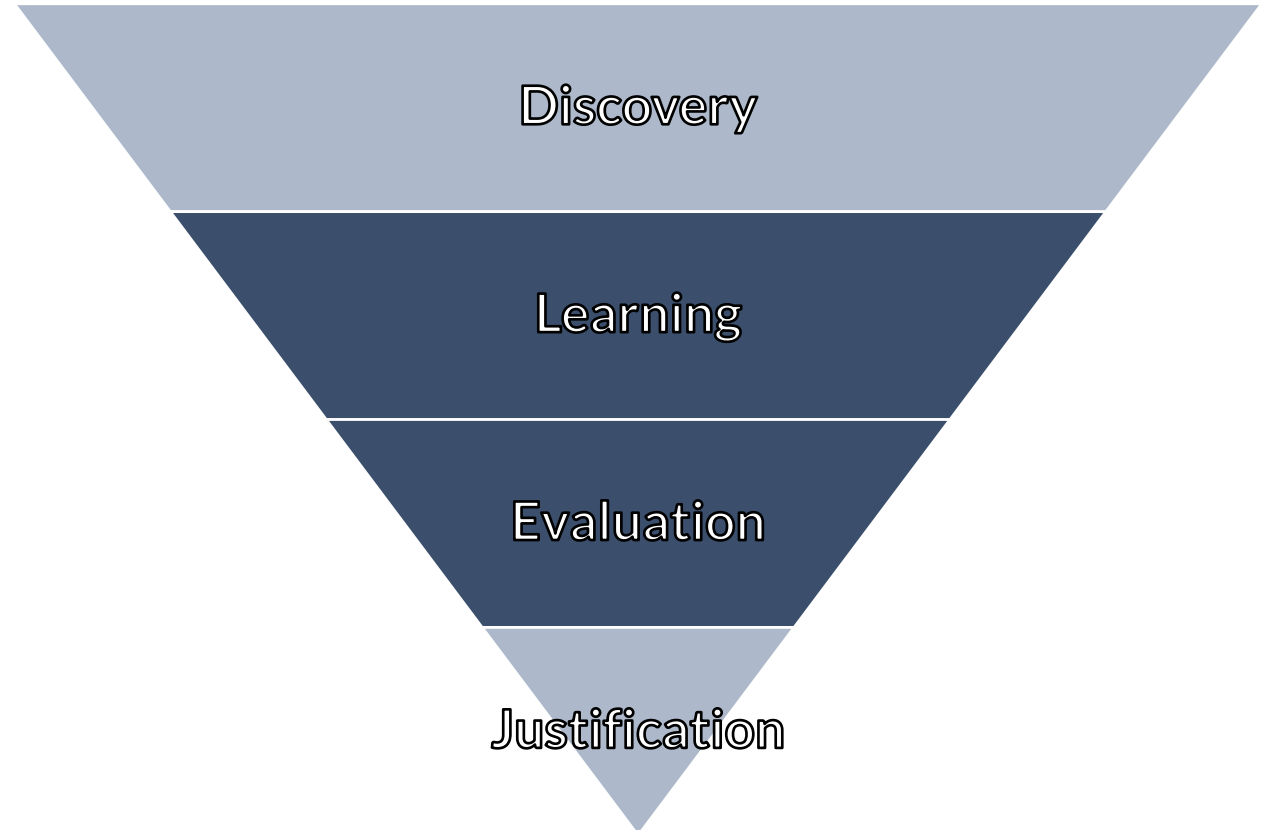
SmartSense embeds computing power in the intersection, so real-time decisions and actions happen right at the edge.

### **Go one step further...**

...by having SmartSense initiate a phase extension to allow the pedestrian more time to exit.

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# Technical Showcase



- Goes behind-the-scenes of *The World's Smartest Intersection*
  - Introduces the architecture

Discovery

There's a podcast up on the **CROMULENT MARKETING** blog that talks about this project (among other things).

modified or extended

- All the while, supports the high-level Smart Cities message

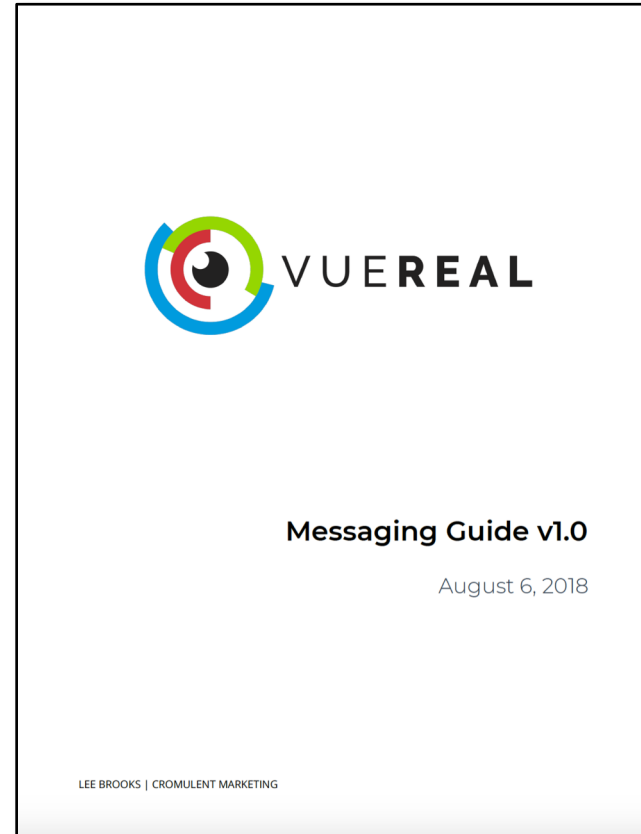
Justification



# Company Messaging



- Defines the company message
- Primary audience: prospective employees
- Secondary audiences
  - Potential partners
  - Potential investors
- Really runs the gamut
  - Company overview
  - Crash course in micro-LED technology, including the market opportunity and heretofore unsolved technical problems
  - Introduces VueReal's solutions
  - Explains additional applications of the foundational manufacturing technologies



## WHY VUE REAL?



### A WINNING TEAM

We're a close-knit group of multidisciplinary domain experts committed to achieving the enormous potential of our solutions.



### CONTINUOUS LEARNING CULTURE

We provide the training and experience to open any door, while working hard to make sure you'll always be engaged.



### STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES

Our breakthroughs are made in custom-built research, production, and test facilities that are accessible 24/7, including a one-of-a-kind Advanced Nano-Technology Centre.



### HISTORY MAKING TECHNOLOGY

We've already made history with the world's highest PPI emissive micro-display, and we're just getting started!



### A BRIGHT FUTURE

We're well-funded, we've established strong partnerships to commercialize our solutions, and we have the plan in place to engineer massive change in enormous markets.

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## CURRENT MICRO-LED

### LIMITED SCALABILITY

The pick and place approaches have limited throughput. With a large display screen needing thousands of subpixels for assembly, it takes days to build one unit. Even populating one smart phone would take hours, limiting the possibility of mass production.

### COSTLY TO MANUFACTURE

With the low throughput, the manufacturing process is expensive, making any goods containing micro-LEDs a luxury item. Due to the fact manufacturing is still in its infancy, a large CAPEX is also required.

### EXISTING LED ARCHITECTURE NOT SUITABLE

Current LEDs are not able to shrink to micro-LED size without undermining the efficiency. A new architecture platform is necessary for optimizing performance.



## VUEReAL'S MICRO-LED

### COMMERCIAL VIABILITY

VueReal's manufacturing technology will make it possible to place tens of millions of individual micro-LEDs into precise locations in a very short period of time. In the longer term, this same technology can be used for the mass integration of other high efficiency micro- and nano- devices.

### HIGH YIELDS WITH ZERO DEFECTS

With pre-screening capabilities built into the manufacturing process, VueReal can achieve a high yield of micro-LEDs (and other micro- and nano- devices) with a zero defect transfer rate.

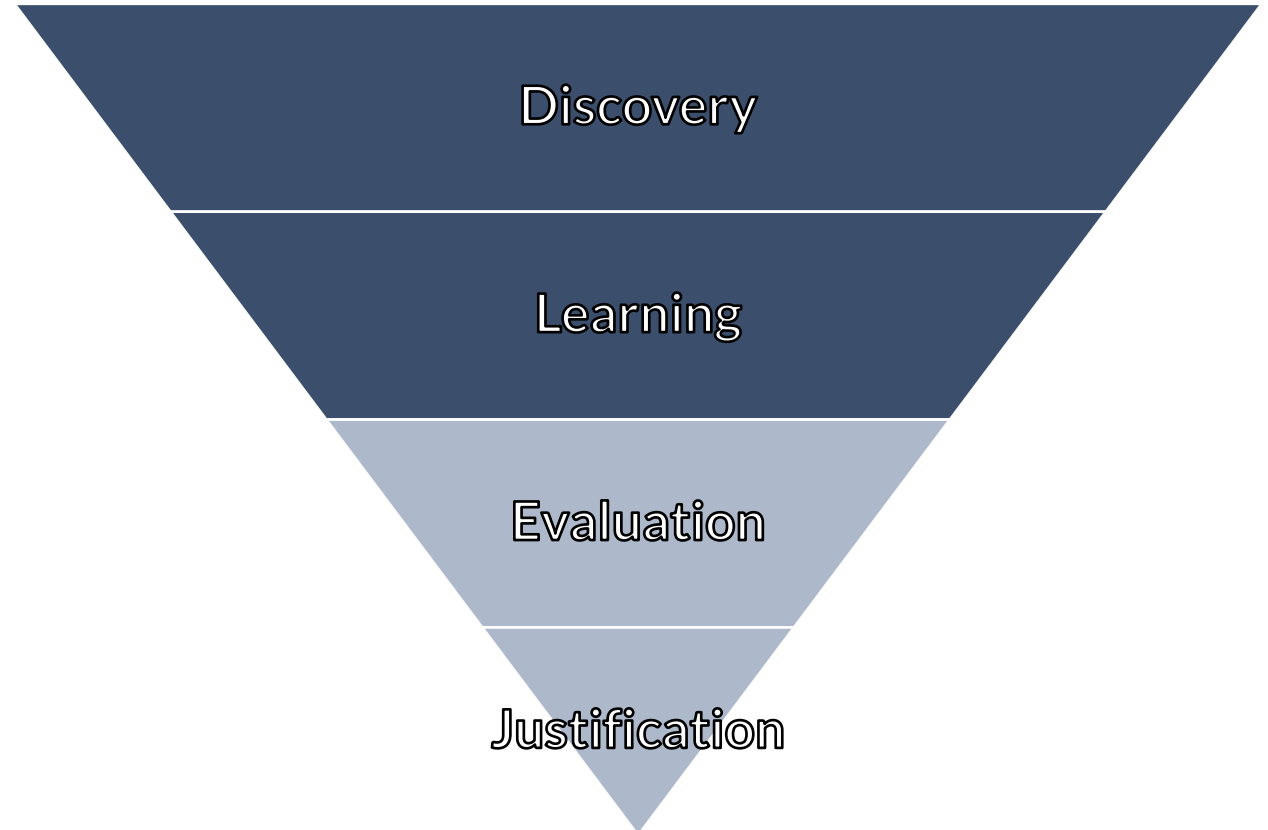
### HIGH PERFORMANCE MICRO-LEDs

VueReal's micro-LEDs are purpose-built to be highly efficient without sacrificing performance at an extremely small size.

# Company Messaging

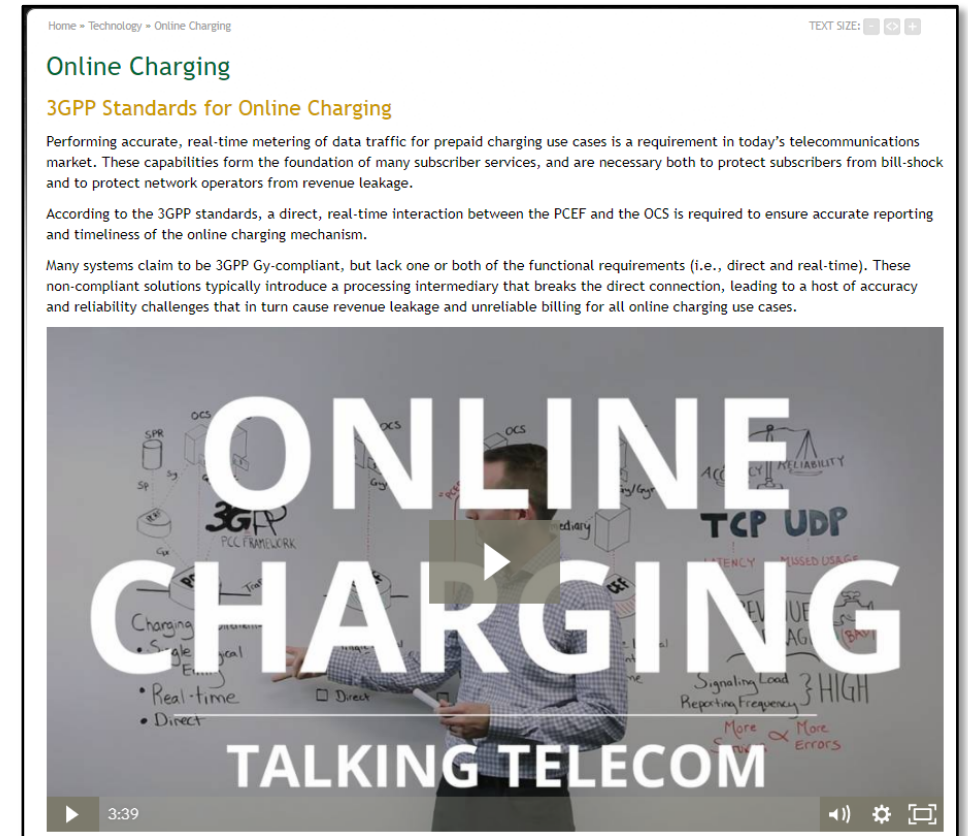


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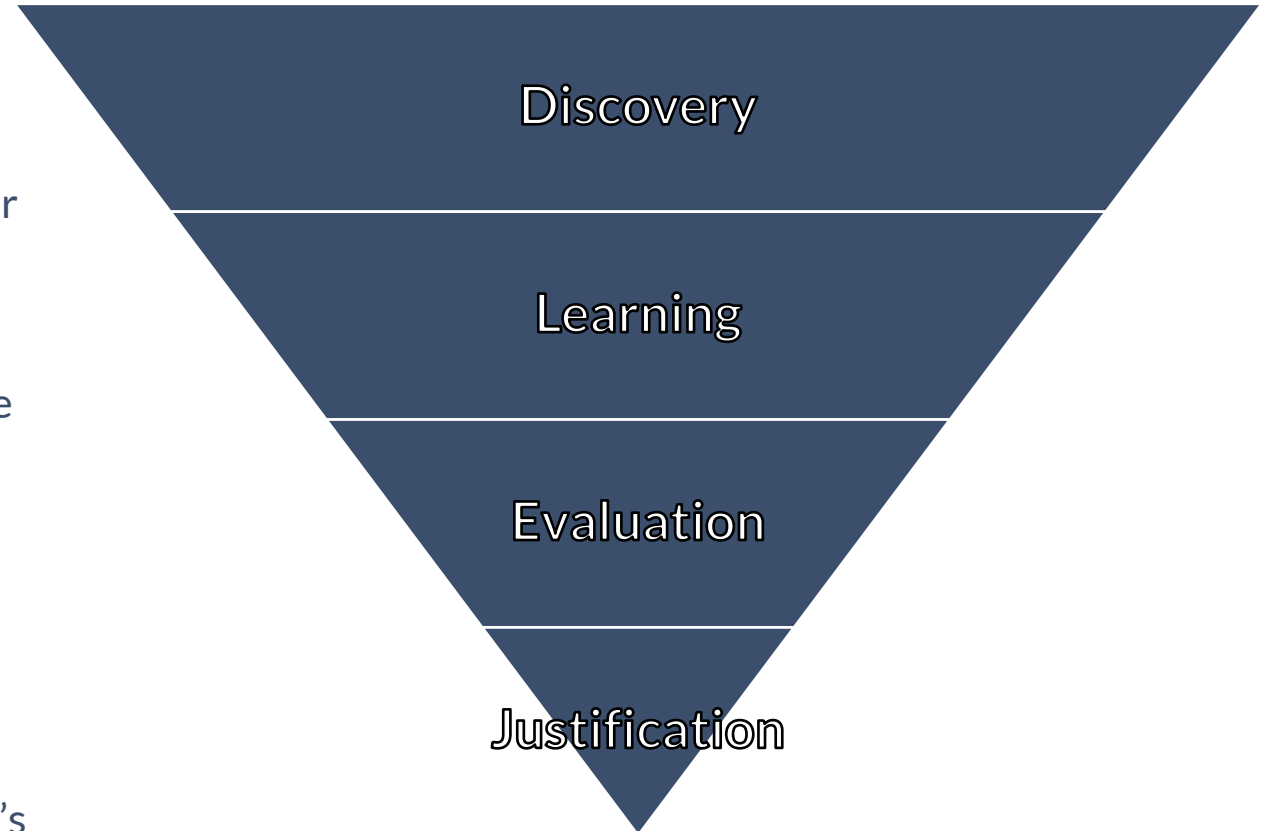
# Technology Education

- Here's a video we did at Sandvine...
  - Kind've an experiment and proof-of-concept
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- We put it up on the site and YouTube channel just before I left
  - Kind've just for the hell of it
- It's extremely high-performing\*
  - It's easy to make false assumptions, but there's clearly an appetite for succinct technical content



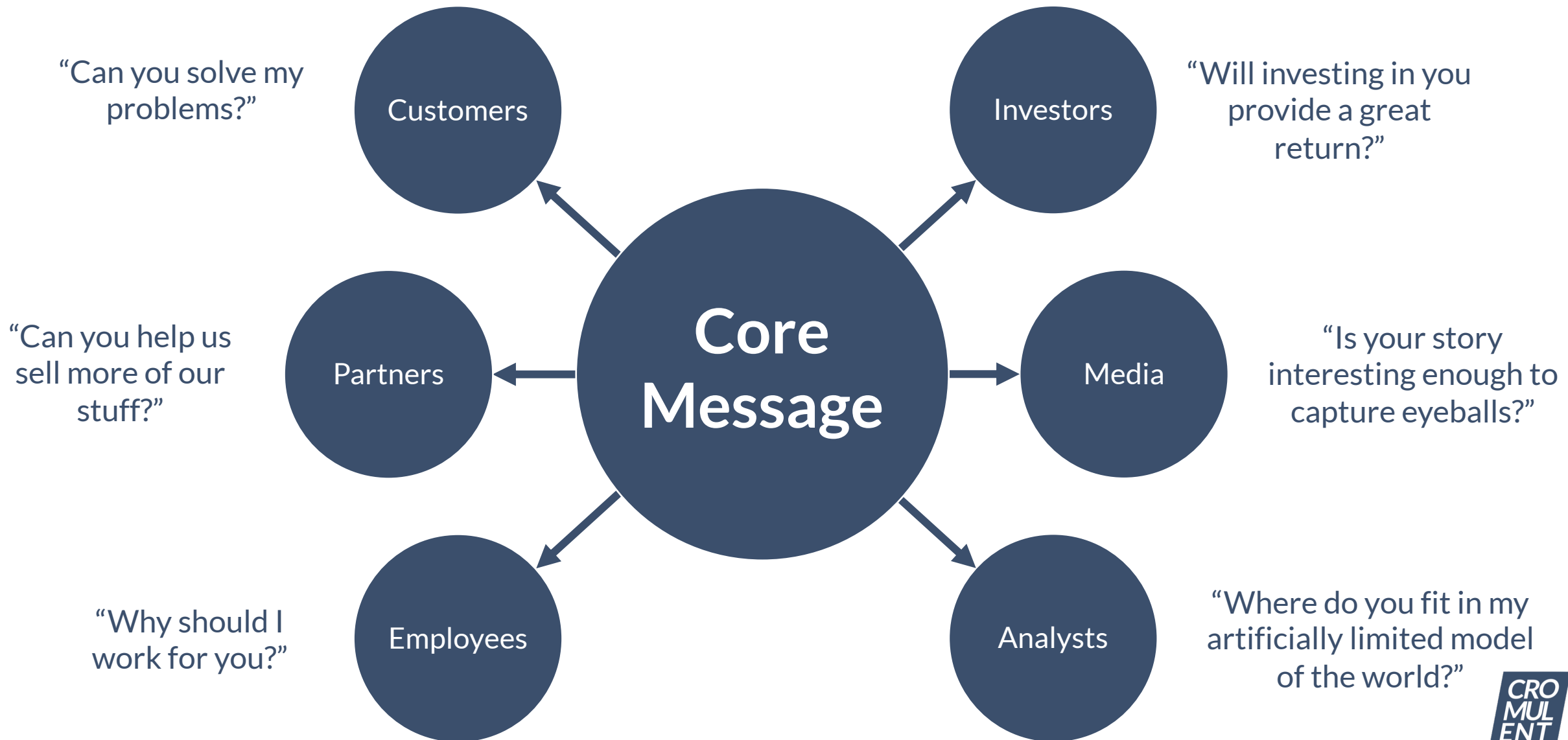
# Technology Education

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# Some Take-Aways

# Companies Have Many Audiences



# Talking\* About Technology is Hard

- And that means there's an enormous amount of opportunity for those who can do so
- Companies have many audiences, those audiences have differing needs, and even the same audience has differing needs at different times
- The best results come from sequentially serving audience needs, and either guiding them through a process or allowing them to self-guide
- Seizing these opportunities requires:
  - **Desire:** because there'll be barriers, and if you're not interested then it won't happen
  - **Empathy:** your audiences' needs matter more than your desired outcomes
  - **Technical fluency, coupled with restraint:** sure, you have to know the tech, but you also have to know what parts matter, when, to whom; it's not about sounding smart
  - **Flexibility and adaptability:** one size does not fit all, whether format, length, style, etc.
  - **Discipline:** remember, it's all in service to answering that crucial question



Thanks!

