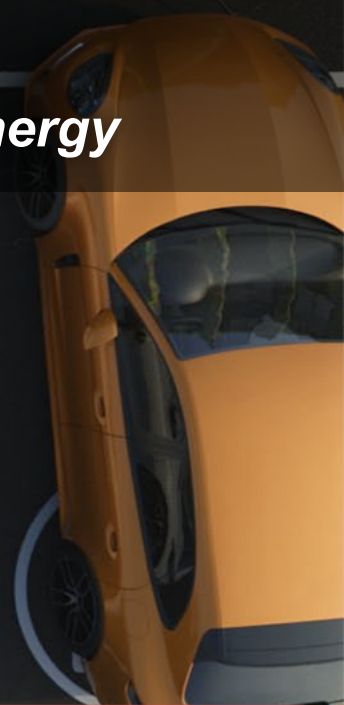
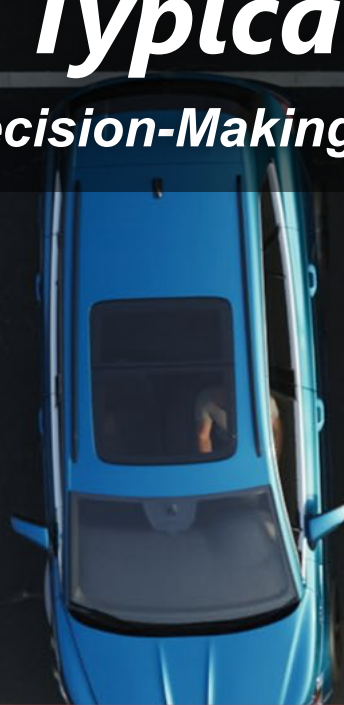


# There Is No *“Typical Driver”*

*Rethinking Consumer Decision-Making and Engagement in Transportation Energy*

April 2026



***NOTE: This is a leave-behind version of the slide deck and has additional commentary notes (like this) based on content covered in the live presentation.***

# Why are we here today?

1

**Build clarity  
through  
connection**

2

**Create a shared  
understanding  
that transforms  
complexity into  
opportunity**

3

**Make informed  
decisions that  
drive progress**

**Have you ever skipped  
an ad?**



# Reasons people ignore ads

*If you are like most people, the answer is YES!*

- Oversaturation
- Irrelevance
- Lack of trust/credibility
- Bad timing/mismatched context

**Has an ad ever  
resonated?**

# What's the difference?

*It does happen. Maybe not to the extent that ads get ignored. So, what's the difference? They make a meaningful connection. the same ideas hold true when thinking about communications in general.*

## Effective communications

- Clear + focused
- Believable
- Relatable + Relevant
- Thought provoking
- Emotional engaging
- Have purpose

*They make a meaningful connection*

# How do we build meaningful connections?

*We start with the target audience and getting to know them. It's a lot easier to make a meaningful connection when we know what matters to the people we are trying to connect to.*

**It's less about us and  
more about them**

# The power of choice



The **market** represents different **choices, ideas, & points of view** (i.e., no “typical” driver).

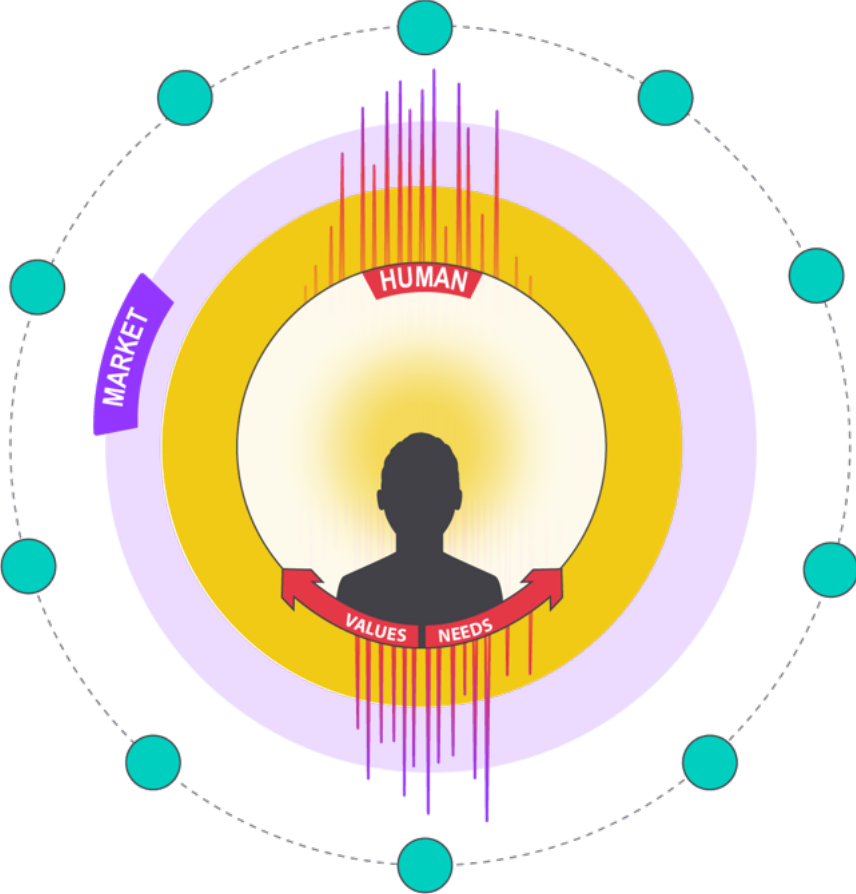
Our work is grounded in the **power of choice** and how people choose what **best fulfills their unique needs, wants, + values.**

*We start with understanding the consumer. Once we understand different types of consumers we can see how transportation choices fit into their world, then what role an organization can play to help consumers navigate the decision-making process.*

**Start with a  
humancentric approach**

**Understand how  
transportation choices  
fit into their world**

**Clarify your role helping  
people navigate**



# We need to understand how people think and feel

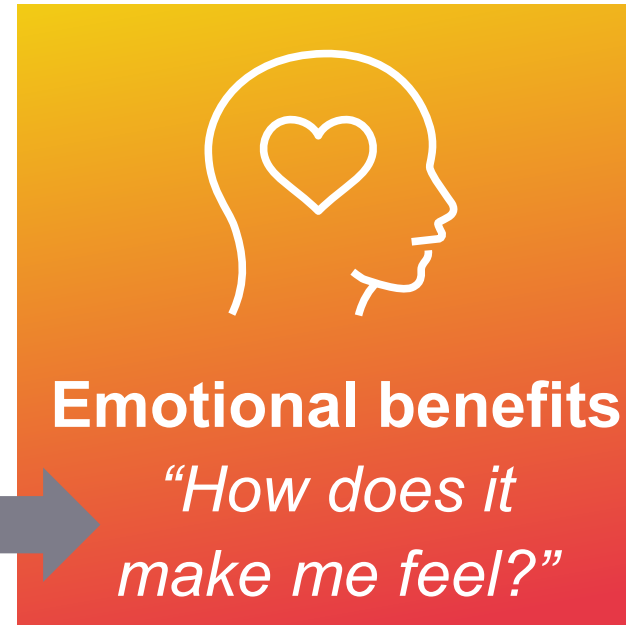
persuade by

**REASON**



motivate through

**EMOTION**

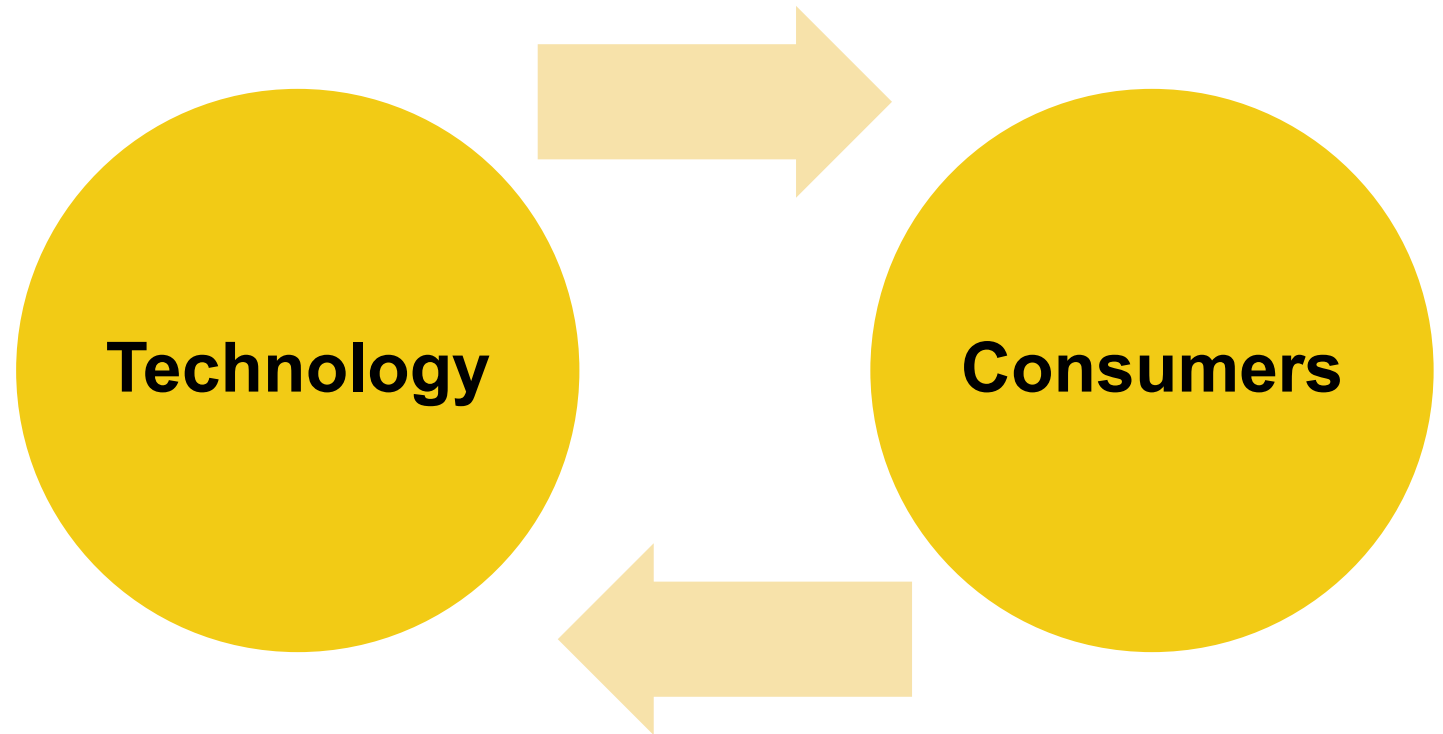


***The decision-making process has rational and emotional components. Knowing both allows us to create more impactful communications.***

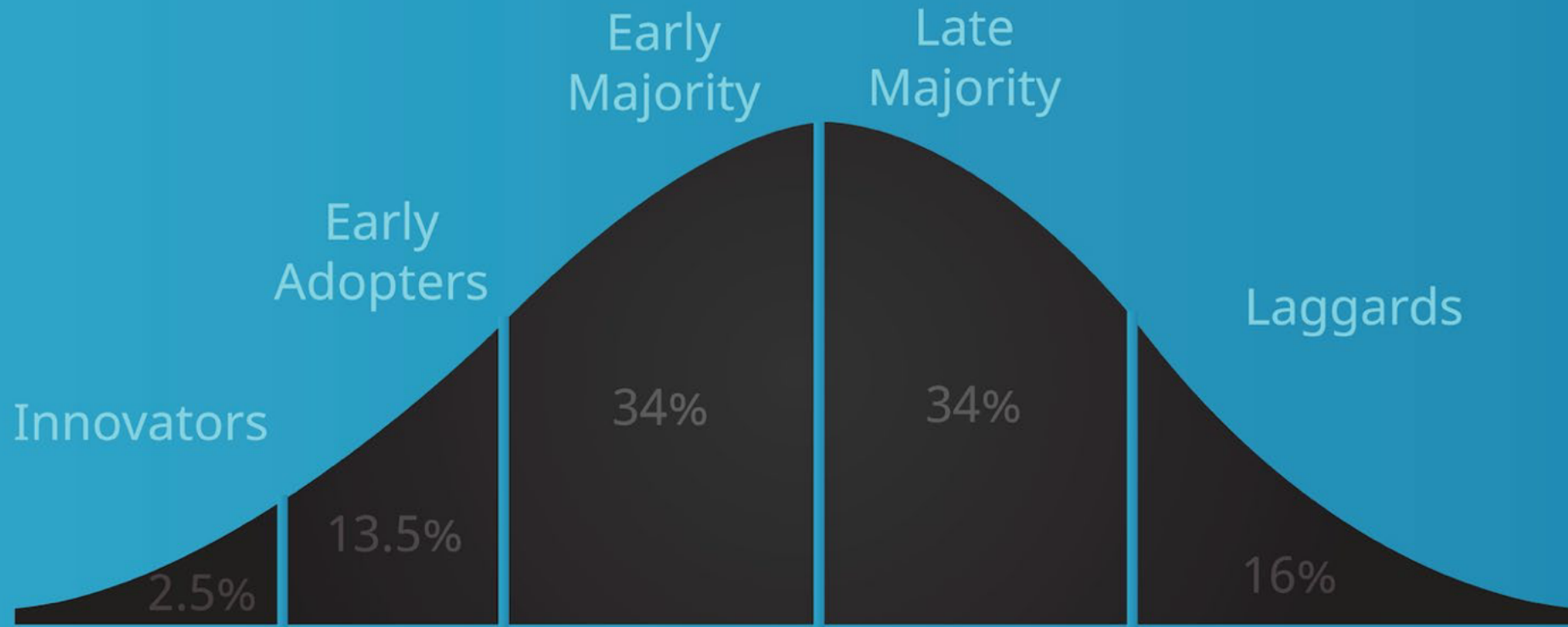
**What do we know  
about the market  
today?**

# Continuous evolution of consumers + tech

*There is a symbiotic relationship - consumer behavior shapes technology and technology shapes consumer behavior. Neither are static or monolithic.*

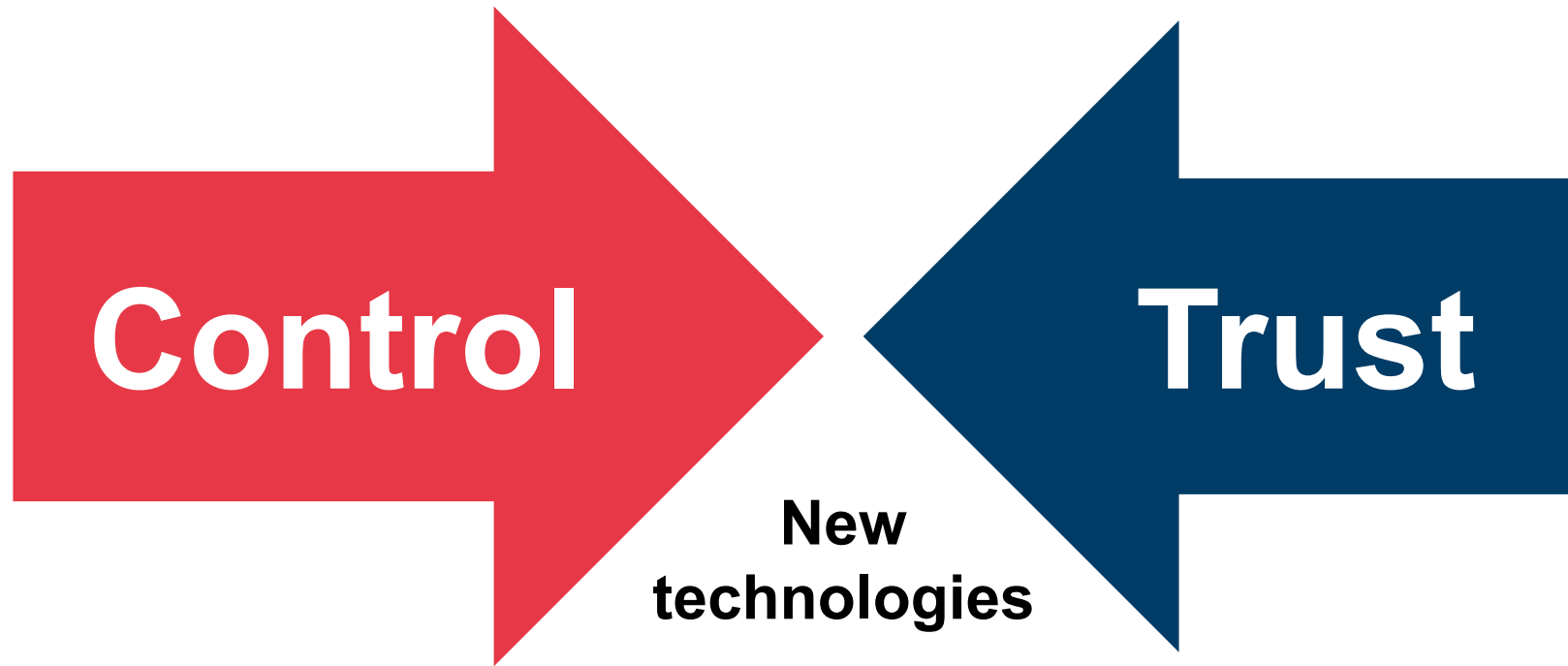


# Experience with technology varies



## Technology Adoption Curve

# New tech can breed tension

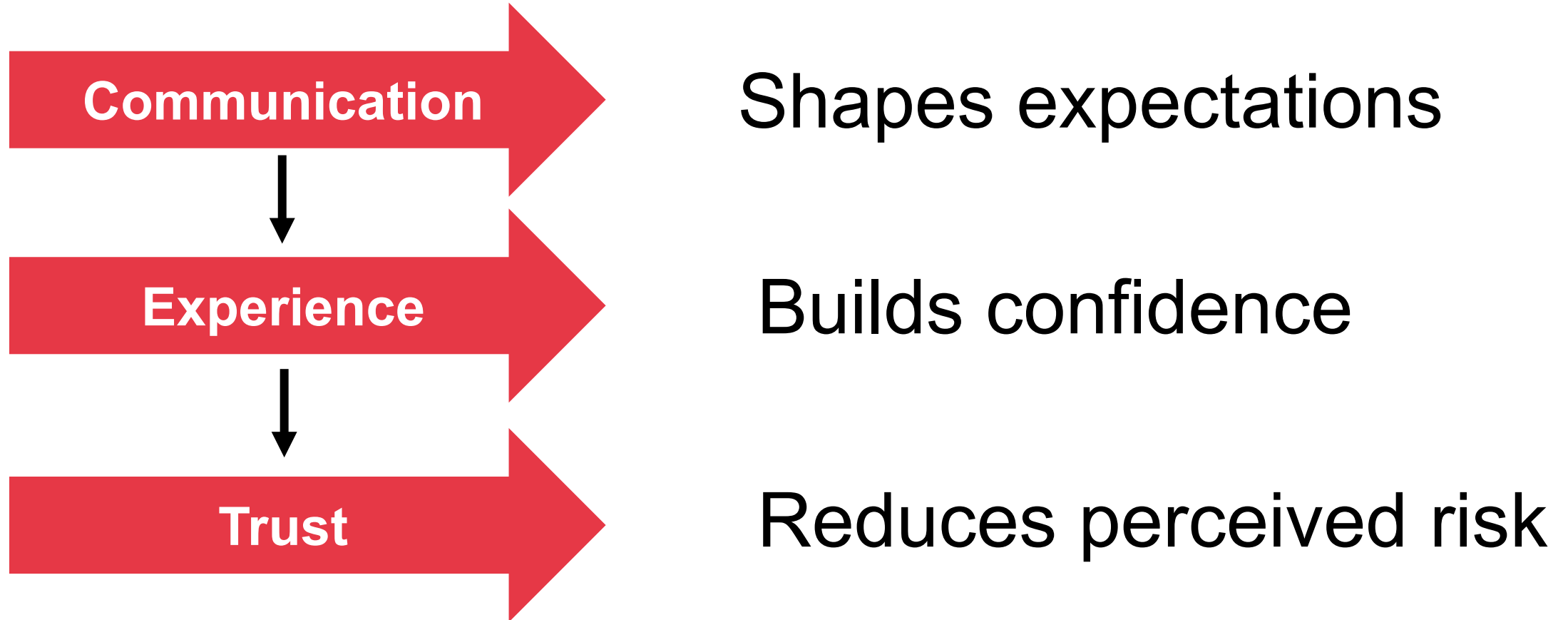


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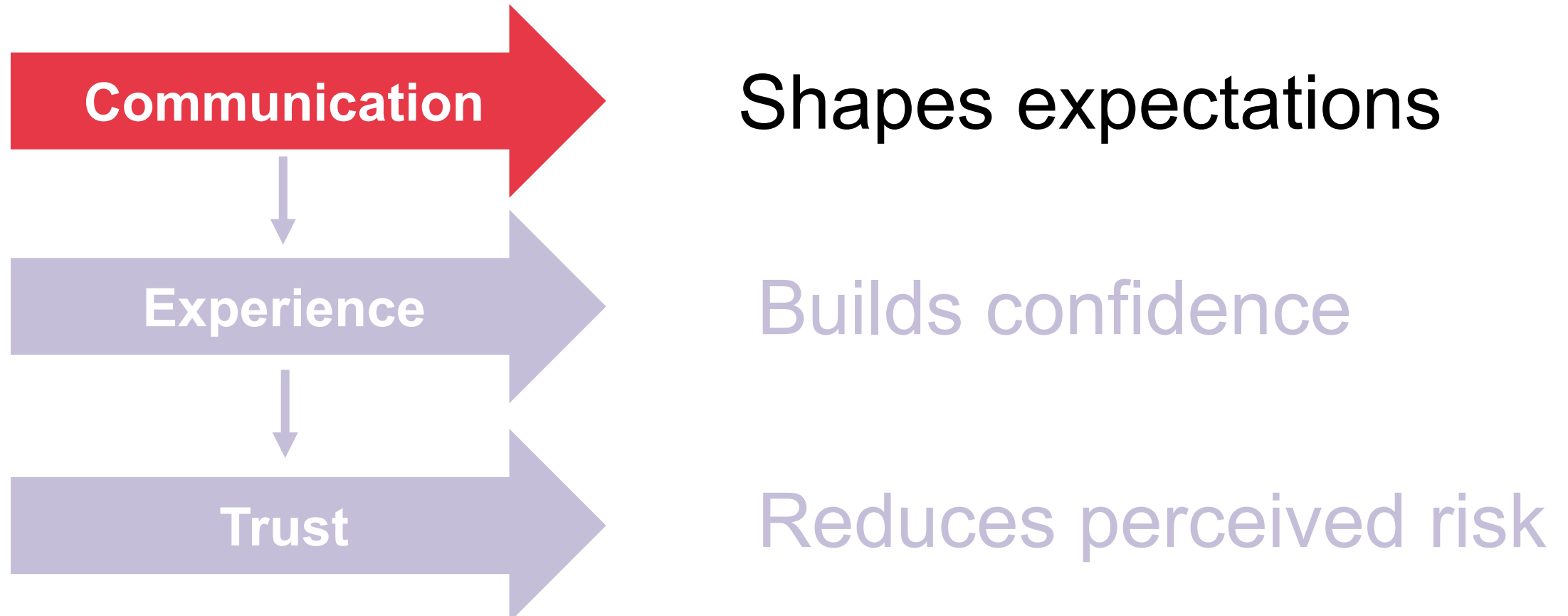
*In general, people like it when technology puts them in control – giving them information to make more informed choices. As technology begins to take more of a role in decision-making, people have less control and trust can become an issue.*

---

# Adoption Accelerates When Three Forces Align



# Effective communication is at the core



***And while all three play a role, communication is a common thread throughout the process.***

# Information persuades *only* when it reassures

## Trust, more than knowledge, critical for acceptance of fully autonomous vehicles

July 9, 2025

By Sara Zaske, WSU News & Media Relations



The central role of trust and perceived risk in the acceptance of autonomous vehicles in an integrated UTAUT model

***Research shows how knowledge does not change attitudes unless it increases trust.***

# How do we build trust?

***When you tell  
somebody somethin'  
it depends on what  
part of the country  
you're standin in...  
as to just how  
dumb you are***

**- Quote from Smokey and the Bandit**



***Communications need to be relevant and meaningful – creating a connection to serve as the foundation for building trust.***

# Context matters – *Not everyone needs the same proof*

*Different things matter to different people. Context allows us to align to the individual and the situation – both critical to getting a handle on how people navigate the decision-making process.*

# The right message for the right people



# What MIGHT the market REALLY look like?

## Note:

1. Example uses EV adoption as context (but this approach can be applied to any decision)
2. Is based on mock data (i.e., I made it up)
3. This is NOT an actual conversion strategy (see point 2)
4. The purpose illustrate different POVs in the market and why we need to tailor messaging to specific groups (i.e., there is no “typical” driver)

**Fit with daily needs**

*One way we like to look at segments is to plot them on a map using different dimensions – in this case imagine we did a study on electric vehicle (EV) adoption and it included data that measured...*

*How well EV's fit with daily needs (vertical axis) along with How well EV's provided a meaningful advantage over other vehicles (horizontal axis).*

*Please note – these are mock data (i.e., I made it up) to illustrate how the market contains more than one kind of consumer.*

**Delivers meaningful advantage**

**Fit with daily needs**

*In the upper right we could see examples of **Early Adopter segments...***

clear, practical benefits



**Practical Proof**



**EV Evangelist**

actively promote electric mobility and influence others

**NOTE!**  
This is mock data

**Delivers meaningful advantage**

Fit with daily needs



align daily behavior with their beliefs



Climate Conscience

*Early Majority segments might show up in the upper left or lower right – they are headed in the right direction but need work for conversion/activation.*

**NOTE!**  
This is mock data



Tech Status

symbol of progress and personal achievement

Delivers meaningful advantage



Fit with daily needs

skepticism about performance, cost, & impact



Skeptical Resistors

waiting for EVs to meet real-world standard



Wait and See

**NOTE!**  
This is mock data

*Late Majority & Laggard segments might show up in the lower left – and would require significantly more work to move.*

Delivers meaningful advantage

*Overall, it's a much more complex look at the market – beyond a singular “typical” driver.*

Fit with daily needs

skepticism about performance, cost, & impact



**Skeptical Resistors**

align daily behavior with their beliefs



**Climate Conscience**

waiting for EVs to meet real-world standard



**Wait and See**

clear, practical benefits



**Practical Proof**



**Tech Status**

symbol of progress and personal achievement



**EV Evangelist**

actively promote electric mobility and influence others

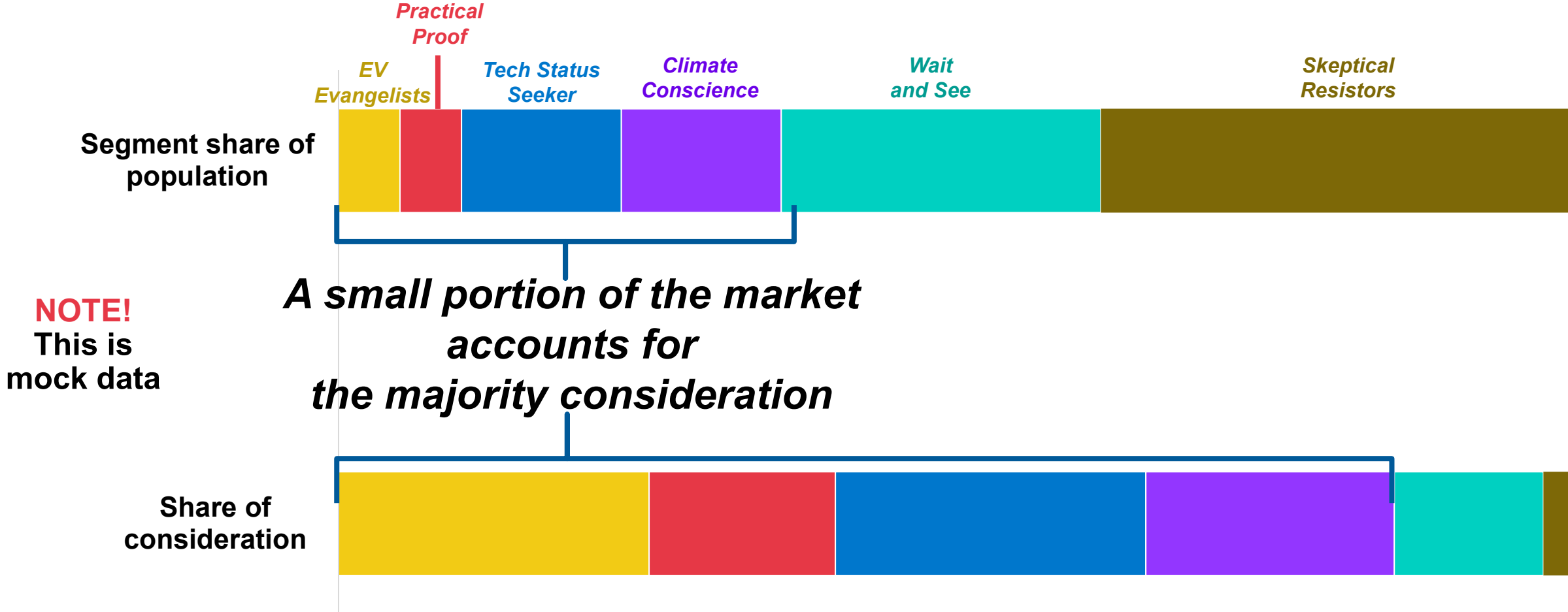
**NOTE!**  
This is mock data

Delivers meaningful advantage

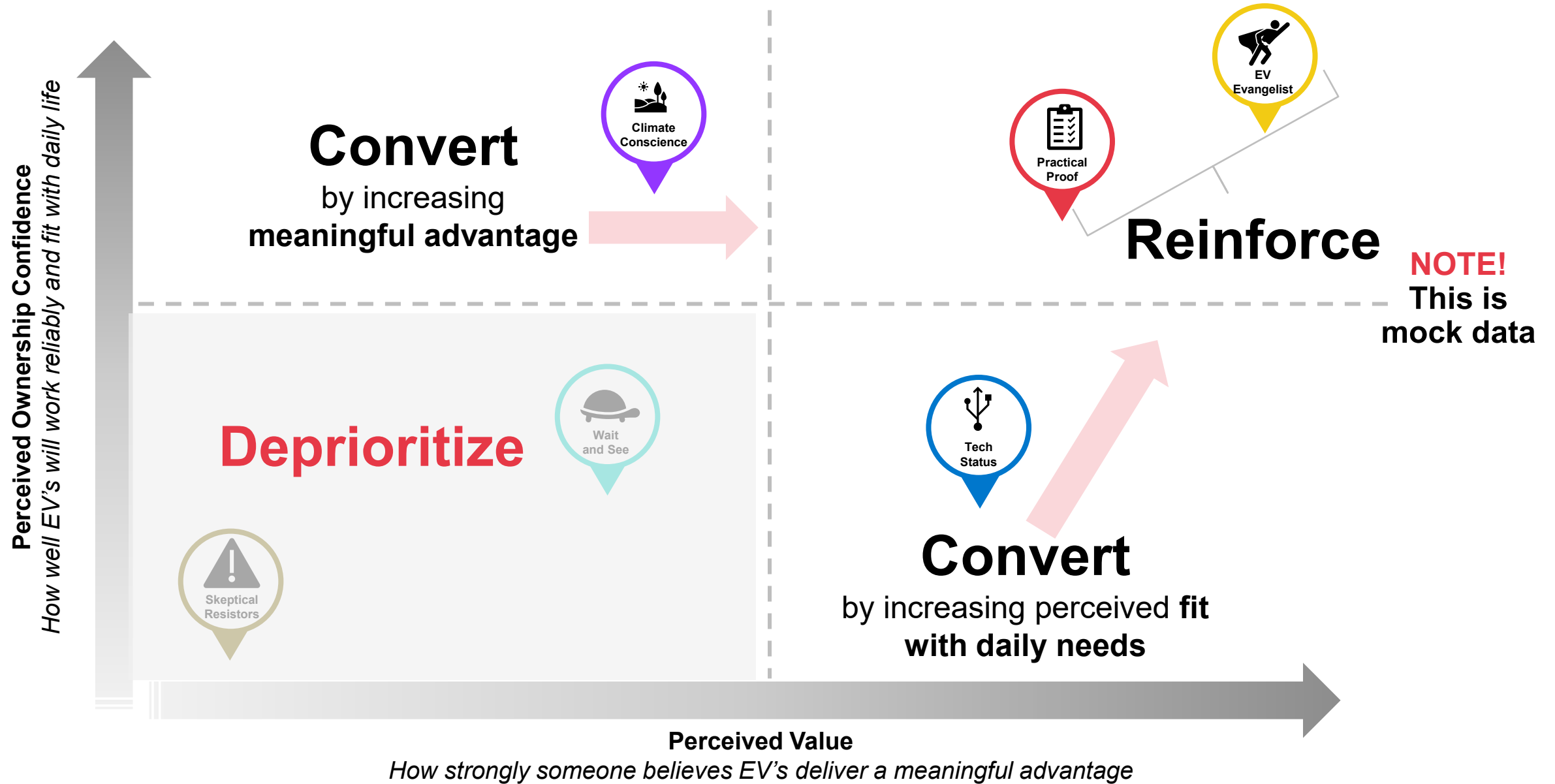
**How do we turn  
complexity into  
opportunity?**

# Which segments are the best opportunities?

*We can look to see which subset of segments offer the strongest potential opportunities and focus on those.*



# What actions should we take?



**How do we make  
informed decisions to  
drive progress?**

# Myth vs. Reality

## The typical driver

### Myths

- Best technology wins
- Lowest cost drives adoption
- Data convinces people

*Communications built on averages and least common denominator*



## Unique Archetypes

### Reality

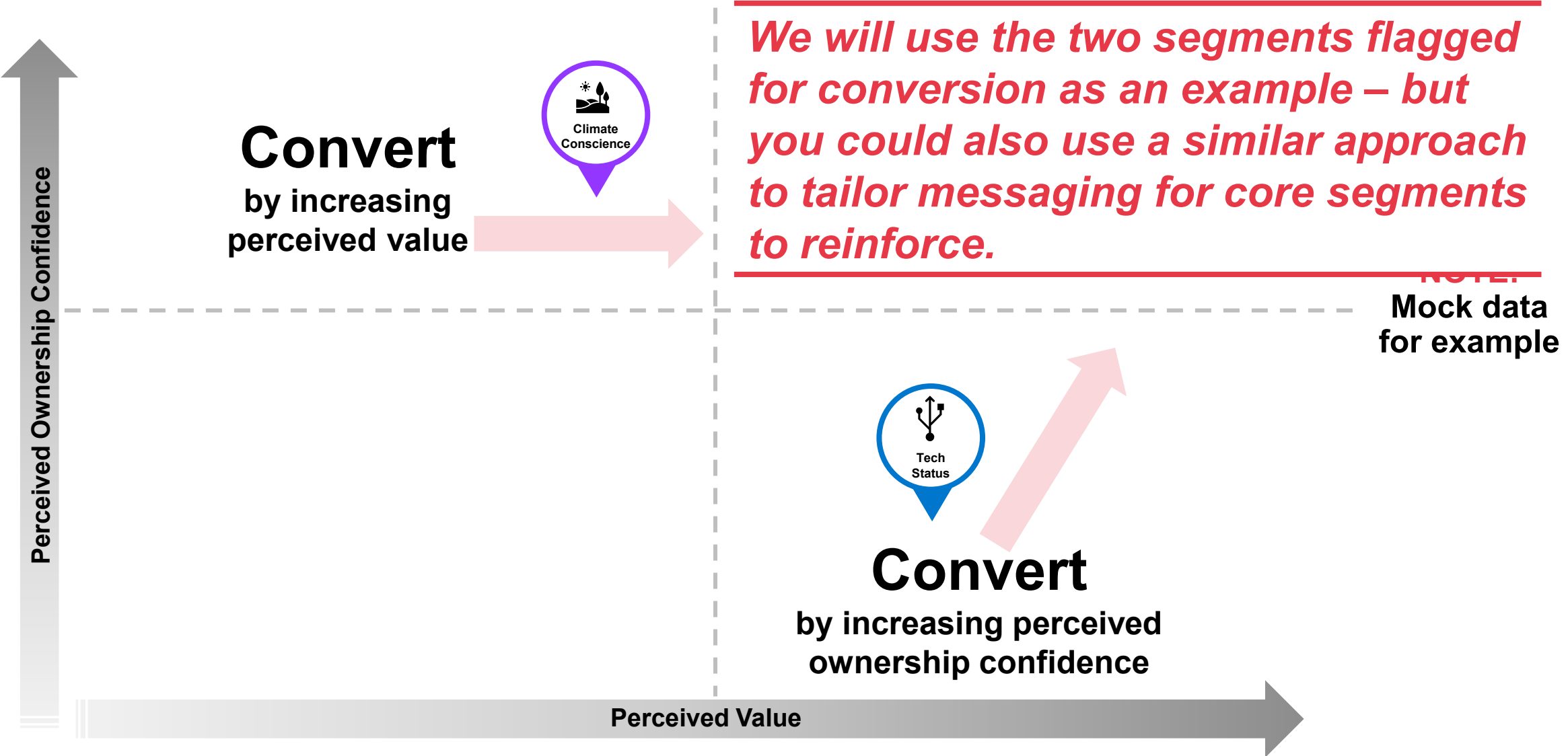
- Fit beats features
- Confidence beats economics
- Context beats claims

*Communications built on selection and alignment with strategic target segments*

# Clarity is essential for meaningful connections

*It will be much easier to build communications that are clear and meaningful when we don't have to be everything to everyone. Instead, messaging is tailored to specific segments with unique needs.*

# Driving adoption through tailored messaging





**NOTE!**  
Mock data  
for example



# Understand the target segment's unique mindset



*How does it make me feel?*



*What does it do?*

**Peace of mind**



Feel like you are part of the solution



Less negative impact on environment



**Fewer emissions**

**Pride**



Confidence



Keeps me ahead of the curve



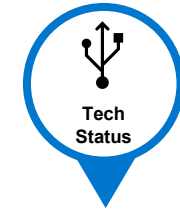
**Latest and greatest tech**

**What is the most important thing about owning an electric vehicle?**

# Tailor messaging based on what will connect



**NOTE!**  
This is mock data



**Drivers of Consideration**

## Social impact

- Protecting the environment
- Social responsibility
- Values alignment

## Personal Image

- Innovation appeal
- Status signaling
- Future relevance

**Unique message elements**

- *Cleaner future*
- *Credible change*
- *Everyday action*
- *Living your values*

- *Next-gen tech*
- *Luxury*
- *Early access*
- *Ahead of the curve*

**Messaging opportunity**

*EV ownership is a credible, meaningful way to live your values—reinforcing that choosing electric is not symbolic, but a tangible step toward reducing impact and acting responsibly every day.*

*Choosing an EV embraces the future and signals being ahead of the curve, aligned with what's next, and adopting technology that defines modern success.*

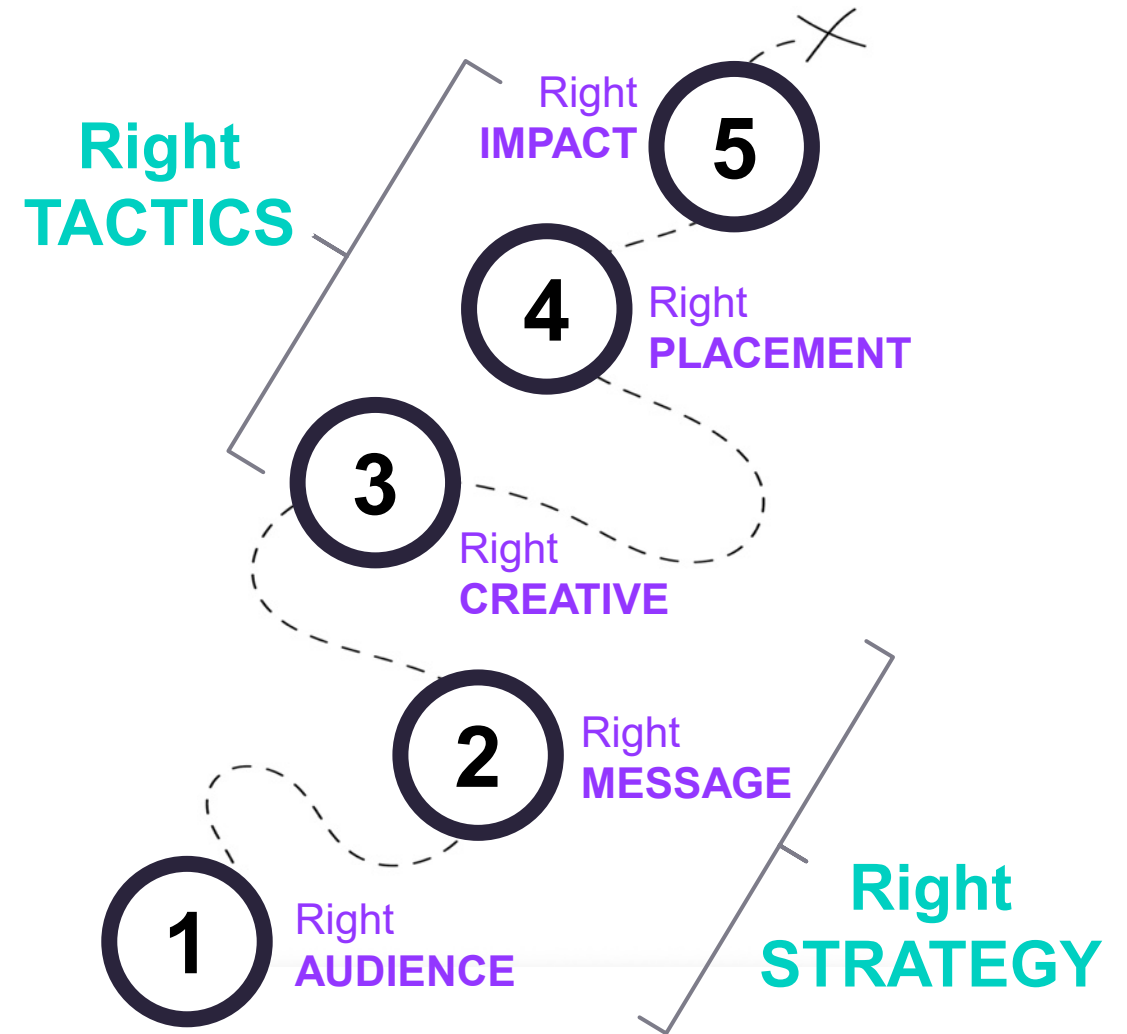
# How do we get there?

# Research helps us get to know the consumer

---

*When you think about it, research is a learning process. We have questions, we gather information, we learn, we apply those insights and we look at the results. This often sets up new questions and creates new research needs. It's a lot like a journey. And one of the ways to make a journey more efficient is to have a map.*

---



# Our framework

1

Right  
**AUDIENCE**

**Who should we be focusing on?**

2

Right  
**MESSAGE**

**What should we be saying?**

3

Right  
**CREATIVE**

**What is the best way to say it?**

4

Right  
**PLACEMENT**

**How do we meet them where they are?**

5

Right  
**IMPACT**

**How do we know we are connecting?**

# Our framework

1

Right  
**AUDIENCE**

*The framework is modular and scalable – we can use select phases or the full process.*

2

Right  
**MESSAGE**

*We leverage a range of qualitative, quantitative, and advanced analytics research tools.*

3

Right  
**CREATIVE**

*The design of each stage is customized based on the need of a specific client/engagement to provide the best solution.*

4

Right  
**PLACEMENT**

*The underlying mission is the same –*

5

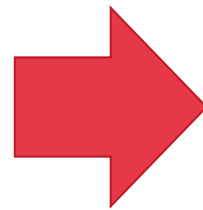
Right  
**IMPACT**

*Building more effective communications through deeper understanding.*

**The result is communications that feel less like marketing and more like a meaningful connection**



**Marketing**



**Connection**

# Want to learn more? Let's connect!



**Ben Custer**  
Senior Solutions Consultant  
[bcuster@heartandmindstrategies.com](mailto:bcuster@heartandmindstrategies.com)  
703.474.8082



Insights-Based  
Strategy  
Consultants



Global  
Experience



Repeat winners  
of David Ogilvy  
Award



Experts in how  
values influence  
choice