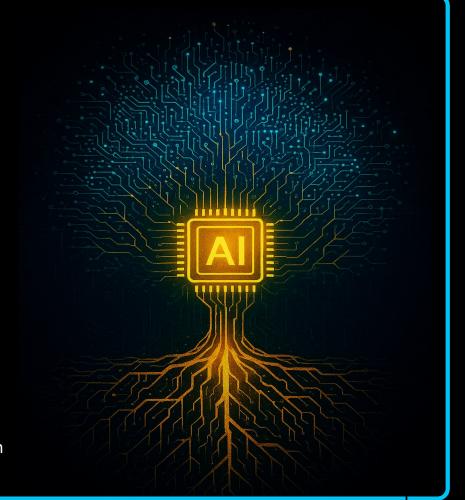
October 9th, 2025

GROWTH IN THE AGE OF AI



Winning by Design | Wintercircus | Ghent, Belgium

GROWTH IN THE AGE OF A

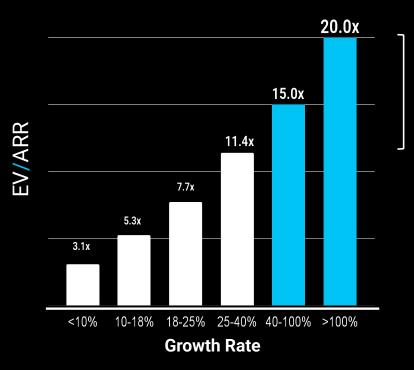
Grow Your Own Way

Jacco van der Kooij

Founder & CEO, Winning by Design



Growth rate will continue to be the dominant driver of premium valuation



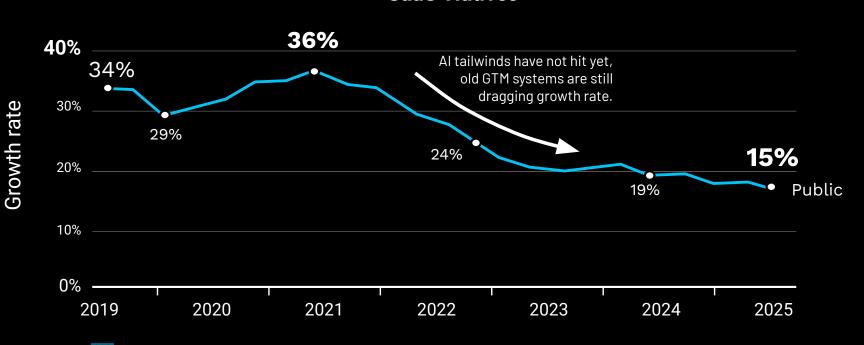
PREMIUM VALUATION ZONE

Growth over 40% earns a premium multiple—even more if you break 100%.

Source: Benchsights, white bars based on prices for public SaaS as of 5/2/25 (Source: Meritech, N=90). Blue bars are educated guesses based on the private market

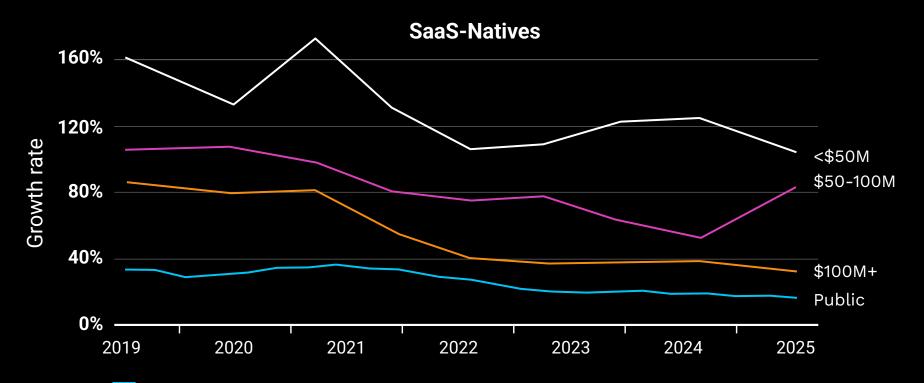
SaaS-Natives growth is prematurely stalling (public SaaS)





Source: Public, BenchSights N = 52 to 86, depending on year

SaaS-Natives growth Is prematurely stalling (public and private SaaS)

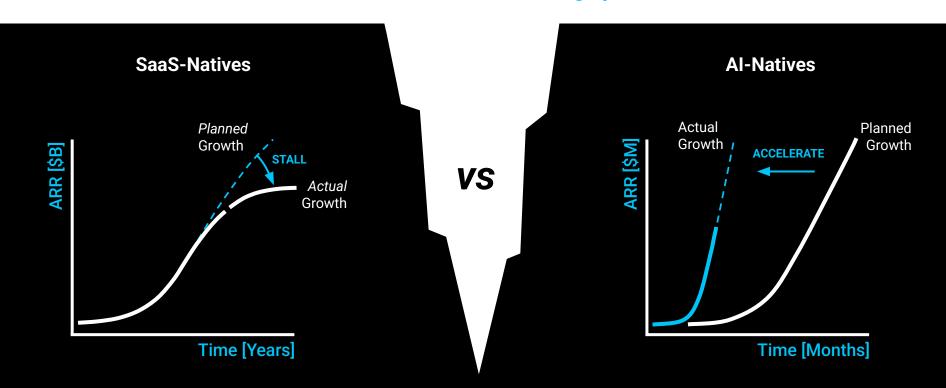


Source: Public, BenchSights N = 52 to 86, depending on year, and Private, Iconiq N=462 to 71 depending on year

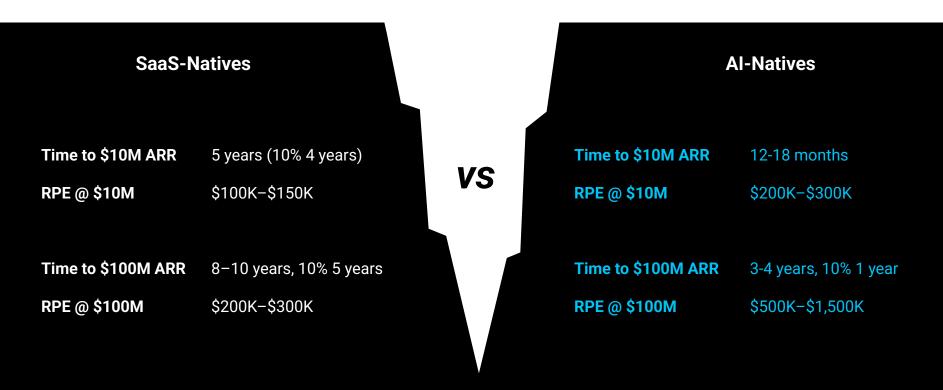
Al-Natives accelerate growth faster than any generation before

ACCOUNT NAME	REVENUE (\$M)	TIME (MOS)	ACCOUNT NAME	REVENUE (\$M)	TIME (MOS)
Al Squared	15	38	Lovable	100	8
Anthropic	3,000	41	Magnific	10	12
Aragon.ai	10	24	Mercor	100	24
Bolt/Stackblitz	40	5	Midjourney	50	12
Cal AI`	21	10	Mistral	100	16
Codeium	100	38	Morphos Al	10	22
Cohere	100	72	Perplexity	200	33
Crescendo	100	18	PhotoRoom	94	58
Cursor	500	24	Runway	30	18
Deepgram	22	108	Replit	10 to 100	6
ElevenLabs	100	24	Sana	5 to 50	36
Fyxer Al	10	7	Scale	100	36
Gamma	50	6	Stability Al	100	25
Genspark	10	0.3	Synthesia	100	24
Glean	100 to 300	7	Torq	24	48
Harvey	100	36	Windsurf	72	6
InVideo	61	16	Writer	47	52
Jasper	75	24	Vapi	10	12

This creates a growth chasm Two different worlds, drifting apart



This creates a growth chasm Two different worlds, drifting apart



NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

In SaaS, champions and deciders are often not users.

In AI, users are often the champions and deciders.

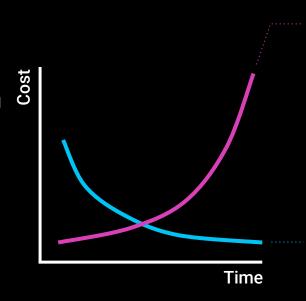
The moment the user became the decider, growth started to compound.

Inference Cost vs. Training Cost

In SaaS: Once software is built, the marginal cost per user is nearly zero.

In Al: Every use triggers cost, making marginal cost per user non-trivial and rising with usage. Providers are counting on these costs to decline over time.

Will pricing pressure from commoditization outrun cost reduction?



Inference Cost

Ongoing expense of *using* the trained model, every time a user asks a question or generates output, GPUs/TPUs must run the computation.

Training Cost

One-time expenses of teaching an Al model, running datasets through powerful GPUs/TPUs until it learns patterns.

Where have we seen this movie before?

1990s Web-Natives bought website traffic Bet = eyeballs will become customers.

2010s Mobile-Natives bought ad clicks/installs

Bet = they'll convert into customers.

2020s SaaS-Natives buy Customers

Bet = they'll stay for years and pay back CAC.

2025+ Al-Natives buy Usage

Bet = costs will drop and customers will stick around.

In Al Freemium is very dangerous.

Al-Natives face a far more severe impact of freemium, because every free query burns cash at the gross margin level.

The evolution of software is based on evolution of growth loops

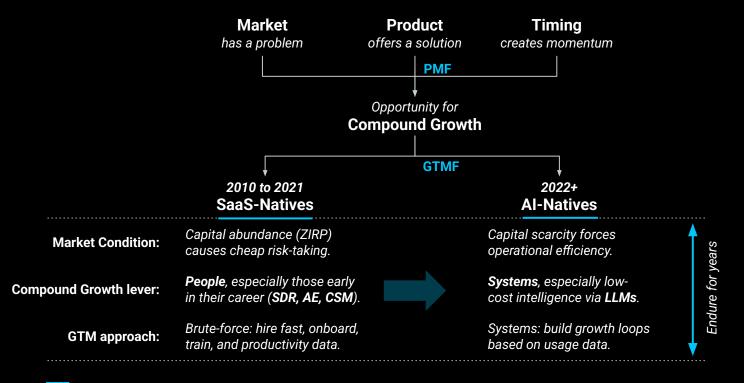
SOFTWARE ERA	WHO CLOSES THE LOOP	LOOP SPEED	WHAT POWERS THE LOOP
Perpetual Software	Account Executive	Years	License sales, upgrade & support, and renewals
SaaS-Native (Sales-Led)	Customer Success	Months	Retention and expansion
SaaS-Native (PLG-Led)	The Product Team	Weeks	Usage, activation, and in-product conversion
Al-Native (Customer-Led)	The System	Real-time	Continuous feedback loops

Acceleration from Years to Real-time

- From sales-led acquisition \rightarrow to user-led adoption
- From long term contracts → to usage/consumption
- From human touchpoints \rightarrow to in-product signals

Growth Architecture has shifted: From people to systems

Winning by Design



NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

When speed is the strategy, systems become the solution.



GROWTH IN THE AGE OF A

Growth Expectations From The Top

Private Equity Expectations Uncovered

Lauren Goldstein

Chief Growth Officer, Winning by Design





\$130B in AUM 800+ portco's





Aurelien Dupuy PSG



Jennifer Montague Verdane



Richard Sgro Insight Partners

GROWTH IN THE AGE OF A

Compounding Growth

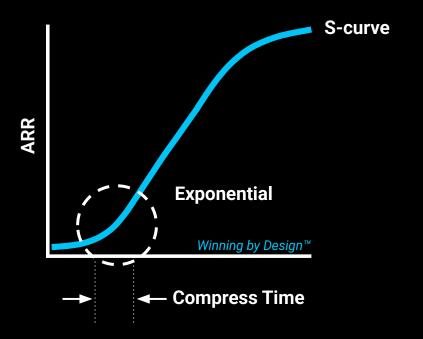
The Holy Grail of Al and SaaS Success

Dr. Dan Patterson

Chief Innovation Officer, Winning by Design

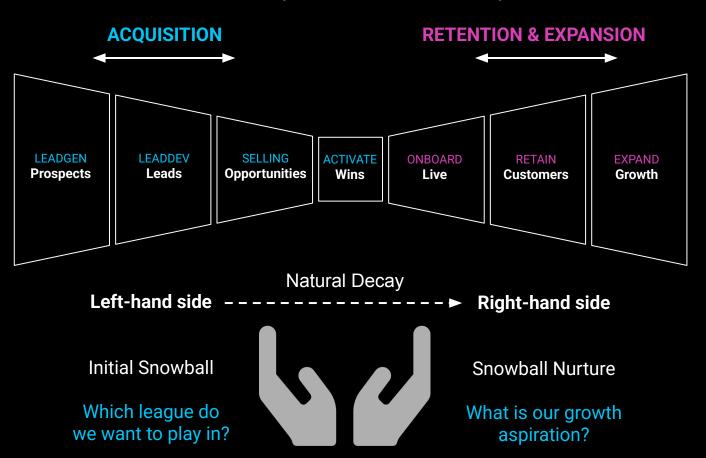


The uncomfortable truth: simple "growth" is actually acceleration toward decay.

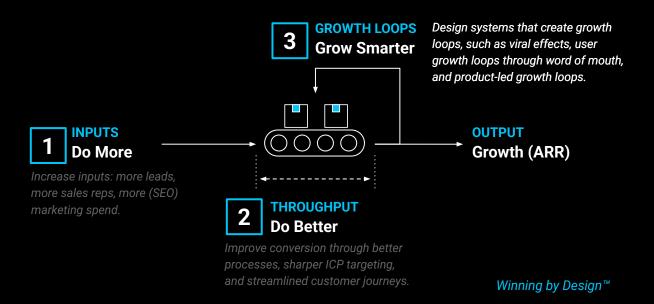


- The illusion is thinking we can scale by simply selling more.
- The reality is, compounding happens when each win fuels the next.
- It's easier to compress time than to chase volume.

The Complete Customer Journey

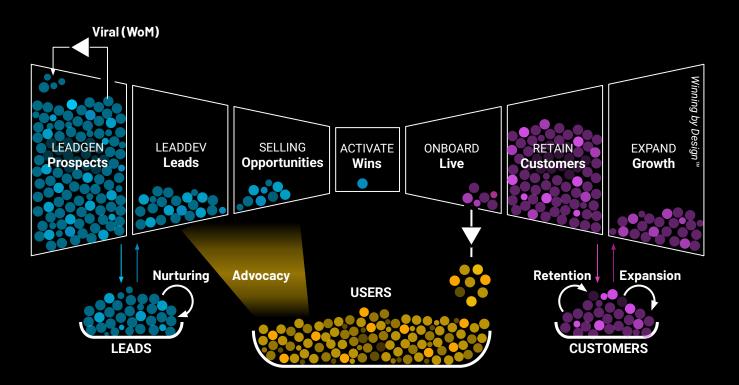


Where do compound growth levers come from?



Focus on those who love you!

Al-Natives User Customer Acquisition Journey



Self-reinforcing Journey

Example Impact of a User Loop



1,500 customers

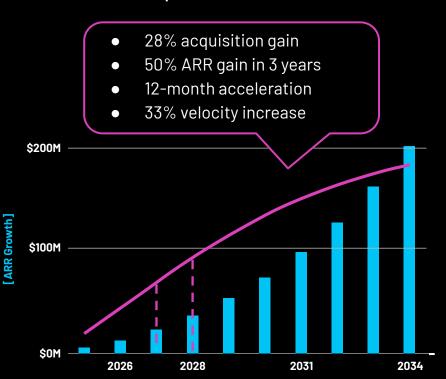
12 users per customer

19,200 users

1 in 25 users creates an opportunity

650 additional opportunities 111 extra deals

\$6M gain on \$20M



This is Not a SaaS-Native vs. an Al-Native Battle

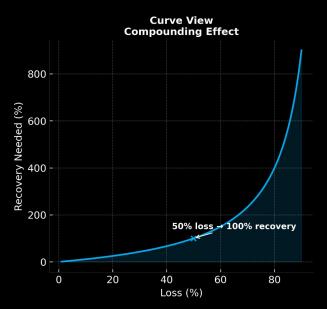
In the new era, winners will act like Al-natives—compounding faster, yet without the turbulence:

- Master the mechanics of compounding growth
- Fuse humans and Al inside every growth loop
- Course-correct in real time, not in hindsight

 \rightarrow The outcome: compound growth — not compound cost.

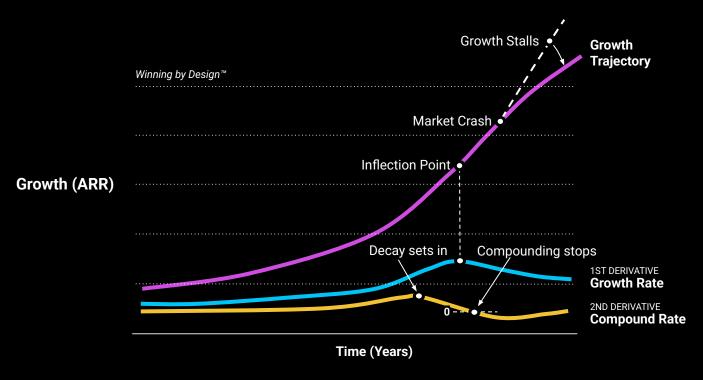
Keeping NRR Above 100% is Harder Than We Think





- Recovery takes more % effort than the churn % loss
- This gets worse the bigger the churn
- We need to focus on minimizing churn

Are We Compounding, or in Decay?

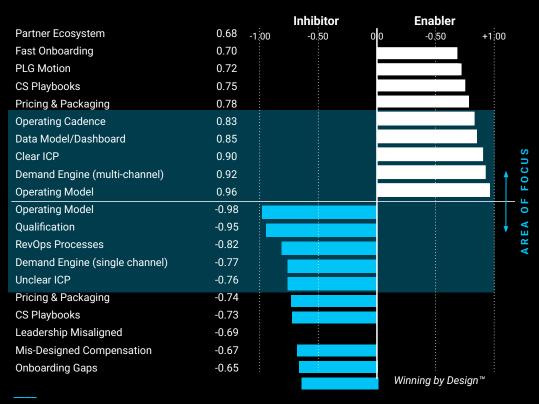


Living on past momentum.

Characteristics of Successful Compounding Growth Organizations

Research Findings

Quantitative Findings



Findings – Top Compounding Enablers

01

Operating Model

The organization has a standardized way of working — shared data, language, and methodology that aligns the entire company across the customer journey.

02

Data Model

Real-time customer journey metrics from acquisition to retention to expansion.

Conversion rates, time in stage, and volumes are tracked and benchmarked.

03

Multi-Channel Demand Engine

Multiple GTM motions, channels, and campaigns working together.

Buyers don't buy in one dimension — therefore, we shouldn't sell in one dimension.

04

Clear ICP

Clarity on who the company is built to serve — ensuring fit, retention, and expansion.

User loops remain active.

SPICED OPERATING MODEL **BOWTIE DATA MODEL**

GTM MODEL GROWTH MODEL

GROWTH IN THE AGE OF A

AI Readiness Workshop

Real World Examples Across The Bowtie

Shari Johnston

Chief Operating Officer, Winning by Design





of GTM teams plan to increase AI investment in the next 12 months.

*WbD AI-Led GTM Growth Survey, conducted in April 2025

Stated Top Adoption Issues (In Order)

1. Budget constraints

Limited budgets are slowing down Al adoption.

2. Lack of internal expertise

Teams lack the skills and training to effectively leverage Al.

3. System integration difficulties

Organizations struggle to integrate AI tools seamlessly with existing workflows and CRM systems.

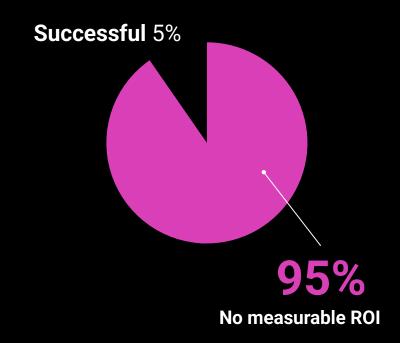
4. Data quality issues

Inconsistent or incomplete data reduces AI effectiveness.

5. Unclear ROI

Difficulty quantifying tangible returns from Al investments makes it harder to secure stakeholder commitment.

MIT GenAl Divide Study Aug 2025



NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

The future of accelerated growth won't be defined by how

fast AI evolves—but by how fast humans adapt and apply it.

AI GTM Archetypes

Framework for Getting Started

Difficulty	Al Assistive Oifficulty Empower individuals by automating repetitive tasks, accelerating research, and closing skill gaps with Al-powered tools.		Agentic Agentic Systematically transition lower-complexity, high-volume human tasks to Al agents while maintaining — or improving — performance.		Orchestrative Occhestrative Ocches		Autonomous • • • • Enable Al systems to make decisions autonomously within human-defined boundaries, frameworks, and objectives.	
Use cases	Account research and lead intelligence gathering	Content creation and messaging personalization	Al SDRs (Sales Development Reps) for outbound prospecting	Al onboarding agents for customer setup and FAQ handling	Al-driven lead-to-customer journey management	Automatic task routing and prioritization based on account scoring	Fully autonomous revenue teams (sales, marketing, success) operating on set targets	Al systems self-adjusting GTM strategies based on market signals without human prompts
	ldeal Customer Profile (ICP) analysis and segmentation	Marketing campaign generation and optimization	Al-powered CS (Customer Success) chatbots for ticket deflection		Intelligent revenue forecasting and pipeline	Marketing-to- sales alignment through real-time		
	Automated meeting note-taking and summarizing	Project management task automation			management	campaign insights	W	inning by Design™

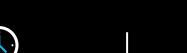
Key considerations

- ★ Tool access, team training, security, reinforcement
- ★ Prompt engineering
- ★ Cross sharing and top-down support
- ★ Define job descriptions, performance goals, enablement cycles, and feedback loops
- ★ Continuous training and enablement

- ★ Integration with existing tech stack (CRM, ERP, CPQ systems)
- ★ Central governance of data sources and process flows
- ★ Change management and executive sponsorship

- ★ Framework design and guardrail enforcement
- Exception handling protocols for edge cases.

Harnessing AI prospecting tools to save time and grow pipeline

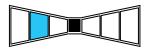


Saving Reps

2 - 5

Hours / Week





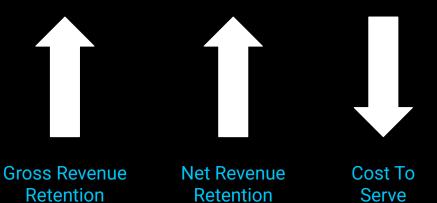
Mural integrated PocusAl Prospecting to combine internal and external signals for outreach, saving reps several hours each week.

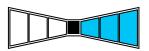
Chris Geraci Mural



Al tech used: PocusAl Prospecting

Embedding AI agents to turn CS into a true growth lever





Human used AI tools to automate manual tasks, free up time, and reduce tedious workload, allowing CS to focus on driving revenue.

Dan Page Human



Al tech used: Gemini, Salesforce, Groove

WbD's (Internal) Al Agents



Jack

Position: Al Inbound SDR **Start Date:** Jan 29, 2025

Mission: "Do better than the Contact Us form at converting web traffic to

qualified leads."



Celeste

Position: GTM Intelligence Agent

Start Date: Feb 12, 2025

Mission: "Monitor all calls, emails, and project activity. Be available 24x7 on Slack for up-to-date account information (ODIOTE).

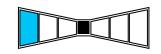
(SPICED + details)."



Cyril

Position: GTM Enablement Buddy Start Date: October 1, 2025

Mission: "Ingest product information, pricing, use cases, customer stories, and offerings to equip sales with solutioning options, pricing and packaging guidance, and FAQs."



Leveraging an always-on SDR agent to uncover SPICED, build pipeline, and enhance CRM hygiene



HELD

2,030

CONVERSATIONS

193 HOURS OF LIVE ENGAGEMENT



> \$500k

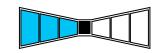
IN PIPELINE

Winning by Design employed Jack, an AI sales agent, to grow pipeline 24/7 and improve CRM hygiene for follow-on sales actions.

Shari JohnstonWinning by Design



Al tech used: 1mind Superhumans



Employing AI to grant greater visibility into deals and provide on-demand guidance



REDUCTION OF

160 HRS

IN ADMIN. TIME

\$

GENERATED

35%

BOOST IN SALES

Fospha leveraged Hive Perform's Al solution to boost conversion rates and create more hours for reps to focus on what matters.

Tom Sheepshanks Fospha



Al tech used: Hive Perform

Exercise — Identify Your Best-fit Al Use Cases Across the Bowtie

			Recurring Revenue	is the result o	f recurring impact	:		
	Awareness	Education	Selection	Commit	Implementation	Adoption	Expansion	
								1
							İ	
							Winning by Design™	
	Al-driven SEO-optimized page creation	Al conversational training for SDR ramp-up	Al-powered account insight surfacing		Al-driven user activation workflows	Al-enhanced support response and documentation	Al competitor intelligence workflows	
soiotivo	Al-powered conversational experience	Al-embedded SPICED account planning templates	In-call Al assistant for CRM data capture			Al-powered internal knowledge retrieval	Al conversational upsell insights	
ssistive	Al-driven GTM campaign asset generation	Al-enhanced prospecting signal integration	Automated Al-driven call review					
	Al-enhanced social campaign optimization	Causal Al modeling for content strategy forecasting	Real-time playbook adherence and CRM automation					
gentic	Event call nurturing	AI SDR	Al Solution Engineer		Al Onboarding Agent	Al Health Monitoring Agent	Al Expansion Agent (revenue operating system)	

Getting Started – Assistive

Al Readiness Planning Worksheet

Owner & Timeline

Planning Area	Notes / Team Input
Key Bottlenecks to Solve	What recurring tasks or processes are inefficient or time-consuming?
Skills Gaps Identified	Where do individuals or teams need support (e.g. writing, research, data analysis)?
Initial Use Cases	What tools or Al assistants could help today? List 2–3 (e.g., ChatGPT for writing, Apollo for research).
Data/Tool Access Needs	What access or licenses are needed for tools to be effective across the team?
Security & Compliance Concerns	What guardrails or approvals are needed before using tools?
Success Metrics	How will we measure success (e.g., time saved, output quality, team feedback)?

Who is leading, and what are the next steps?

Getting Started - Agentic

Al Readiness Planning Worksheet

Planning Area	Notes / Team Input
Candidates for Automation	What roles/tasks can be enhanced/replaced (e.g., call summaries, onboarding checklists)?
Entry Point Tools or Technologies	What AI platforms can be tested in tandem with human reps (e.g., call coaching tools like Gong or

What would an Al "job description" look like? What success criteria would it be held to?

How well are processes documented? How will Al integrate into current workflows? ICP, Product, and Use Case How well is our ICP documented? The job to be done? Expected Pain and rational / emotional

Role & Goal Design **Process & Workflow Design**

Impact? Our product features and benefits that deliver Impact?

Documentation

How will the Al system be trained, monitored, and improved over time?

Enablement & Iteration Plan

How will this be communicated to teams? What support is needed?

Change Management **Owner & Timeline** Who is leading this and what are the next steps?

GROWTH IN THE AGE OF A

Unlocking Conversational Intelligence

Dan Smith

Chief Learning Officer, Winning by Design



95% Of All Customer Data Goes Unused

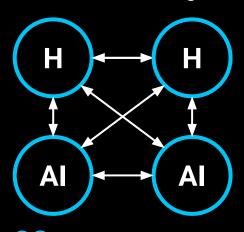


- Thousands of hours of growth intelligence go unused in most GTM systems.
- A common language transforms these fragmented interactions into a connected system where humans and Al work in harmony.
- Only C-Level leadership can break the silos and turn lost conversations into compounding growth loops.

NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

Unstructured data fragments your intelligence. A common language unifies it by letting each team keep their voice while creating a cohesive whole.

Structured Intelligence



01.

Humans with Humans

Using a common language to align every function on impact.

02.

Humans with AI

Making that language machine-readable so insights flow into systems to create growth loops. 03.

AI with AI

Enable connected systems across the customer journey to exchange intelligence natively.

NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

SPICED makes human conversations machine readable



Relevant background facts



The issue or opportunity



Specific outcomes that matter



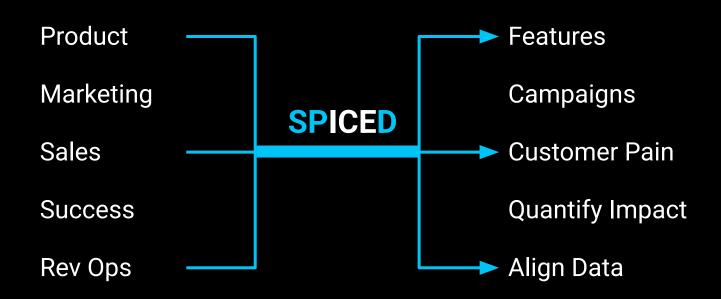


Catalyst for action

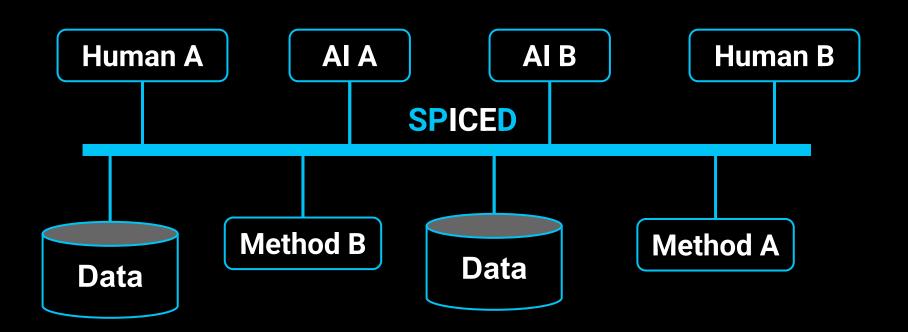


The people, process and criteria used select

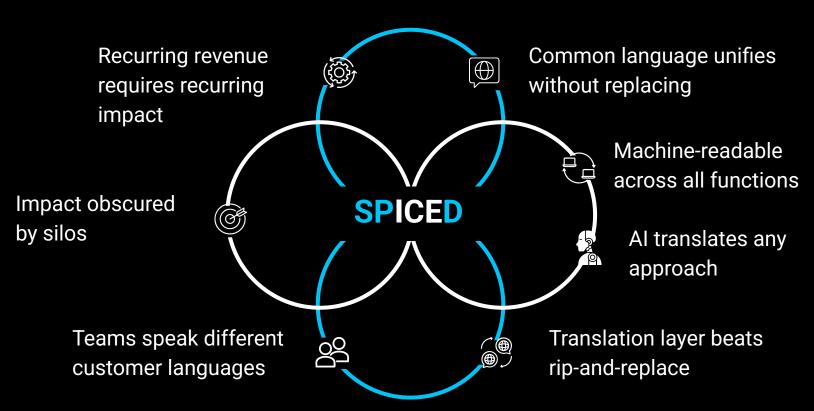
Humans with Humans — Orchestrate



Humans with AI — Common Language



Harmonize



Humans with Al

Capture Conversations

Connecting Apps to a System is what turns raw dialogue into usable intelligence.



Real-Time Data

Having data isn't the problem.
Getting it quickly enough to
build the right thing turns
conversations into compound
growth

AI Extracts SPICED

From every conversation, structure insight when impact becomes machine-readable.



Standardize

It provides the common language that organizes information and enables understanding.

Patterns Emerge

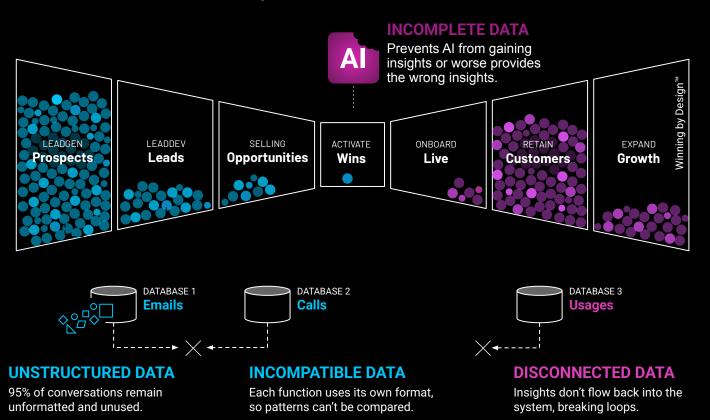
What feels random at the micro level reveals precision across thousands of convos



Enable Growth Loops

Once connected, every insight feeds back to accelerate the next one.

The Importance of Real-time Data



Growth Loops

Patterns evolve into predictions Every interaction becomes fuel and prescriptions for the next Conversations feed system, Single signal triggers cascade powering compound growth across business CEO action is required to break silos Building based on data and patterns in a dynamic market

Leadership Alignment

Connected systems require CEOs to take action
First movers seize advantage, lock out others
Invest in intelligence infrastructure: 8-12x ROI
Mandate universality, but allow individual learning
Lead a cultural shift from heroes to systems
Multiple disruptions rewrite rules of competition

NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

When everyone, humans and AI alike, speaks the same language, functions stop operating in silos and start working as parts of a coherent system.



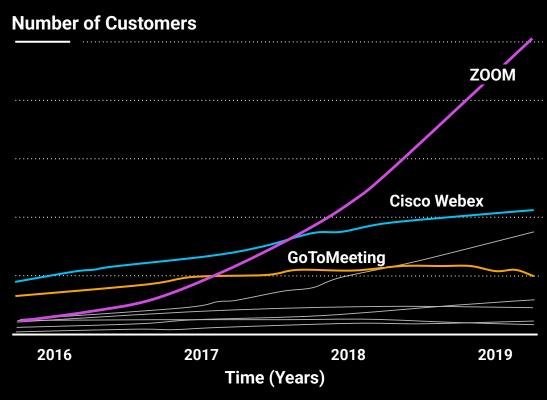
How Self-Service is Reshaping GTM



David Boyce

EVP Product, Winning by Design

Video Conferencing Market

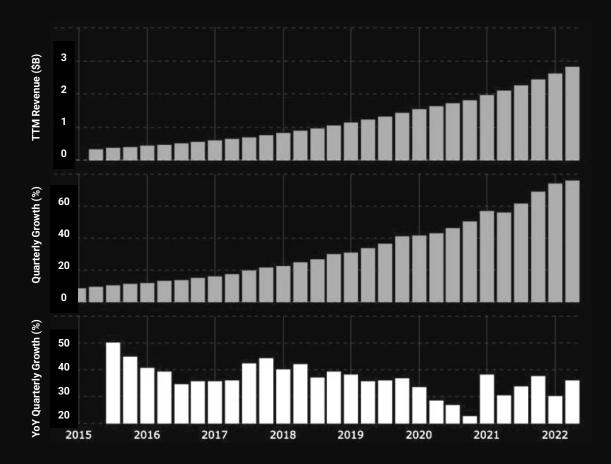


Video Conferencing Software Market, 2016-2019

66

Product-led growth is the de-laboring of the GTM process. It's about making it as easy as possible for users to find, understand, adopt and achieve value with a product, without t'he need for a lot of manual intervention from sales and marketing teams.

OpenView Partners



Atlassian Growth

Fastest-Ever Growing SaaS-Native Software Companies

Year (approx)	Company	Metric Highlight	Context / Why Called 'Fastest Growing'	
1999-2003	salesforce	Revenue: ~\$5M > \$100M ARR in ~5 years	Early SaaS CRM; minimal competition; rapid enterprise adoption; 100%+ YoY growth.	
1998-2003	vm ware [*]	Revenue: \$3M > \$300M+	Enterprise virtualization adoption exploded; analysts highlighted it as fastest-growing in enterprise software.	
2002-2007	A ATLASSIAN	Revenue: ~\$50M in 5 years	Bootstrapped, product-led growth; viral adoption among developers; almost no sales team; press called it "fastest-growing software you've never heard of."	y Design™
2007-2011	❖ Dropbox	Users: 100k > 4M in 3 years	Consumer SaaS; referral program drove exponential adoption; called "fastest-growing consumer SaaS company ever" by tech press.	Winning by Design™
2011-2014	box	Revenue: \$1M > \$100M ARR (approx)	Enterprise file sharing; early cloud adoption; highlighted in Forbes as fastest-growing enterprise SaaS.	
2013-2015	नं ः slack	Users: 15k > 1M DAUs (Daily Active Users) in ~2 years	Enterprise messaging; minimal paid acquisition; viral PLG adoption; press widely called it "fastest-growing enterprise software company ever."	
2011-2017	zoom	Users & ARR: ~\$0 > \$100M+ ARR in ~6 years	Freemium video-first model; simplified enterprise adoption; called "fastest-growing video conferencing software" relative to WebEx/GoTo Meeting.	
2014-2017	(#) twilio	Revenue: \$0 > ~\$150M+	Developer-focused communications API; viral developer adoption; highlighted as fastest-growing cloud communications platform.	

PLG

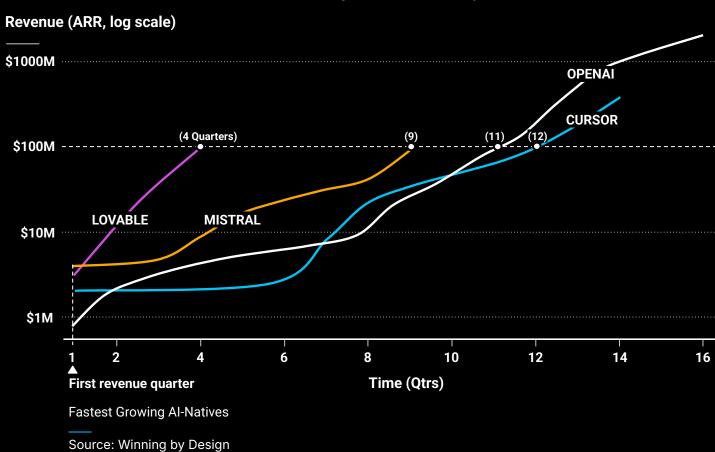
Companies Leveraging PLG Go-to-Market

Company	Ticker	Market Cap (USD, ≈)		Plus 33 Additional Public
Atlassian	TEAM	\$42.98 B	+	Companies
Datadog	DDOG	\$47.63 B		
HubSpot	HUBS	\$31.74B	+	Plus 72% of the Forbes
Zoom	ZM	\$23.88 B		Cloud 100 (private companies)
Okta	OKTA	\$19.59 B	+	Plus thousands of smaller
Twilio	TWLO	\$13.7 B		businesses
Dropbox	DBX	\$8.48 B		

Compa ies Leveraging a PLG Go-to-Market motion

What About AI?

Fastest-Growing Al-Native Companies



Fastest-Growing Al-Native Companies

Company	GTM Leadership	Software Experience	
CURSOR	Tomer Chernia, VP GTM Jack Yandel, GTM Leadership	Vercel, Branch Metrics Figma, Box	All PLG
֍ OpenAl	Greg Brockman, President Fidji Simo, CEO of Applications Maggie Hott, GTM Leader Conor Dragomanovich, GTM	Stripe Instacart, Facebook Eventbrite, Slack, Webflow Dealpath, Productboard	All PLG
▶ Lovable	Elena Verna, Growth	Dropbox, Miro, SurveyMonkey	All PLG
Mistral Al	Marjorie Janiewicz, CRO Michael Butler, GTM Lead, USA	Foursquare, HackerOne, MongoDB Modelbit, Deepnote	All PLG

NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

Al-native companies run on PLG rails.

Self-Service Buying

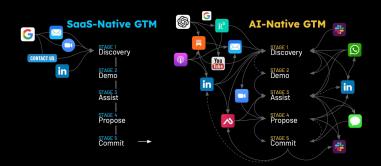
Al-Native and PLG

Knowledge Gap Flipped

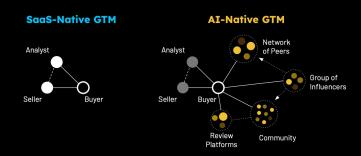


Source: Research Brief "How Al will Replace Sales People", October 2024 by Jacco J. van der Kooij, Winning by Design.

Control Shifted

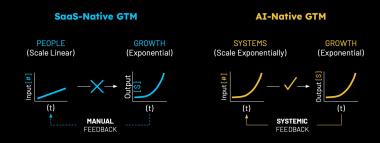


Trust Decentralized



Source: Revenue Architecture by Winning by Design

Systems Not People Create Exponential Growth



NOT SO TINY THOUGHT

Growth scales through systems, not people.

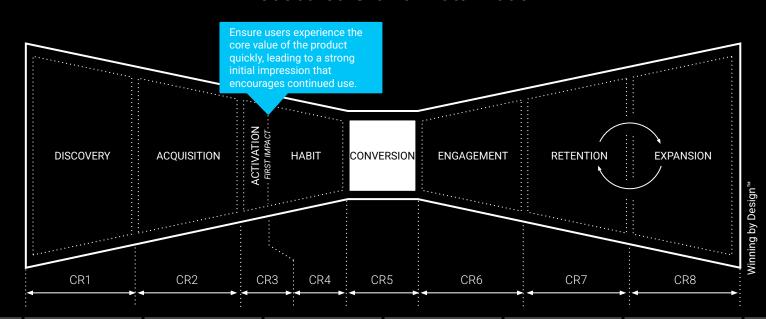
How is it done?

PLG Product Design

First Principles of Product-Led Growth

empathy generosity metrics

Product-led Growth Data Model



CR1. Discovery

Drive relevant, high-intent traffic to your website while keeping Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) as low as possible.

CR2. Acquisition

Educate website visitors on the value of the product and convert as much traffic as possible to free signups; i.e., website visit to sign-up.

CR3. Activation

Reduce time-to-value and guide users to their 'aha' moment (or First Impact) in the product.

Onboarding

CR4. Habit

Foster regular usage by integrating the product into the user's daily workflow, making it an indispensable tool for their tasks.

CR5. Conversion

Generate revenue by efficiently converting free accounts into paying customers.

CR6. Engagement

Increase user interaction with the product by encouraging exploration of features and fostering a deeper connection with the product's capabilities.

CR7. Retention

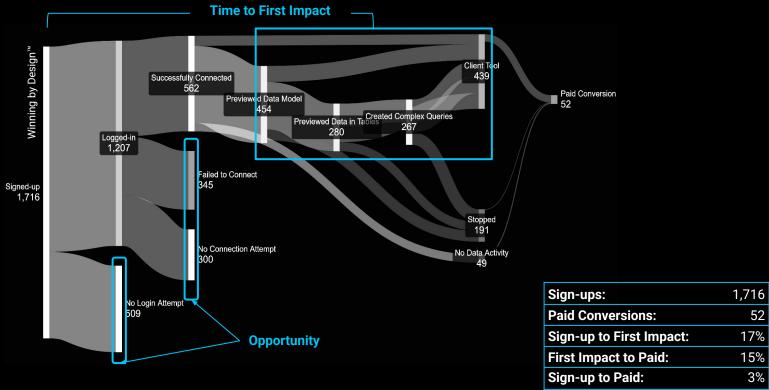
Maintain user loyalty and satisfaction by continuously delivering value, addressing user needs, and preventing churn through proactive support and engagement.

CR8. Expansion

Drive the expansion of overall revenue generated by paying customers through upselling, cross-selling, and encouraging referrals and virality.

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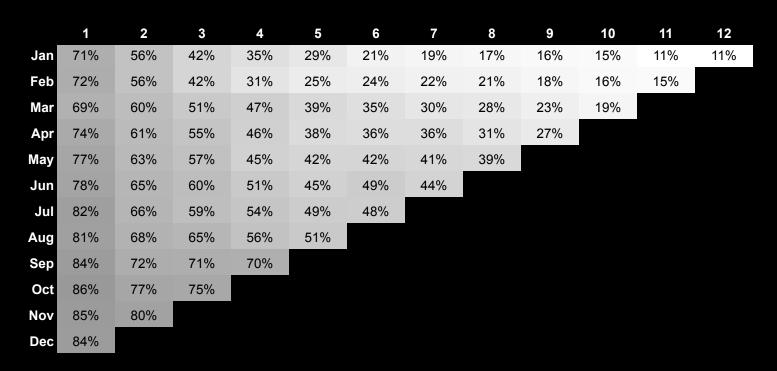
Customer Journey Drop-offs



Customer Journey Dropp-offs

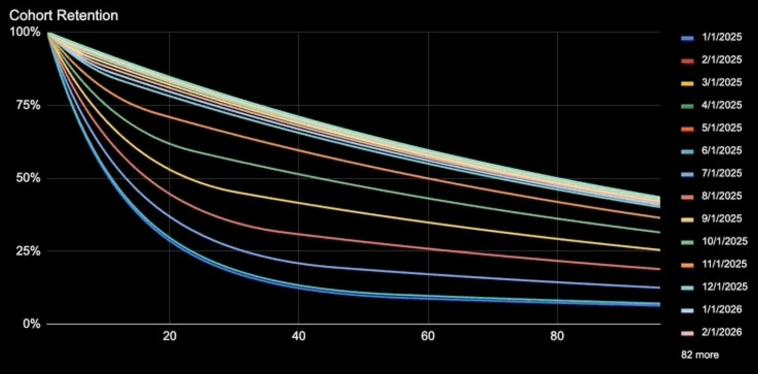
Source: Connect Cloud Aha Trial Reporting (Oct 2024 - Jan 2025)

Retention is a Function of Cohort Experience



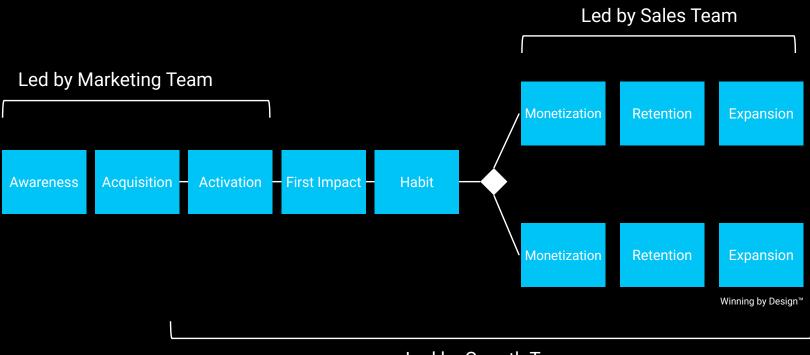
Retention is a Function of Cohort Experience.

Small Month-Over-Month Improvements in Experience can Flatten Retention Curves Faster



Flattening Retention Curves

PLG → PLS Allows for Enterprise Scaling



Led by Growth Team

Comparison of Sales-Led vs. Product-Led

Where do we go from here?



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