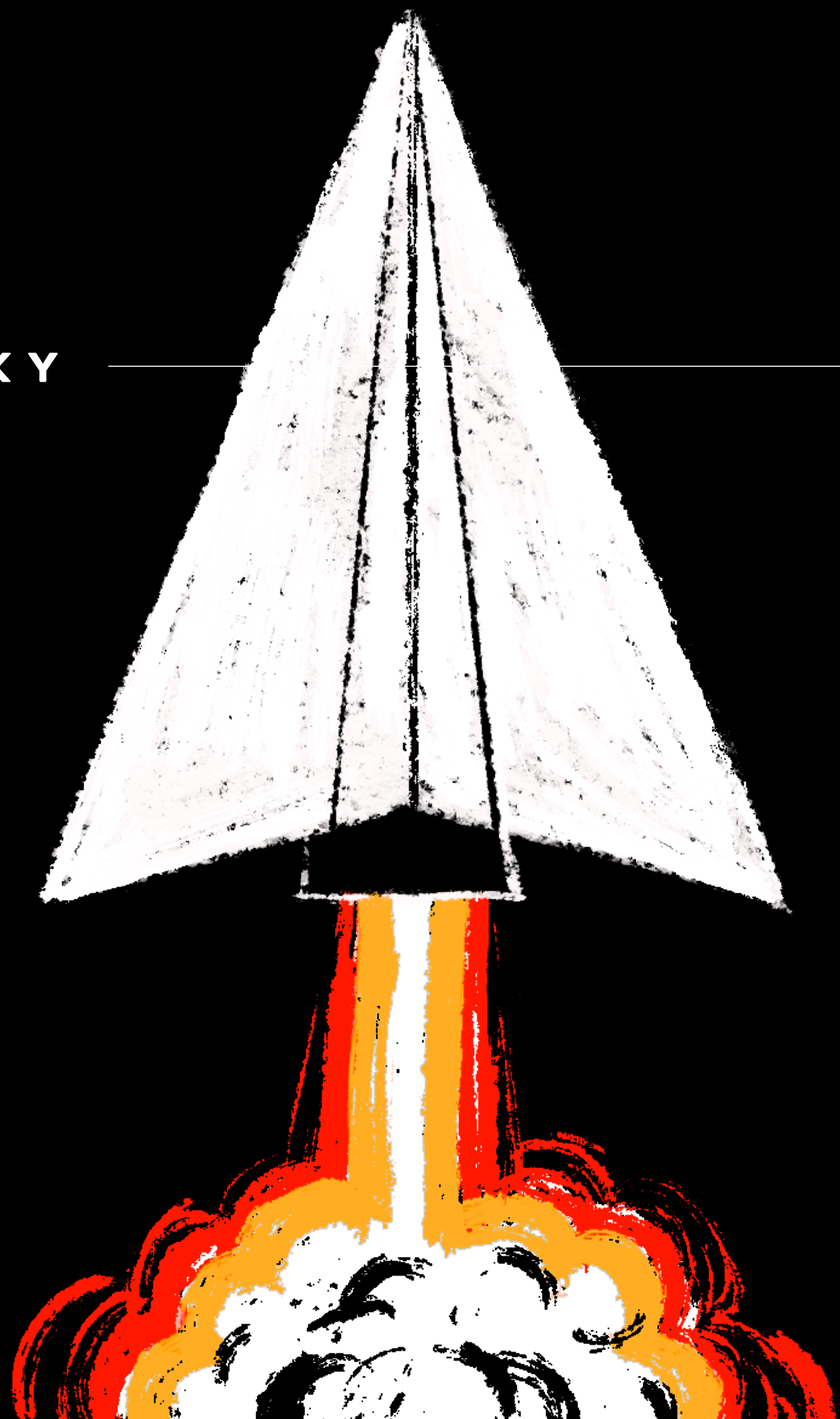


TOKY

Accelerating Thought Leadership



Hello!

I'm Jerry Gennaria

Kentucky Boy (Danville)

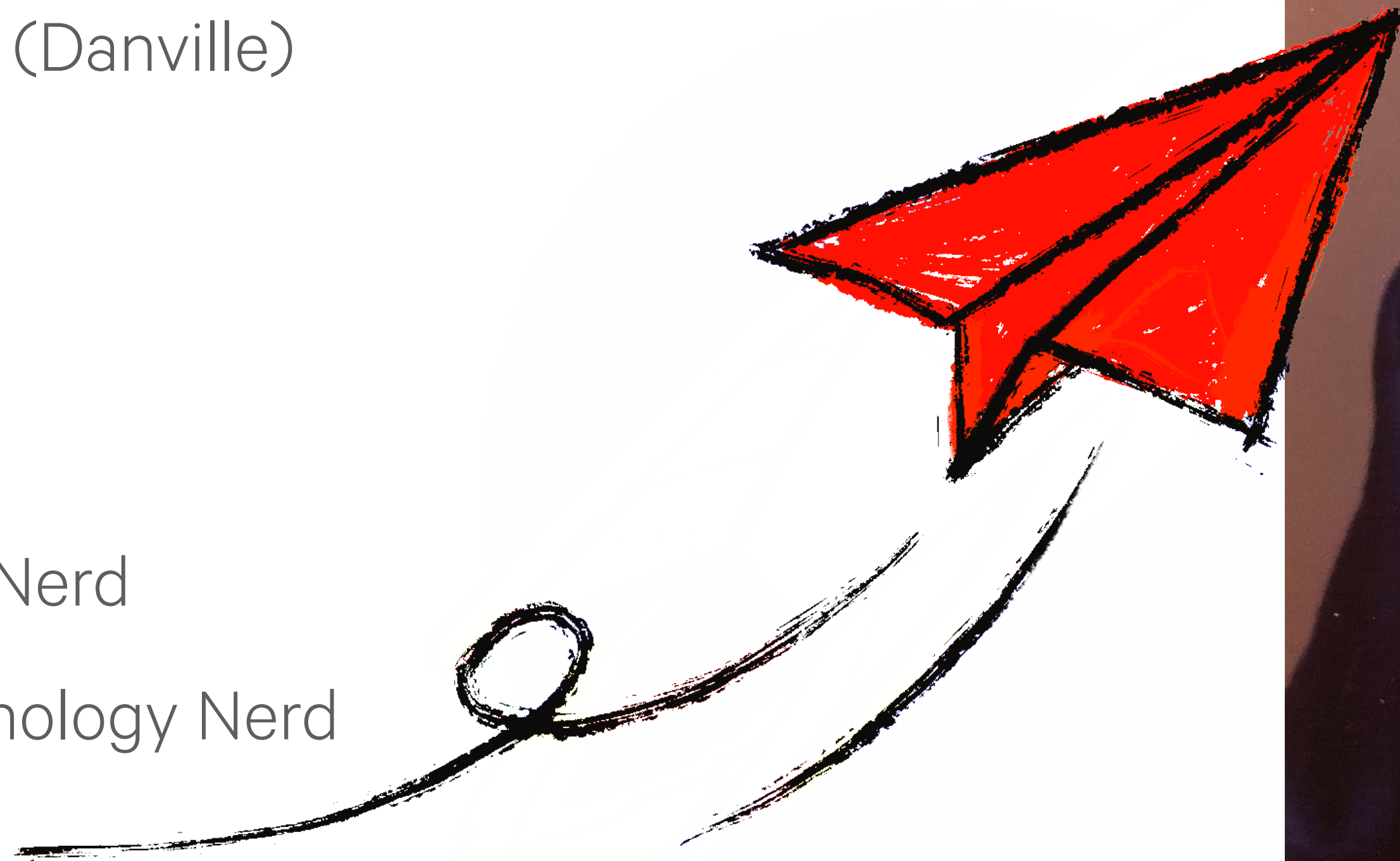
Design Nerd

Data Nerd

Brand Nerd

Photography Nerd

Vintage Technology Nerd

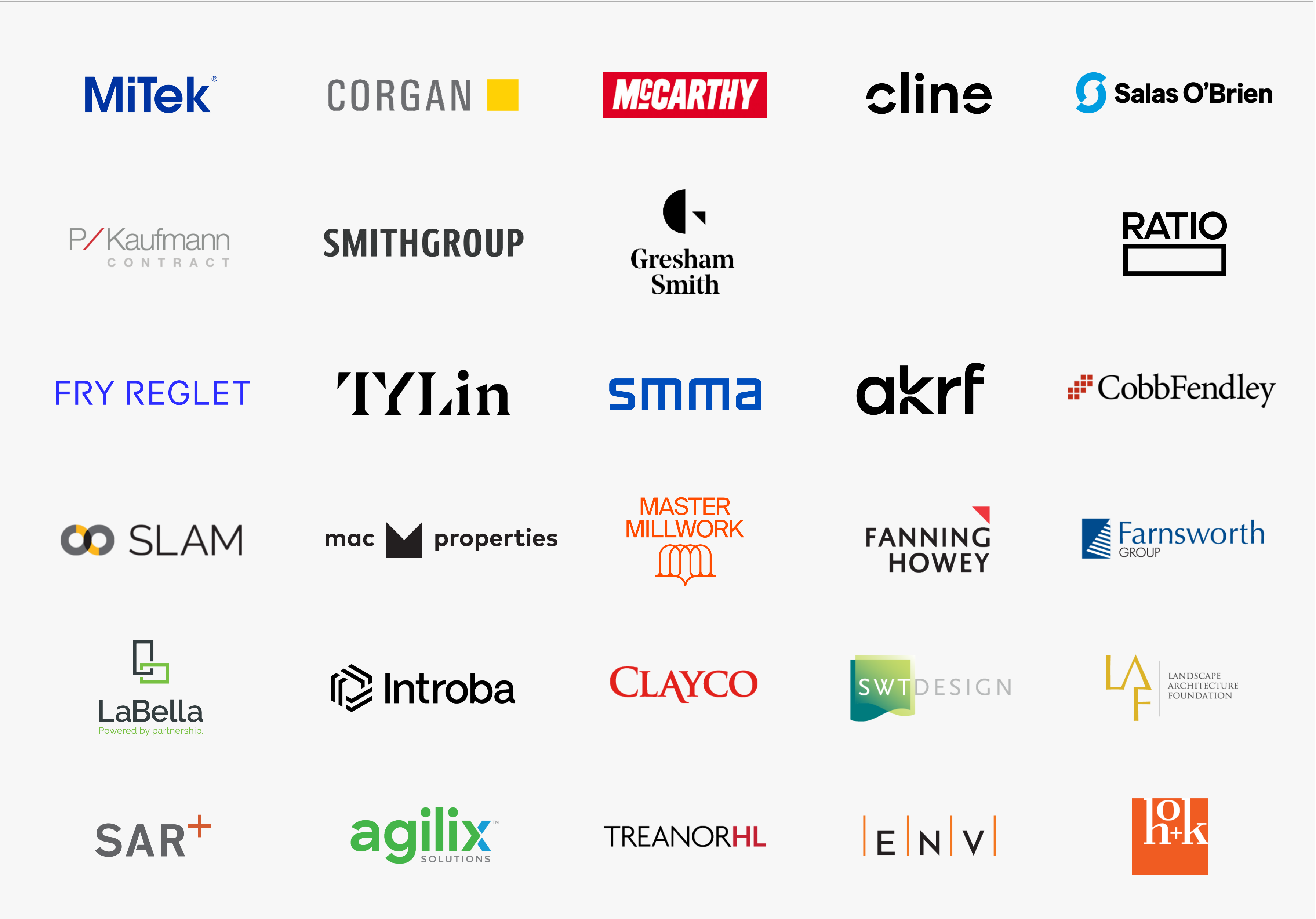


We specialize in key **inflection** points



Reposition
Restructure
Growth
Expansion
Mergers & Acquisitions
Focus Pivot
Turnaround
Refresh
New Brand

TOKY has been privileged to partner with more than 120 organizations serving the built environment around the world.



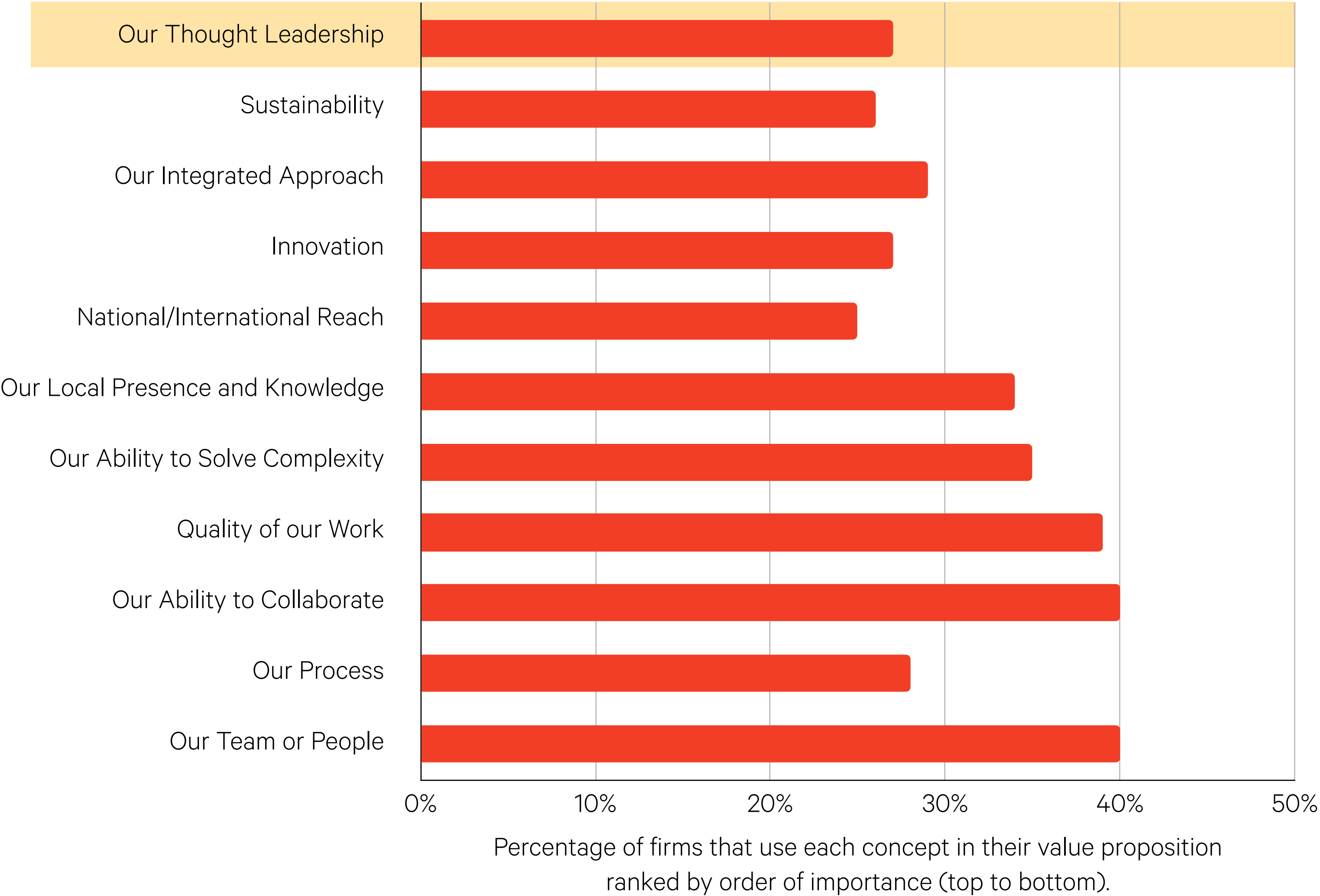
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Why Thought Leadership?

In a TOKY study of 800 A/E/C marketers, fewer than 30% of A/E/C firms include Thought Leadership in their firm’s value proposition.

Yet, these same marketers list **Thought Leadership as the most important value proposition to differentiate their firm.**



**If Thought Leadership
is such an important
differentiator, why do
so few firms provide it?**



In our conversations with marketers, we hear three primary reasons.



1. We don't know how to get started.
2. We can't get the subject matter experts in our firm to participate.
3. We don't have the time or resources.

We observe one more reason:

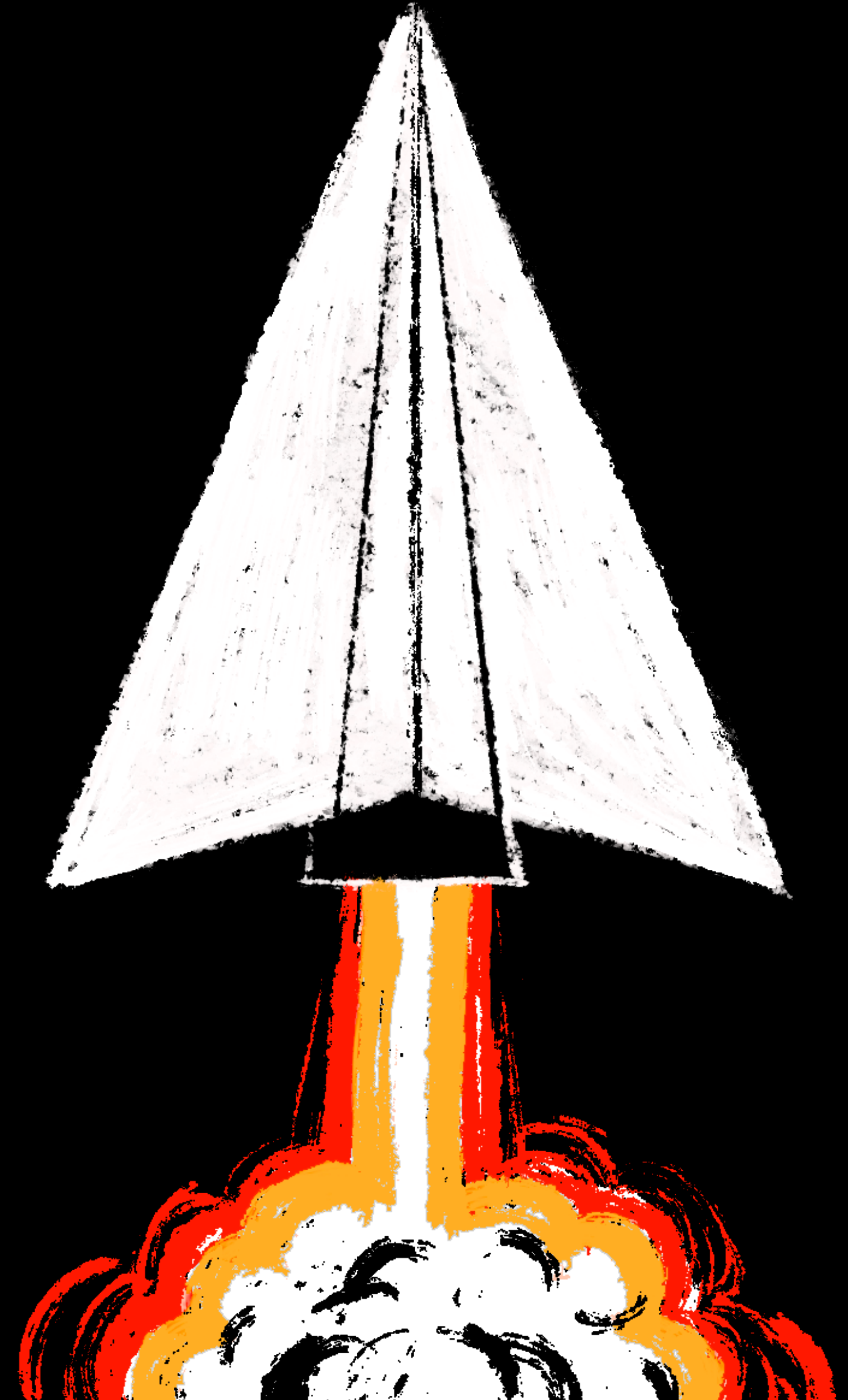


Many firms don't differentiate between *content* and *thought leadership*.

Real thought leadership establishes your firm and your people as the *authority* on your chosen *expertise*.

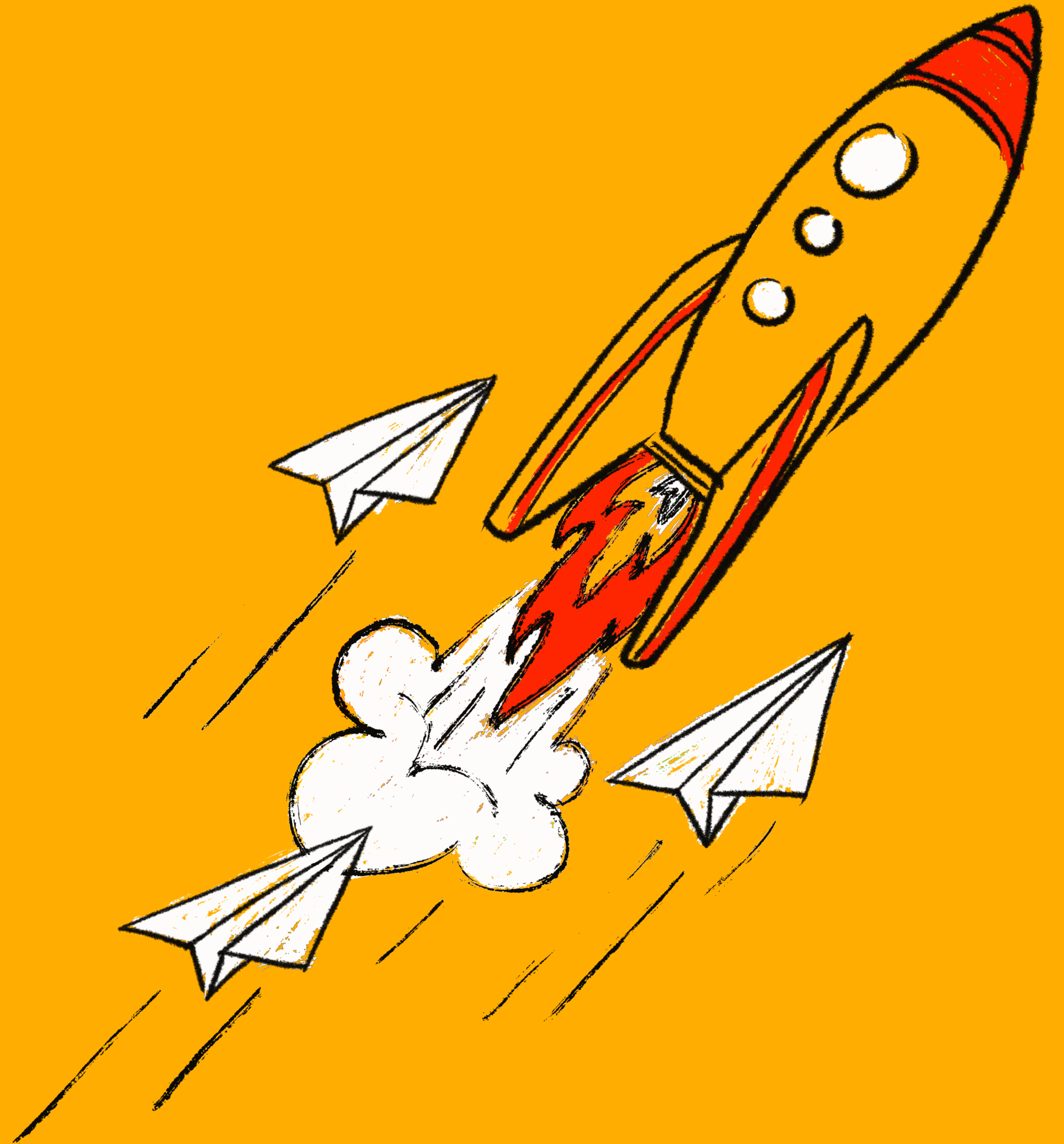
Random acts of blogging are simply not enough anymore.

**So how do we go from
Zero to Full Throttle
Thought Leadership?**



True thought
leadership requires
both *thought* &
leadership.

And it starts with
being an **Authority.**

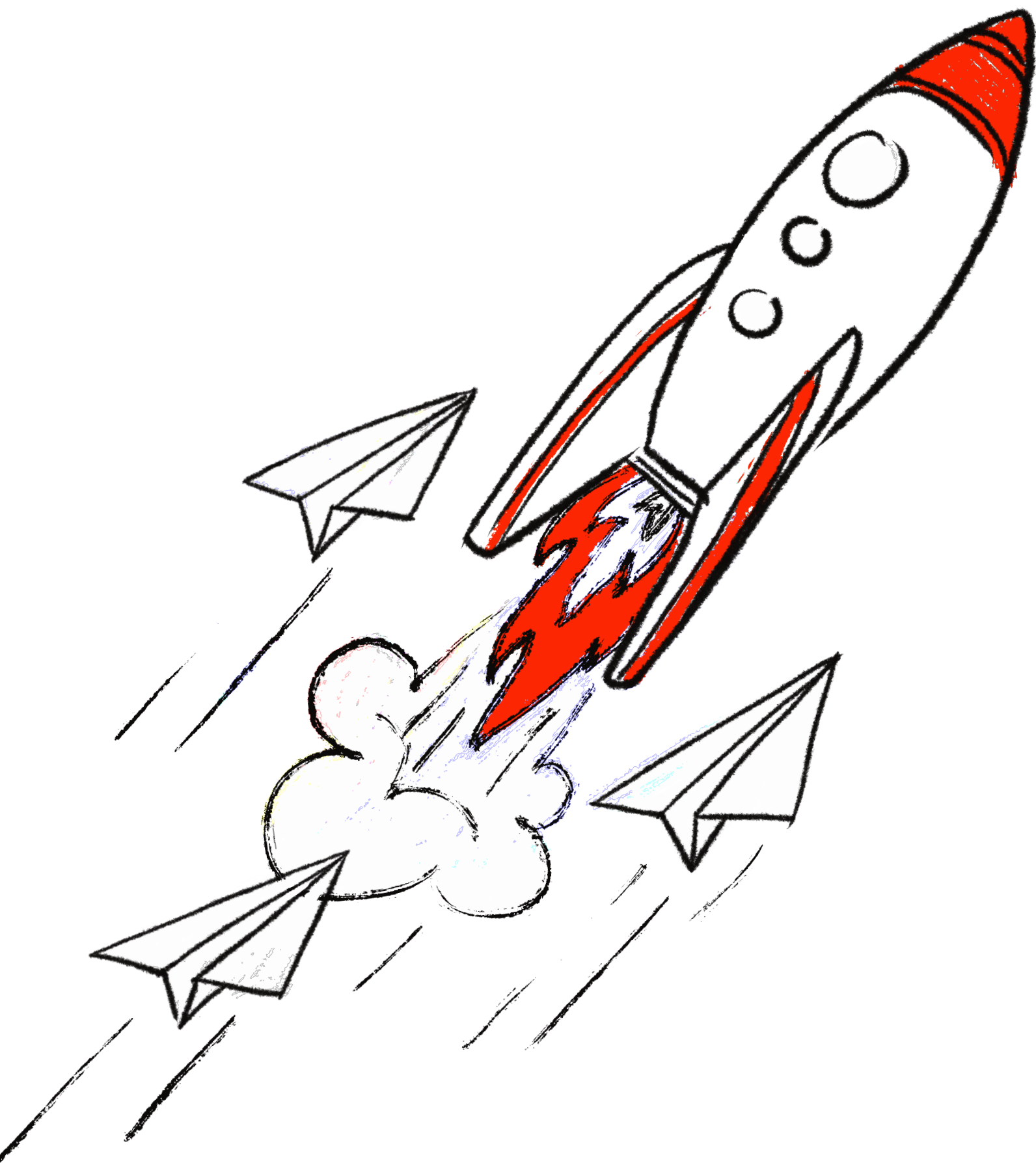


Three essentials to becoming an **Authority.**

1. Specialist expertise
2. A strong point-of-view with significant or original content
3. Multiple channels for sharing expertise



What makes someone an authority?



-
- Focused on a subject-matter area.
 - Shares original insights, not common knowledge.
 - Public presence to demonstrate expertise.
 - Often specializes, appealing to a niche audience.
 - Passion for the subject and willingness to share knowledge freely.
 - Clear, strong point of view.

Why Narrowing Focus is Key



-
- Specializing helps build a strong audience.
 - A narrow audience leads to faster audience growth.
 - Generalists often struggle to stand out.
 - Focus on quality over quantity for impact.

Why Narrowing Focus is Key

- Specializing helps build a strong reputation.

- A narrow audience lets us focus our efforts on a specific audience.

- Generalists struggle to stand out.

- Focus on quality over quantity to maximize impact.

**But my firm is in many sectors or disciplines.
We can't narrow our focus.**

Why Narrowing Focus is Key

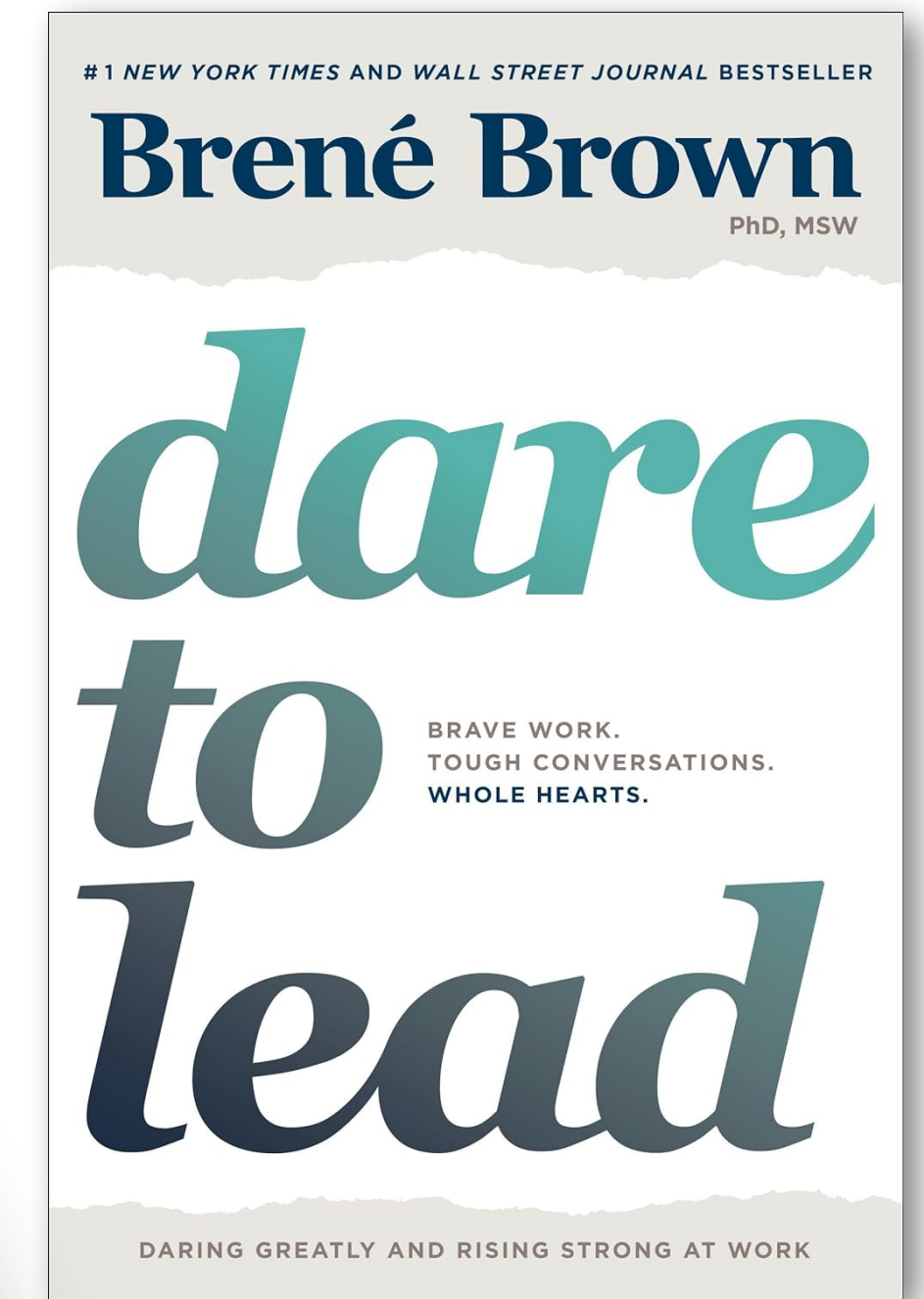
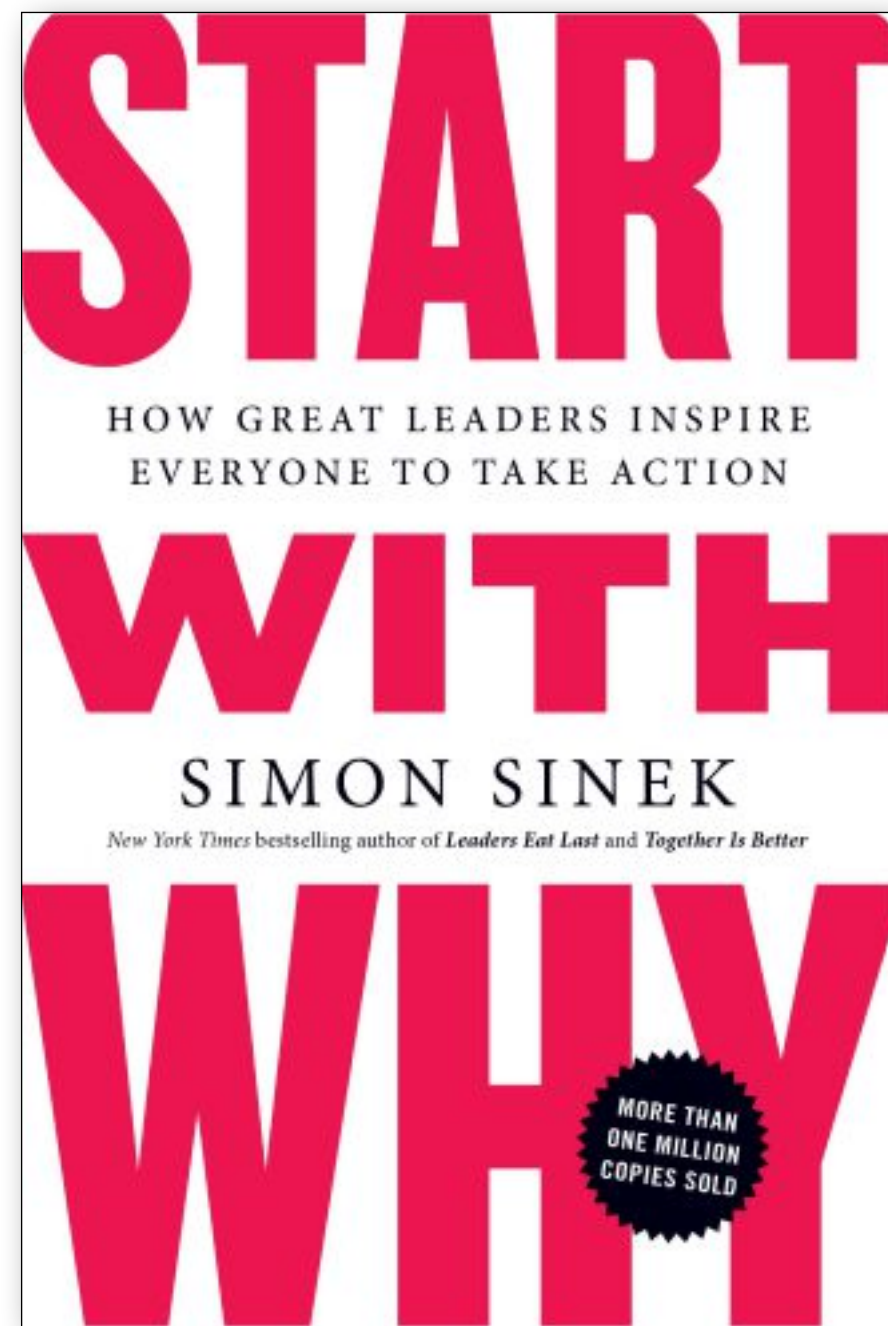


-
- Treat each sector and leader as it's own opportunity to create a niche.
 - Remember, the sector or market may not be enough of a niche by itself.
 - It's the intersection of your POV and the sector that creates the niche.

Brand Truth — The Importance of Having a POV

- Differentiates you in your niche.
- Shapes how you approach your work.
- Influences the value you add to your audience.
- Combines expertise with unique insights.





The Power of a Narrow Focus

Identifying Your Brand Truth

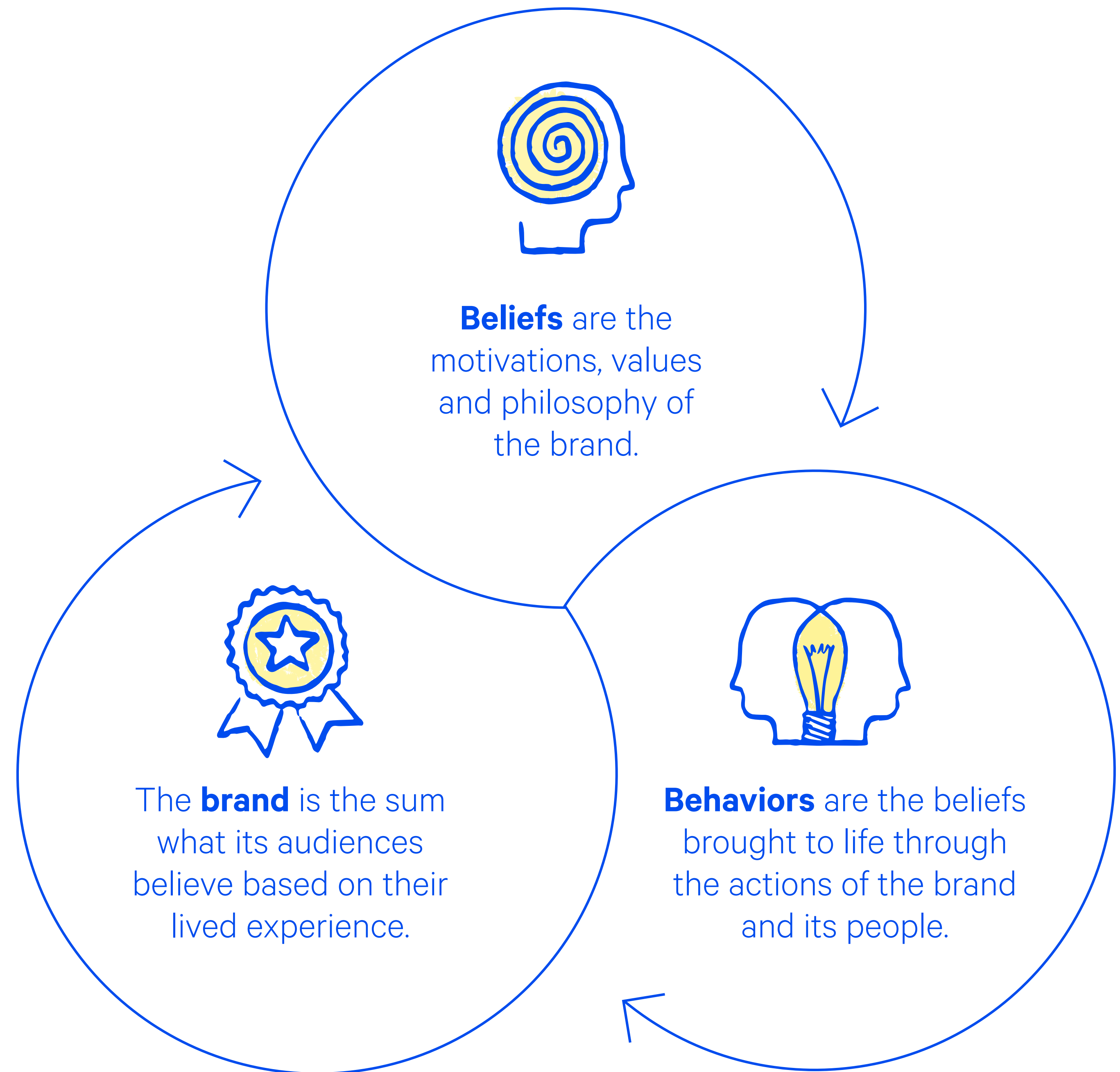
- What beliefs define your approach?
- What do you believe about your niche or clients?
- How does your firm's overall POV provide and umbrella for each of your sector niches?



Branding from Within

We believe that every communication and every interaction your people have with clients, prospects, and each other is a building block of your brand.

That's why our approach is **brand first**, whether we're doing foundational brand building, igniting thought leadership, or a creating a marketing campaign.



Avoiding the One-Trick Pony Trap

- Authorities don't rely on just one channel.
- Build cornerstone content (e.g., books, podcasts).
- Repurpose content into smaller pieces (cobblestones) for various platforms.
- Example: A research report turned into blog posts, social media, and podcast appearances.



Building a Sustainable Authority Position



Cornerstones and Cobblestones

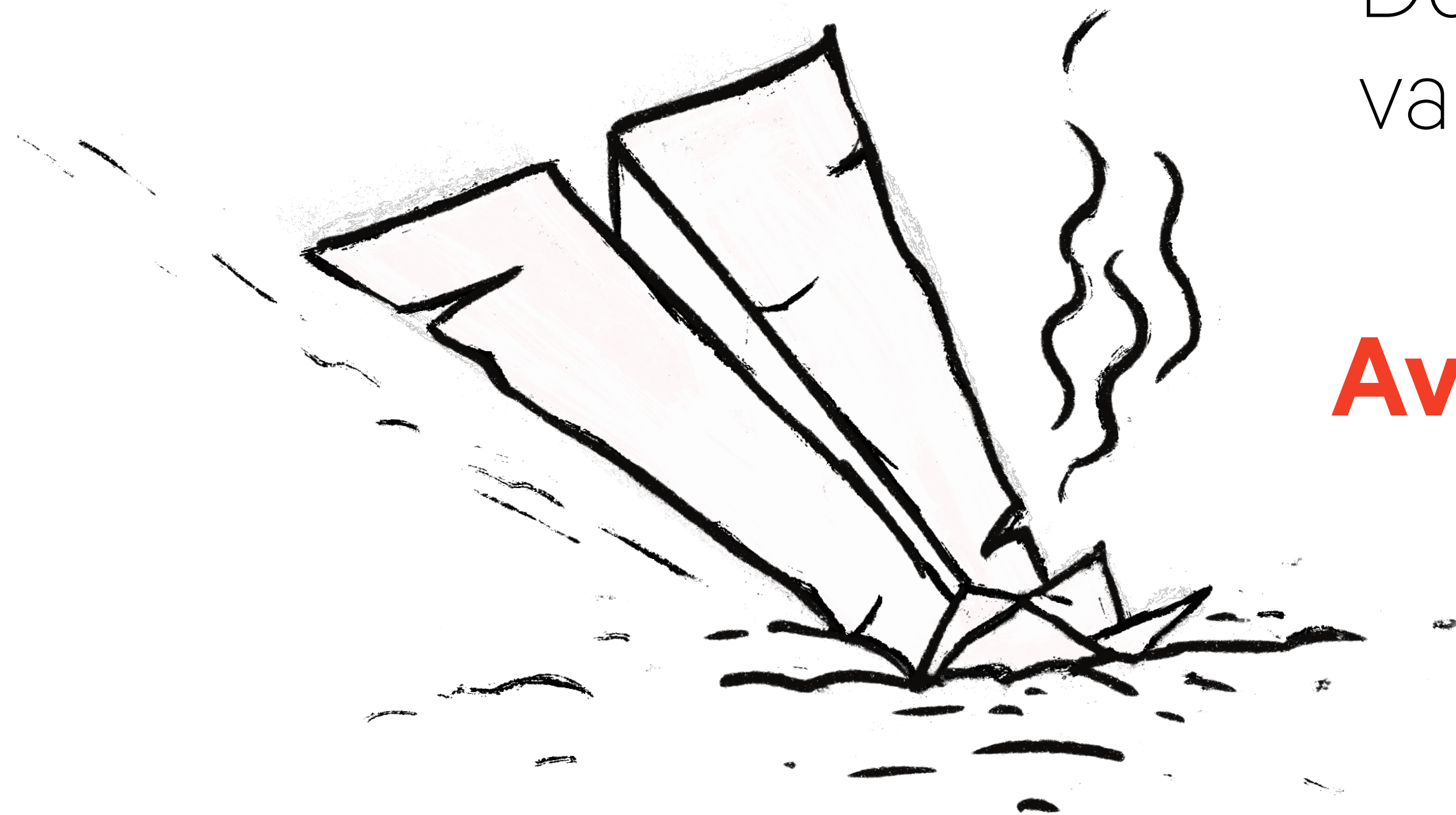
- Start with cornerstone content and break it into smaller pieces.
- Use multiple channels to create an everywhere presence.
- Focus on a few key channels that reach your audience consistently.

Going Narrow and Deep

- True authorities focus on niche audiences.
- Narrow focus leads to deeper, more relevant content.
- Expertise built from real-world successes and failures.
- Owning a niche allows you to set the standard.

Avoiding Generic Content

- Firms often create shallow, broad content.
- Generic content fails to differentiate and drive leads.
- Depth and relevance make content more valuable to prospects.



Avoid Random Acts of Blogging.

Using Content to Build Relationships

-
- We all know that relationships are key for A/E/C firms.
 - Cornerstone content invites prospects into a conversation.
 - Trojan horse strategy: featuring prospects as guests in content.
 - Develops relationships without a direct sales approach.

Be Brave and Go Narrow

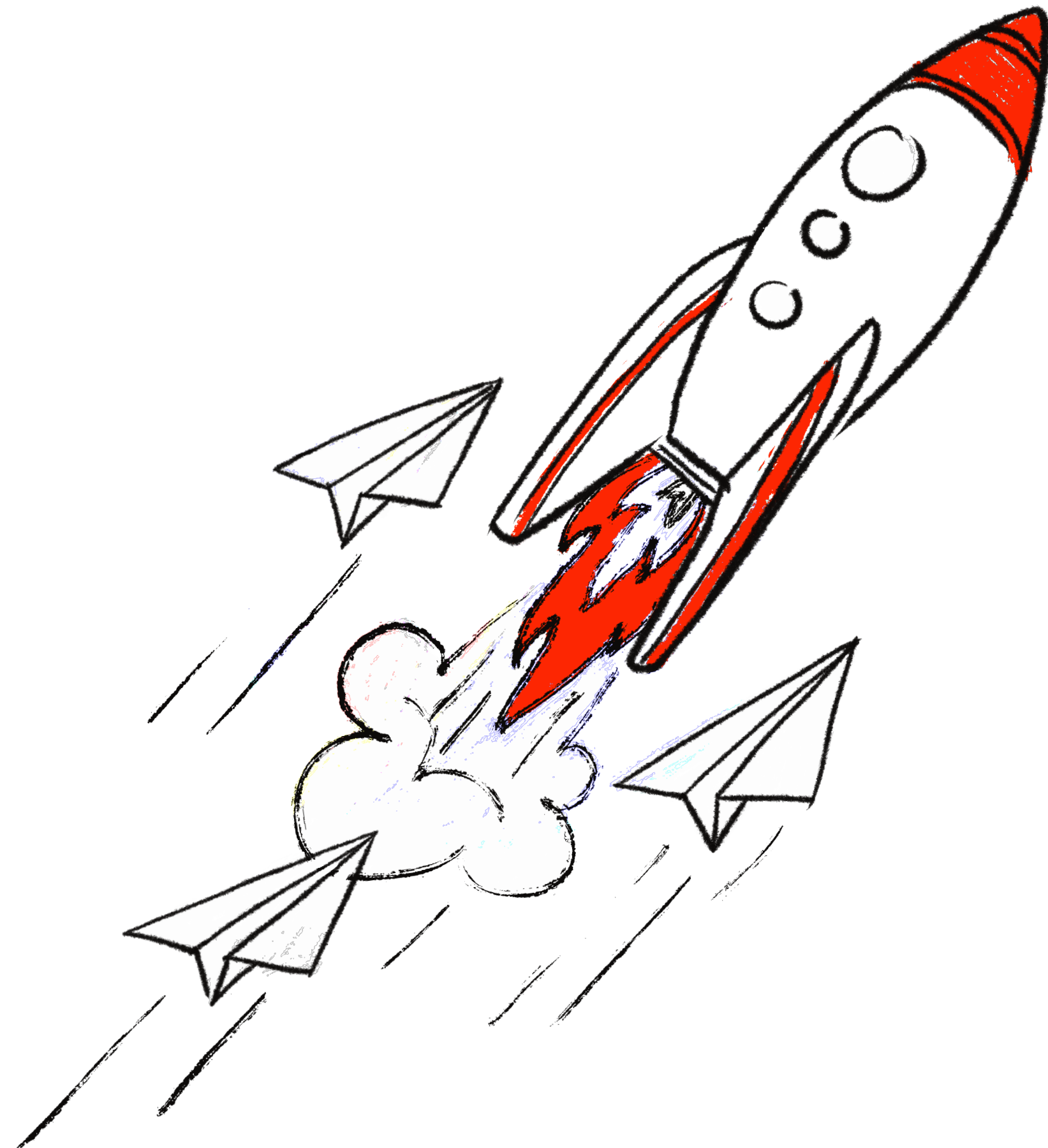
- Going narrow makes you stand out.
- Develop content that serves your niche deeply.
- Build relationships through your content.



Defining Your Brand Truth (Point of View)



The Importance of your Brand Truth (POV)



-
- Niching by sector or market is important.
 - But a strong POV is what truly sets you apart.
 - POV helps define your firm's unique expertise.
 - Ideally this POV is universal across the firm, but it can be unique to the sector.

The Power of a Strong POV

- POV turns expertise into actionable insights.
- It helps interpret facts and deliver value beyond knowledge.
- A well-defined POV significantly reduces competition.

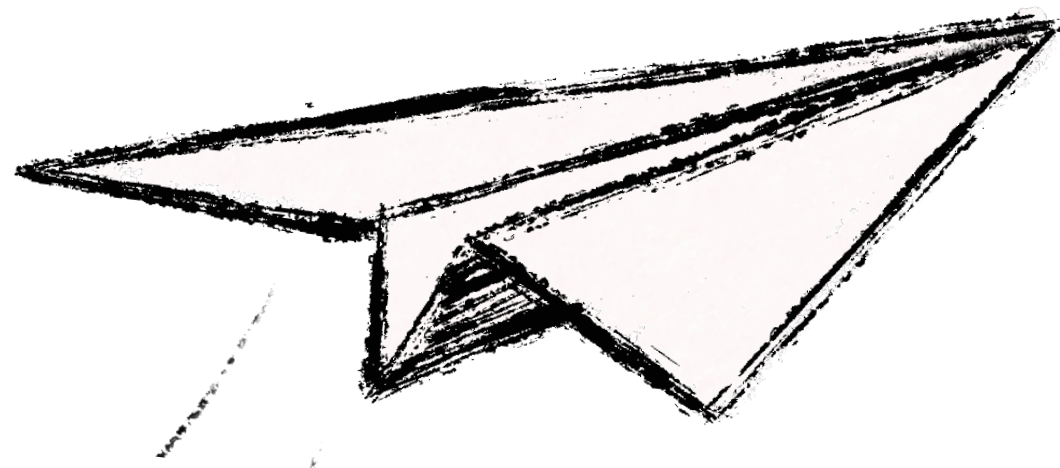
Uncovering Your Brand Truth

- Look at stories, anecdotes, and phrases you always use.
- These reveal the core beliefs behind your work.
- Identify the truths that shape your recommendations.

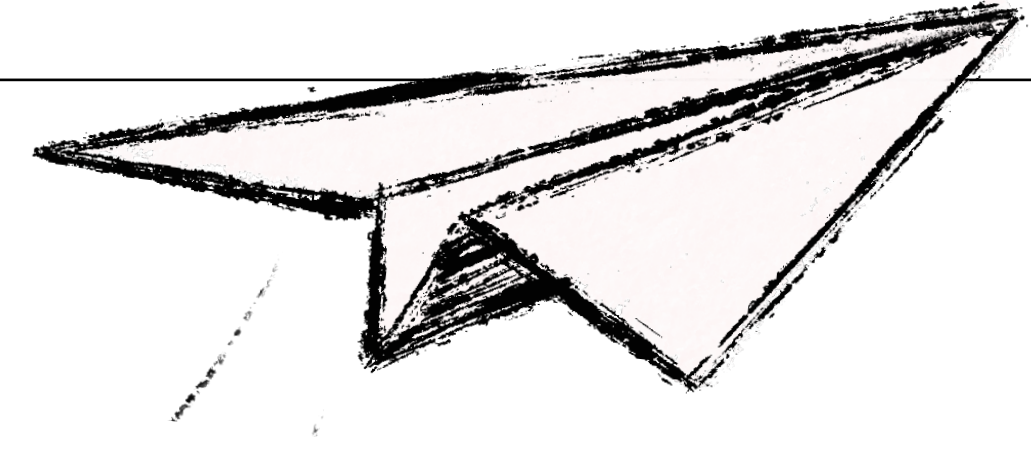


Playing the Toddler Why Game

- Ask why multiple times to uncover deeper insights.
- Find the root challenges your clients face.
- Use the same process to understand why your teams do things the way they do.
- This reveals the foundation of your POV.

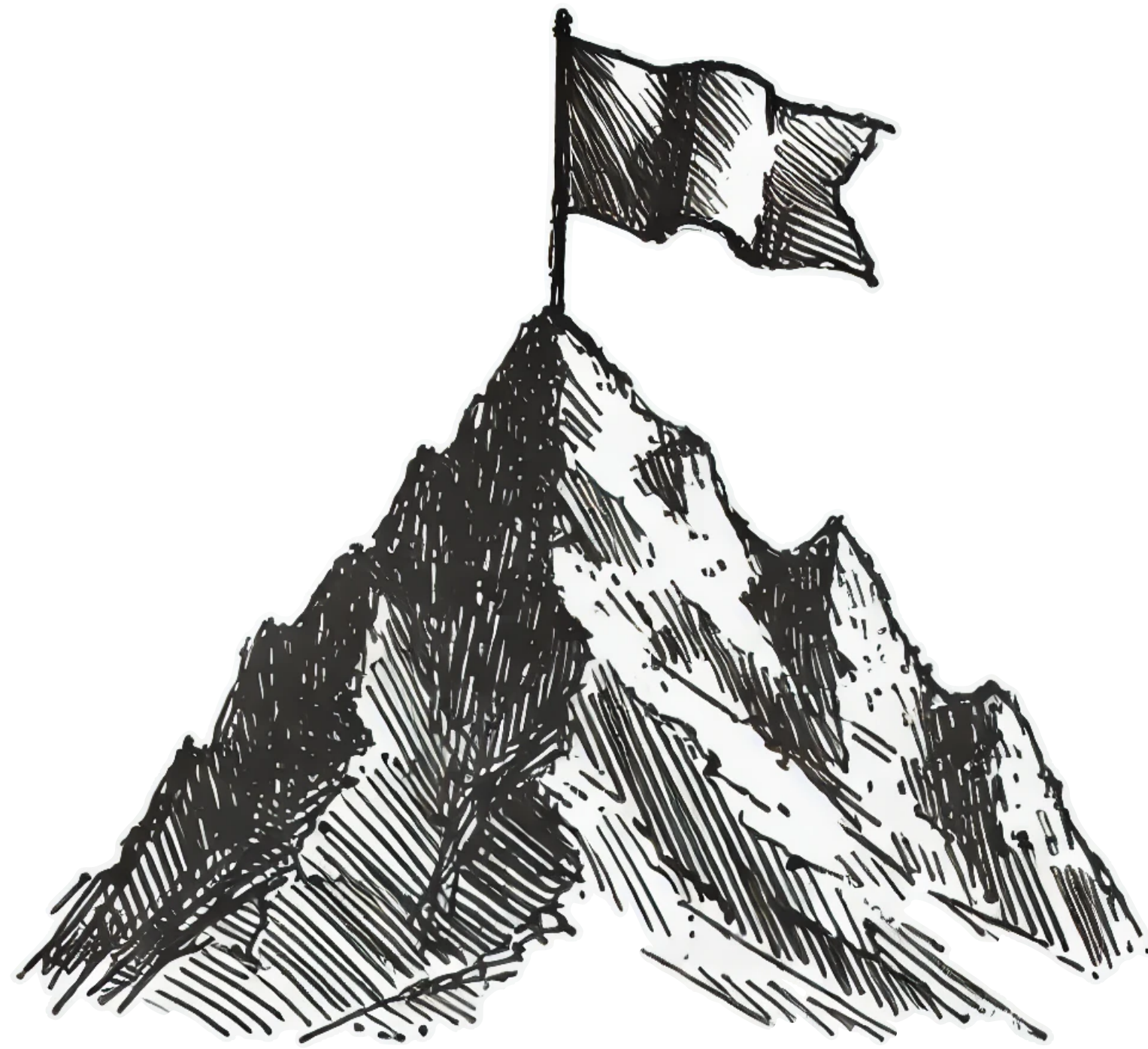


POV + Niches = Authority Positioning

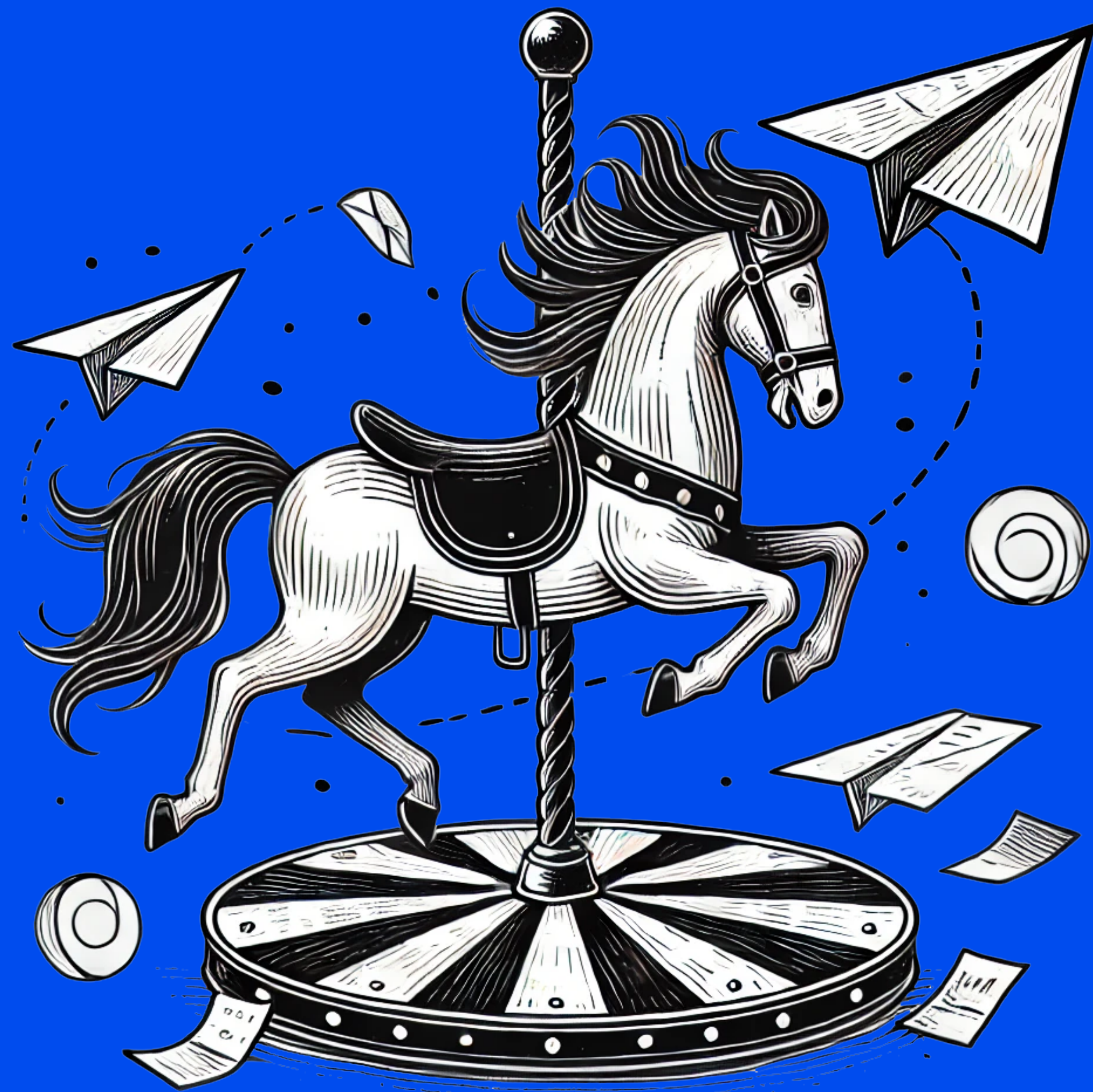


- Combine your POV with clearly defined niches.
- If your niches are related, use one POV; if unrelated, create separate POVs.
- For example, can you identify a POV that is true for both multi-family and senior living?
- This combination is the core of your authority position.

Claiming Your Firm's Brand Truth



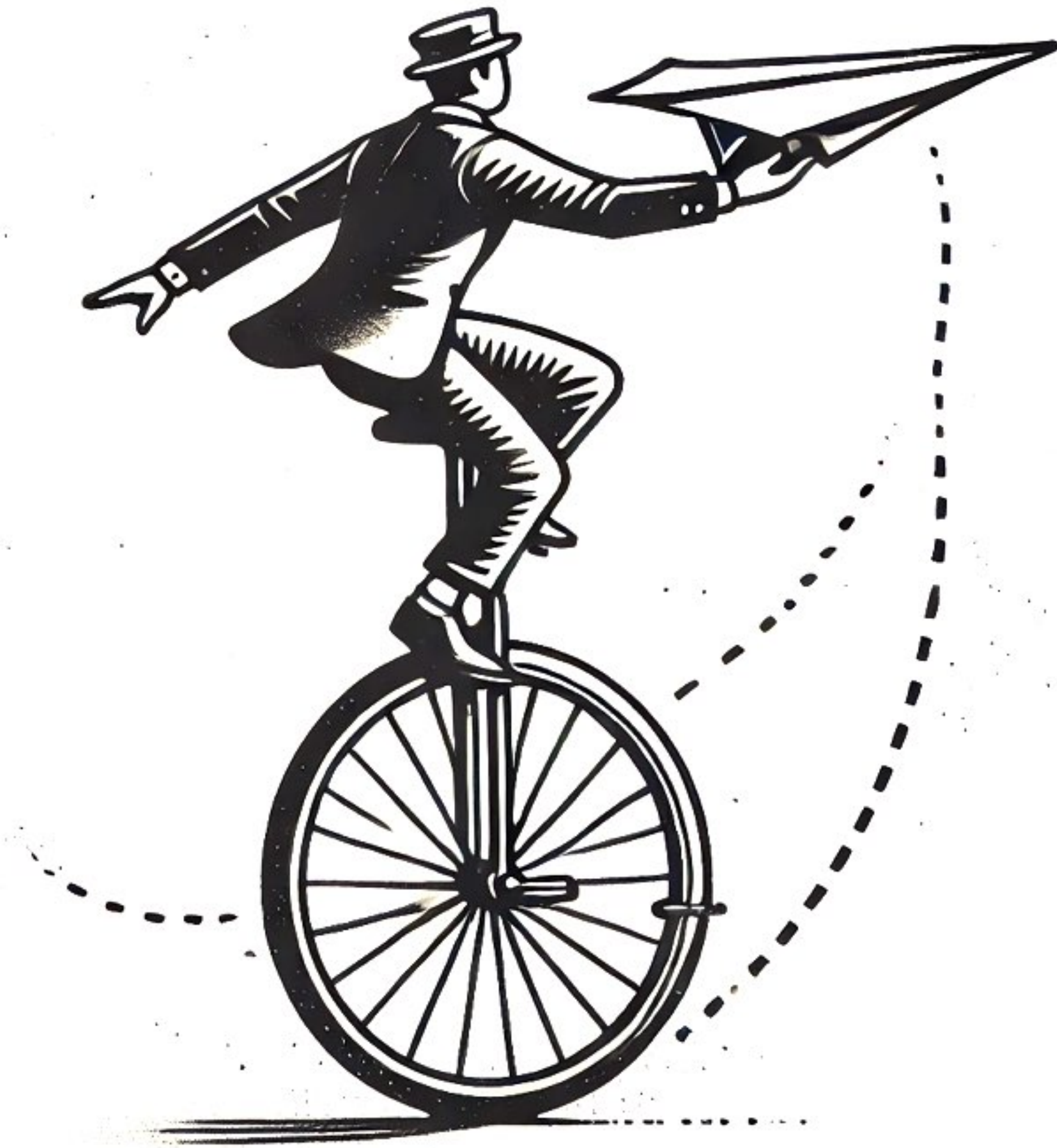
-
- Your Brand Truth is not new—it's something you've already known.
 - Recognize and articulate this point-of-view to position your firm.
 - Build content around this POV to attract your ideal clients.



Don't be a
One-Trick
Pony

Why You Need Multi-Channel Presence

- Relying on one platform limits your reach and influence.
- True authorities diversify their expertise across multiple channels.
- Multiple channels help you create repetition and expand your audience.
- A multi-channel approach reduces the risk of losing relevance as platforms change.



The Hub-and-Spoke Model

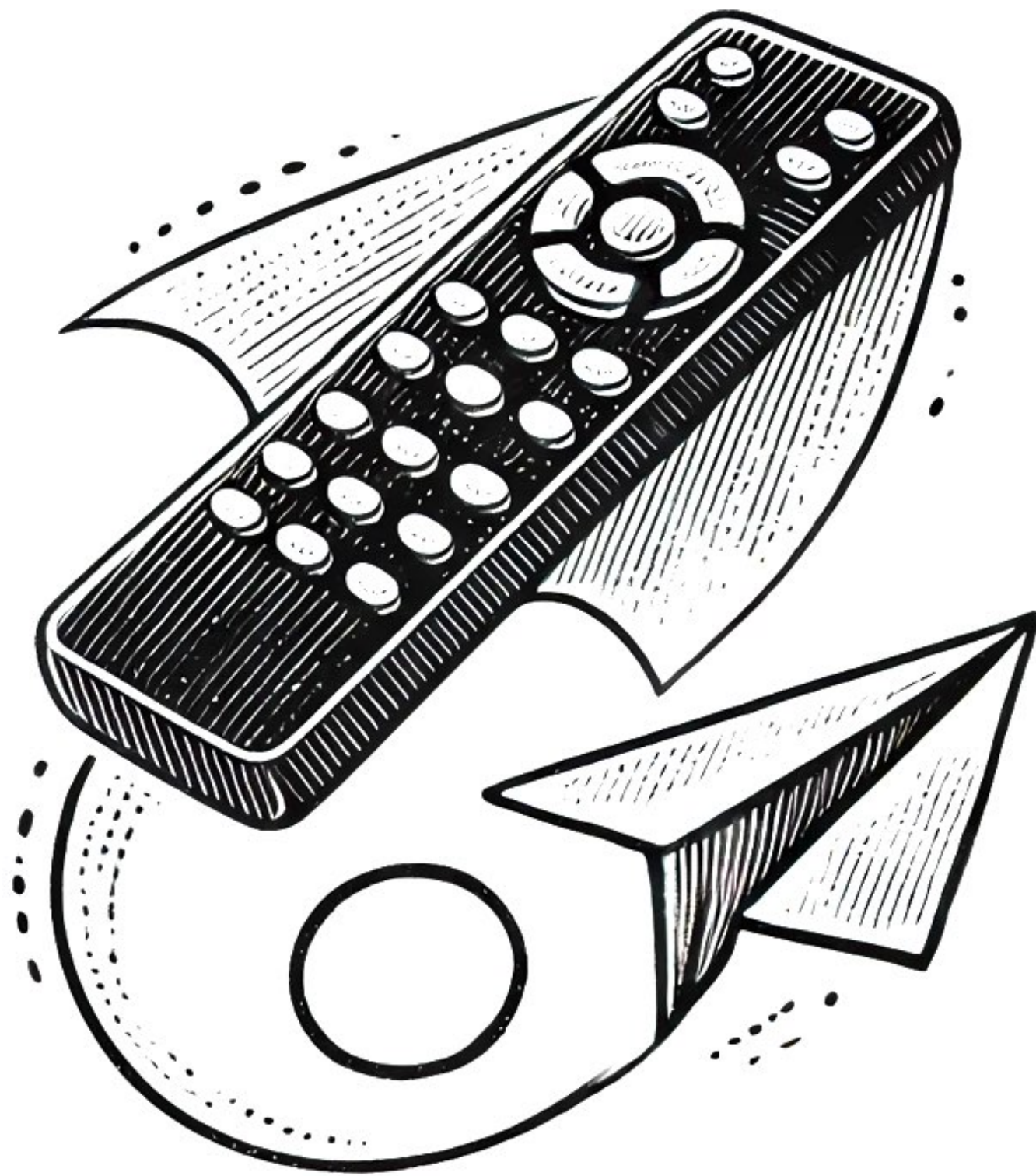
- Use cornerstone content (hub) and repurpose it into smaller pieces (spokes).
- Example hub content: books, podcasts, original research
- Example spoke content: blog posts, video clips, and social media.
- This strategy ensures your content is discoverable across platforms without overloading your team.

Seth Godin's Multi-Channel Strategy

- Seth Godin writes a daily blog and publishes books.
- His content is repurposed into graphics, quotes, podcasts, and courses.
- He creates the impression of being everywhere without producing entirely new content for each channel.



The Benefits of a Multi-Channel Strategy



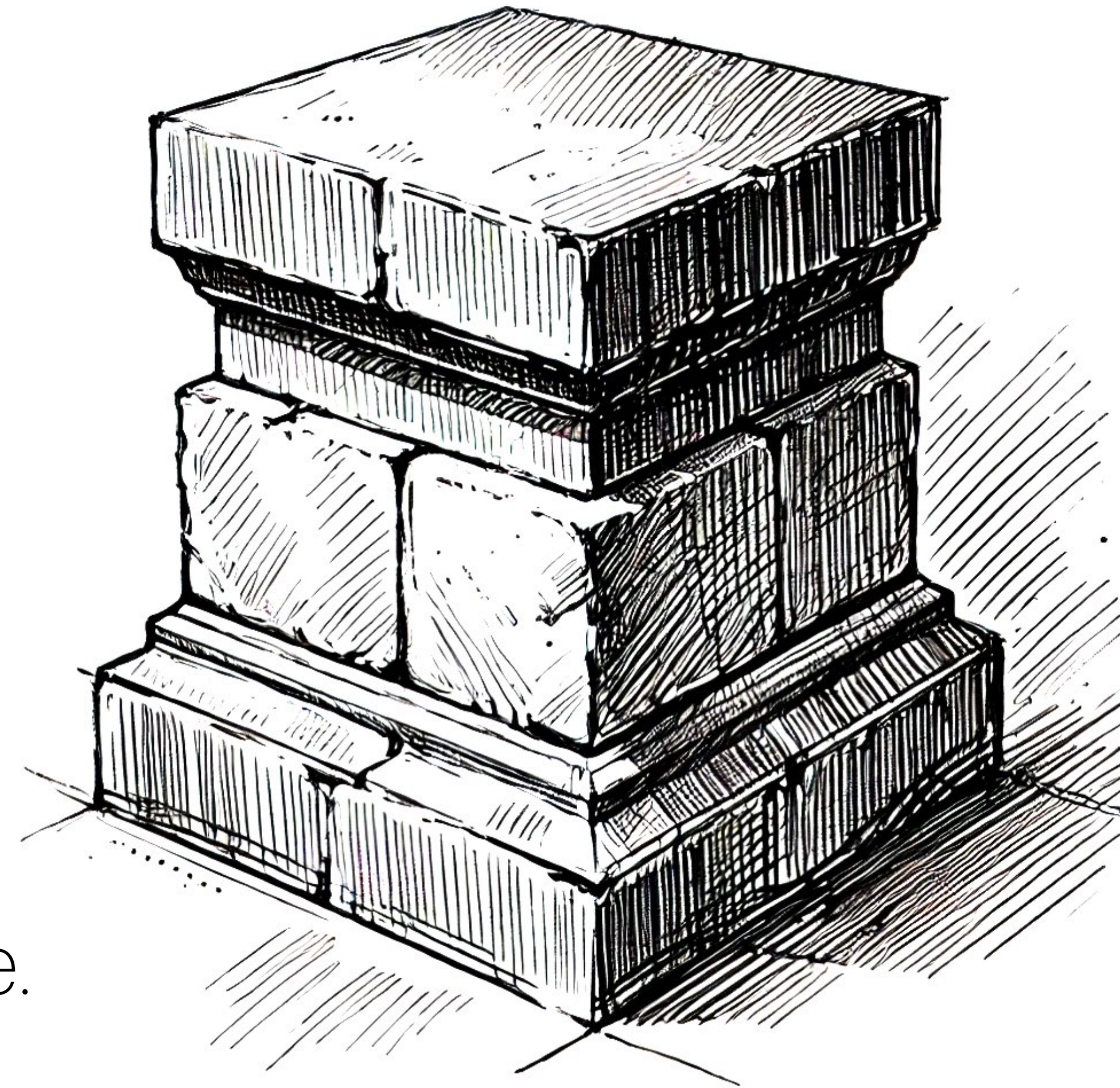
-
- Appearing on multiple platforms builds credibility and authority.
 - Repurposed content reaches more people and drives engagement.
 - As you grow, adding more channels deepens your influence and expands your audience.



Creating Cornerstone Content

What is Cornerstone Content?

- Meaty enough to produce smaller pieces (cobblestones).
- Epicenter of your promotion and authority.
- Consistent in focus and production.
- Sales-free—focus on educating and building trust.
- A long-term play to build a loyal audience.



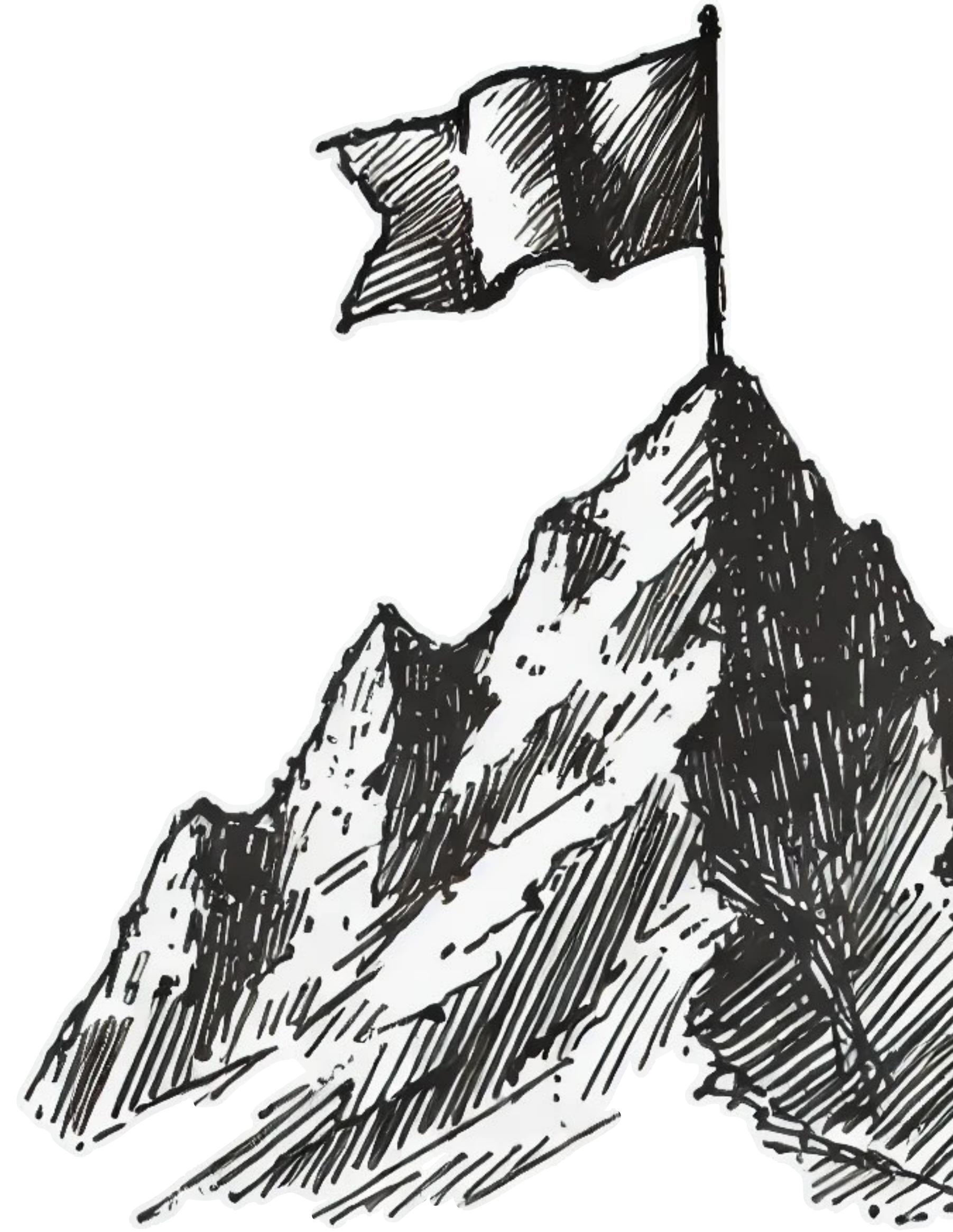
Examples of Cornerstone Content

- Books.
- Podcasts.
- Primary research.
- Video Series or Webinars.



Importance of Owning Your Cornerstone

- Your cornerstone content must live on a platform you control (e.g., your website).
- Avoid relying solely on third-party platforms (e.g., Facebook, Medium).
- Ownership ensures longevity and security of your content.

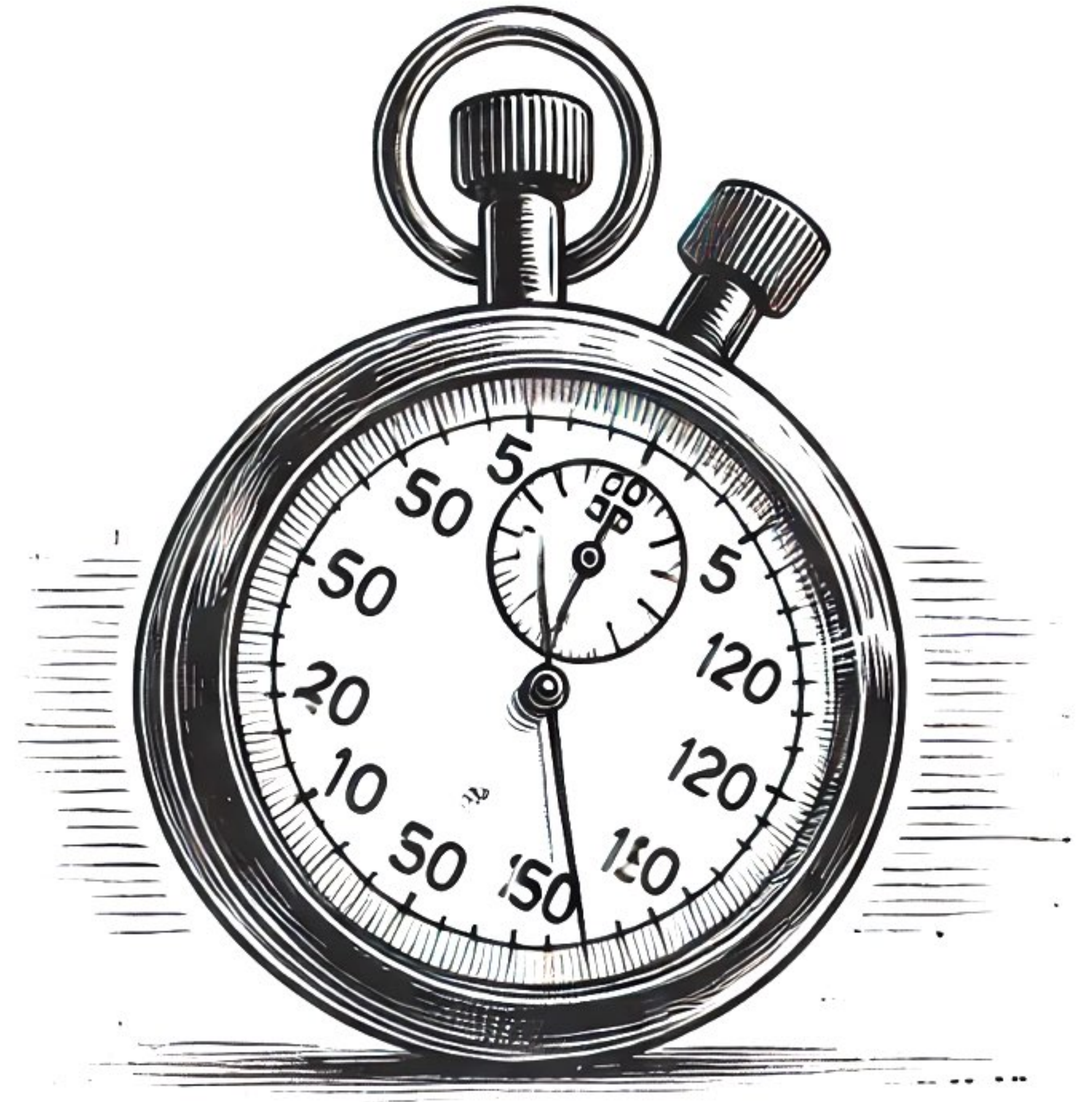


Consistency & Community

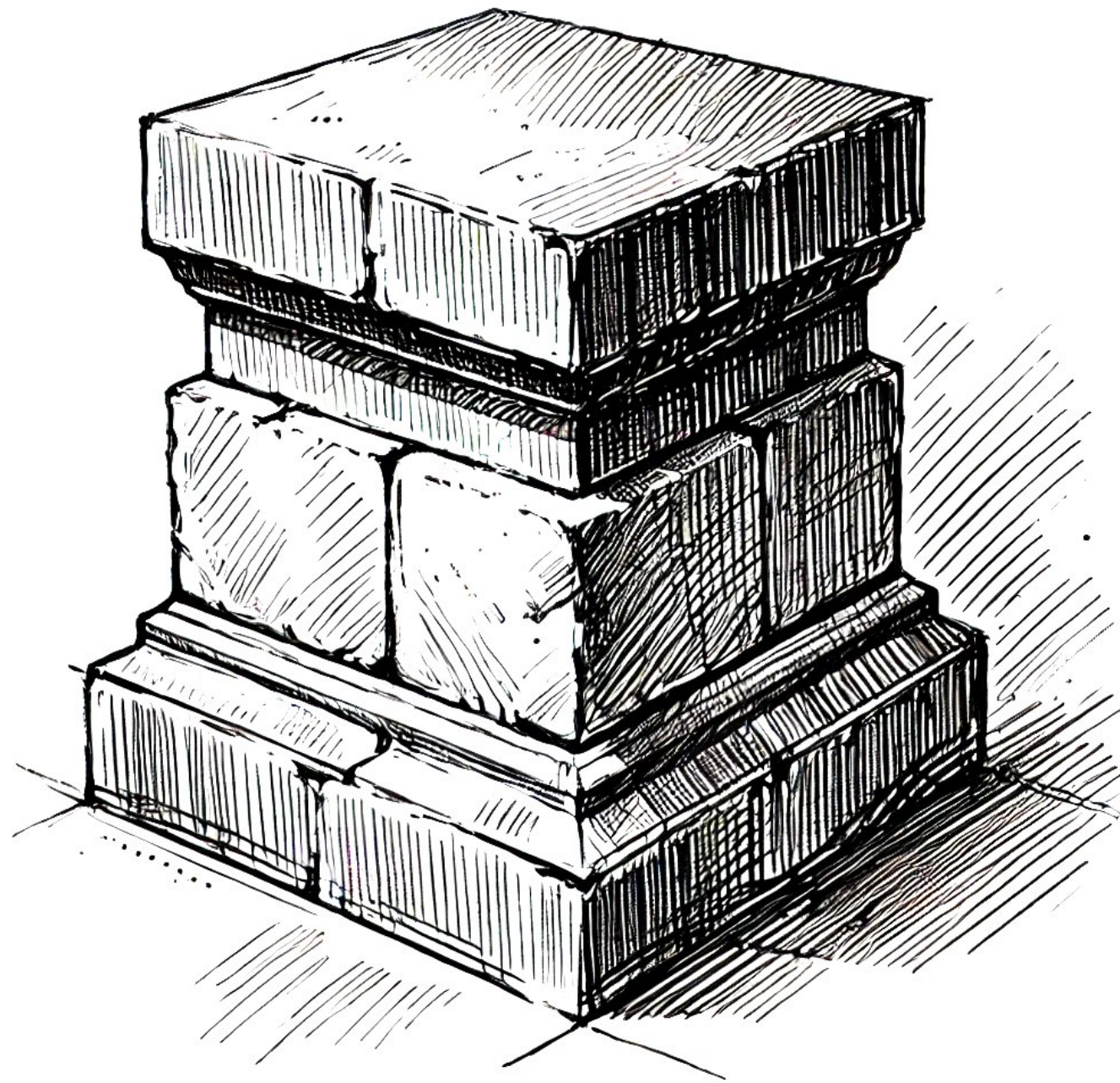
- Cornerstone content requires consistent creation and promotion.
- Repetition builds trust and authority over time.
- Your main goal is to create an engaged audience that trusts you.
- Focus on how your content helps them and deepens your connection.
- Resist the urge to sell—your goal is to build a space for learning.

How Long Does it Take to Build Authority?

- It takes 6-12 months to see significant results from cornerstone content.
- Year two: Expect strong growth; year three: well-established authority.
- Occasional lucky breaks (e.g., shared content) may accelerate the process.



What's the Right Cornerstone for You?

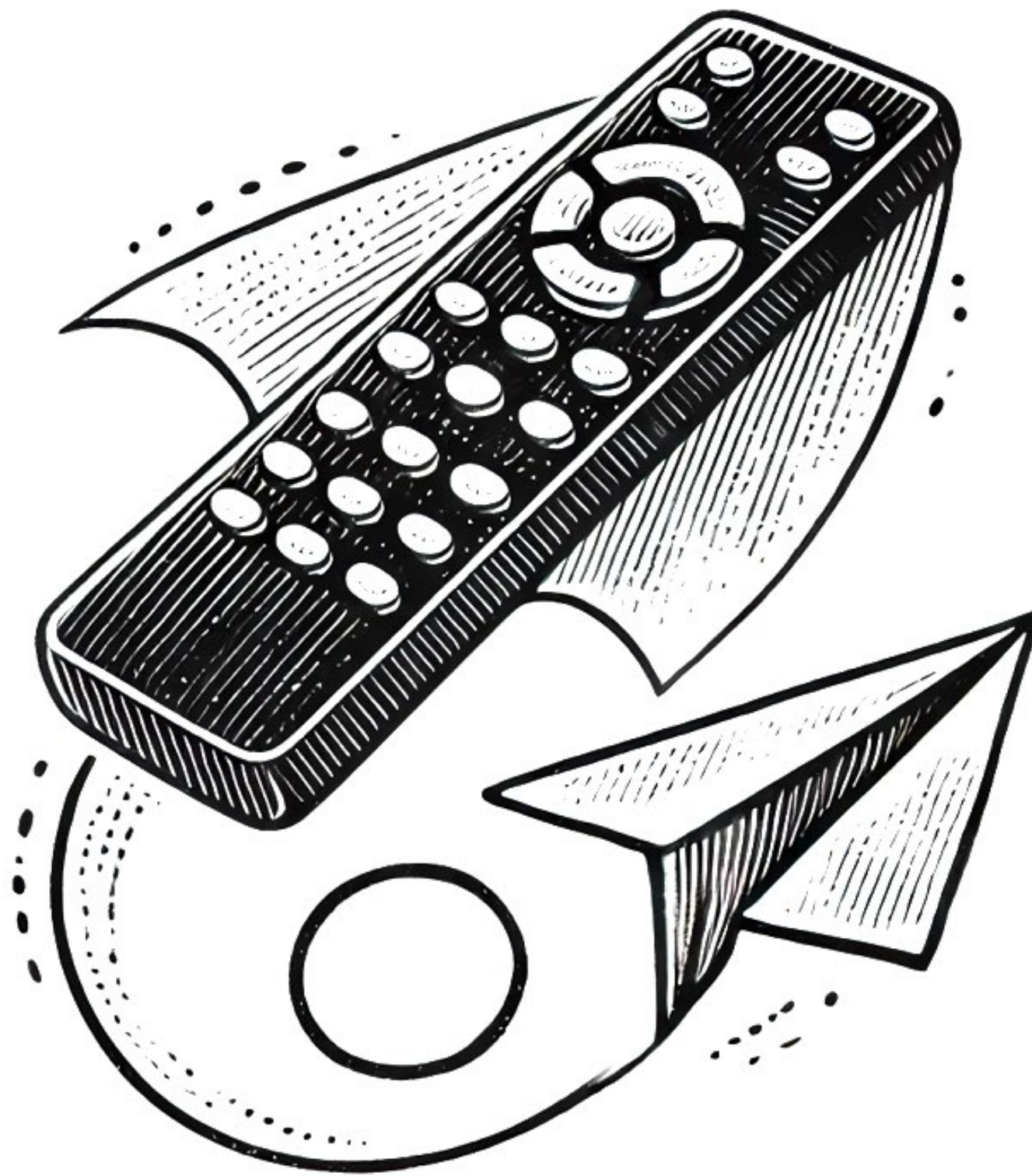


-
- Choose the format that best suits your strengths and audience.
 - Consider budget, resources, and long-term commitment.
 - Start with one format and expand once it's systematized.



The Pros and Cons of Talking

Choosing Your Cornerstone Channel

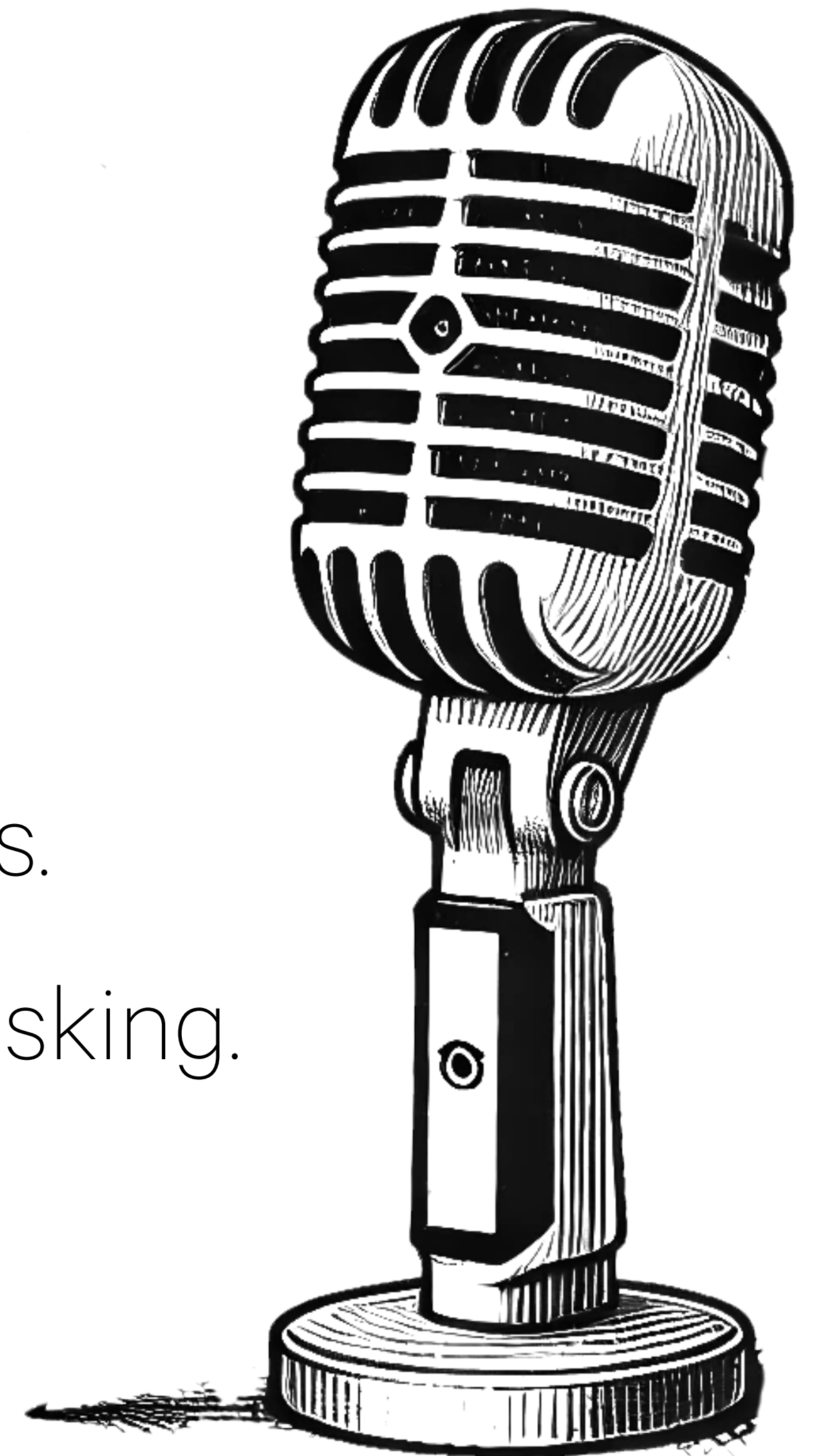


-
- Content creation can be through writing (books, blogs) or talking (podcasts, videos).
 - Often, both are combined, but one is usually dominant.
 - Each option has its strengths and challenges.

Pros of Talking

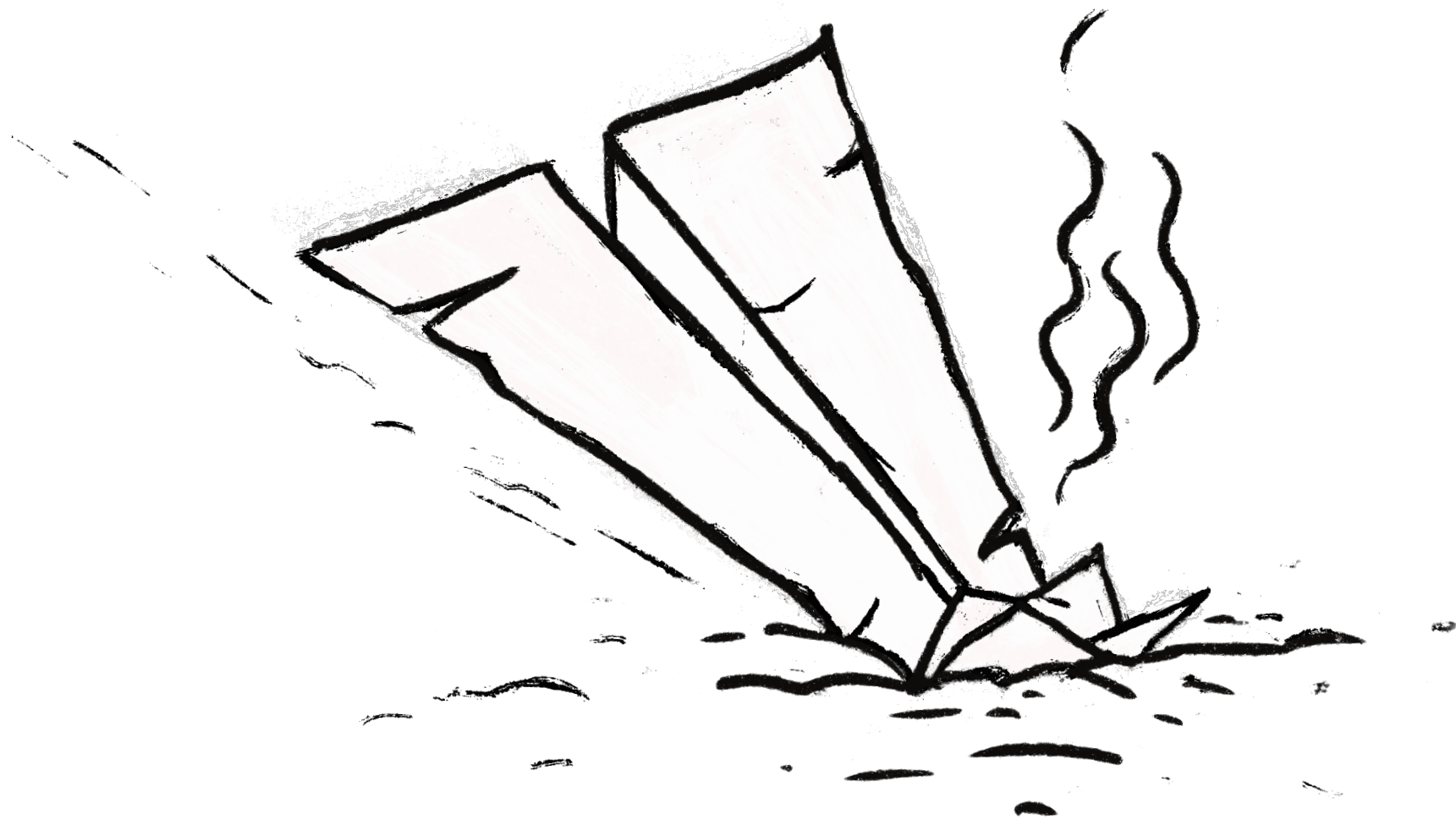
(Podcasts, Videos, Webinars, Public Speaking)

- Spontaneity adds an exciting, authentic element.
- Faster to market with less preparation.
- Guest contribution enriches content.
- Easier promotion as guests share with their networks.
- Podcasts are rising in popularity—perfect for multitasking.
- Accessible anytime, on demand



Cons of Talking

(Podcasts, Videos, Webinars, Public Speaking)



-
- Improv is risky—unpredictable results.
 - Production quality needs to be high, especially for video.
 - Requires consistent time and effort.
 - Marketing and technical expertise are required.
 - Speaking engagements require invitations, travel, and promotion.
 - Live content requires more planning and flexibility.

The Reality of Podcasts

- Podcasting's popularity is growing—over 50% of Americans have listened to a podcast.
- Podcasts allow for micro-targeting specific audiences.
- Time commitment: 10-15 hours per episode on average.
- Guests help generate content, and bring in new listeners or watchers.
- Consistency is key to retaining listeners.



The Reality of Video Content



-
- Video content is highly engaging—people consume 84 minutes of video per day.
 - Shareability: video is easily shared, helping content go viral.
 - Requires high-quality production to stand out.
 - Video content should be concise—audiences have short attention spans.*

The Reality of Video Content

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* This really depends on the type of content. People watch long-form video all the time — it's not really about the length, it's about the value and quality of the content and production.

The Reality of Webinars

- Highly engaging, with live interaction keeping audiences for nearly an hour.
- Evergreen potential—can be repurposed as on-demand content.
- Minimal equipment required—simple setup.
- Audience investment—those who sign up are genuinely interested.



The Reality of Public Speaking



- Public speaking offers third-party endorsement, adding credibility.
- High visibility—direct audience interaction and feedback.
- Time-intensive—preparing, traveling, and presenting take significant effort.
- Marketing is key to securing speaking gigs.
- Public speaking works best as an amplifier for your cornerstone content.

Writing as the Hub of Your Cornerstone Content



Why Choose Written Content?

*This really depends on the type of content. Producing a book or primary research can be expensive, depending on how you do it.

-
- You can rewrite and refine before publishing.
 - Lower cost*—no special equipment needed.
 - Create anytime, anywhere—complete flexibility.
 - Written content boosts SEO and drives traffic to your site.
 - Easily shareable on social media.

Challenges of Written Content

- Perfectionism can delay publishing.
- Strong writing skills or a good editor are needed.
- Writing, especially books, requires a significant time investment.
- Consistency is key—one article or blog isn't enough.
- Errors are highly visible in written formats.

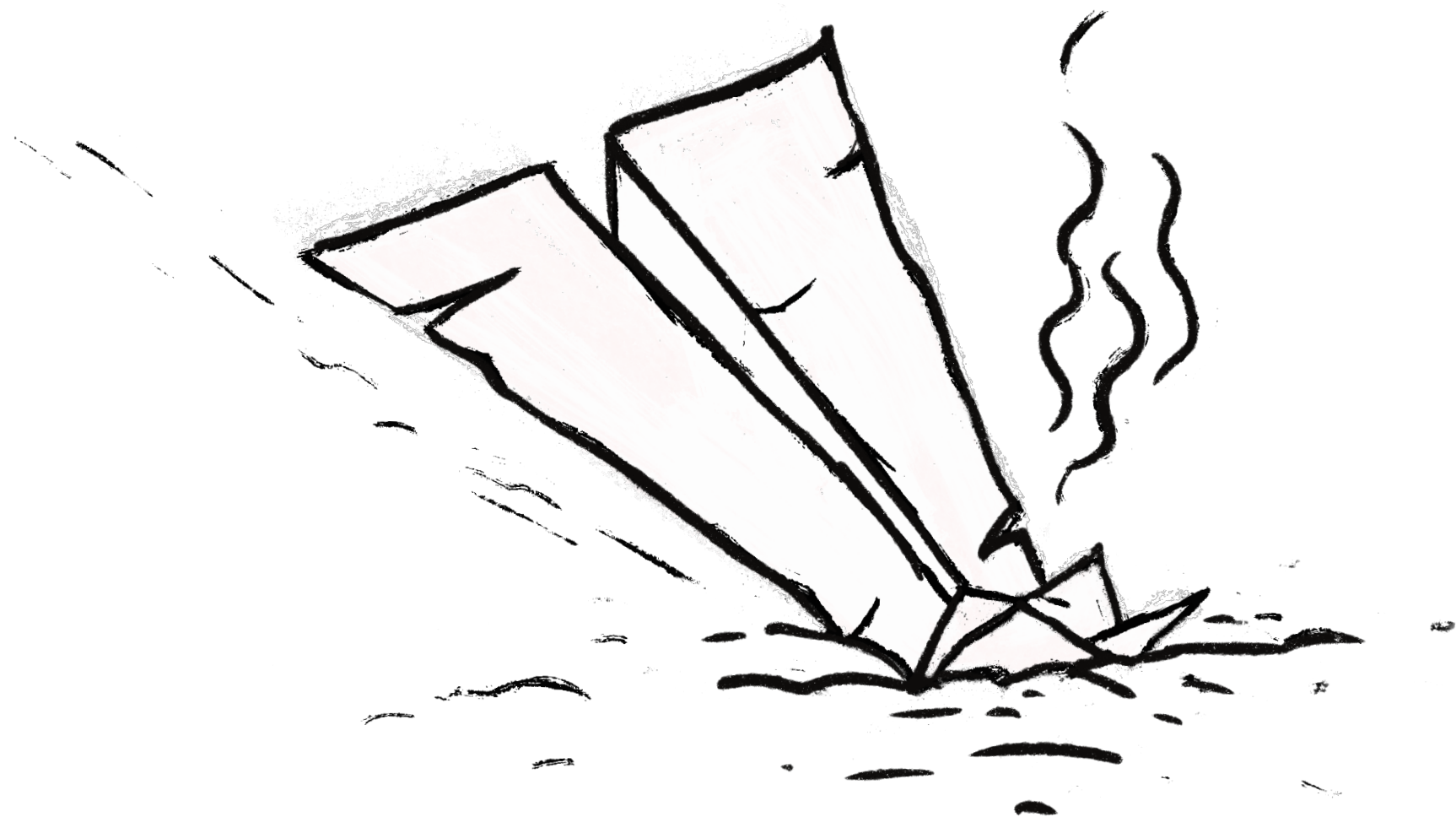


The Power and Pitfalls of Blogging



-
- Blogs are great for boosting SEO and driving traffic.
 - Crowded space—you have to work hard to stand out.
 - Guest contributors can help increase frequency and value.
 - Frequency, consistency, and a strong POV are critical to success.

The Power and Pitfalls of Blogging



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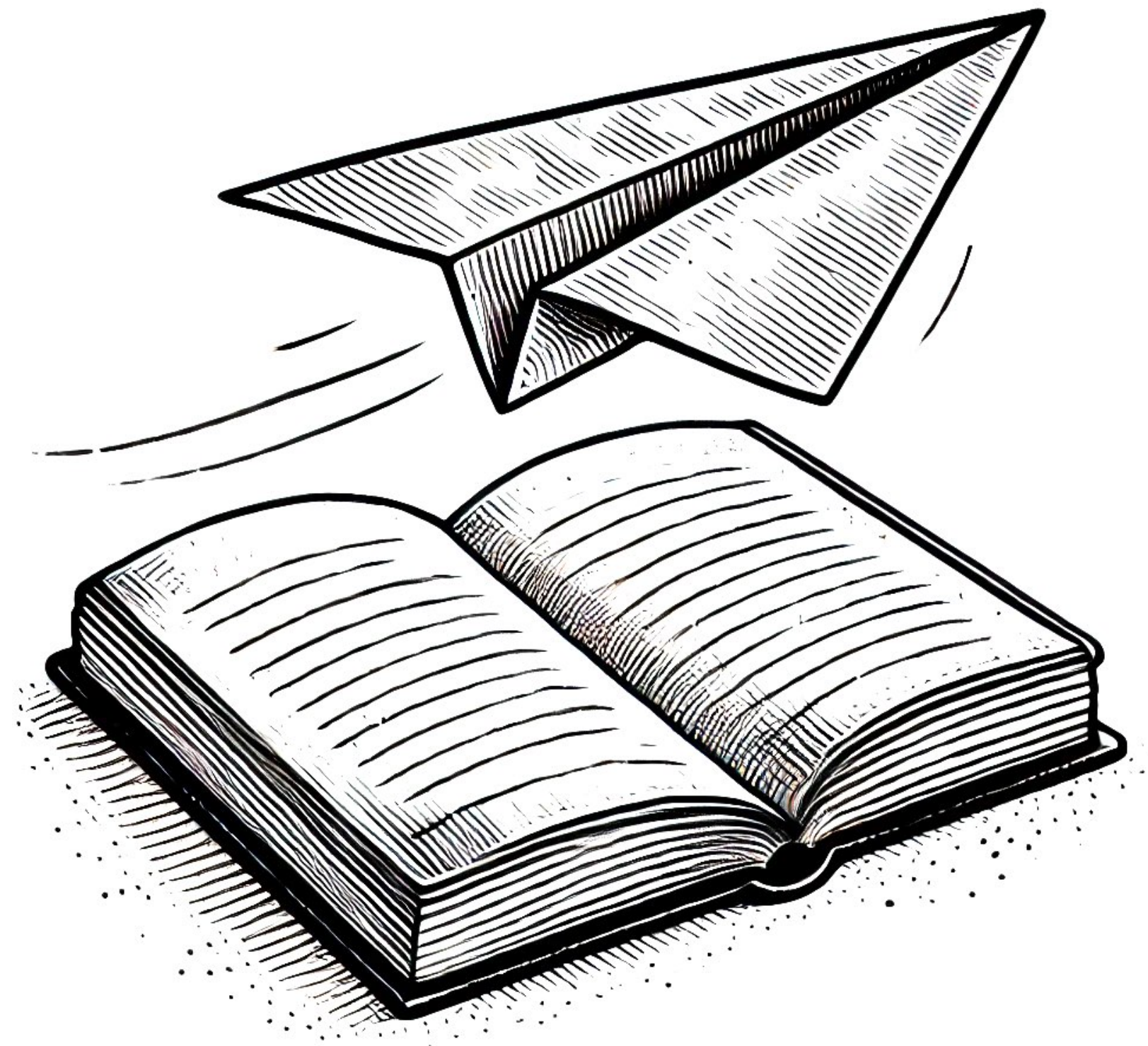
Remember to avoid random acts of blogging!

Writing Articles for Publications

- Regularly writing for trade publications builds authority in your niche.
- Articles provide exposure and lead to speaking engagements and partnerships.
- Limited control over editorial changes and distribution.
- Time-intensive—long waits for publication and revisions.
- One-off articles work better as cobblestone content.



The Power of Authoring a Book

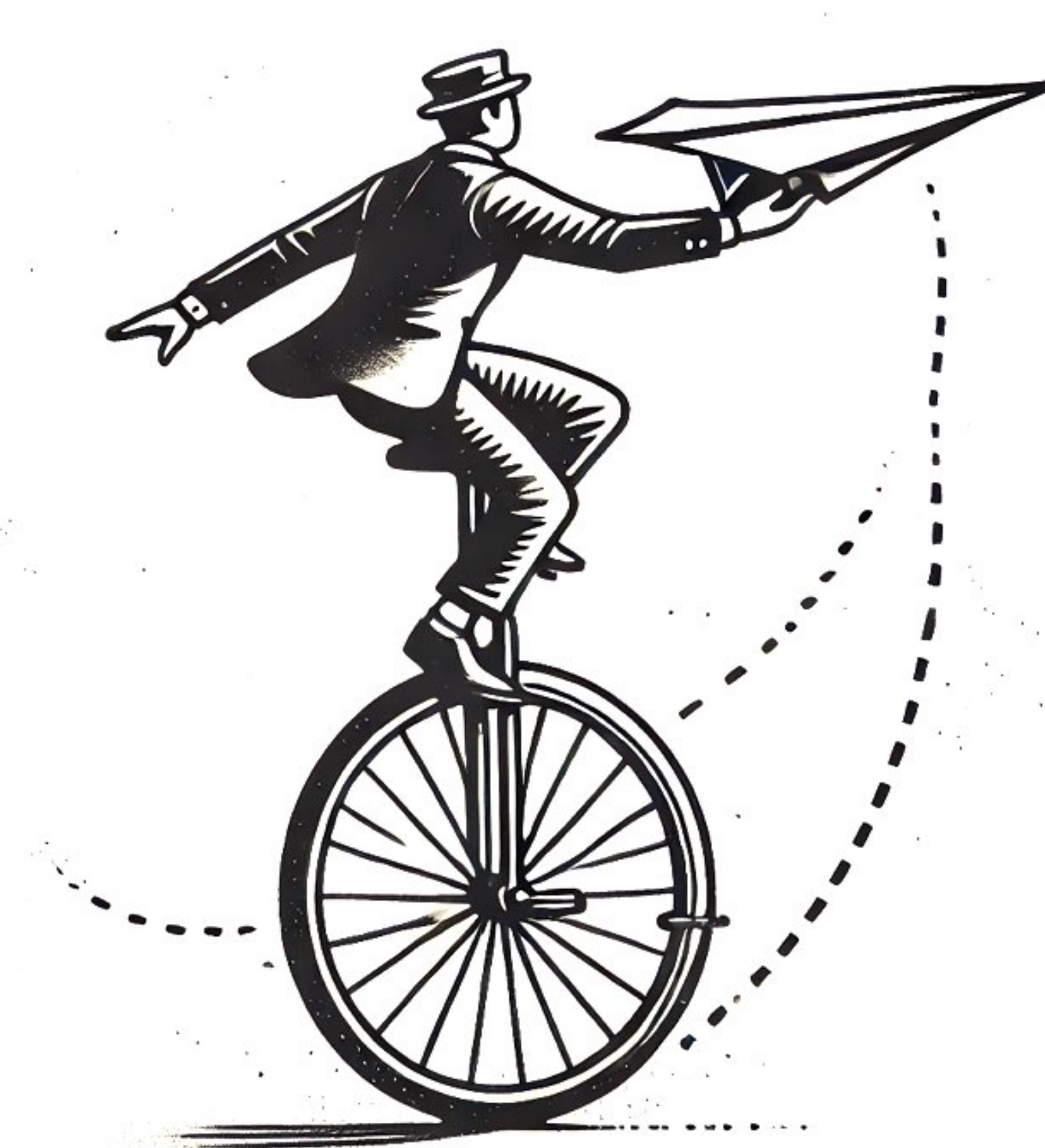


-
- A book firmly establishes you as an expert.
 - Long-term asset—opens doors to speaking engagements and media features.
 - Significant time commitment—writing a book is no small task.
 - Provides a wealth of content for future repurposing.
 - Strongly consider hiring a consultant or at least an editor or ghostwriter.

Using Primary Research to Build Authority

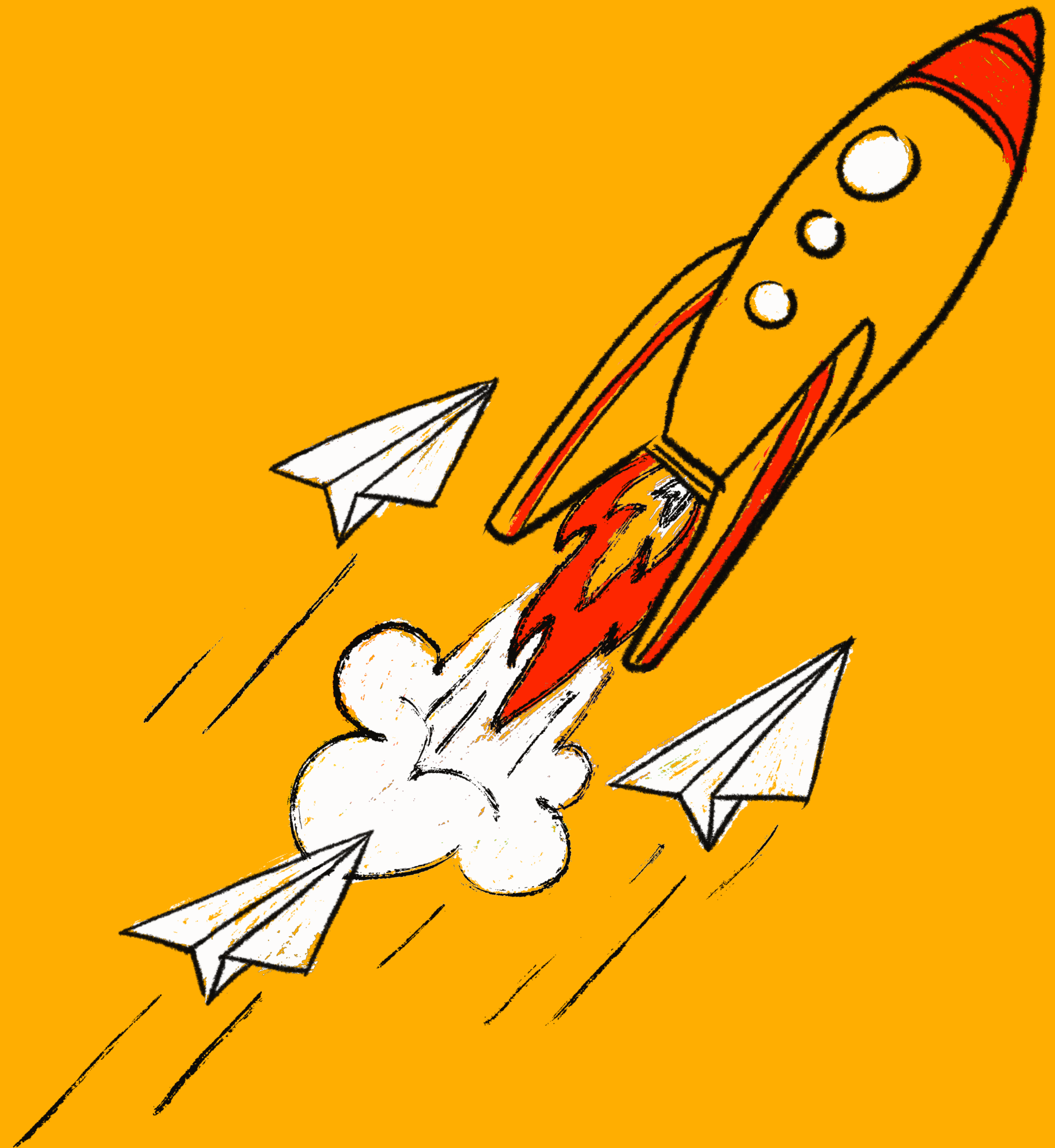
- Research provides unique, data-driven insights.
- Almost nothing else is as effective in establishing you as a thought-leader.
- May require collaboration with a qualified research partner.
- Evergreen content that adds value for years.

Choosing the Right Hub

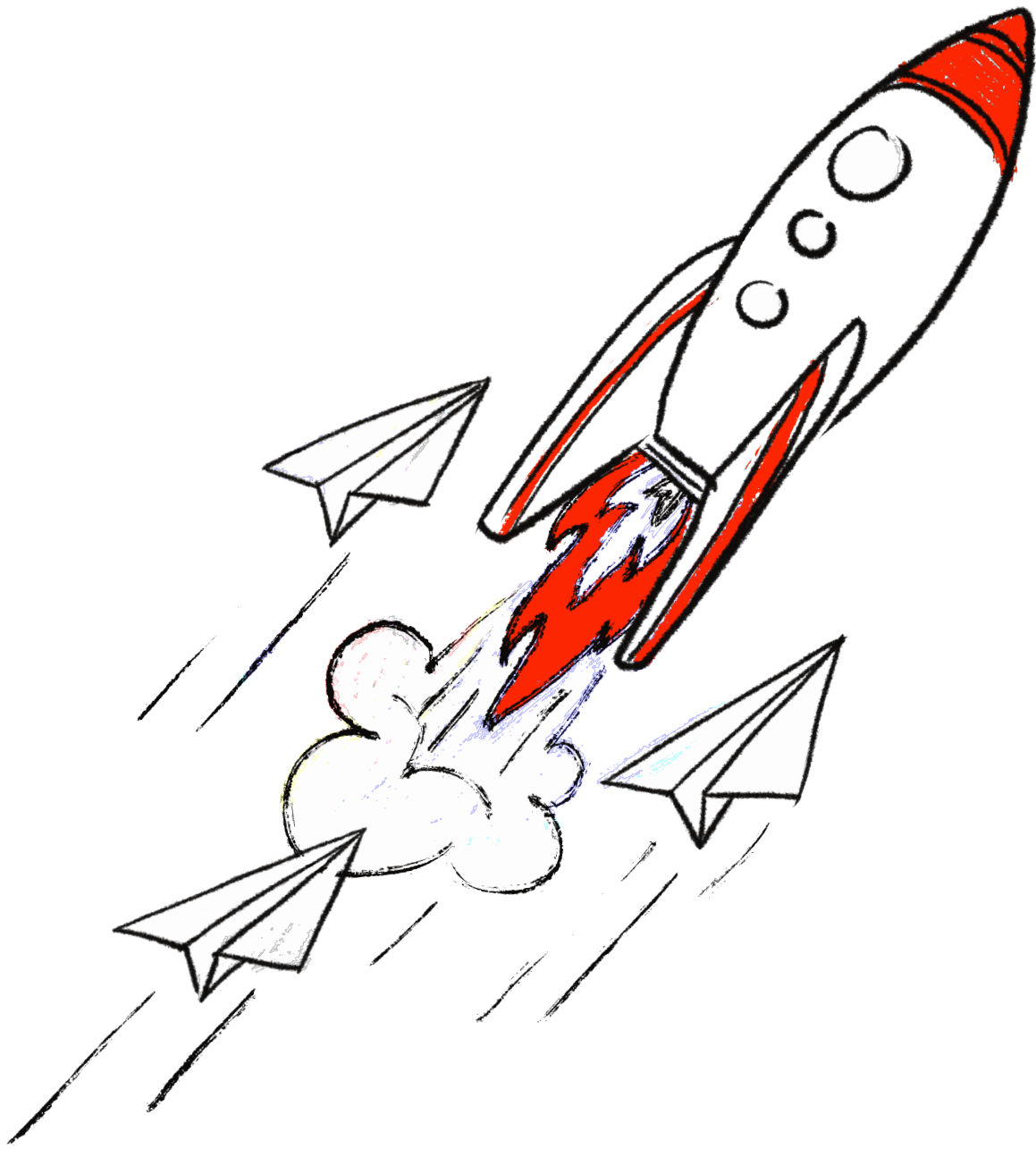


-
- Pick a format that works for you and your team.
 - Consider what the competition is doing and your audience..
 - Generate significant value and repurpose into smaller content pieces (cobblestones).
 - Remember, your decision isn't permanent —you can adjust as you grow.

Getting It All Done



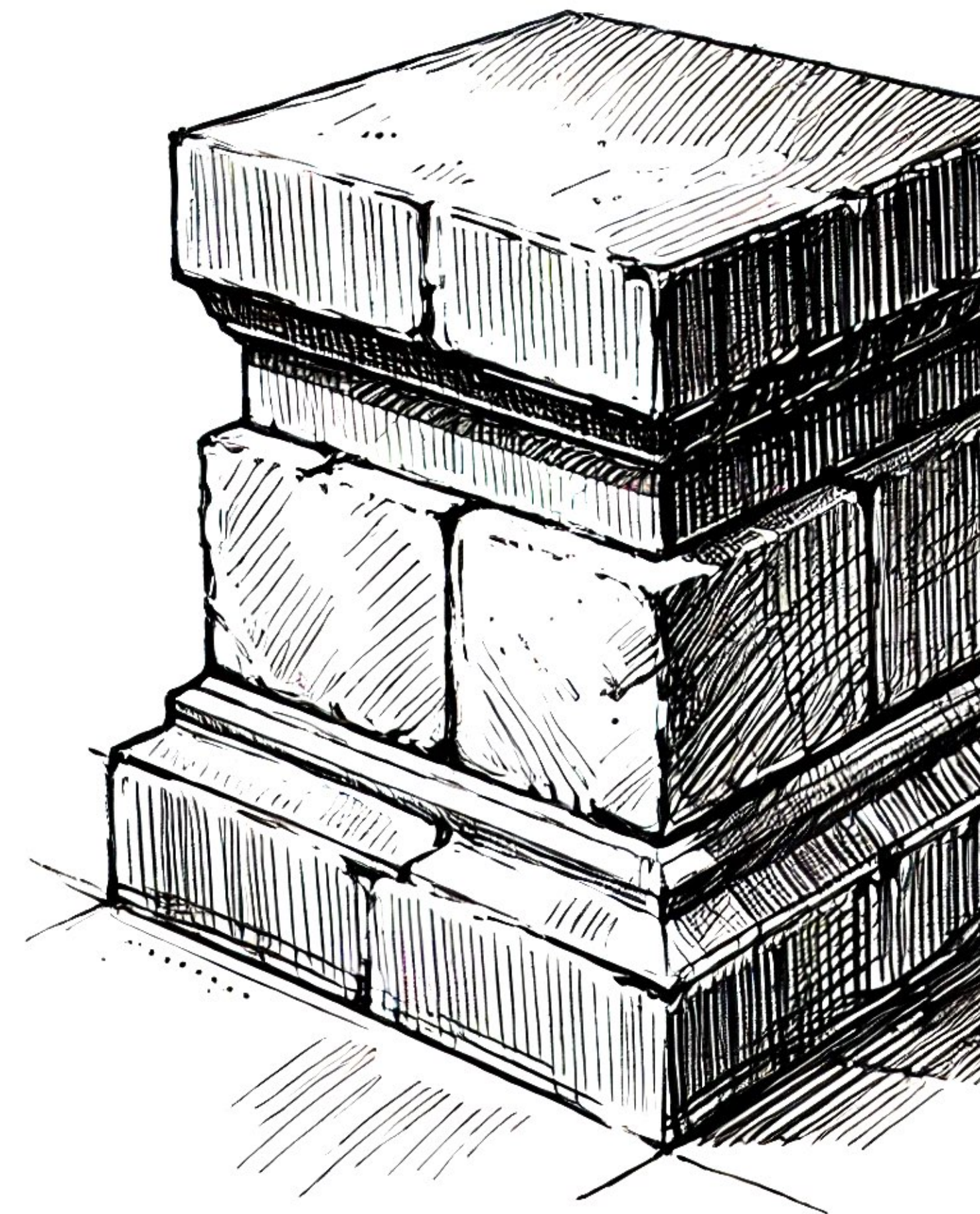
Hacking the System to Get it All Done



-
- **Set Aside Focus Time:** Block a few hours per week to focus on content creation.
 - **One Plus One Makes Three:** Repurpose existing content into new formats.
 - **Go Backwards:** Start with smaller pieces of content and build them into larger assets.
 - **Get Help:** Producing content is the perfect opportunity to engage a freelancer, consultant, or agency.

Maximize Your Content: The Slice and Dice Approach

- Turn cornerstone content into multiple smaller pieces (cobblestones) for increased reach.
- Repurposing content maximizes its visibility and effectiveness.
- Use a system to automate and streamline content repurposing for efficiency.



One small leap...

- Start with one cornerstone content format and expand over time.
- Consistency and patience are key to building authority.
- Stay focused on providing value to your audience.

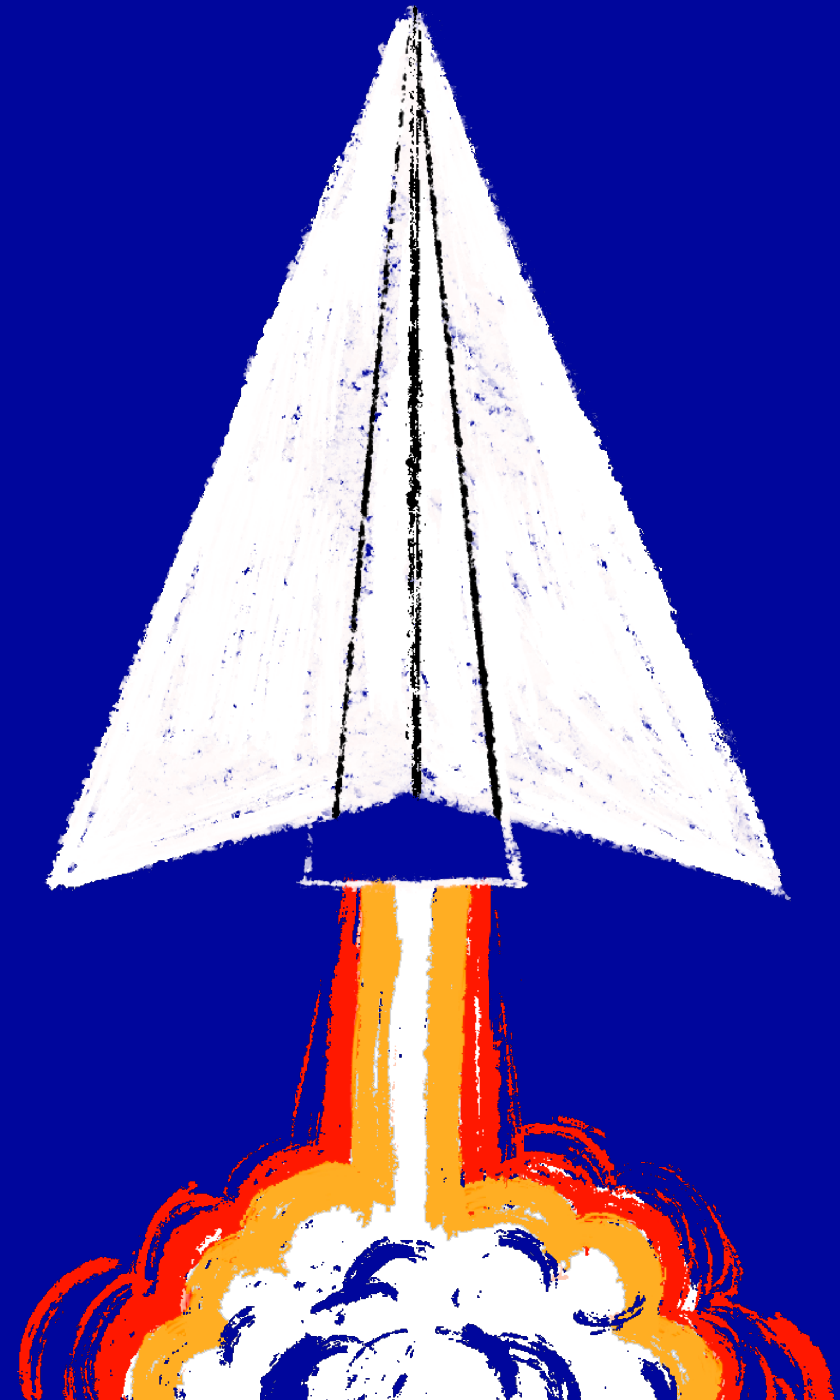




Chart a new course.

True thought leadership takes time and effort, but the results can yield significant dividends in your firm's business development and growth.

If you have questions or just want a sounding board, I'm always happy to talk.

Let's stay in touch.

Jerry Gennaria

TOKY

314-496-4294

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Connect with me on LinkedIn.