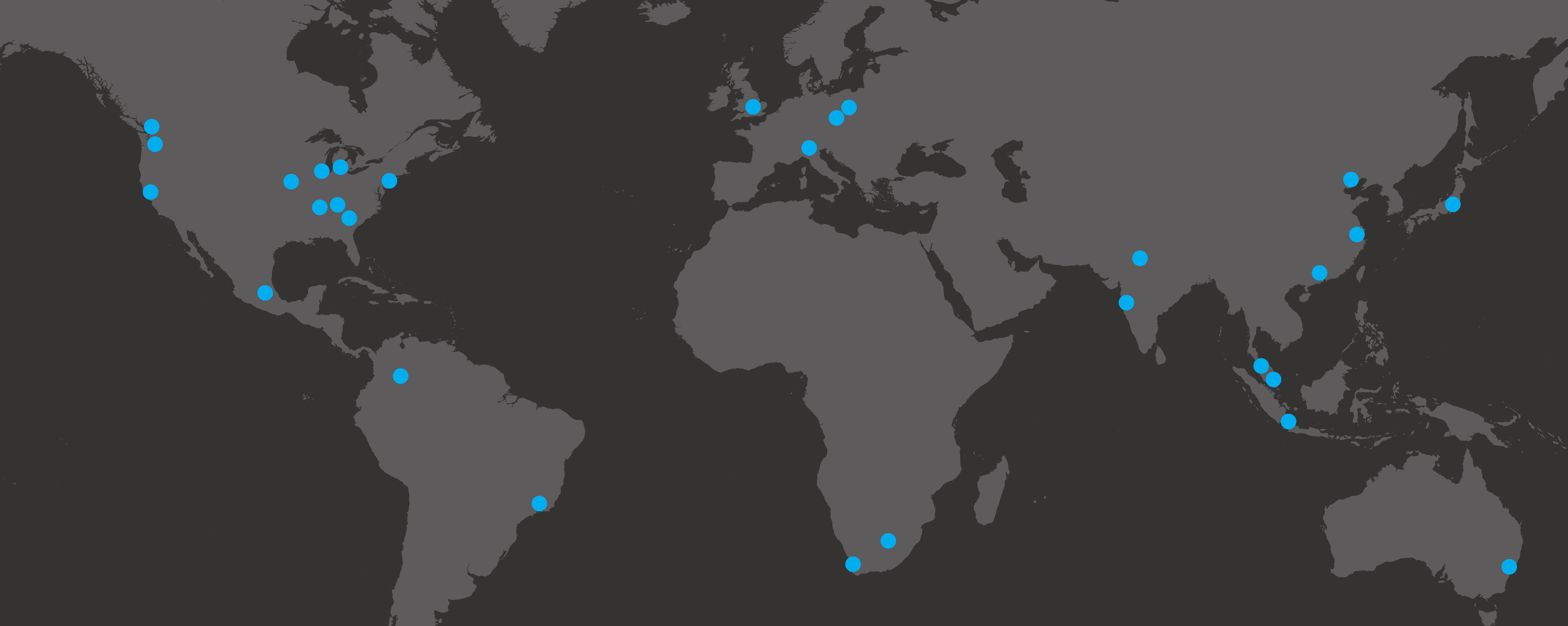


Your Red Tape Toolkit

How To Win Trust And Get Your Search Work Implemented





ATLANTA
BEIJING
BOGOTÁ
CAPE TOWN
CHICAGO

CINCINNATI
DALLAS
GUANGZHOU
JAKARTA
JOHANNESBURG

KALAMAZOO
KANSAS CITY
KRAKÓW
KUALA LUMPUR
LONDON

MEXICO CITY
MEMPHIS
MILAN
MINNEAPOLIS
MUMBAI

NASHVILLE
NEW DELHI
NEW YORK
ROGERS
SÃO PAULO

SAN FRANCISCO
SEATTLE
SHANGHAI
SINGAPORE
SYDNEY

TOKYO
WARSAW
WHITE SALMON

3,000+ VMLERS // 33 LOCATIONS

A few of
our clients



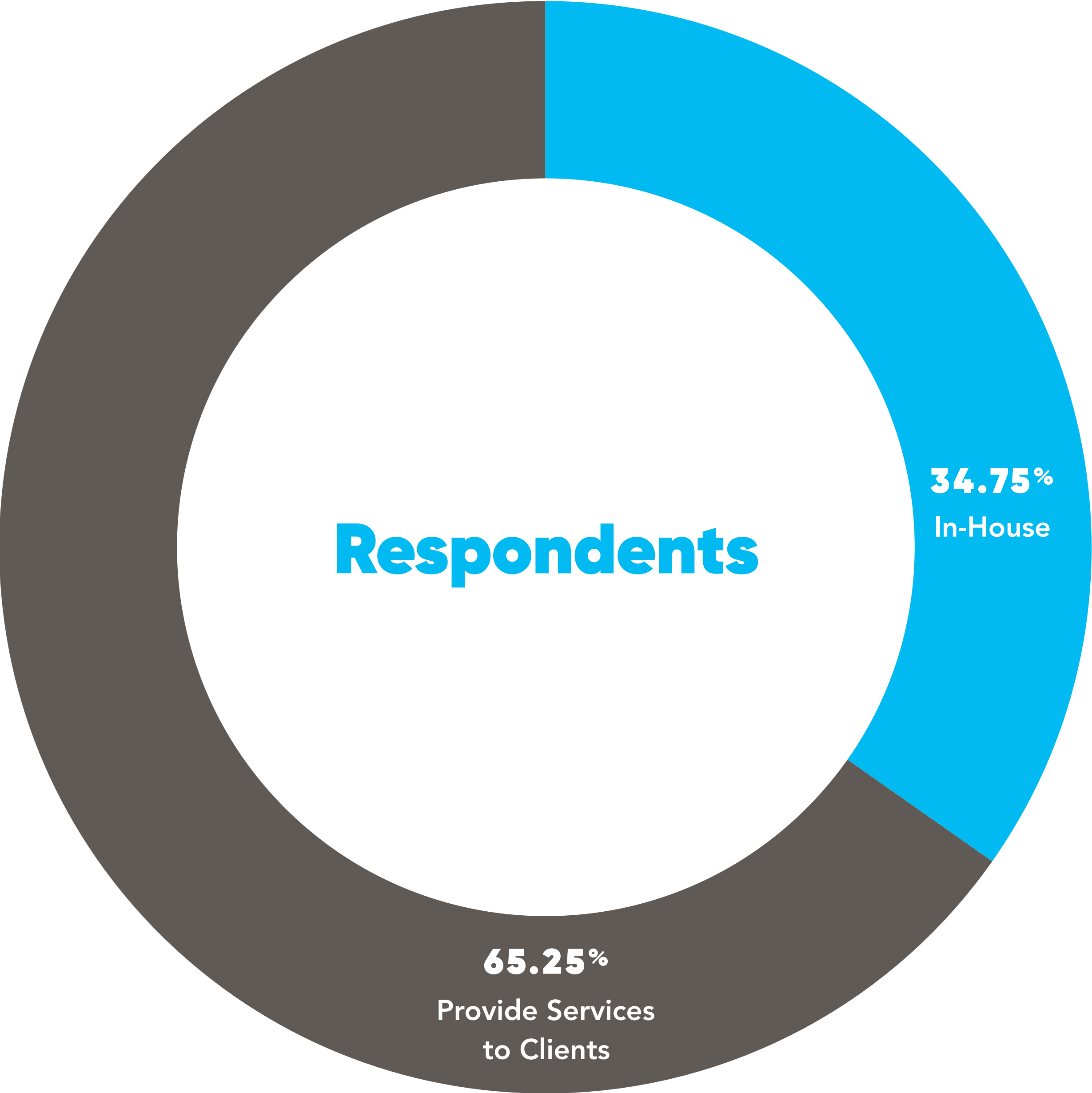
BUYING YOUR SERVICES
DOESN'T MEAN **BUYING IN.**

Roadblocks seem to increase with the
size and scale of the client

Making smart recommendations
that never get implemented **sucks**

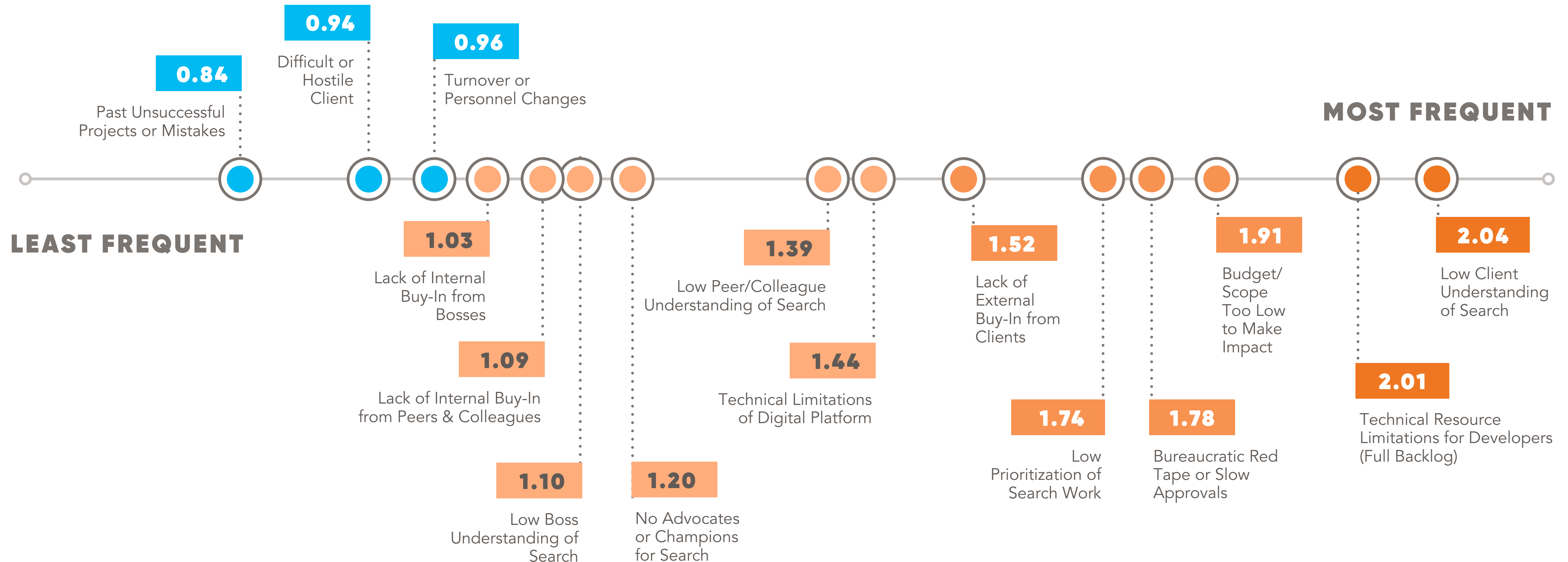
Especially when the clients are all,
“Where my results at?”

WHAT STANDS **IN THE WAY**

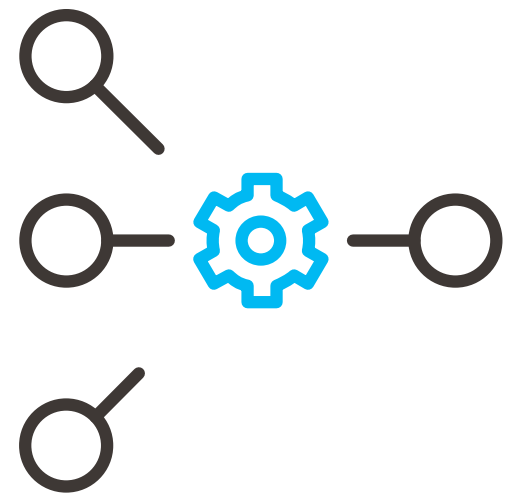


RESPONDENT FIRMS	%
In-House or "Client-Side"	33.33%
Multi-Service Agency (Advertising, Web, Creative, etc.)	22.70%
Search-Specific Agency	21.28%
Self-Employed (Freelancer, Contractor, Business Owner)	12.76%
Consulting Firm	4.96%
Content Marketing Shop	3.55%
SaaS Company	1.42%
	N=141

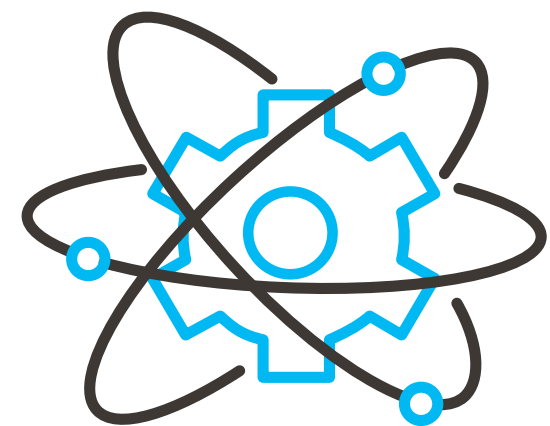
Implementation **Blockers**



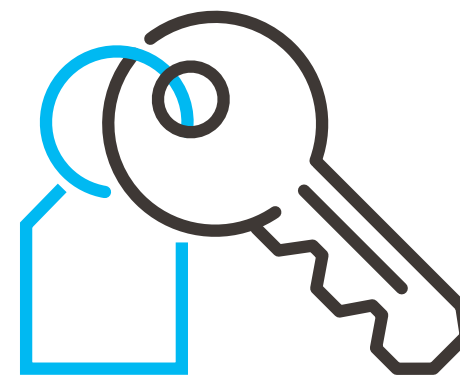
And more...



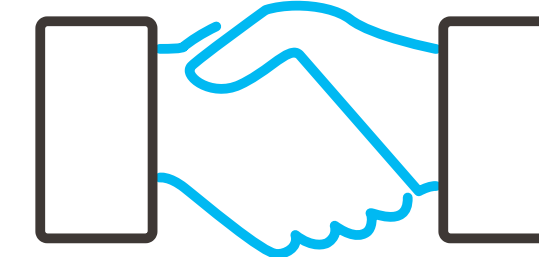
Workflow
Bottlenecks



Overcomplicated
Process




Lack of
Ownership



Internal
Politics



Shifting Budgets
& Priorities



Why are you making us feel these things!?

Playing the **blame game**

I DON'T BUY IT.

IT'S YOU.

But things can change.
I believe in you.

7 TECHNIQUES TO **OVERCOME OBSTACLES**

#1 DIAGNOSE YOUR **CLIENT'S MATURITY**

How **mature** is your client?

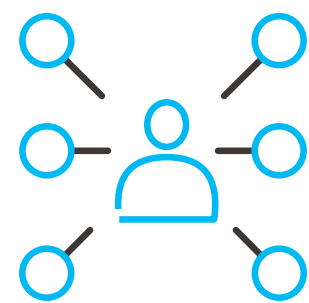
What is a **maturity** model?

Search Capabilities Maturity Model

CRITERIA



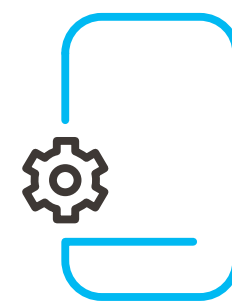
Analytics



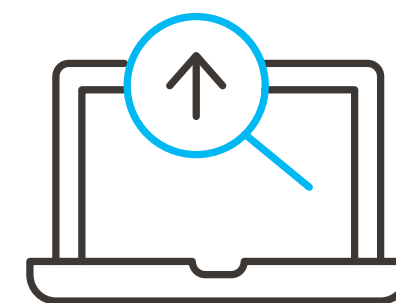
Collaboration



Content



Mobility



Off-Page



On-Page



Technical



New Tech

STAGES

0

CHAOS

1

NON-EXISTENT

2

TACTICAL

3

STRATEGIC

4

PRACTICE

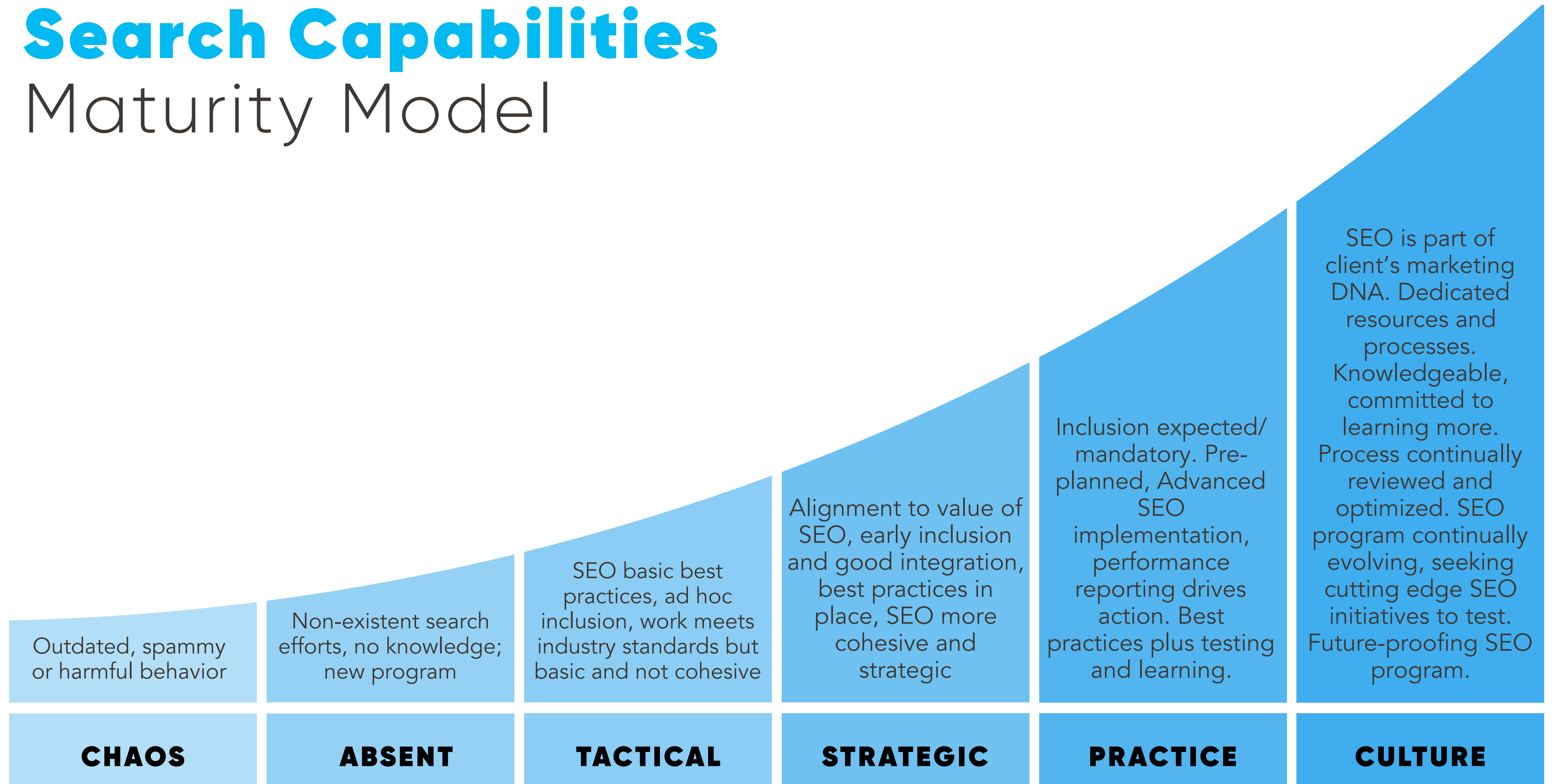
5

CULTURE

Search Capabilities

Maturity Model

CAPABILITIES MATURITY



ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY

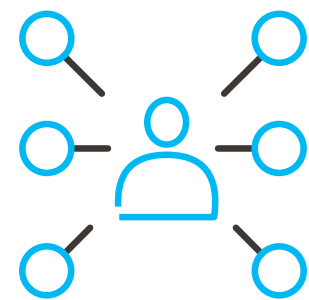
Search Capabilities Scorecard

STAGE	0 (CHAOS)	1 (NON-EXISTENT)	2 (TACTICAL)	3 (STRATEGIC)	4 (PRACTICE)	5 (CULTURE)
COLLABORATION	No collaboration, even avoids sharing information	No collaboration	After-the-fact requests, or client had to request something they know about SEO.	Early internal inclusion for consultation, before the work is completed, to be included in research and planning phase of process.	Early internal inclusion for consultation, before the work is completed, to be included in research and planning phase of process. Organic search data consistently helps drive digital/channel strategy choices.	Early internal inclusion for consultation, before the work is completed, to be included in research and planning phase of process. Organic search data consistently helps drive digital/channel strategy choices. Cross-channel collaboration and decision-making exists at all stages of process.
MOBILITY	No mobile experience	No mobile experience	A few key pages are mobile or even a separate M-dot mobile site, but not site-wide mobile-friendliness and no distinct mobile optimization	Fully responsive and technically mobile-friendly site, no distinct mobile optimization.	Fully responsive and mobile-friendly site, focused mobile content and speed optimization. App store assets optimized, if applicable.	Mobile-first mindset for usability, speed and content. Fully responsive and mobile-friendly site, optimization, testing. Active ASO program for app store assets, deep linking, and in-app indexing.
TECHNICAL	Black hat tactics	Messy code, broken technology, outdated practices. Sitemaps or robots.txt file outdated.	Minimum technical optimization, such as fixing 404 errors. HTTPS secured.	HTTPS secured. No broken pages. Canonicalized. Continual page speed improvements. Some Schema markup in use. Duplicate content management. Monitoring for SEO errors. SEO consulted for some technical projects.	Advanced technical optimization. HTTPS secured. No broken pages. Canonicalized. Continual page speed improvements. Some Schema markup in use. Duplicate content management. Monitoring for SEO errors. SEO consulted for some technical projects. SEO requirements baked into most new technical and UX projects.	Minimum technical optimization, HTTPS secured (no broken pages). Basic technical optimization (page speed, canonicalization, Schema markup). Proactive monitoring, maintenance and technical optimization efforts. Adopting new search technology (AMP, OpenGraph, In-App Indexing). Integration/partnership with developers. SEO active partners in technical projects.
CONTENT	Thin, weak, duplicative, spun, or over-optimized content	Content limited, random, unoptimized	SEO implemented during or after publication, not pre-planned	Keyword research performed for pre-determined topics prior to creating content	Organic search data informs content strategy and UX.	Organic search data drives digital content strategy alongside analytics, social and other channel inputs
ON-PAGE	Over-optimization, keyword stuffing	No content optimization, thin/weak/duplicate content	Minimum on-page optimization - titles tags, meta descriptions and H1 tags. Successfully avoiding duplicate content.	Top-to-bottom on-page and content optimization for known SEO signals. Beginning to add rich, optimized content pages based on search demand.	Advanced top-to-bottom on-page and content optimization for known SEO signals. Beginning to add rich, optimized content pages based on search demand. Advanced optimization with content optimization workflow and distribution flywheel. Testing, monitoring and iterating on-page optimization tactics.	Advanced top-to-bottom on-page and content optimization for known SEO signals. Beginning to add rich, optimized content pages based on search demand. Advanced optimization with content optimization workflow and distribution flywheel. Testing, monitoring and iterating on-page optimization tactics. Organic search informs content ideation. Advanced optimization with content optimization workflow and distribution flywheel. Testing, monitoring and iterating on-page optimization tactics.
OFF-PAGE	Link penalties, spammy link directories or exchanges, low-quality guest-blogging	No link-building, no off-site optimization	No active link-building, some passive link reception. Claim major social media profiles and local listings.	Early link-building efforts. Proactive low-hanging fruit link requests from partners or membership organizations, awards, press releases, social profile optimization.	Active link-building efforts and creating link-earning content. Proactive low-hanging fruit link requests from partners or membership organizations, awards, press releases. Active monitoring web for unlinked mentions. Active link profile monitoring. Periodic opportunistic link outreach. Local listing ownership and optimization.	Proactive low-hanging fruit link requests from partners or membership organizations, awards, press releases, active monitoring web for unlinked mentions. Local listing ownership and optimization. Persistent ongoing link-building campaigns, partnership outreach. Coordination with content strategy leads to increased volume of earned links. Nurturing other third party sites: reviews, forums, communities, etc.
NEW TECHNOLOGY	No new technology understanding or focus	No new technology understanding or focus. No risk tolerance	Chasing the shiny new technology with little focus on end goals.	Sees clear opportunity for new search technology to achieve business goals, researching and planning to implement.	Understanding of implications of new technology and implementing new technologies to perform in search and other channels. Actively implementing and testing new technology.	Actively implementing and testing new technology. Aggressively pursuing visibility and engagement in new technology for search, measuring efficacy, and continuing to optimize. High risk tolerance.
ANALYTICS	None	Present, with no organic search reporting	Occasionally project-specific follow-up after SEO initiatives published, inconsistently executed, no regular reporting	Regular reporting, rankings, traffic, engagement. Rearview mirror performance reporting with some action items derived from insights.	Regular reporting, rankings, traffic, engagement, content consumption, conversions. Relying on performance reporting to drive SEO strategy and next iterations from insights.	Regular reporting, rankings, traffic, engagement, content consumption, conversions. Multi-channel funnels, testing, conversion rate optimization. Data-driven organization that leans into day-to-day data management, performance reporting, and decision-making.

Search Capabilities Maturity Model



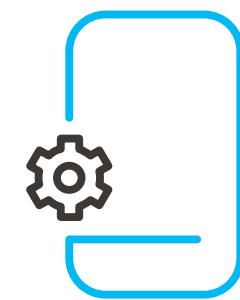
Analytics



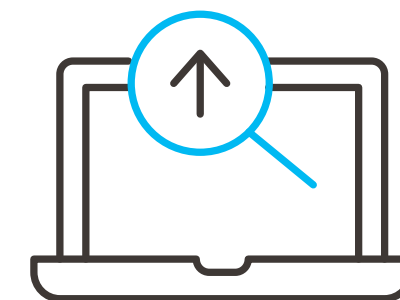
Collaboration



Content



Mobility



Off-Page



On-Page



Technical



New Tech

Thin, weak, duplicative, spun,
or over-optimized content

0

CHAOS

Content limited, random,
unoptimized

1

NON-EXISTENT

SEO implemented during or
after publication, not pre-
planned

2

TACTICAL

Keyword research performed
for pre-determined topics
prior to creating content

3

STRATEGIC

Organic search data informs
content strategy and UX.

4

PRACTICE

Organic search data drives
digital content strategy
alongside analytics, social and
other channel inputs

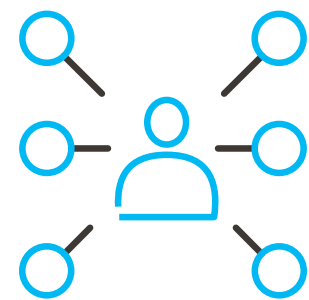
5

CULTURE

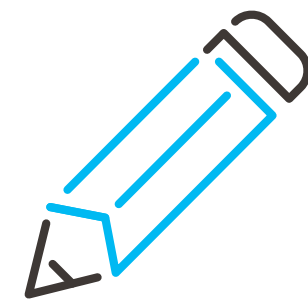
Search Capabilities Maturity Model



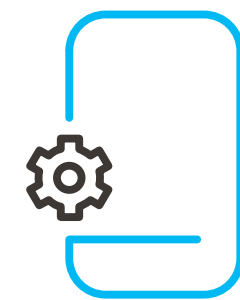
Analytics



Collaboration



Content



Mobility



Off-Page



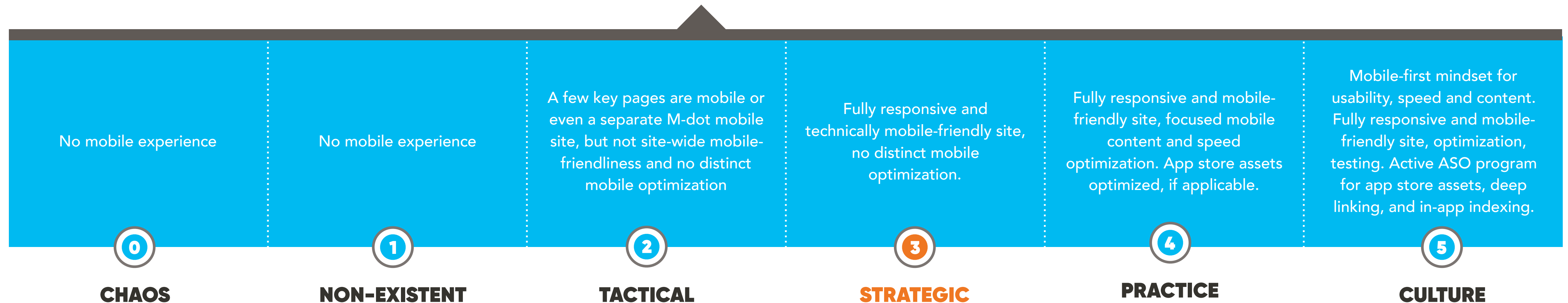
On-Page



Technical



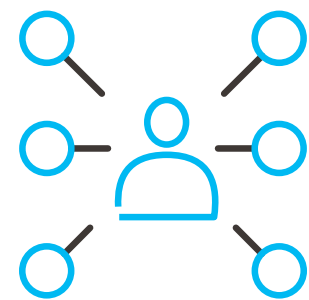
New Tech



Search Capabilities Maturity Model



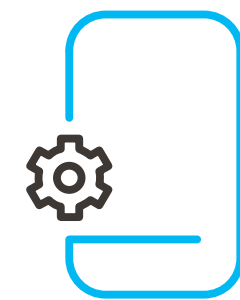
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Collaboration



Content



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Off-Page



On-Page



Technical



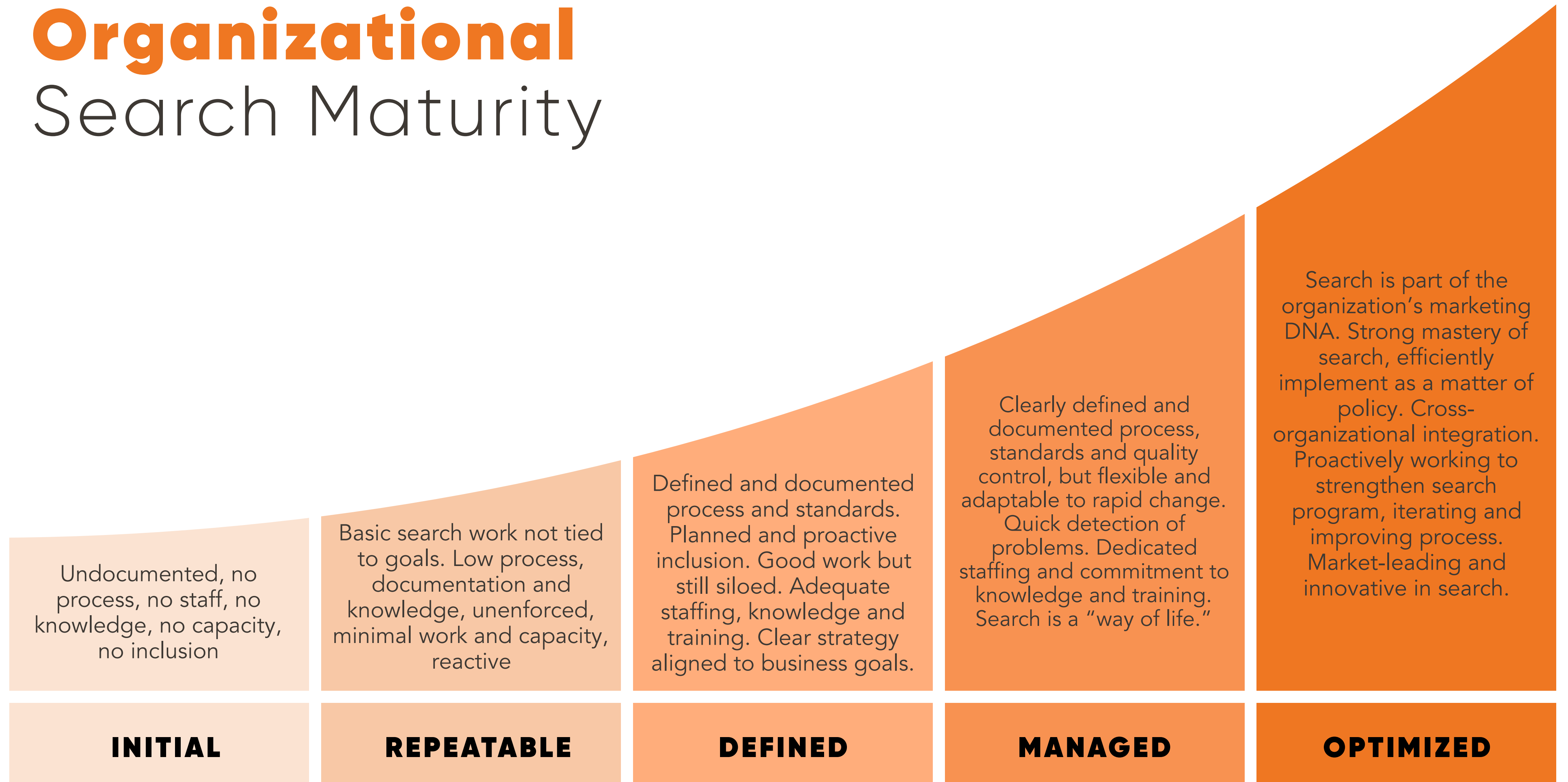
New Tech



Useful, but still doesn't get to the
heart of the issues.

Organizational Search Maturity

PROCESS MATURITY



ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY

Scorecard Exercise

STAGE / CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5
	INITIAL/CHAOTIC	REPEATABLE	DEFINED	MANAGED/CAPABLE	EFFICIENT/OPTIMIZING
PROCESS Does a documented, repeatable process for including of organic search exist and is it continuously improving?	Undocumented, no search processes exist	Search processes exist, not documented, not enforced	Search processes documented, enforced, at times reactive inclusion	Search processes documented and enforced, proactive inclusion	Search processes documented and efficient, proactive inclusion, continual process optimization
PERSONNEL RESOURCES & INTEGRATION Does the necessary talent exists at the organization or within the scoped personnel?	Staff does not exist, no search work being done	Staff exists, minimal search work being done	Staff works actively on search, but often independently in silos	Staff works actively and collaboratively on search, partially integrated	Staff is fully integrated and collaborates across disciplines to execute organic search work
KNOWLEDGE & LEARNING Is the organization knowledgable about search?	No knowledge of search, no training, no commitment to learn more	Low knowledge of search, some basic training, no commitment to learn more	Moderate knowledge and training in search, basic experience, commitment to learning	Advanced knowledge and training in search, high commitment to learning	Expert level knowledge and training in search, high commitment to learning and staying current or cutting edge
MEANS, CAPACITY & CAPABILITIES Does the organization budget for and prioritize organic search?	No means and capacity — never built in	Low means, ad hoc inclusion as available	Moderate means, frequent inclusion, sometimes prioritized	High means, consistent inclusion and prioritization	Always built in and prioritized
PLANNING & PREPARATION Is organic search aligned to brand goals and proactively planned?	Never included, never planned, no awareness of connection to brand goals	Occasionally included, rarely planned, largely disconnected from brand goals	Usually included, occasionally planned, loosely connected to brand or campaign goals	Always included, usually plan, closely connected to brand or campaign goals	Always included, always planned, search helps inform brand and campaign goals

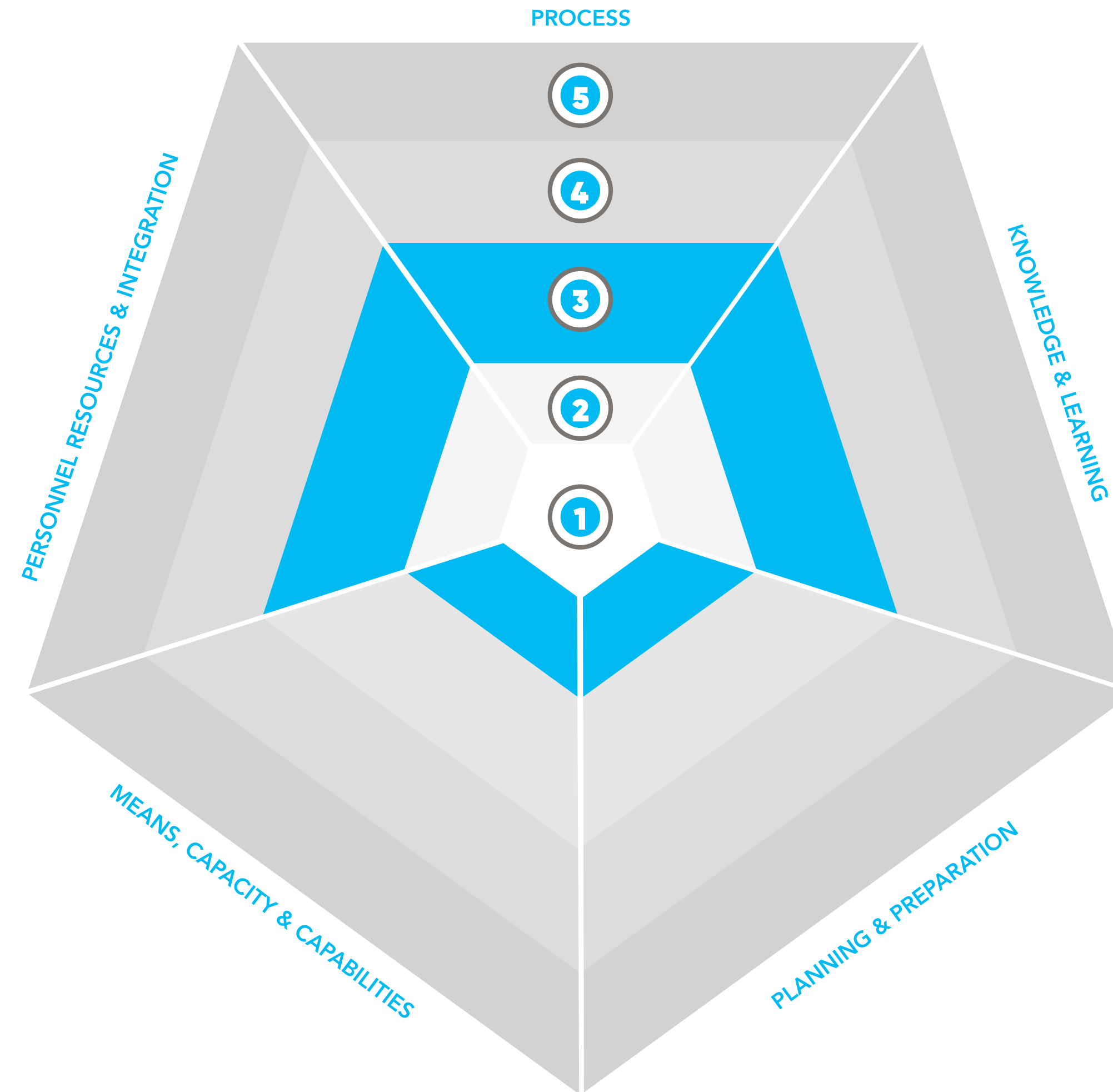
Scorecard Exercise



PROCESS Does a documented, repeatable process for including of organic search exist and is it continuously improving?	Undocumented, no search processes exist	Search processes exist, not documented, not enforced	Search processes documented, enforced, at times reactive inclusion	Search processes documented and enforced, proactive inclusion	Search processes documented and efficient, proactive inclusion, continual process optimization
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Scorecard Exercise

- 1 INITIAL/CHAOTIC**
- 2 REPEATABLE**
- 3 DEFINED**
- 4 MANAGED/CAPABLE**
- 5 EFFICIENT/OPTIMIZING**



A **collaborative** exercise



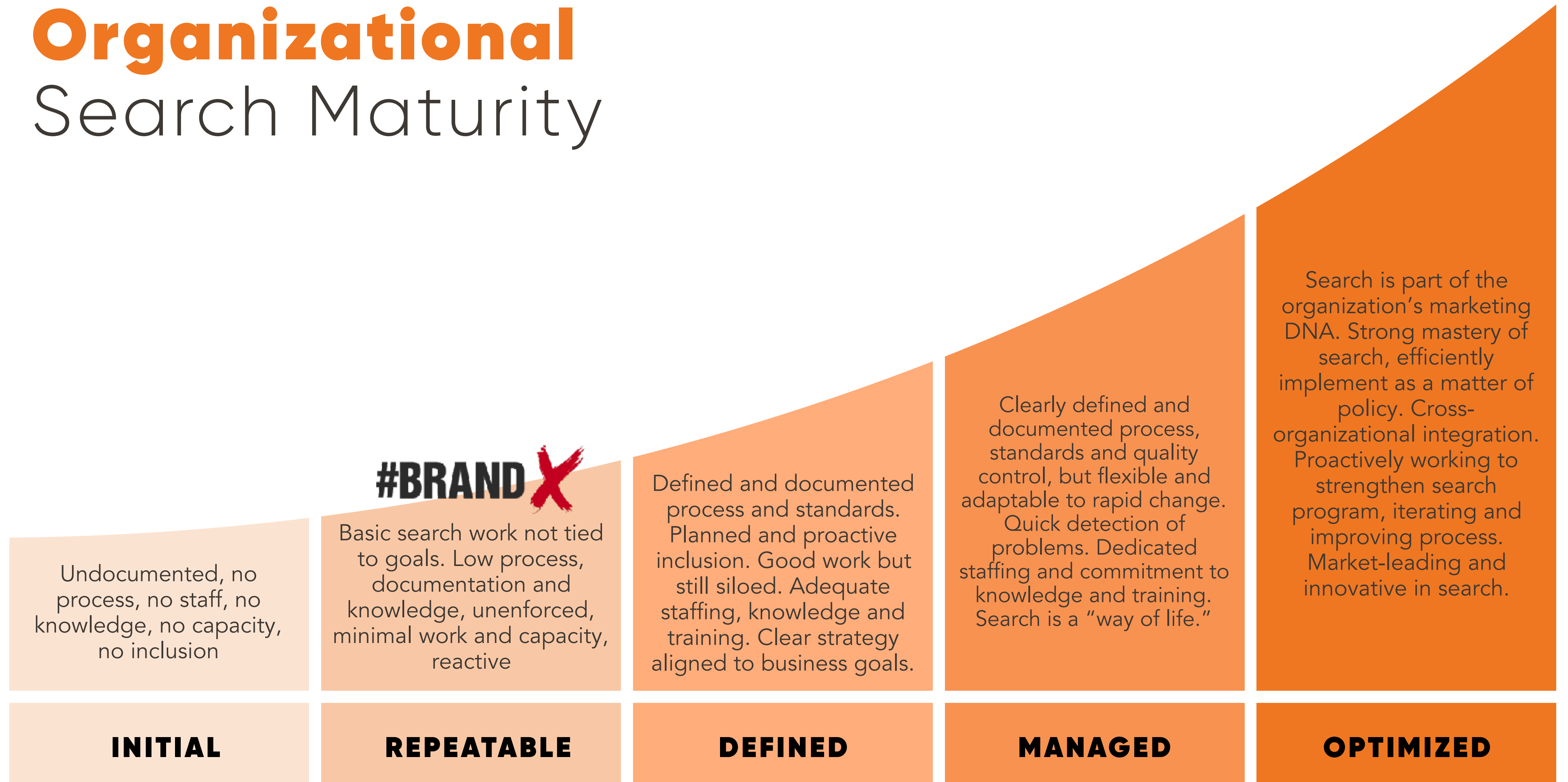
YOU ARE HERE.



YOU WANT TO BE HERE.

Organizational Search Maturity

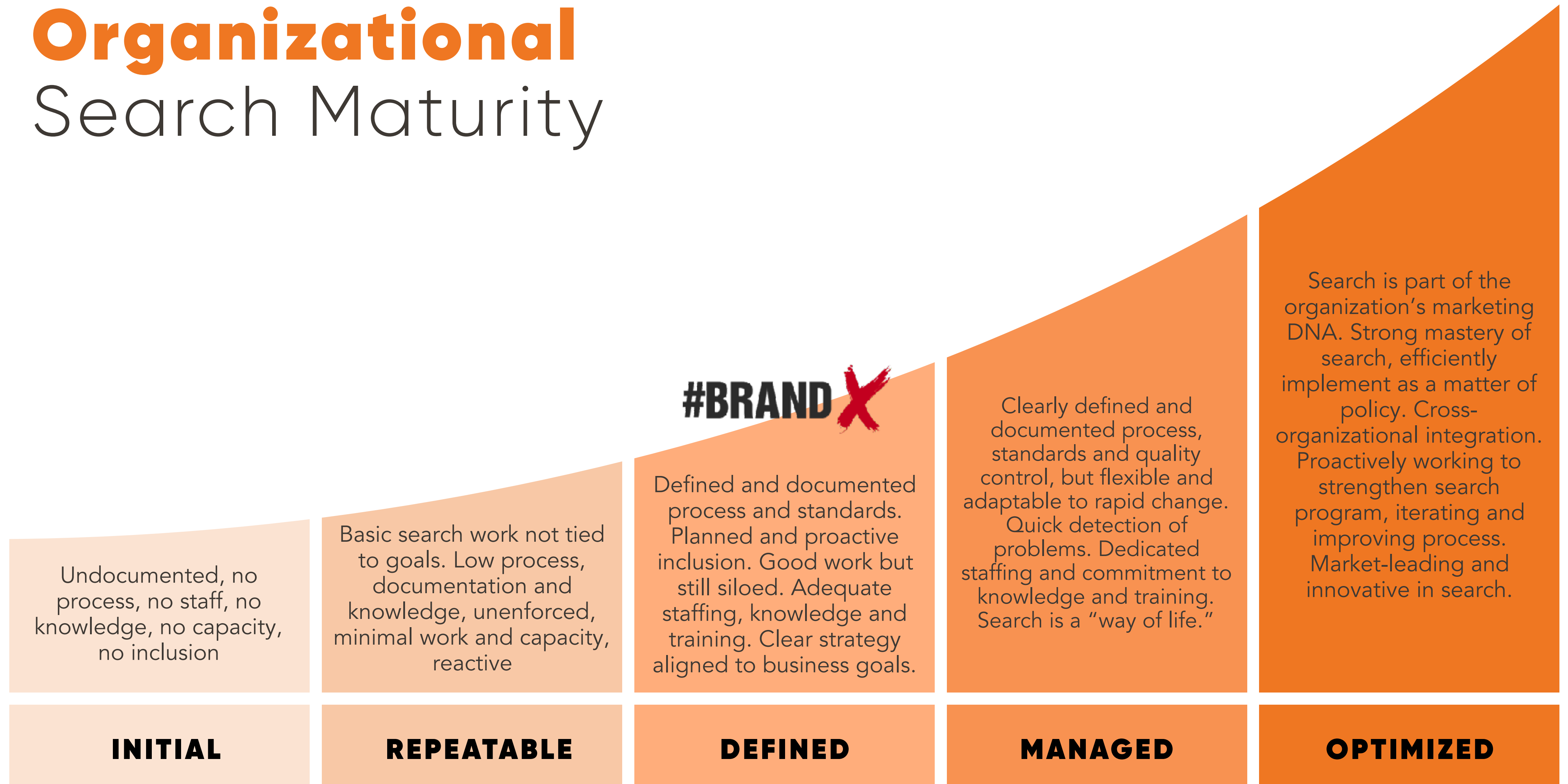
PROCESS MATURITY



ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY

Organizational Search Maturity

PROCESS MATURITY

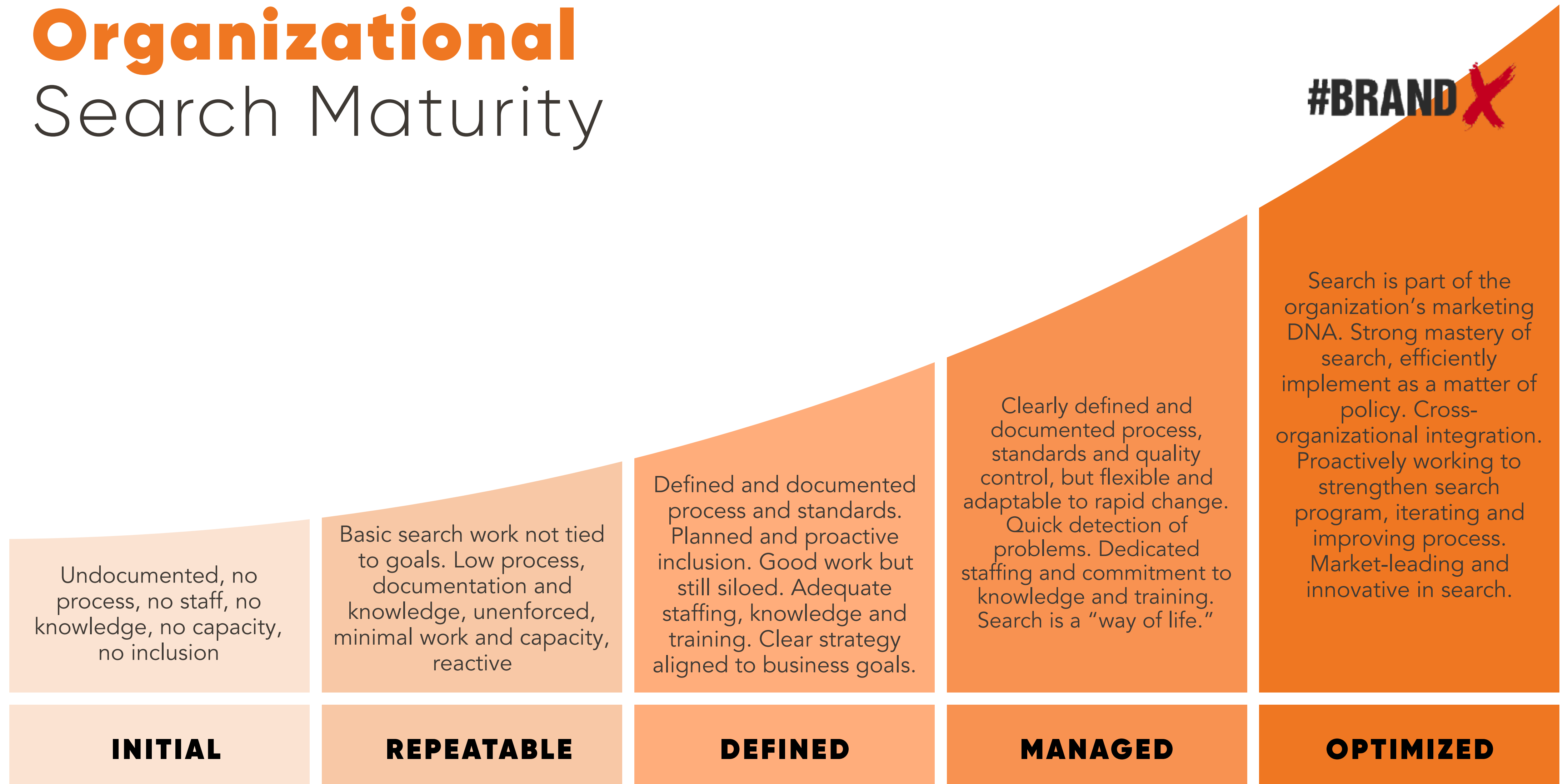


ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY

Organizational Search Maturity

#BRAND 

PROCESS MATURITY



ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY

#2

SPEAK TO CEOs AND CMOs, NOT SEOs

Speak their **language**

Get out of the **weeds**

Focus on **outcomes**

#3

SEEK GREATER
PERSPECTIVE

NOT THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Clients care about the **big picture**

Ladder up to larger marketing initiatives

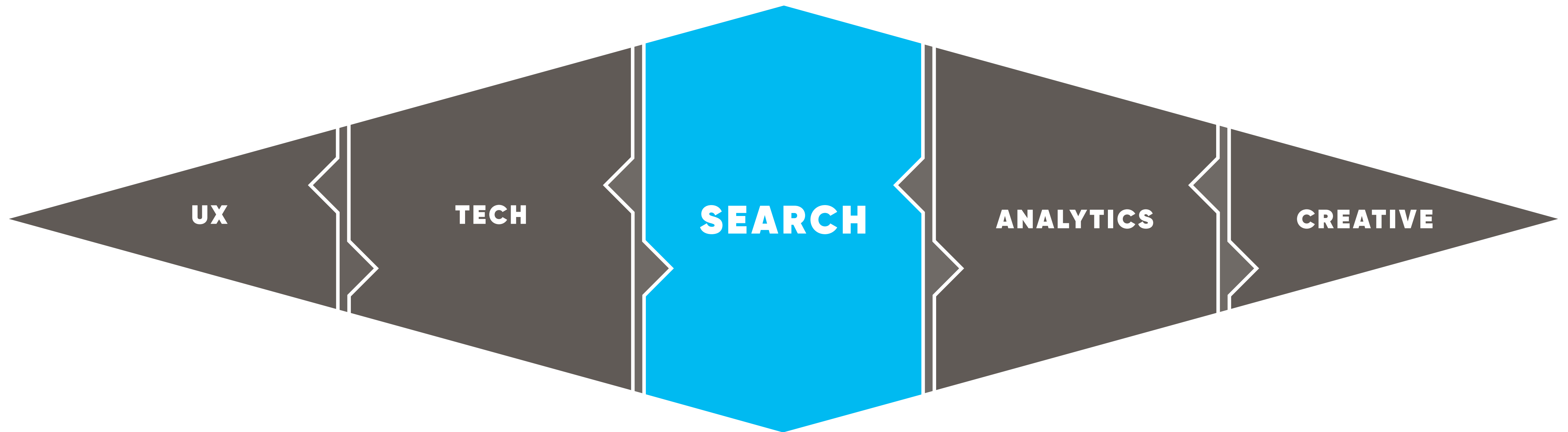
Choose projects based on
their goals, not yours

#4

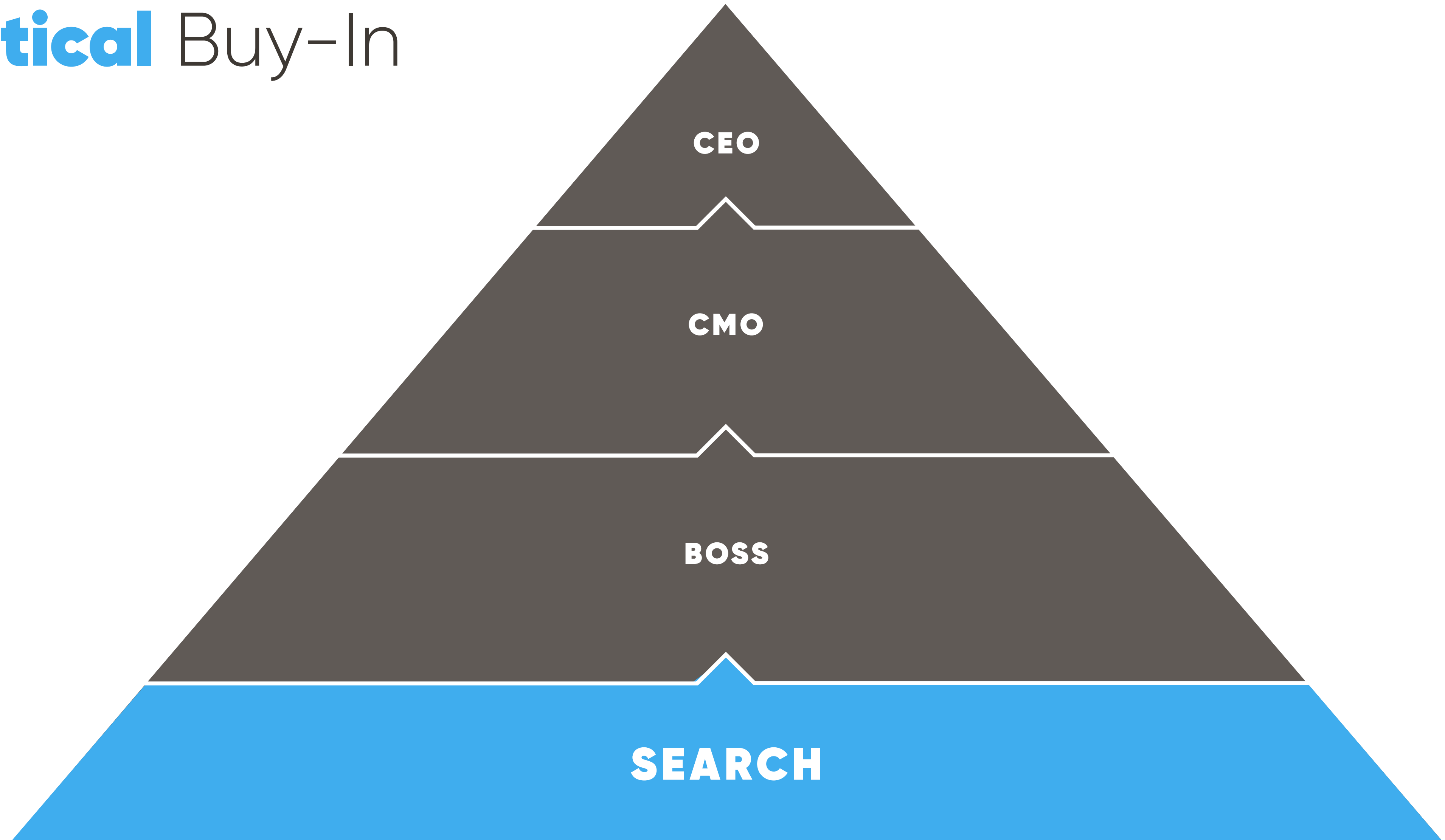
DON'T STAY IN
YOUR LANE

Every project requires a full
"product team"

Horizontal Buy-In



Vertical Buy-In



#5 BUILD A **BULLETPROOF PLAN**

Simplify the process

Show case studies as
proof of concept

What's the **opportunity cost?**

Forecast ROI

ROI Forecast: **Ambitious**

$$750 + 375 \times 35\% \times \$900$$

Avg. Monthly Organic
Mobile Conversions
from Location Pages

50% Conversion Rate
Increase (Ambitious
Goal)

Average Call
Conversion Rate

Revenue Per
Conversion

+\$118,125/MO

ROI Forecast: **Conservative**

$$750 + 75 \times 35\% \times \$900$$

Avg. Monthly Organic
Mobile Conversions
from Location Pages

10% Conversion Rate
Increase
(Conservative Goal)

Average Call
Conversion Rate

Revenue Per
Conversion

+\$23,625/MO

Cost of the Project

\$30,000

Cost of the Project

\$30,000

If **10%** CR increase
(+\$23K/MO)

**6 WEEKS
TO PROFIT**

If **50%** CR increase
(+\$118K/MO)

**1 WEEK
TO PROFIT**

Show the **cost of inaction**

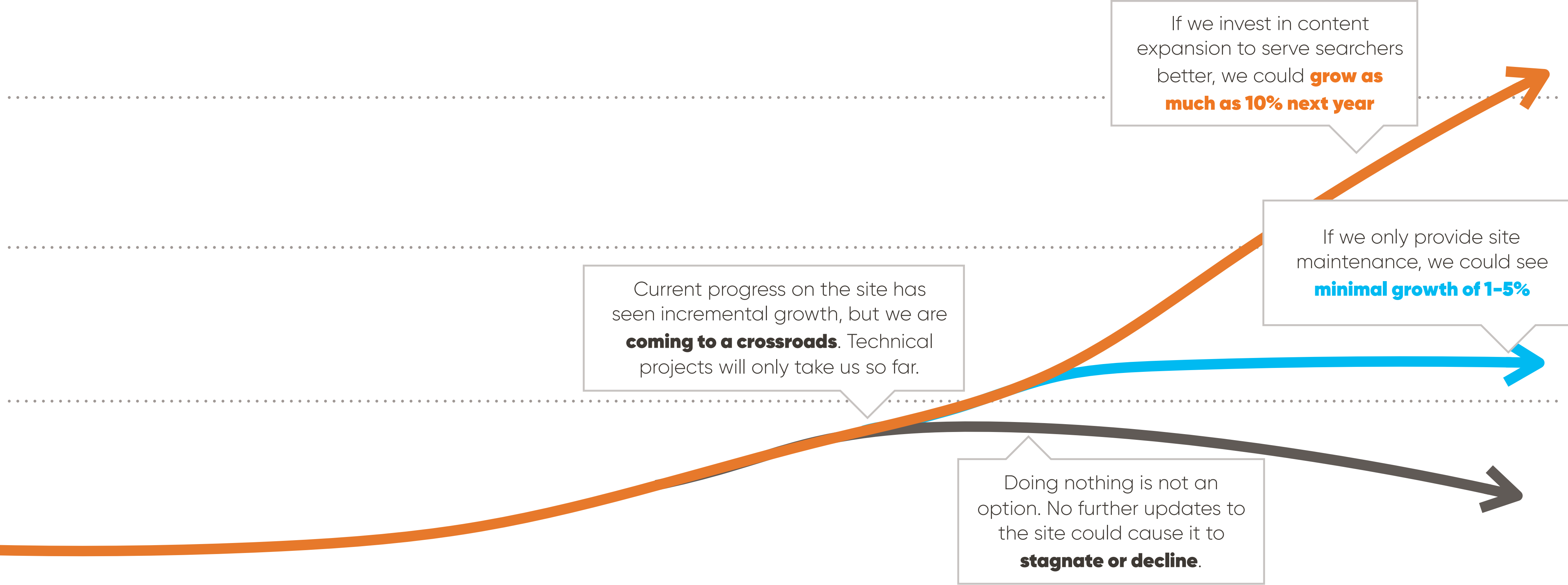
Atrophy vs. **Growth**

GROWTH

MAINTAIN

ATROPHY

GROWTH



Current progress on the site has seen incremental growth, but we are **coming to a crossroads**. Technical projects will only take us so far.

If we invest in content expansion to serve searchers better, we could **grow as much as 10% next year**

If we only provide site maintenance, we could see **minimal growth of 1-5%**

Doing nothing is not an option. No further updates to the site could cause it to **stagnate or decline**.

TIME

#6

HEADLINES, TAGLINES & SOUNDBITES



ASK FOR THE MOON

NOT THE WHOLE GALAXY

Give them **soundbites** to sell

#1

**WEB CONTENT IS THE SINGLE MOST
IMPORTANT SEO INITIATIVE IN 2018.**

#7

PATIENCE, **PERSISTENCE** & PARALLEL PATHS

Build **parallel paths.**

Stay **strong.**

Thank you.



ESPECIALLY YOU:



KIM JONES,
SEER INTERACTIVE



DAN SHURE,
EVOLVING SEO



STEPHANIE BRIGGS,
BRIGGSBY



TREVOR KLEIN,
MOZ



BLAKE DENNAN,
RICKETYROO



MATT LACUESTA,
LOCATION3



JOHN DOHERTY,
CREDO



FELICIA CRAWFORD,
MOZ

AND THESE TWO:

