goto;
GOTO
Copenhagen 2022
#GOTOcph

Discover Weekly

How Spotify's culture enabled one of the streaming service's most loved features

...or How we accidentally fixed Mondays

@joakimsunden
www.joakimsunden.com

crisp

Joakim Sundén

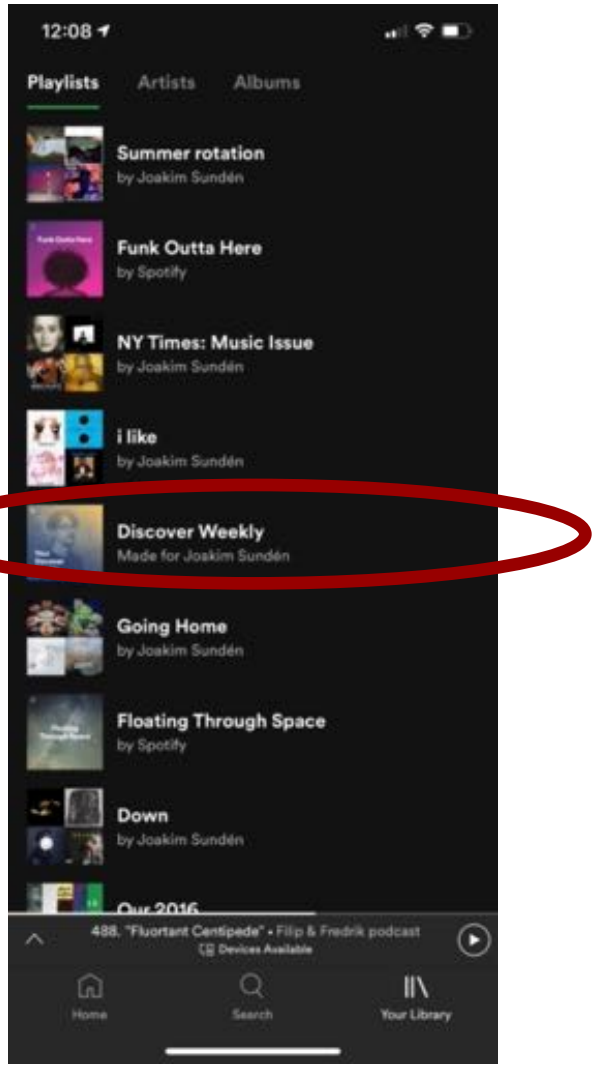
Crisp since 2017
Employed Agile Coach at Spotify 2011 - 2017

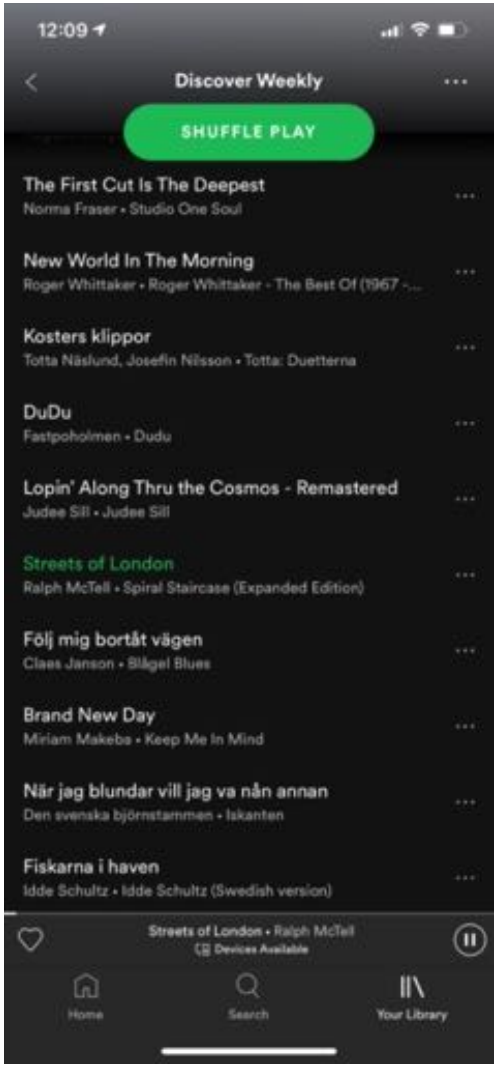
Email: joakim.sunden@gmail.com
Twitter: @joakimsunden
Blog: http://www.joakimsunden.com/

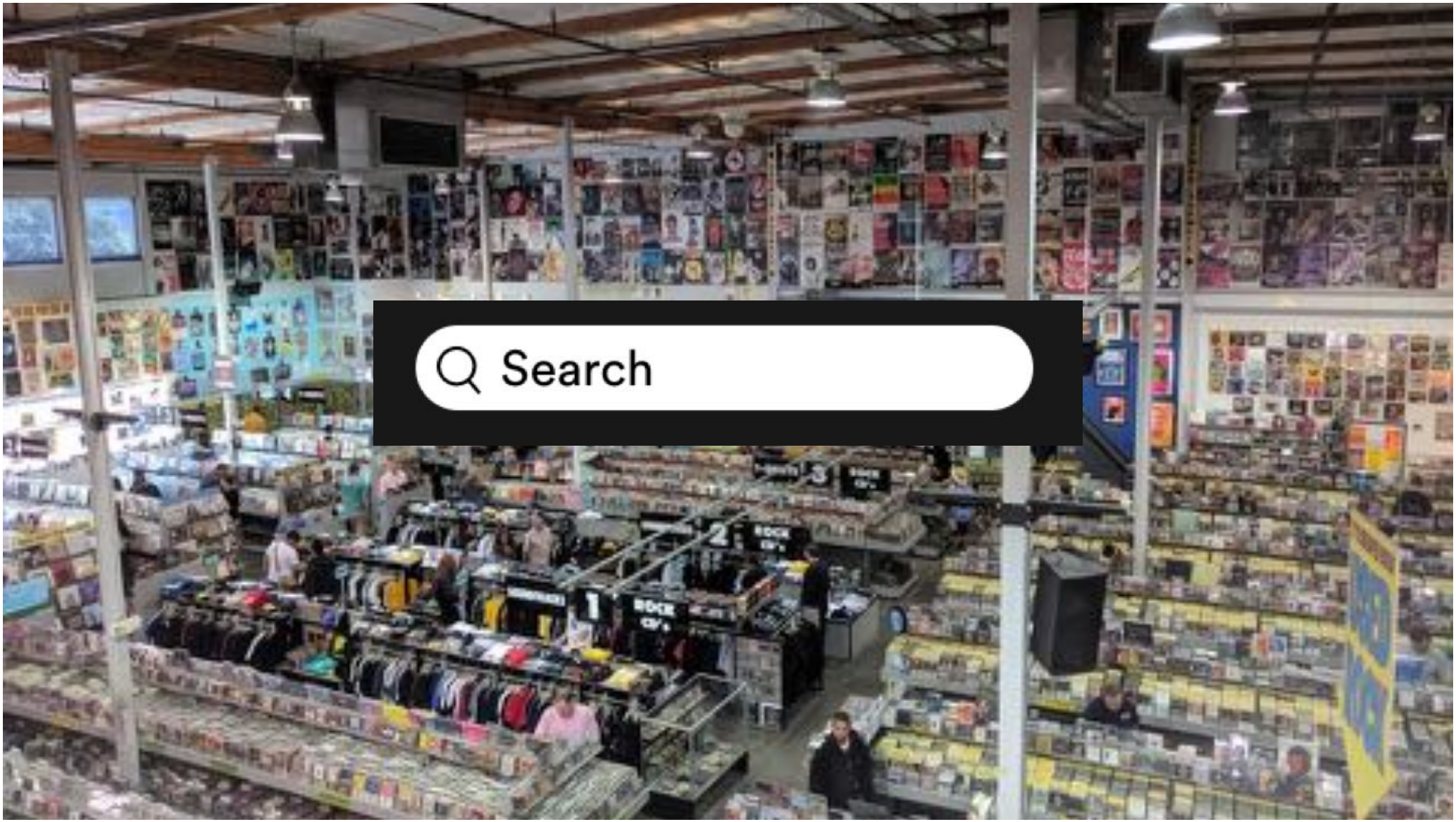
crisp Spotify telenor Länsförsäkringar nexi Raiffeisen BANK VOLVO SAP nets ICA UBISOFT Grindr H&M

40% off manning.com
Code: crisp40

Discover Weekly
Discover Weekly
SHUFFLE PLAY
Available Offline
All My Friends
Can't Deny My Love


12:08
Playlists
Artists
Albums
Summer rotation
by Joakim Sundén
Funk Outta Here
by Spotify
NY Times: Music Issue
by Joakim Sundén
i like
by Joakim Sundén
Discover Weekly
Made for Joakim Sundén
Going Home
by Joakim Sundén
Floating Through Space
by Spotify
Down
by Joakim Sundén
488. "Fluortant Centipede" • Filip & Fredrik podcast
Devices Available
Home
Search
Your Library

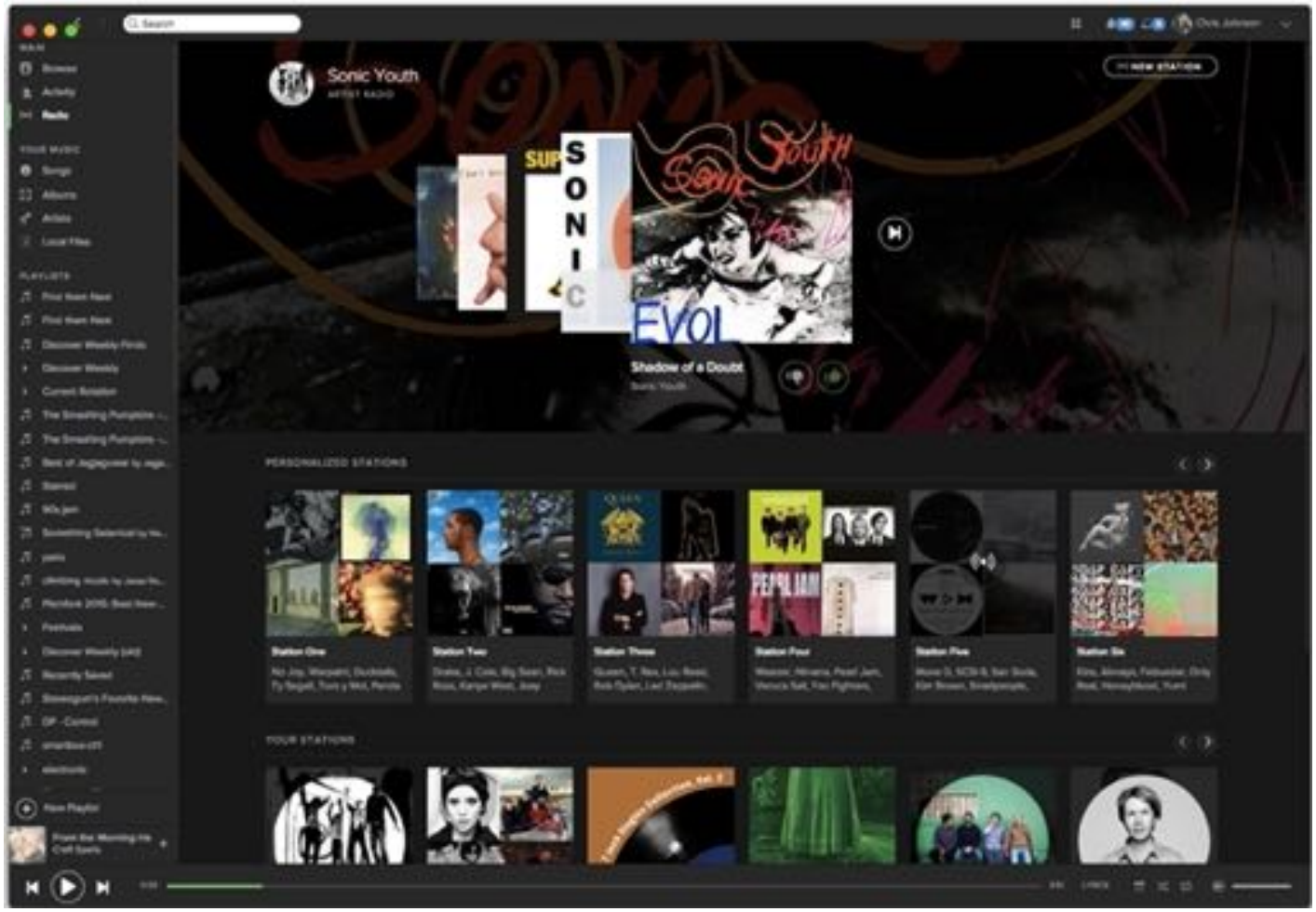

12:09
Discover Weekly
SHUFFLE PLAY
The First Cut Is The Deepest
Norma Fraser • Studio One Soul
New World In The Morning
Roger Whittaker • Roger Whittaker - The Best Of (1967 -...
Kosters klippor
Totta Näslund, Josefin Nilsson • Totta: Duetterna
DuDu
Fastpoholmen • Dudu
Lopin' Along Thru the Cosmos - Remastered
Judee Sill • Judee Sill
Streets of London
Ralph McTell • Spiral Staircase (Expanded Edition)
Följ mig bortåt vägen
Claes Janson • Blågel Blues
Brand New Day
Miriam Makeba • Keep Me In Mind
När jag blundar vill jag va nån annan
Den svenska björnstammen • Iskanten
Fiskarna i haven
Idde Schultz • Idde Schultz (Swedish version)
Streets of London • Ralph McTell
Devices Available
Home
Search
Your Library


Search

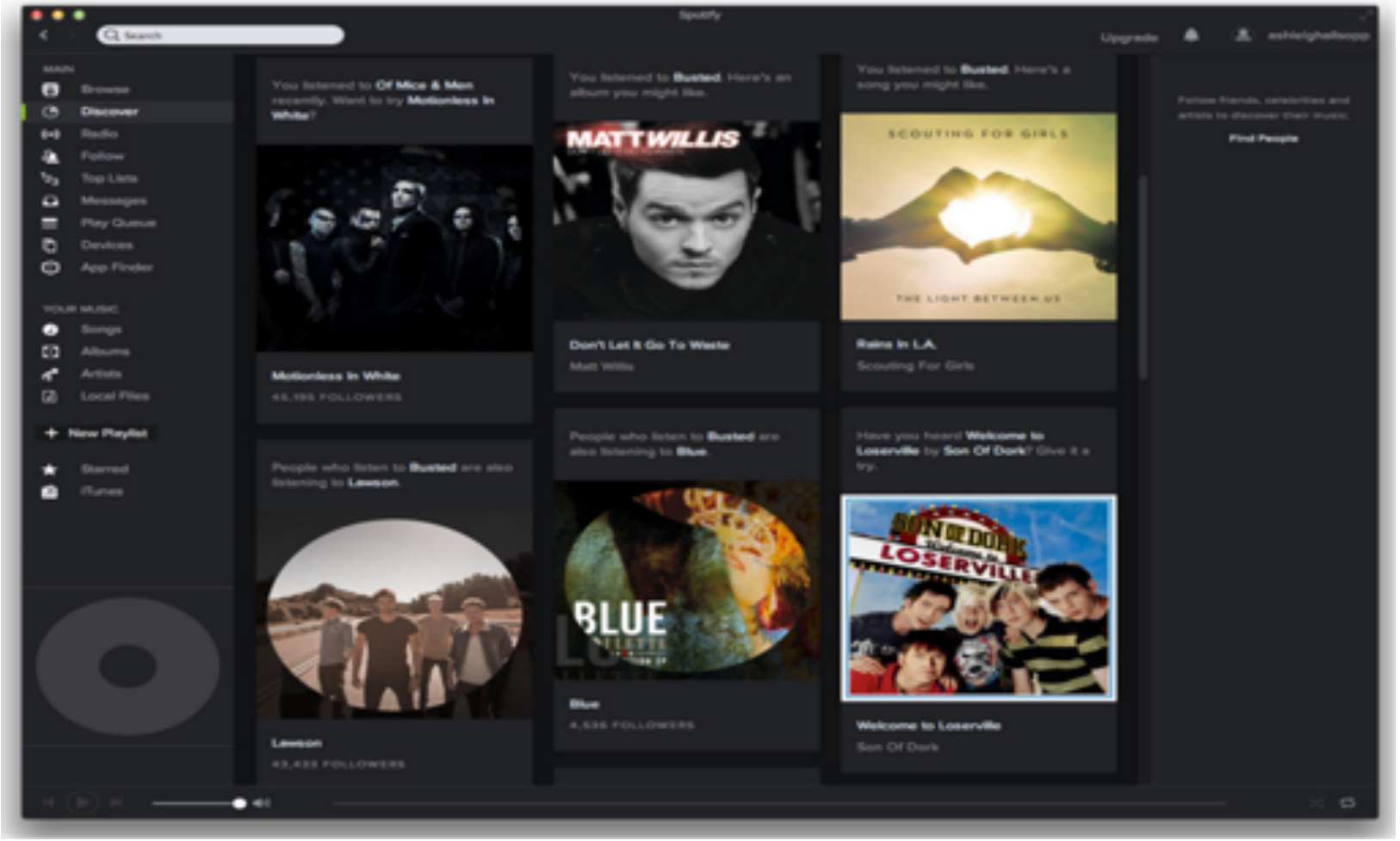
Spotify HQ

Hey, we've nailed search and play! Congrats!
BUT....
If you DON'T KNOW what you want to listen to.... our product is USELESS!

Radio


Sonic Youth
NEW STATION
Shadow of a Doubt
PERSONALIZED STATIONS
YOUR STATIONS

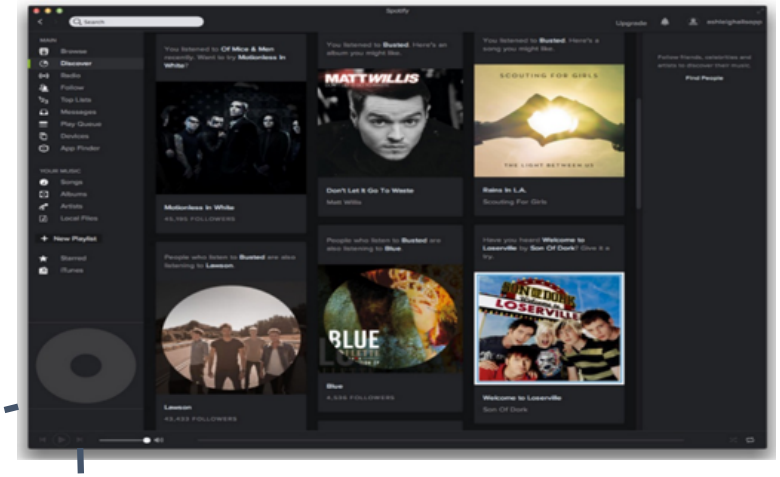
Discover


Spotify
Search
Upgrade
MAIN
Browse
Discover
Radio
Follow
Top Lists
Messages
Play Queue
Devices
App Finder
YOUR MUSIC
Songs
Albums
Artists
Local Files
New Playlist
Starred
iTunes
You listened to Of Mice & Men recently. Want to try Motionless in White?
Motionless in White
45,195 FOLLOWERS
People who listen to Busted are also listening to Lawson.
Lawson
43,433 FOLLOWERS
You listened to Busted. Here's an album you might like.
MATT WILLIS
Don't Let It Go To Waste
Matt Willis
People who listen to Busted are also listening to Blue.
BLUE
Blue
4,536 FOLLOWERS
You listened to Busted. Here's a song you might like.
SCOUTING FOR GIRLS
THE LIGHT BETWEEN US
Rains In L.A.
Scouting For Girls
Have you heard Welcome to Loserville by Son Of Dork? Give it a try.
SON OF DORK
LOSERVILLE
Welcome to Loserville
Son Of Dork
Find People

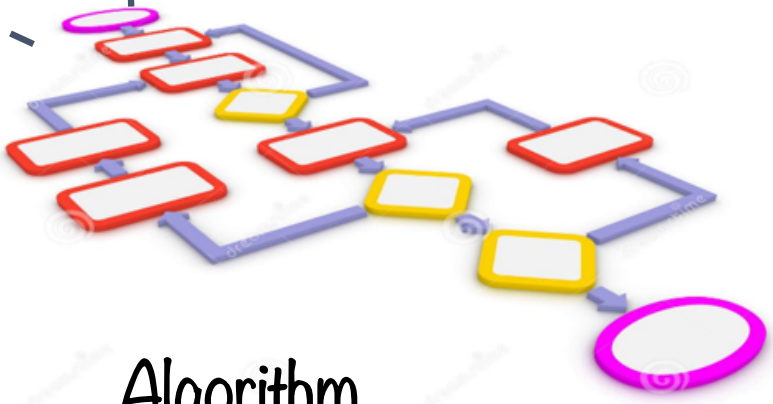
There must be a better way...
Engineers
Product Manager
Designer
Sonic Youth
MATT WILLIS
BLUE
LOSERVILLE

Re-connecting the dots

Data

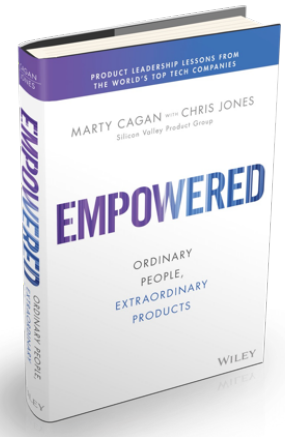


User Interface



Algorithm

If you're just using your engineers to code, you're only getting about half their value



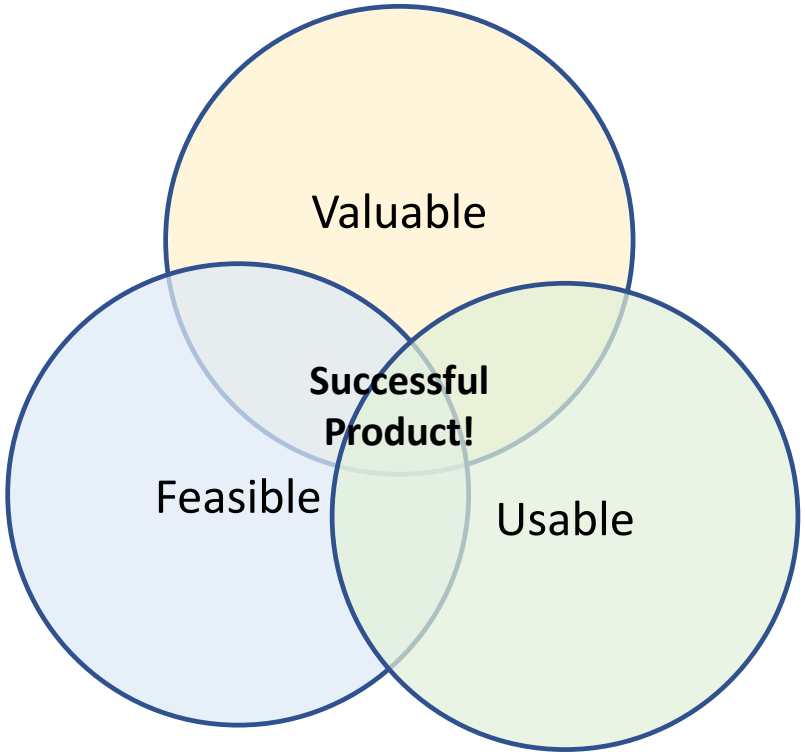
Marty Cagan

"I have said many times that the best single source for innovation is your engineers (because they're working with the enabling technology every day, so they're in the best position to see what's just now possible)."

"Hopefully this is obvious, but a strong tech-powered product company would no sooner outsource their engineers, than they would outsource their CEO."

Finding the Successful Product

- How to code
- How to fit with legacy systems
- Tech trends
- Intangible aspects (security, scaling, performance, privacy concerns, etc.)



- Understand your organization
- Org vision and strategy
- How the org makes €
- The org's market, customers, competitors
- The value proposition

- Understand the users
- Identify users' problems
- Identify solutions, the job-to-be-done
- Design, prototype, test

Based on Marty Cagan's "Mind the Product"

PO/PM as collaborative leader and facilitator

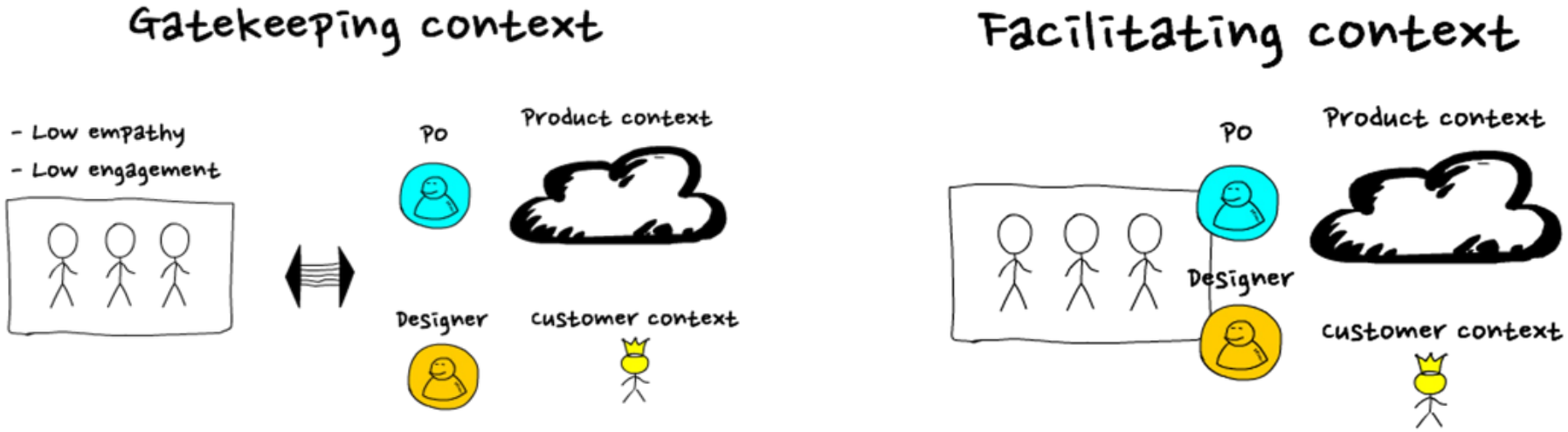
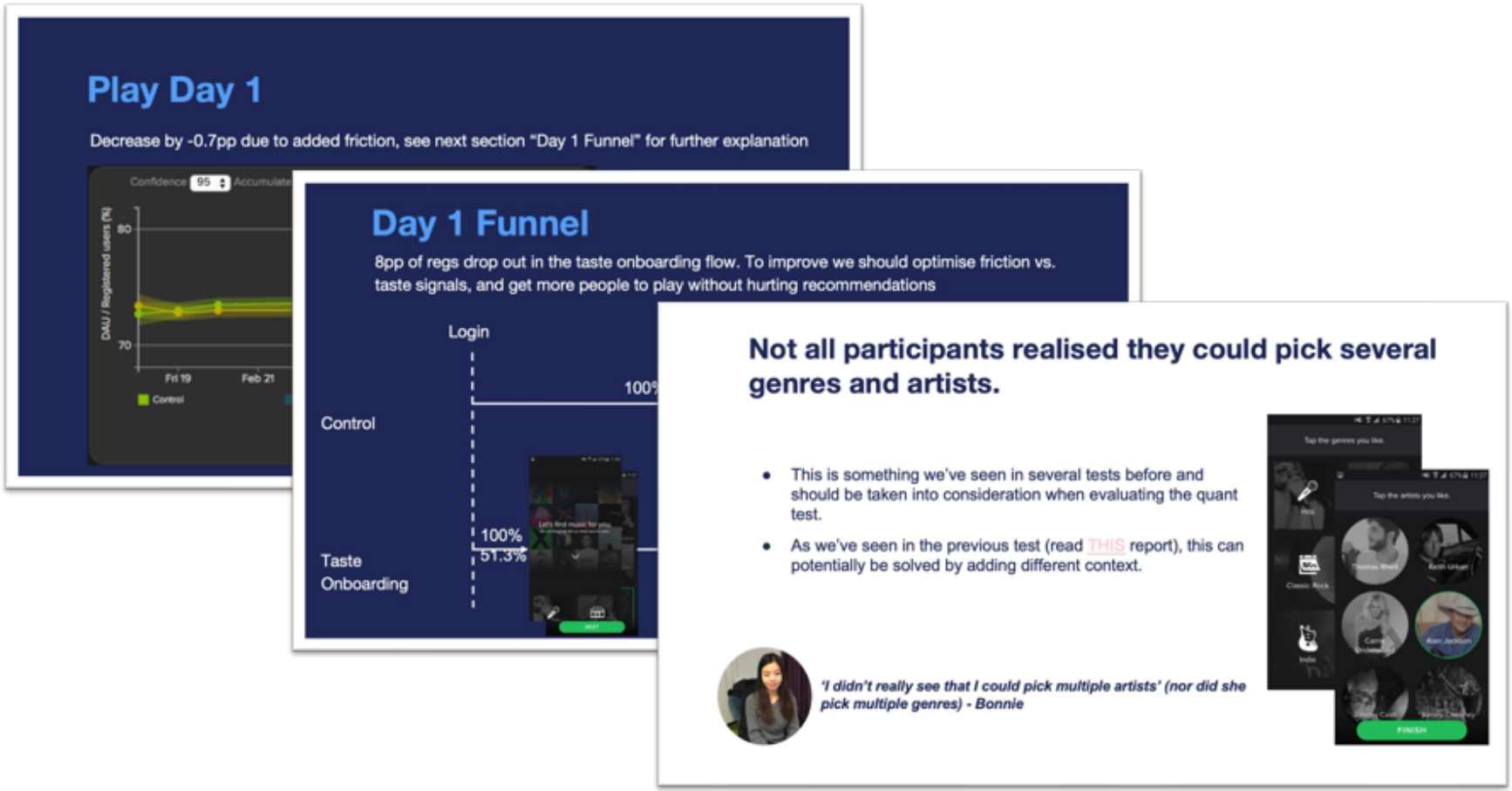


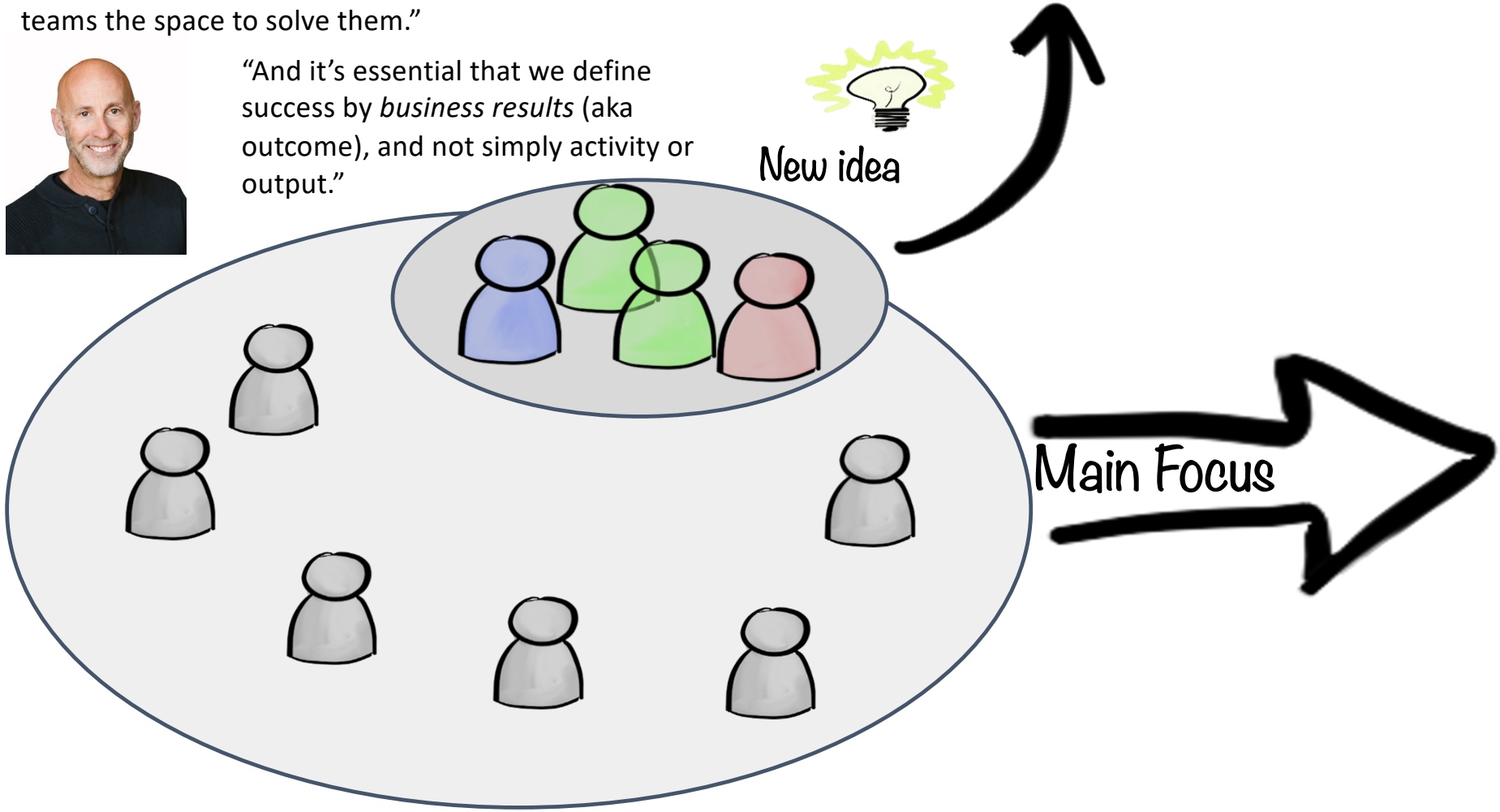
Illustration: Jason Yip

Facilitating context

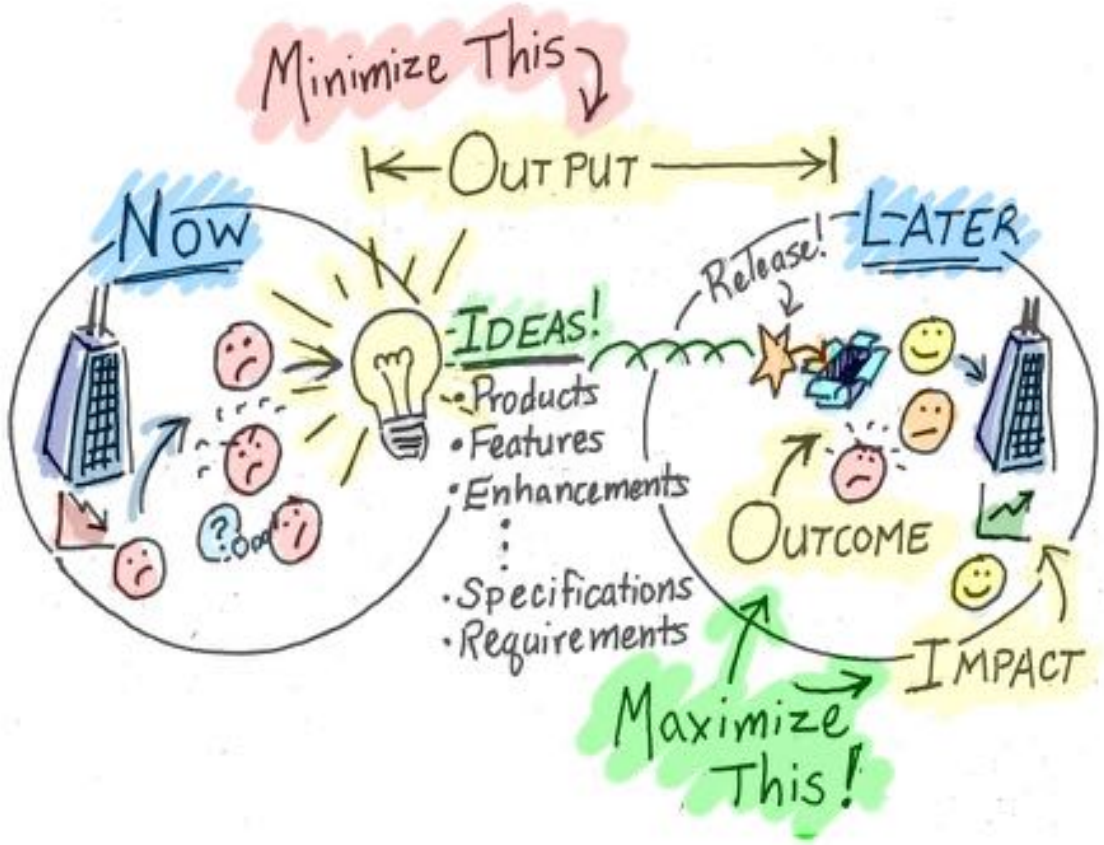


"The most important thing is to empower teams by assigning them *problems to solve*, and then give the teams the space to solve them."

"And it's essential that we define success by *business results* (aka outcome), and not simply activity or output."



Focused on Outcomes, not on Output



Activities, Epics, Features, Stories...

- How we believe we are going to reach our goals
- These are just hypotheses/bets
- They have to change if the numbers aren't improving

These bets have a low success rate

The vast majority of [new ideas] **fail** in experiments, and even experts often misjudge which ones will pay off.

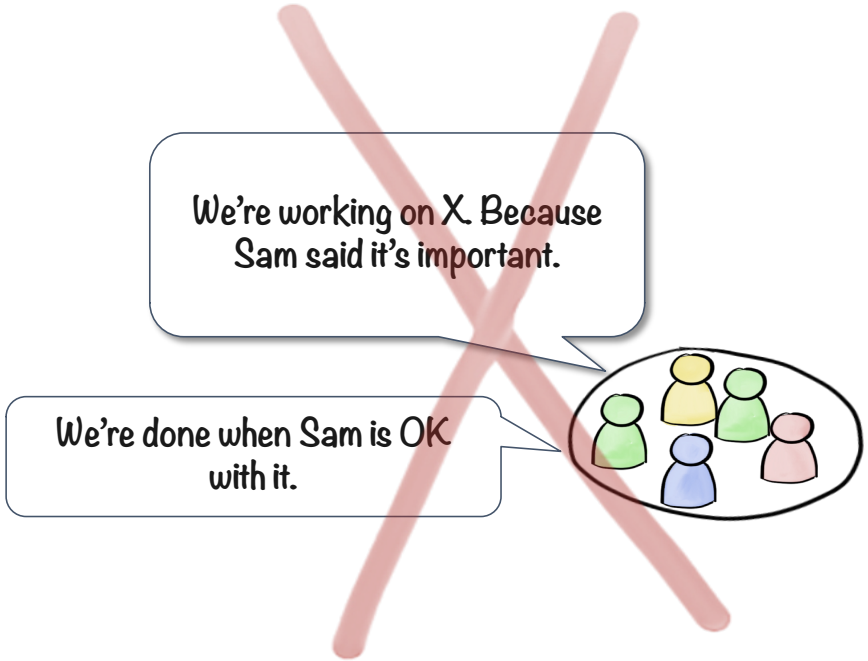
At Google and Bing, **only about 10% to 20%** of experiments generate positive results.

At Microsoft as a whole, one-third prove effective, one-third have neutral results, and **one-third have negative results**.

Ron Kohavi, ex-Amazon, ex-Microsoft

https://hbr.org/2017/09/the-surprising-power-of-online-experiments

Moving from opinions to data



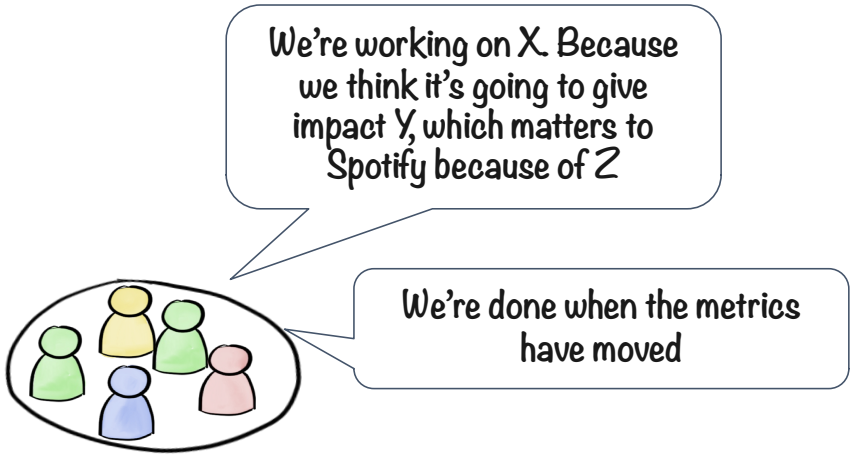
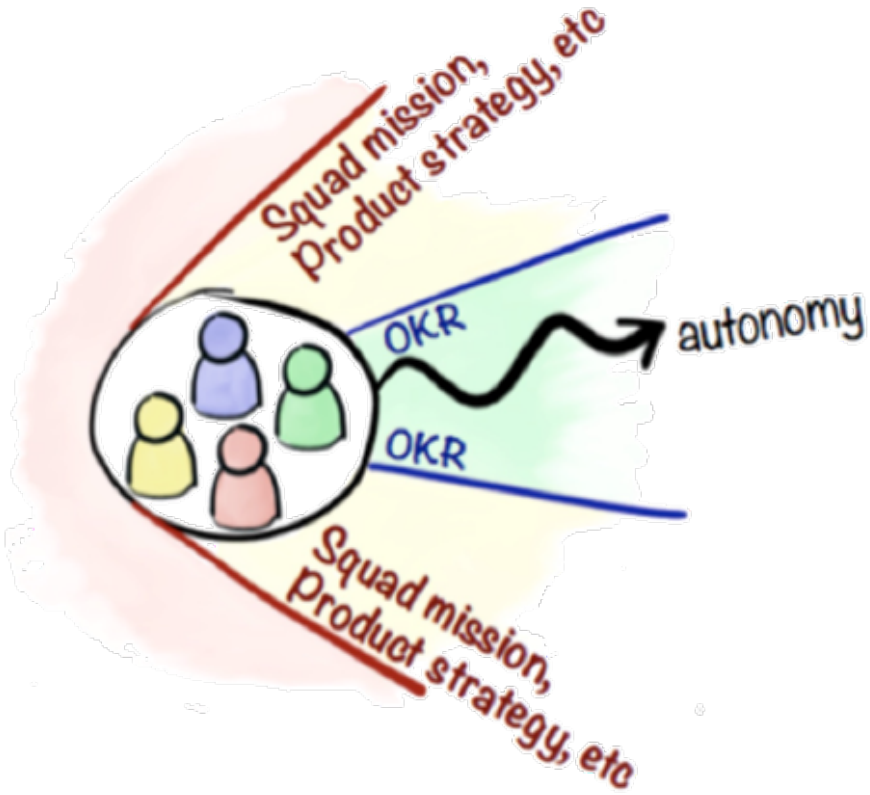


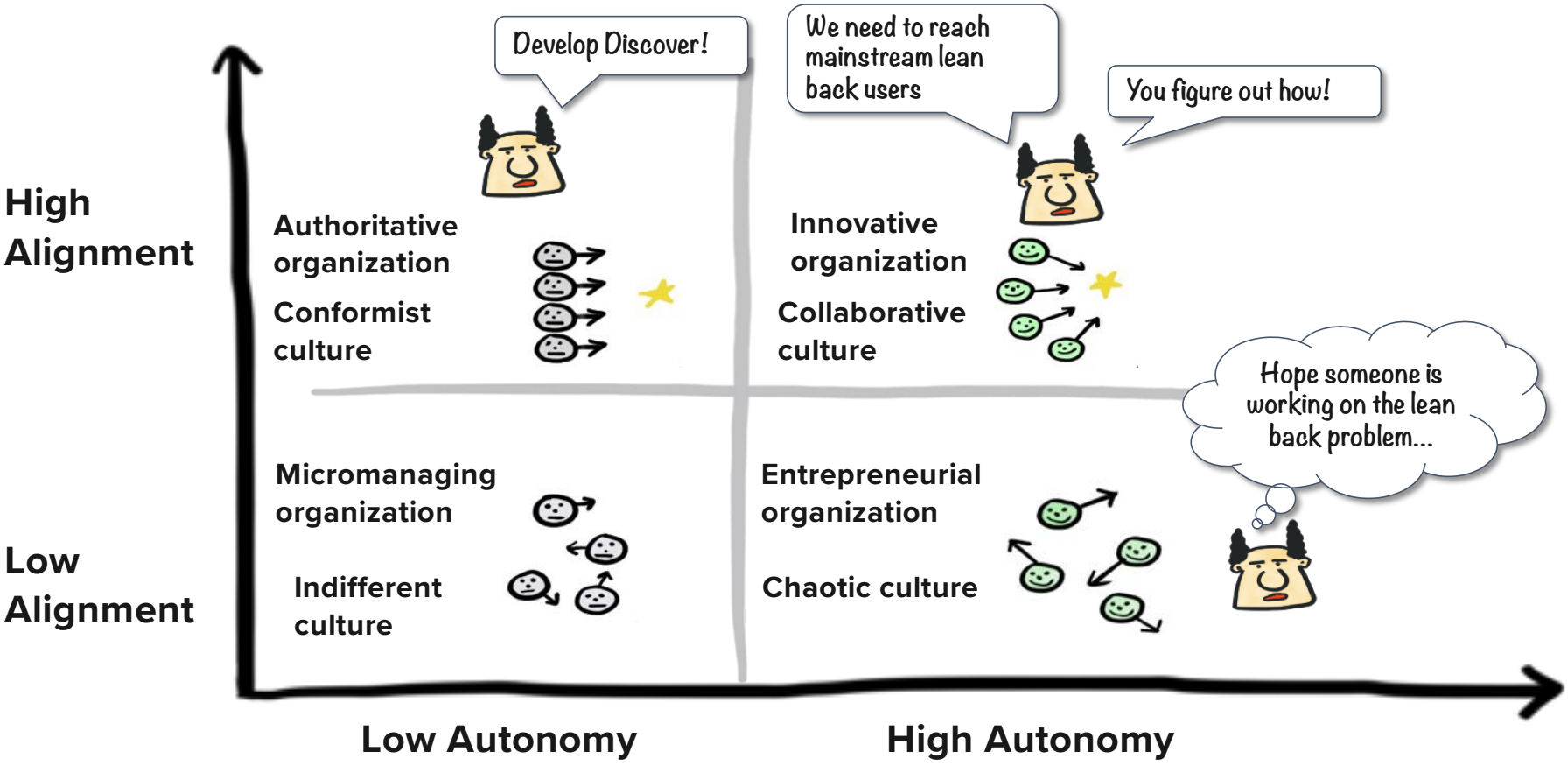
Illustration: Henrik Kniberg

OPTION B
IT IS.
OPTION A
OPTION B
TOM
FISH
BURNE
Let data drive decisions, not the Highest Paid Person's Opinion.
#HowGoogleWorks
HowGoogleWorks.net

Aligned Autonomy

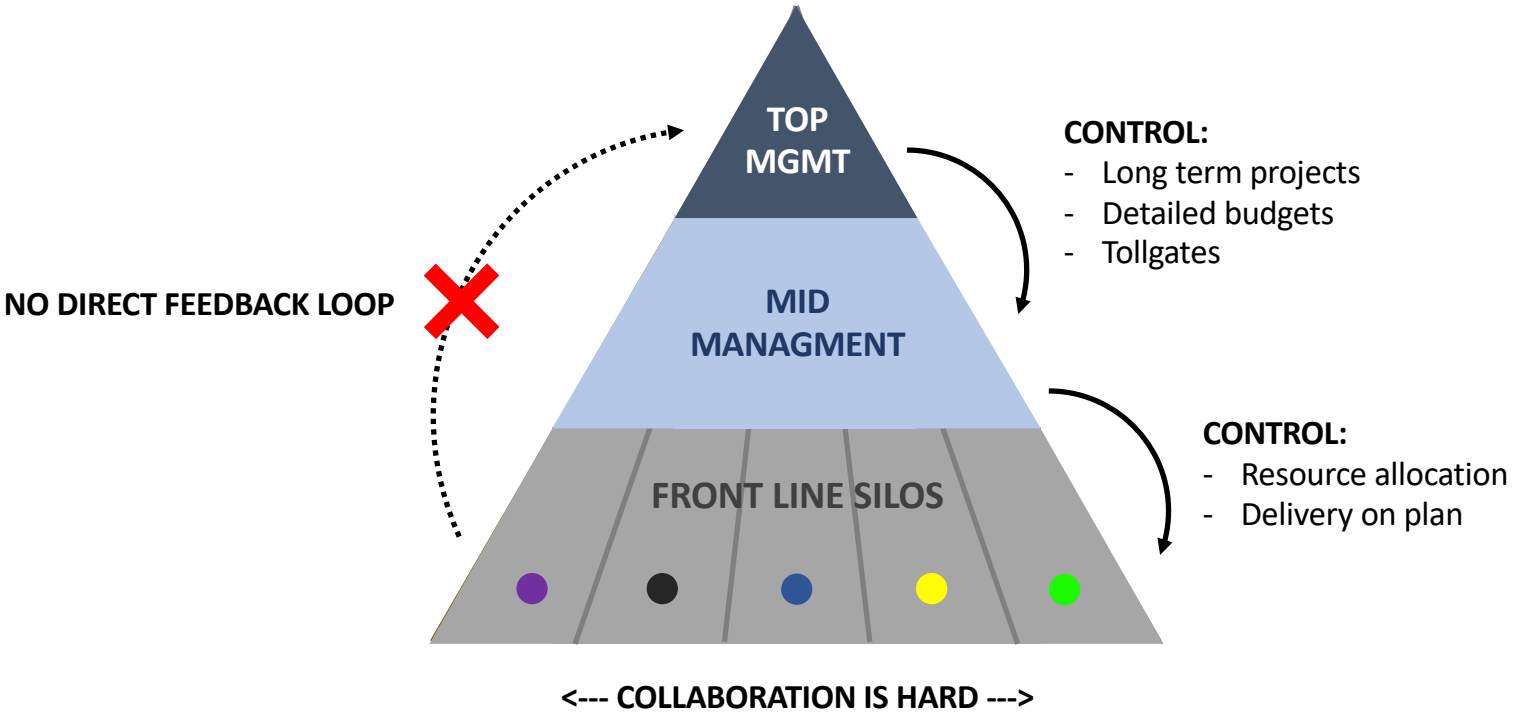


Alignment enables autonomy

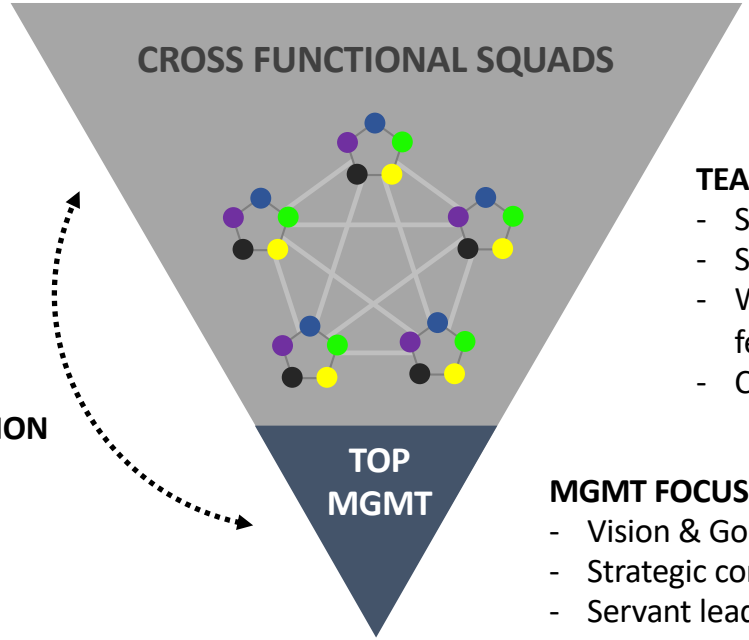


Source: Stephen Bungay

"Traditional" organizations



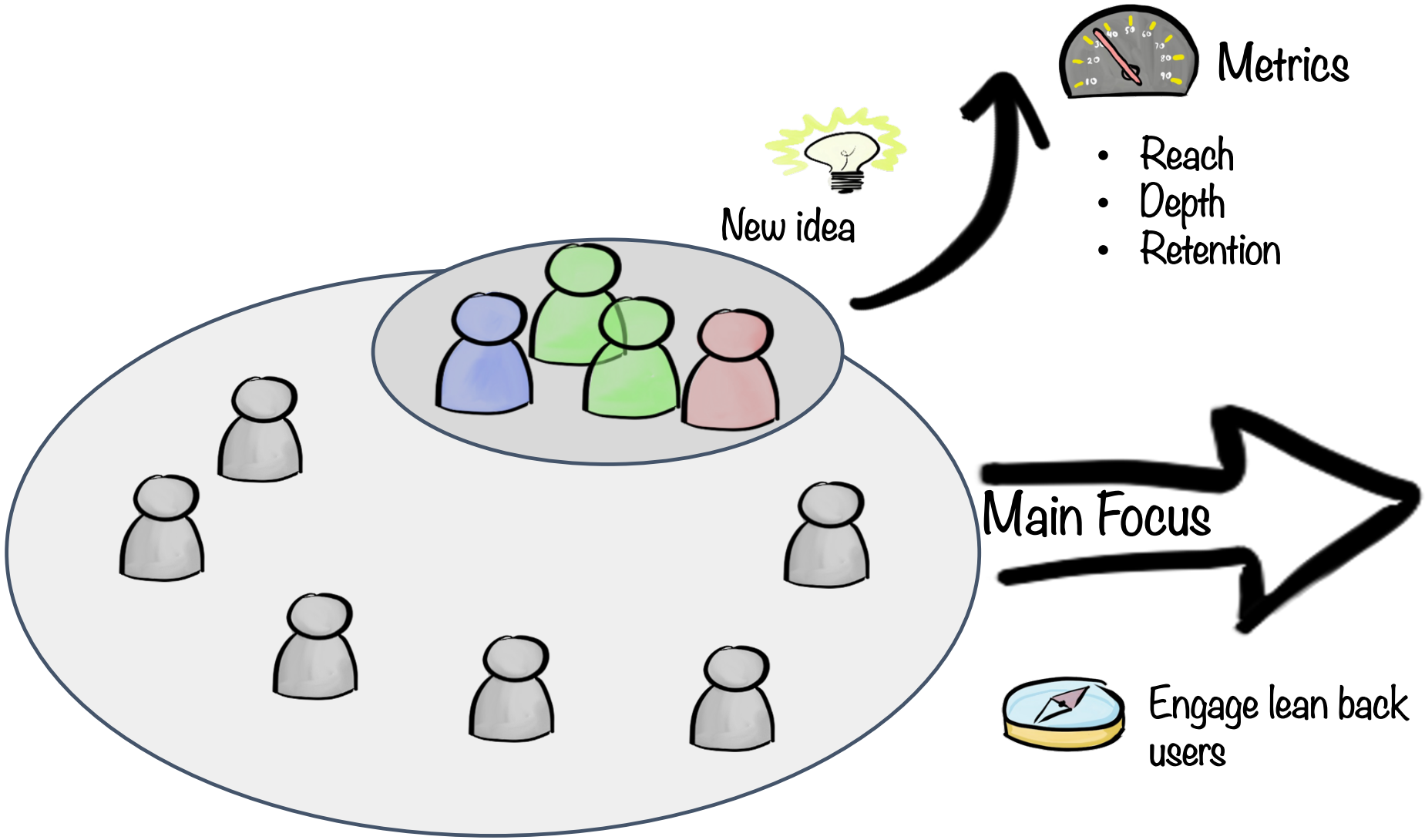
Aligned Autonomy



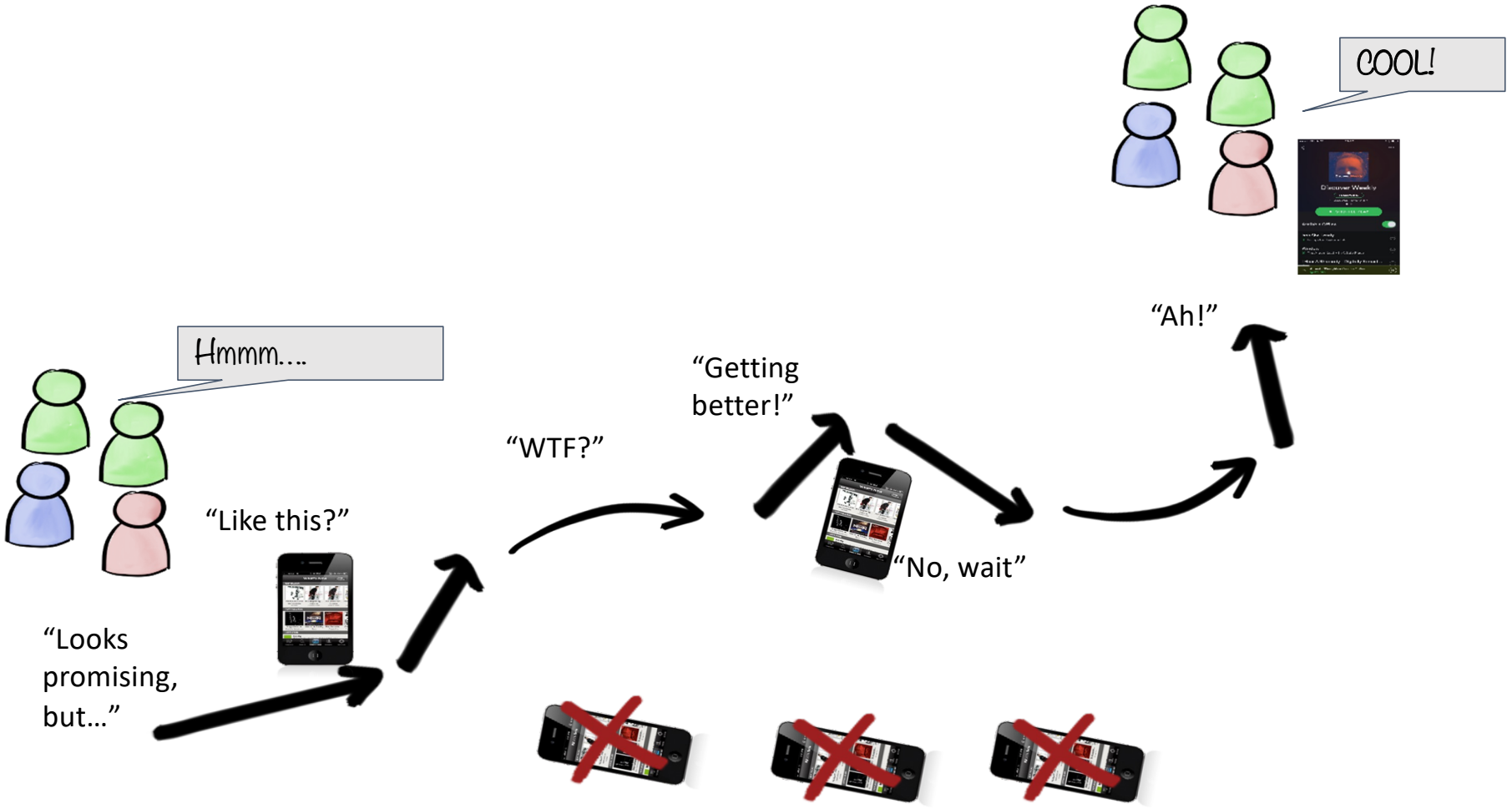
TRANSPARENT INFORMATION
(BOTH WAYS)

TEAM FOCUS:
- Small and long-lived
- Self-organizing
- Working towards goals, using feedback loops
- Collaboration between squads

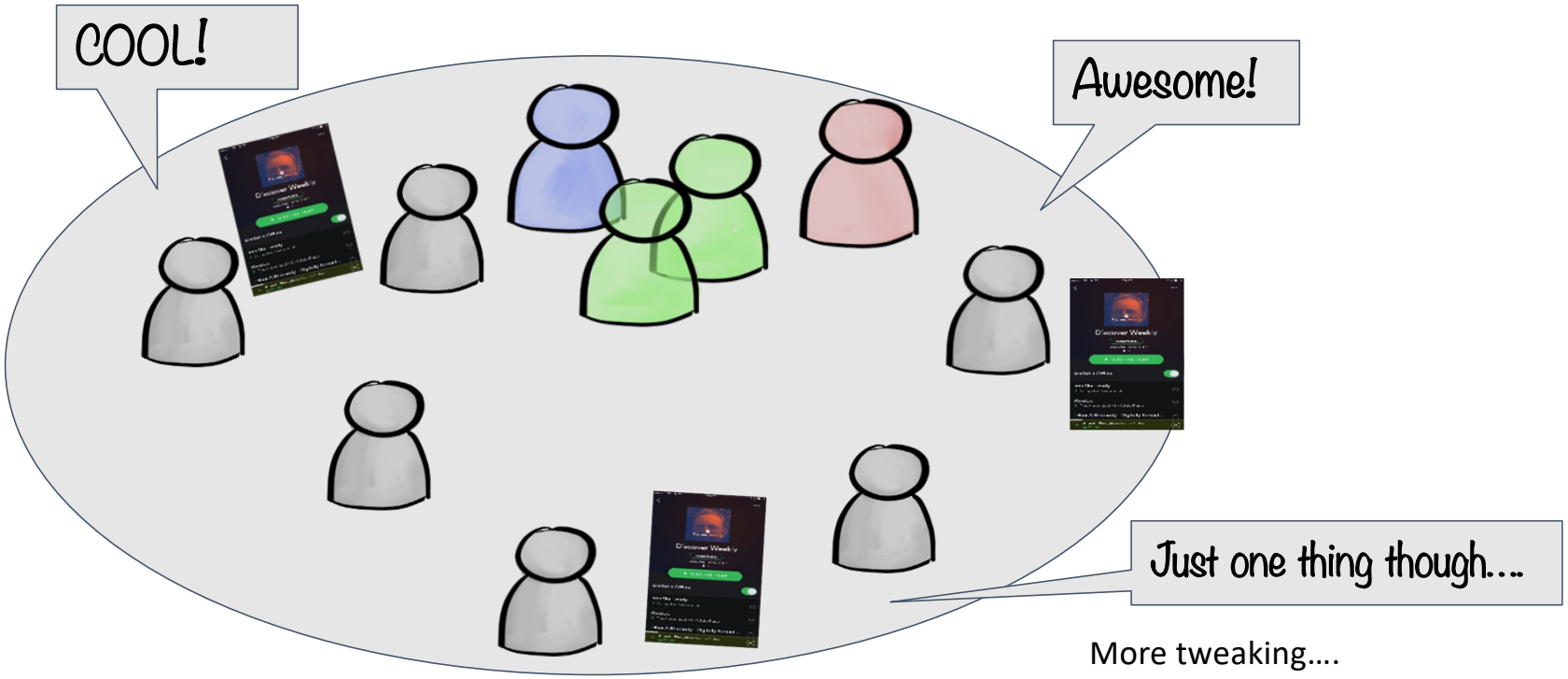
MGMT FOCUS:
- Vision & Goals
- Strategic context
- Servant leadership
- Removing obstacles for squads


Metrics
Reach
Depth
Retention
New idea
Main Focus
Engage lean back users

Iterate, iterate, iterate….



Team using it, continuous improvement

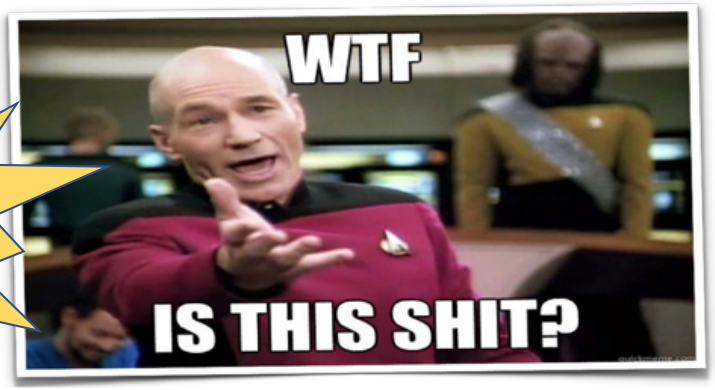


Experiments, experiments

Q: What should the cover art look like?

A: ME! But with cool colors.

10% lift in WAU!



Fixed lots of content WTFs

What's the right length?

~~4 hours~~

~~3 hours~~

2 hours

Q: How often should it be updated?

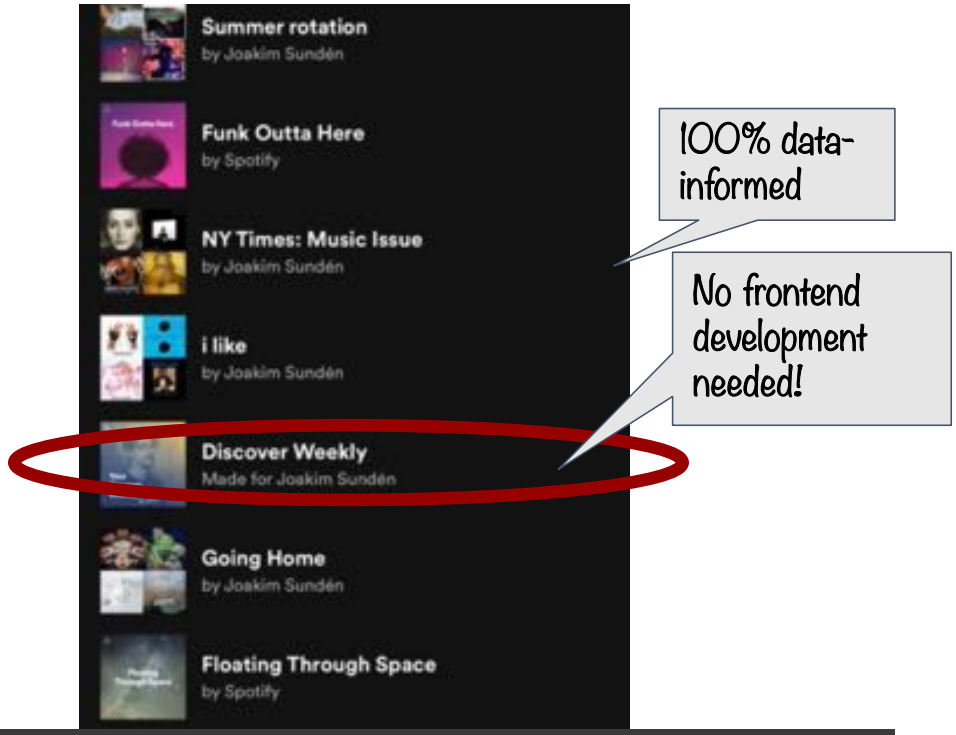
A: Every week.

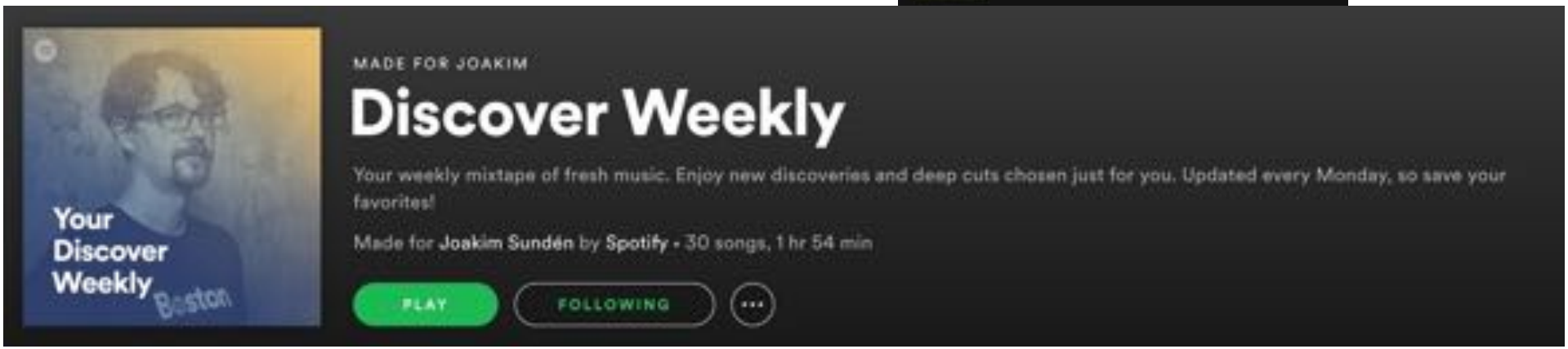
Too unfamiliar

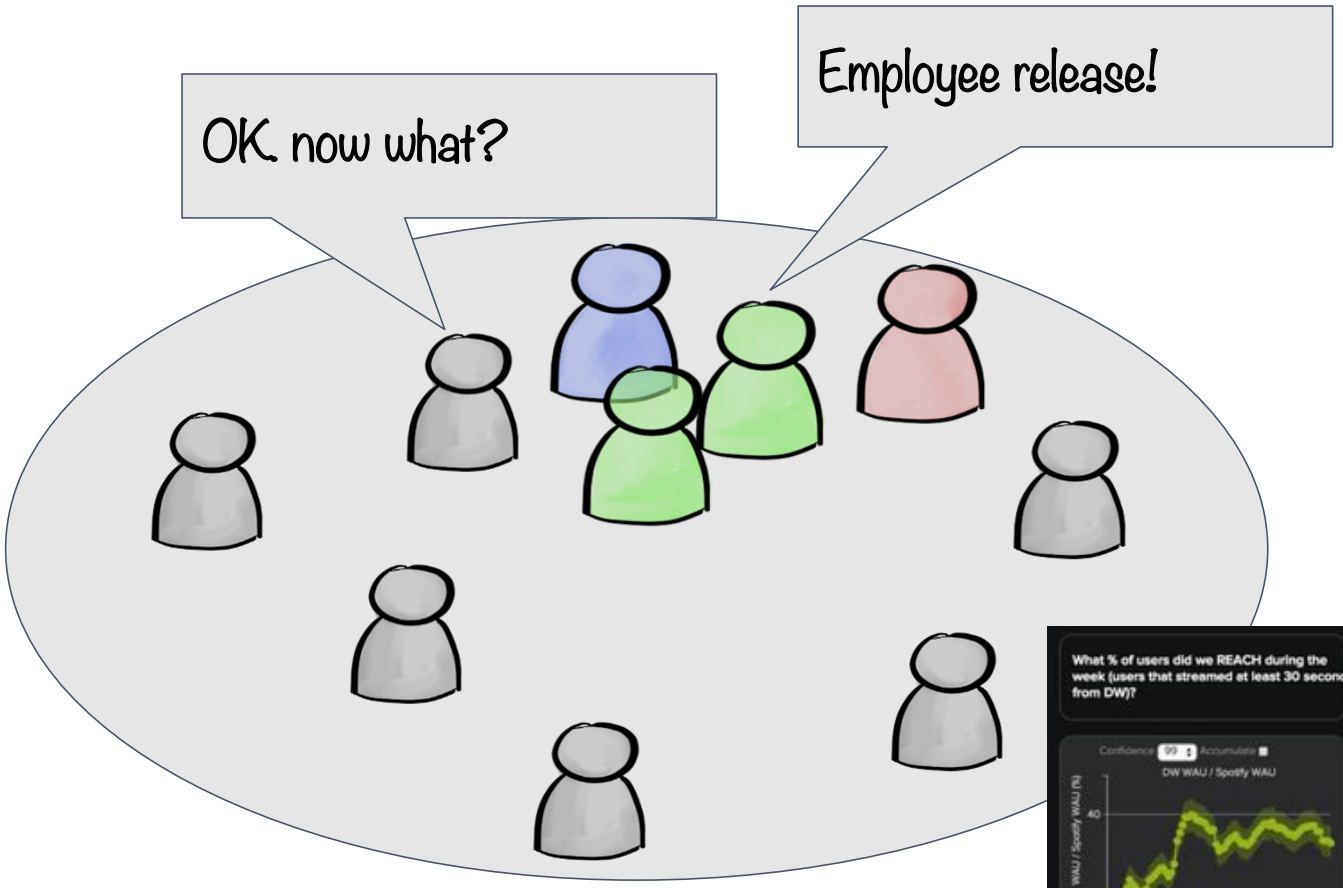
Too familiar

Winning formula

- ➔ 2 hours of personalised music recommendations
- ➔ Refreshed every Monday morning
- ➔ Delivered in a standard Spotify playlist
- ➔ Playlist image is based on user's FB account
- ➔ All songs are *replaced* each week

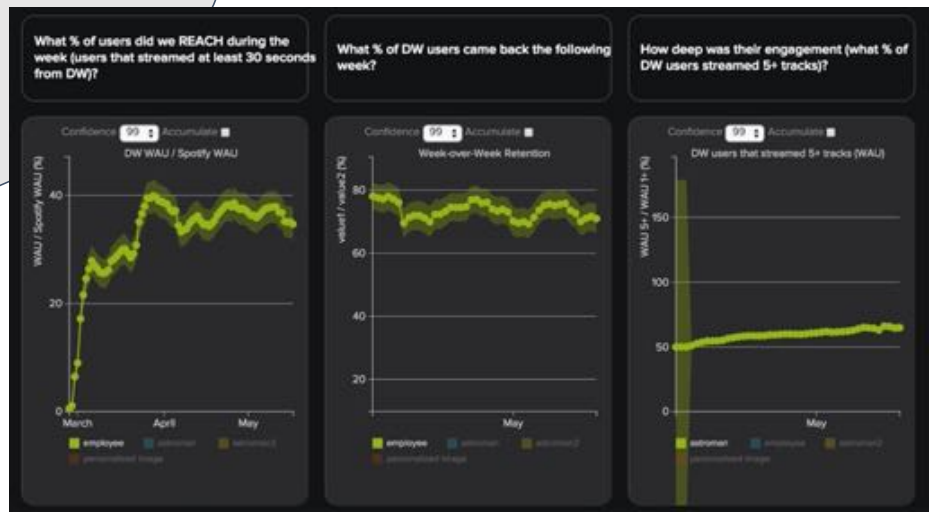






Metrics

- Reach
- Depth
- Retention



Employee release

Employee Test: Discover Weekly

Matthew Ogle <mogle@spotify.com>
to Lambda, bcc: staff

What is it?

Discover Weekly is a new personalized playlist based on the popu
playlists from 2014's Year in Review.

Every Monday we'll (re)fill it with two new hours of music, selecte
your recent listening.

How do I try it?

For the employee test, Discover Weekly should magically appear

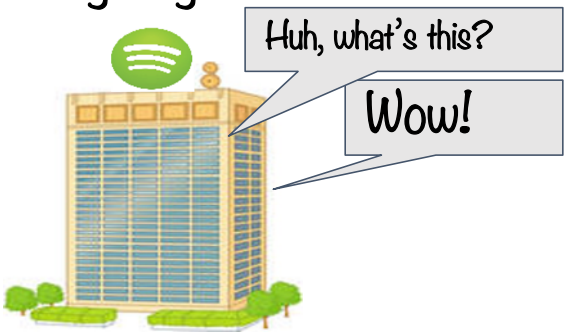
Survey (google form)
"How how much do you like the music in your discover weekly"

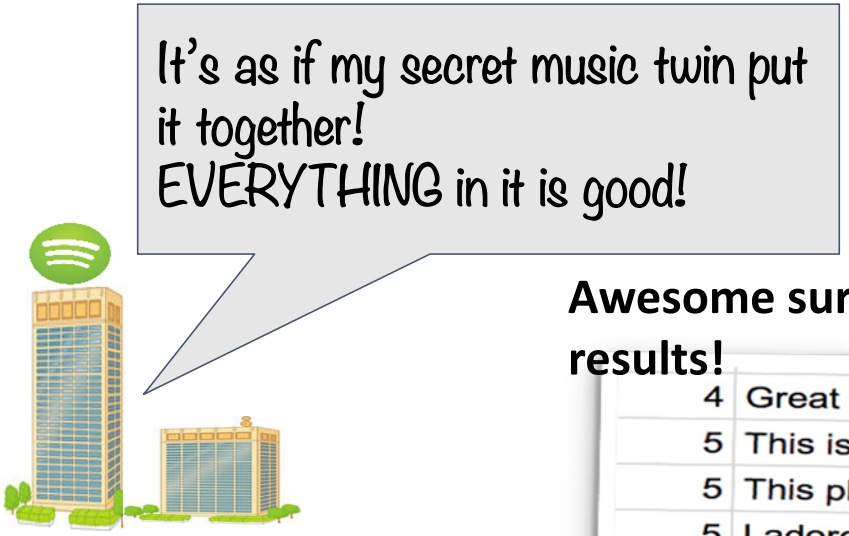
5 ↑ Love it! Found a new favorite song!

1 ↓ Hate it!

Rest of Spotify using it, loving it!

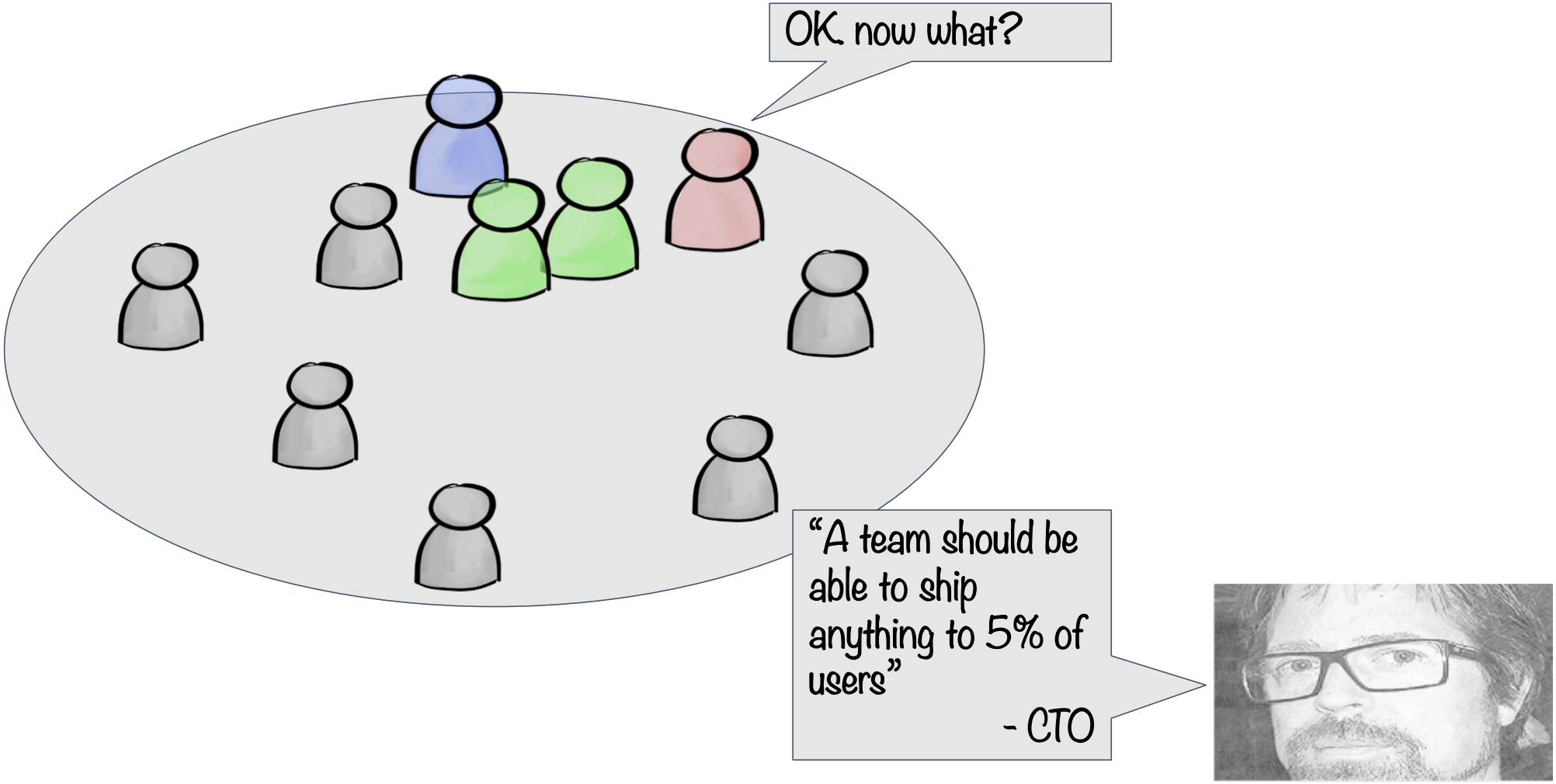
And giving feedback. More iterating!





Awesome survey results!

4	Great invention!!!
5	This is what I've b
5	This playlist was a
5	I adore this new fe
5	Please keep this u
5	
5	VERY impressed!!
5	
5	
4	
5	Spot on.
4	


OK. now what?
“A team should be able to ship anything to 5% of users”
- CTO

Daniel Ek
16
“We aim to make mistakes faster than anyone else”

Celebrate Failure

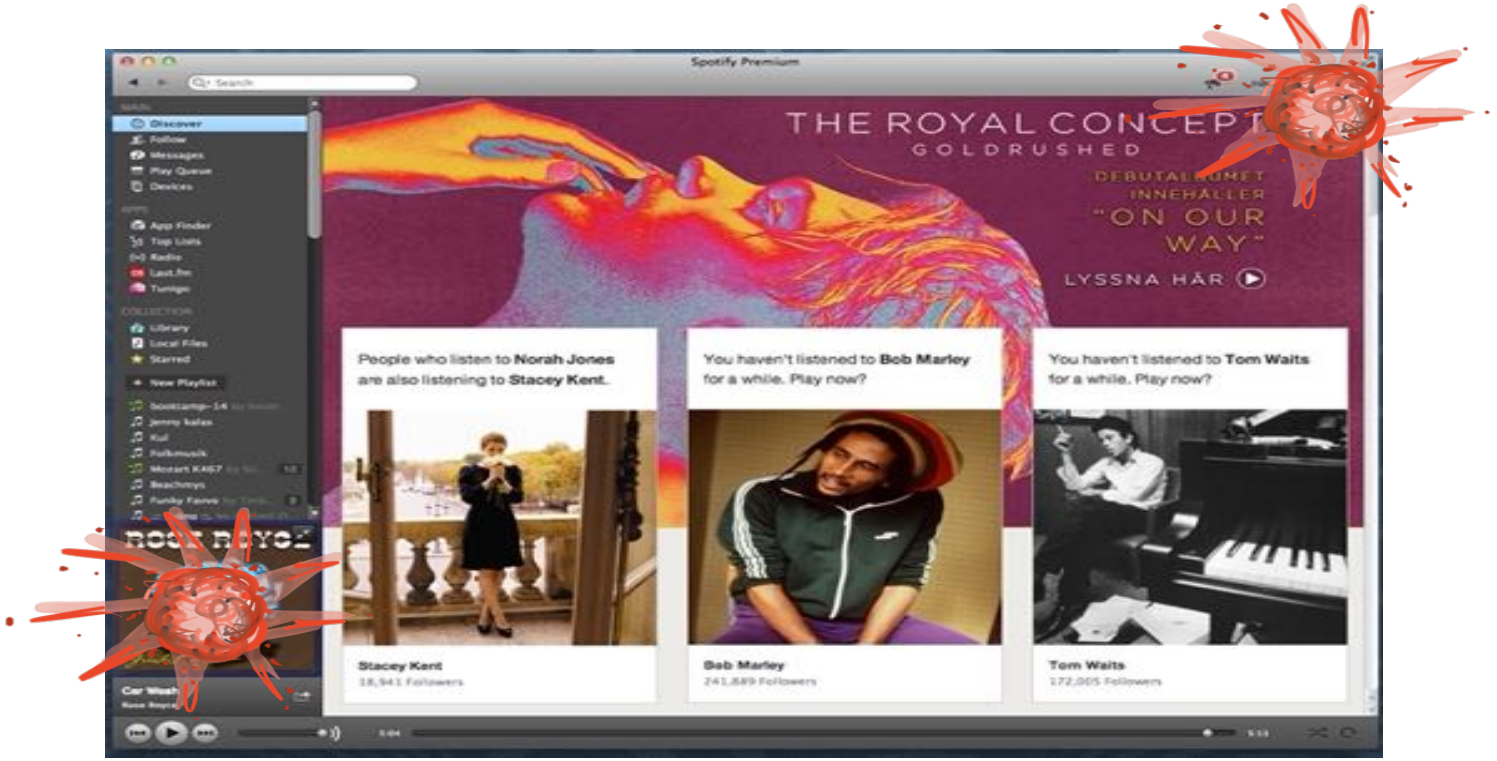
Internal blog:

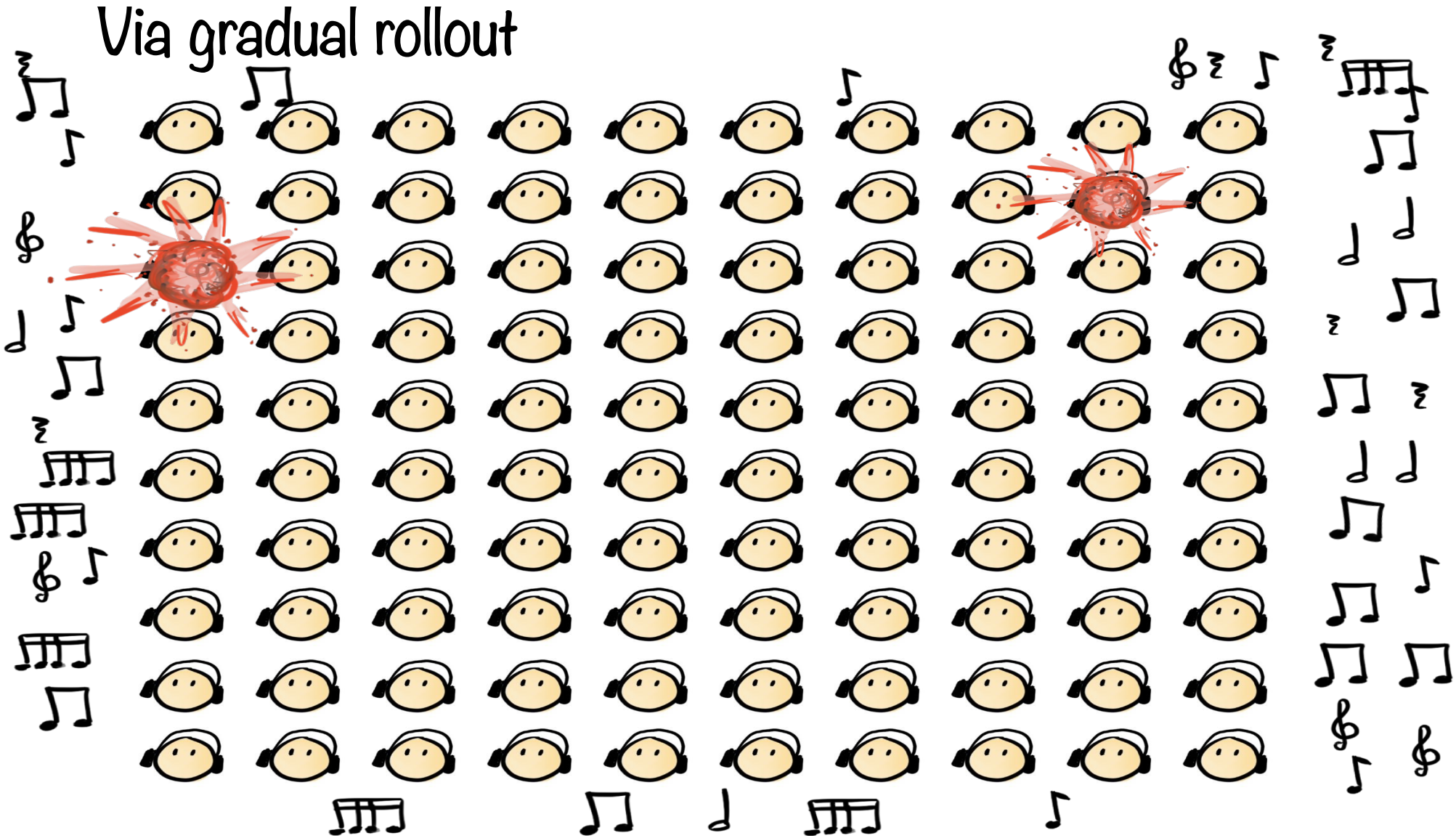
How we shot ourselves in the foot

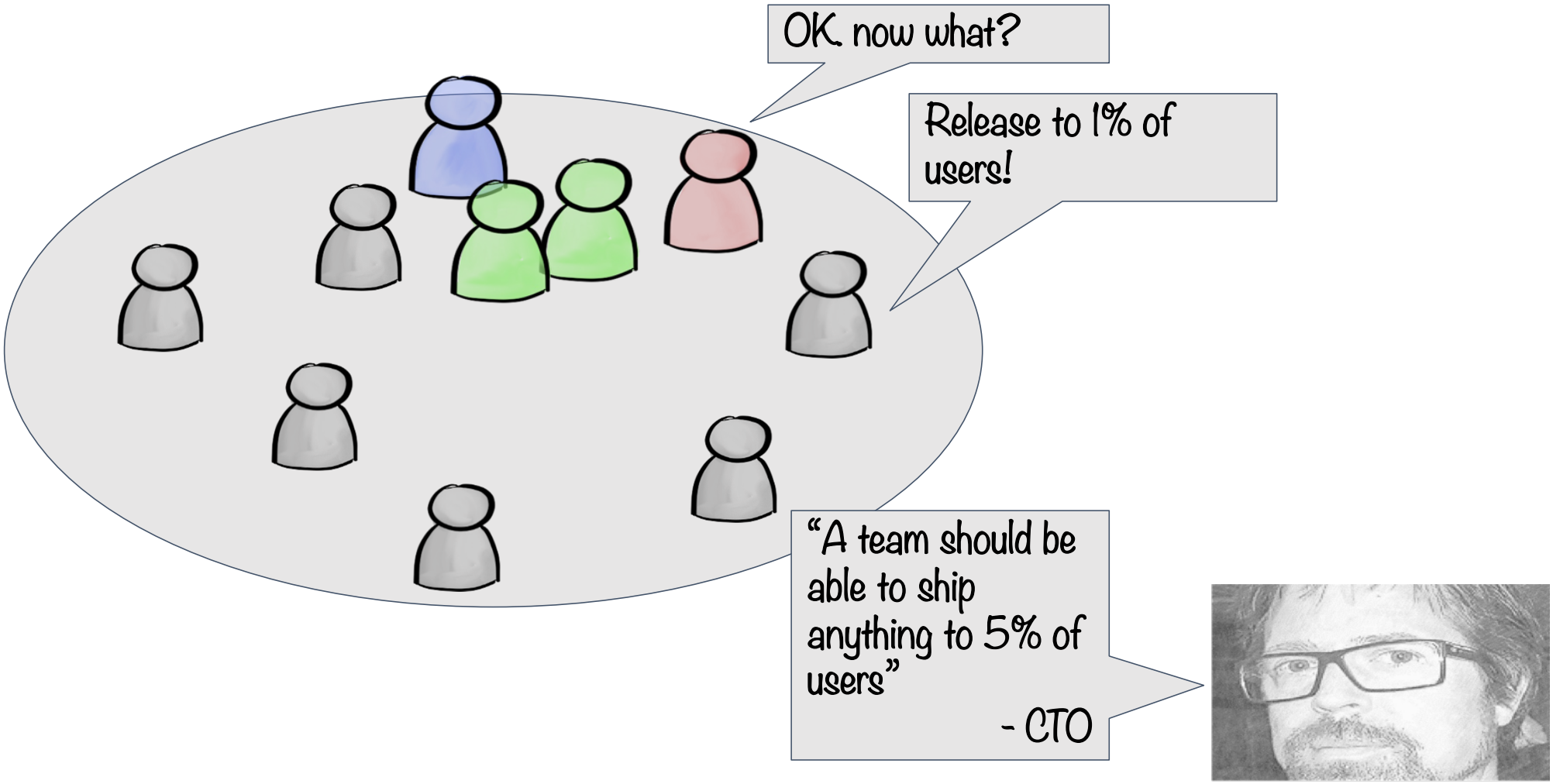
Internal blog:

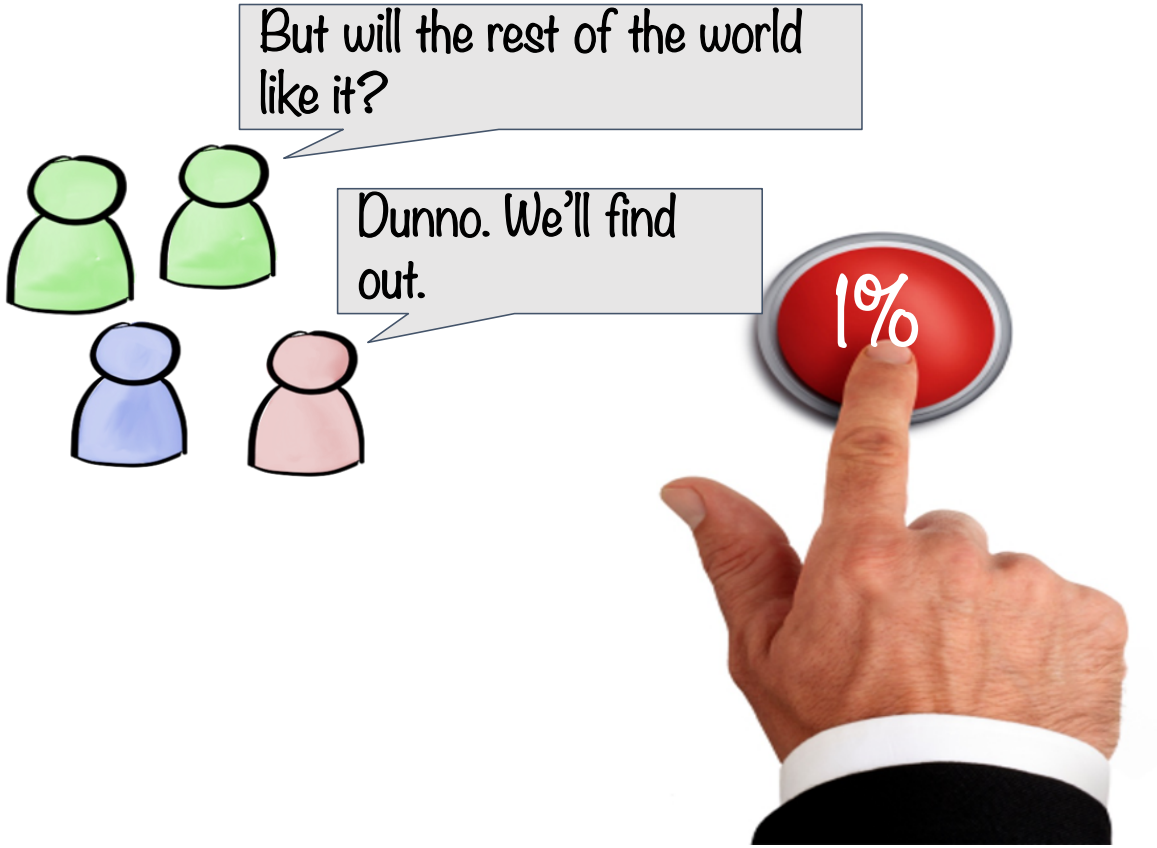
Celebrate failure!

“Limited Blast Radius” via decoupled architecture




Via gradual rollout


OK. now what?
Release to 1% of users!
“A team should be able to ship anything to 5% of users”
- CTO


But will the rest of the world like it?
Dunno. We'll find out.
1%

Watching the data

1200 survey responses

Rating

User metrics

Watching the buzz

dave horwitz
@Dave_Horwitz

It's scary how well @Spotify Discover Weekly playlists know me. Like former-lover-who-lived-through-a-near-death experience-with-me well.

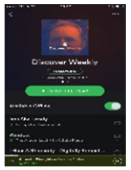
Amanda Whitbred
@amandawhitbred

At this point @Spotify's discover weekly knows me so well that if it proposed I'd say yes

Audrey Rothers
@AudreyRothers

Discover Weekly on Spotify eliminates th
need for a musically knowledgable boyfri
Now I can be single forever! #economica

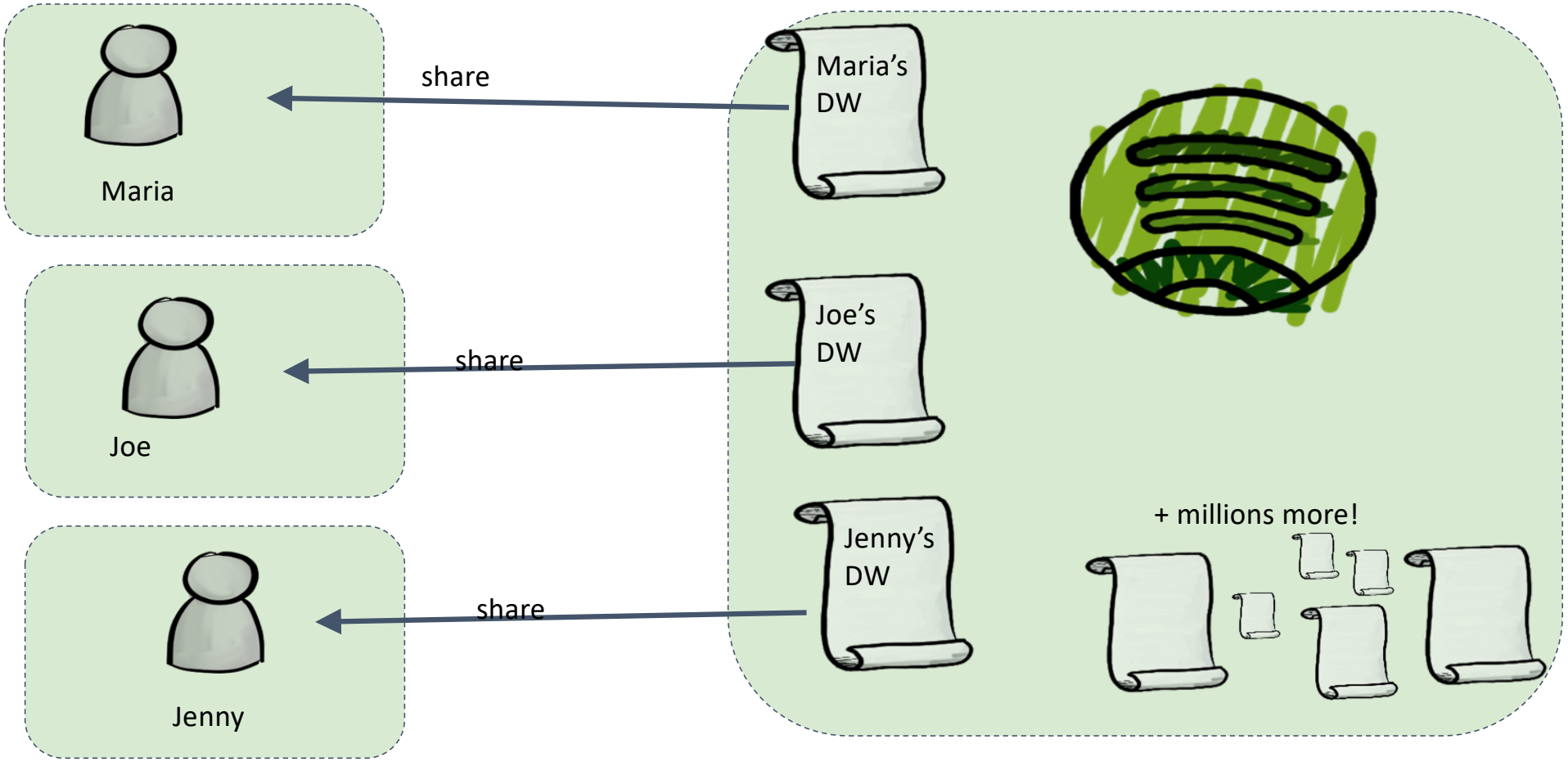
Conclusion: We have a winner!



But...

It didn't scale :(

Spotify = a single "user" with 75 MILLIONS of shared playlists, and they CHANGE EVERY WEEK on the same day!



Undeploy

Hilary Goudeau
@HilaryGoudeau

Follow

And just like that, my @Spotify Discover Weekly playlist was taken from me. I am in mourning. I hope it returns soon. 💔

11:02 PM - 11 May 2015

KEVIN HIRTH @KevinHirth · Jun 7
Thank you **@Spotify** for my brief tenure with **discover weekly**. Best 3 weeks of music I've ever had. Feel free to come back any time!

Brad Seidel @BradSeidel · May 29
@Spotify needs to bring back **"Discover Weekly"** playlists #ASAP
1

nathália @nattfs · May 20
o que aconteceu com a playlist **discover weekly** do **spotify** eu to surtando

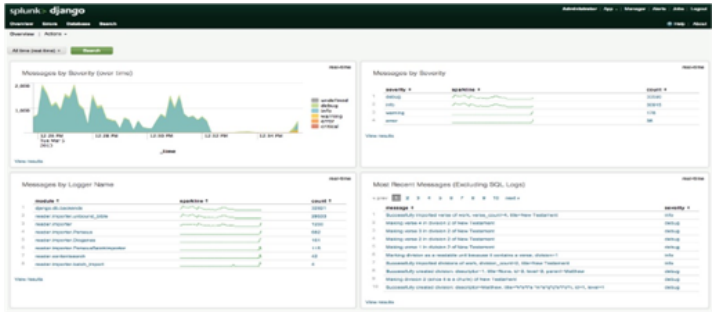
Harry Wilson @HjwilsonHarry · May 18
@Spotify What happened to the **discover Weekly** playlist

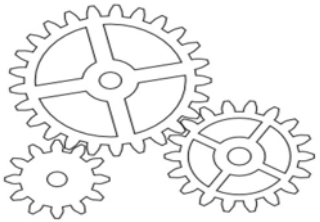
Brad Baraud @BradBaraud · May 18
@Spotify My **Discover Weekly** hasn't refreshed in 2 weeks :(was it just a temporary thing?

View conversation

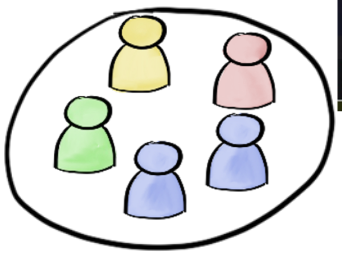
travis @angstnmyveins · May 15
@Spotify @SpotifyUSA Why did my **Discover Weekly** playlist disappear?! I looked forward to that every week!

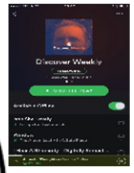
Sort out the tech issues

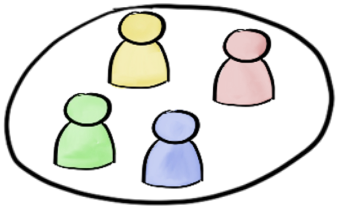




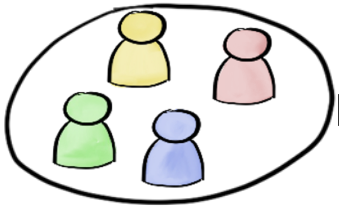
Hmmm.....





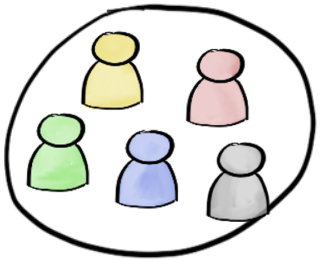


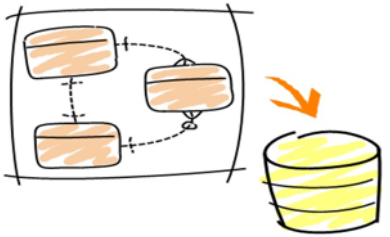
Lemee just...

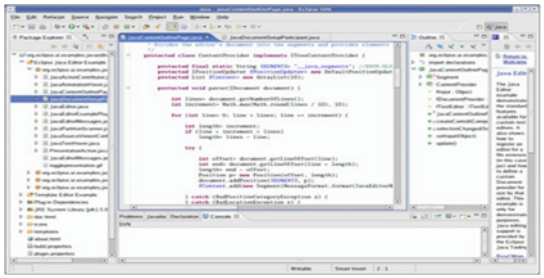


How about....

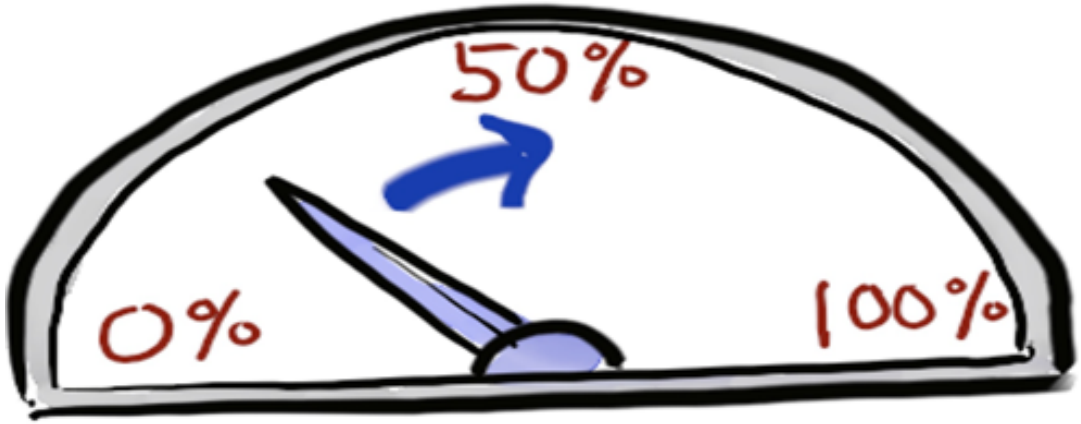
Let’s try....







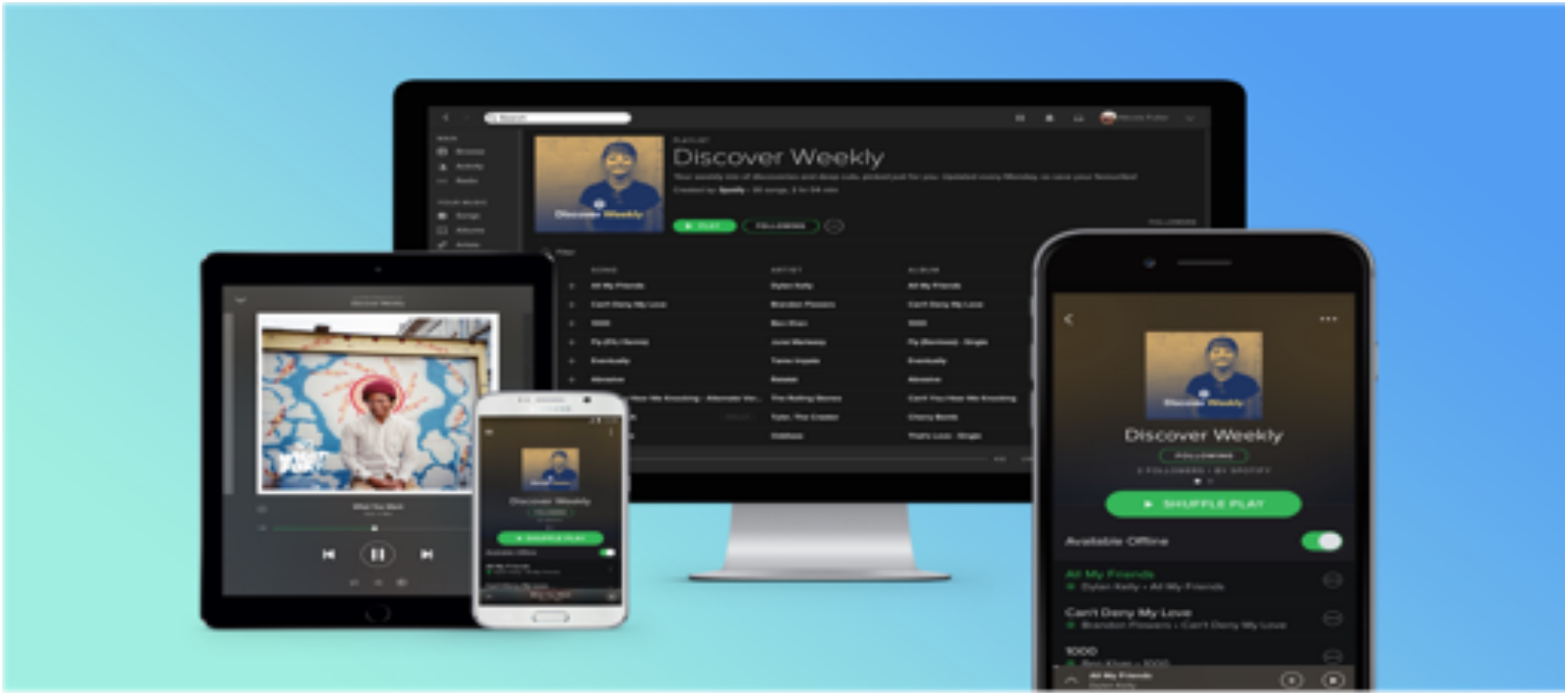
Gradually roll it out again

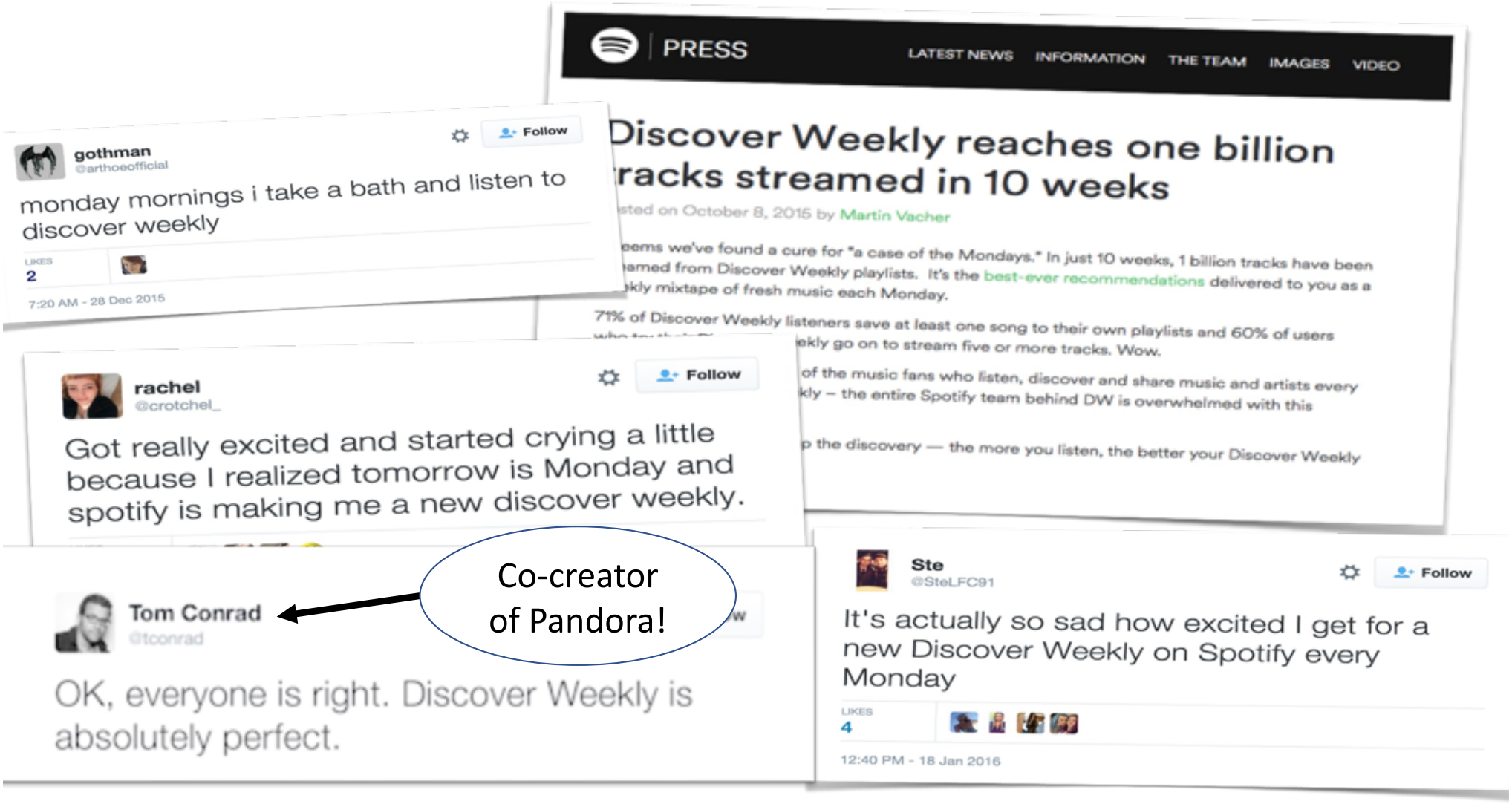


Tweak the marketing message

Used user’s own language in the launch

Tweak the packaging

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Discover Weekly reaches one billion
racks streamed in 10 weeks
sted on October 8, 2015 by Martin Vacher
eems we've found a cure for "a case of the Mondays." In just 10 weeks, 1 billion tracks have been
amed from Discover Weekly playlists. It's the best-ever recommendations delivered to you as a
kly mixtape of fresh music each Monday.
71% of Discover Weekly listeners save at least one song to their own playlists and 60% of users
ekly go on to stream five or more tracks. Wow.
of the music fans who listen, discover and share music and artists every
kly – the entire Spotify team behind DW is overwhelmed with this
p the discovery — the more you listen, the better your Discover Weekly
gothman
@arthoeofficial
Follow
monday mornings i take a bath and listen to discover weekly
LIKES
2
7:20 AM - 28 Dec 2015
rachel
@crotchel_
Follow
Got really excited and started crying a little because I realized tomorrow is Monday and spotify is making me a new discover weekly.
Tom Conrad
@tconrad
OK, everyone is right. Discover Weekly is absolutely perfect.
Co-creator of Pandora!
Ste
@SteLFC91
Follow
It's actually so sad how excited I get for a new Discover Weekly on Spotify every Monday
LIKES
4
12:40 PM - 18 Jan 2016

Ingredients of successful innovation

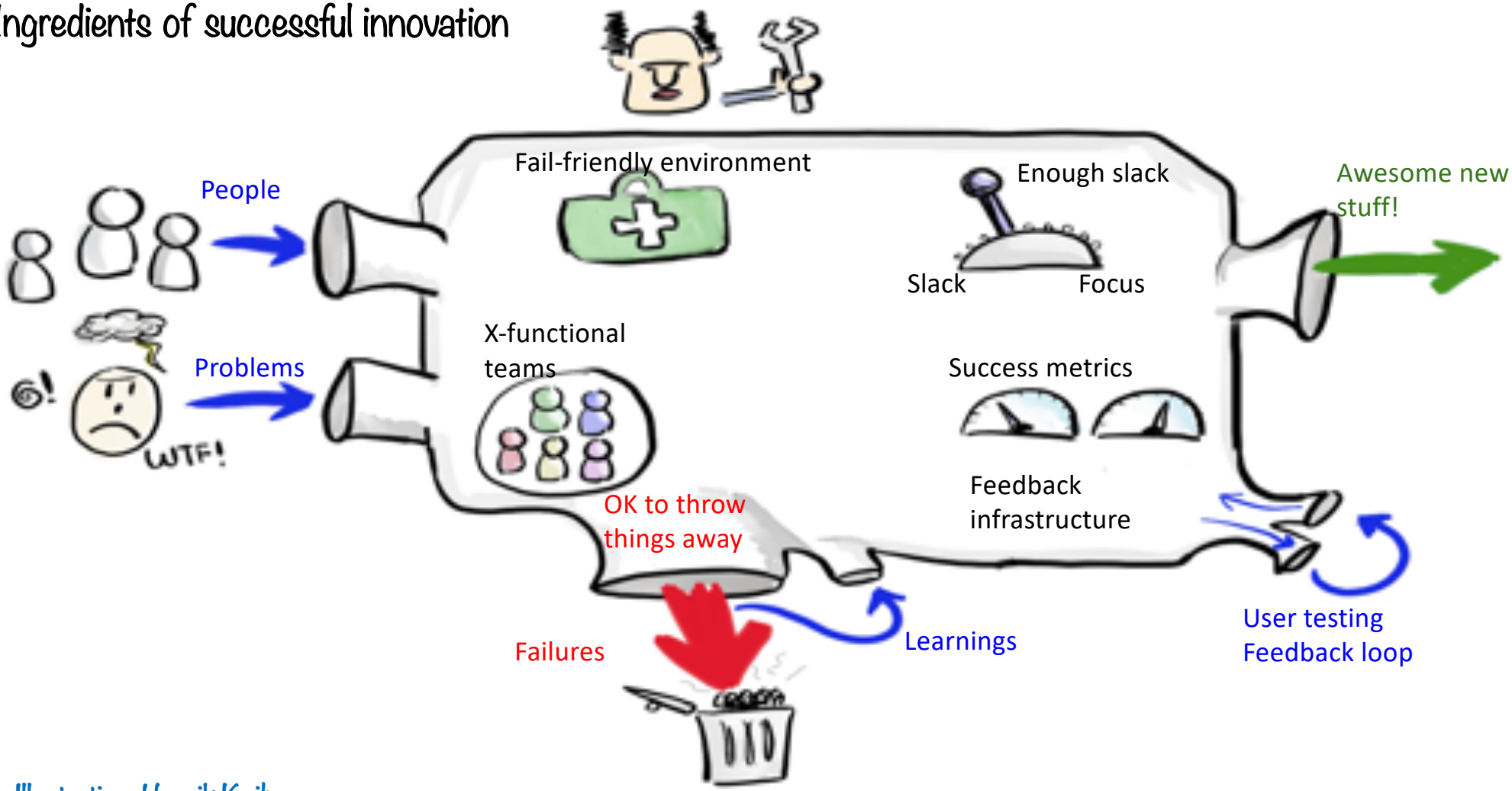

Illustration: Henrik Kniberg

08.07.18

Exclusive: Spotify CEO Daniel Ek on Apple, Facebook, Netflix–and the future

An intimate look inside the mind of the CEO bending the music industry into his visio

[Photo: Ilya S. Savenok/Getty Images for Spotify]

FC: You've had some pretty successful consumer rollouts, like the Discovery Weekly personalized playlist.

Innovation can't be forced

Just enabled & encouraged & supported

Managers cannot make innovation happen - but they can create an environment to support it and stop it from being killed

Illustration: Henrik Kniberg

Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

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crisp

Spotify

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