HOW TO
innovate

Content

Media Innovation is Hard.
But Essential.

> "For the times they are a- changing"
>
> BOB DYLAN
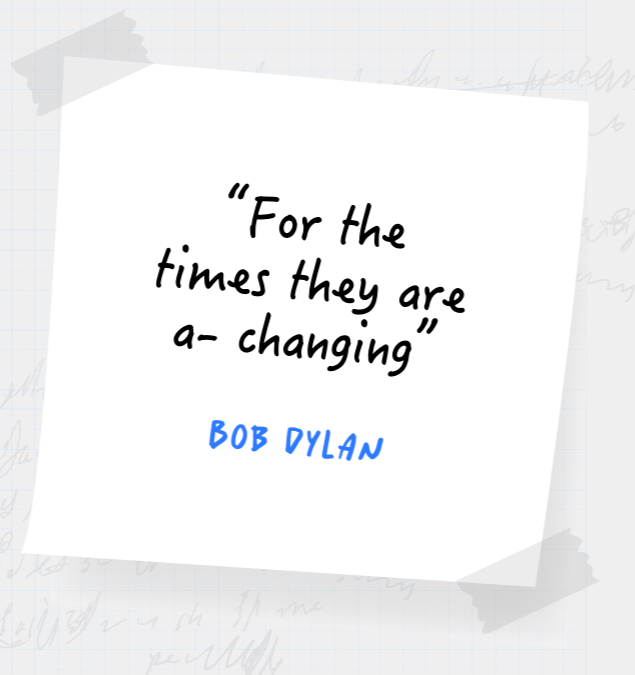
Have you ever been in a meeting and heard this?

- "We need to be more innovative".
- "Why aren't we doing this too?"
- "Can we find a way of doing [insert latest tech trend here] in our next campaign?"

My guess is yes. That's not necessarily a bad thing. Marketers should be looking to future-proof their brands, to de-risk disruption, and to demonstrate their cutting edge credentials to future consumers.

This is important because change is coming. By 2030 it's predicted the streaming market will be worth $417 billion, the Metaverse and gaming will be worth $5 trillion, and Artificial Intelligence will be worth $15.7 trillion.

By 2040, there will be 1 billion new consumers on earth, and 95% of purchases will be online. Technology is changing the media landscape, which is changing the consumer. But is media, marketing and advertising changing quickly enough?

Evidence suggests frustration at the speed at which brands and businesses can react to these shifts. According to McKinsey, whilst 80% of executives think current business models are at risk of disruption, a disappointing 40% felt they could not pre-empt disruption by adopting a change of direction due to 'fear of failure'. No wonder, then, only 6% of executives are satisfied with their company's innovation performance.

How To Innovate, then, is a report about how to be better at innovating in media, marketing, and advertising, and how to make it easier. We wanted to create a piece of work that presents a new way of looking at innovation which puts it in reach of any brand, with any budget. A decongestant for the blockages, an antidote to apathy, a process which makes innovation simple. A distillation and systemisation of everything we know works, from big principles to executional techniques, as well as a candid breakdown of what doesn't work.

But why are we pouring water into the ocean? Why is this report, together with its principles, frameworks, and case studies, any different?

Well, for two main reasons:

First though bookshelves groan with tomes of thought on innovation, not much of it is for media and marketing innovation specifically. We wanted to correct that. Though we will be referencing high-order innovation principles, we are also eager to introduce thinking that can be applied through the lens of media, marketing, and advertising campaigns specifically. We'll codify fresh examples of brands innovating successfully and transform it into executional guidance for other brands.

Second, this approach has worked for our brands. We just want to share our learnings and stir the pot. Though everyone has their innovation 'system', not all systems are created equal. Some are all theory and no practice. Some look good on a PowerPoint, but never get near an actual media plan. Some have flaws built in causing us to stumble before we're even out of the starting blocks.

We have devised a system that circumvents the common pitfalls of media innovation and employs a series of thinking tools and strategic exercises that few appear to carry out, but that we know works wonders for brands. We haven't reinvented the wheel, but we have made it stronger, lighter, and faster than most.

Against a backdrop of a changing media landscape, if you're looking to deliver on the promise of innovation for your brands, to enshrine a progressive mindset, to take ideas through to execution and beyond, we invite you to try our system.

It's worked for us.
We want it to work for you too!

PHIL ROWLEY
Head of Futures, OMG UK

The Report

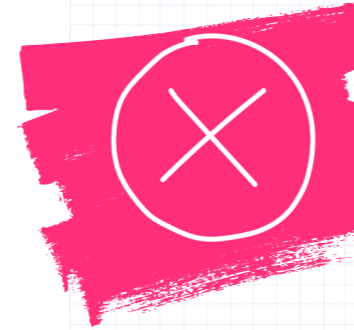We'll deliver this work in two parts - the theory and then the practice. Thus:

Part One

The Three Laws of Innovation

The Theory

We will start by revealing three grand, immutable laws of innovation, often overlooked and ignored, yet hardwired into history:
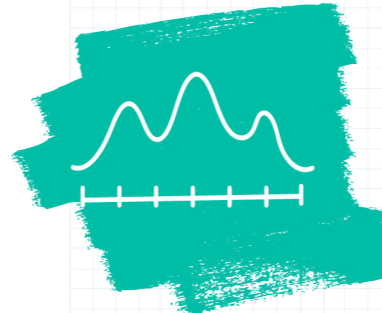
The 3 Laws

01
Innovation is Failure
(Not Success)

We will examine how the most successful innovations come about by embracing a culture of failure.

02
Innovation is a Spectrum
(Not A Word)

We will show that innovation should be viewed as a spectrum, with three distinct waypoints along its continuum, - Incremental Innovation, Exaptive Innovation and Disruptive Innovation. We can use these waypoints to test a brand's bravery and accelerate its innovation plans.

03
Innovation is Timely
(Not Trendy)

Rather than a series of dalliances with attractive innovations we desire for our campaigns, we will show how we should be building a long-term relationship with the discipline of innovation.

We will illustrate these three laws in action both in tech and business, but also more specifically via brands in the sphere of marketing.

Part Two

The OMG Innovation Agenda

The Practice

By taking the three laws above, and by learning to embrace failure, dimensionalise innovation and plan long-term, we can reverse engineer an innovation system that marketers can deploy. We will go on to detail 'The Innovation Agenda' system from OMG Futures, an accelerator programme fast-tracking client futures by delivering ambitious yet accessible and affordable innovations.

We will do this in three strategic workstreams:

01. Reflecting
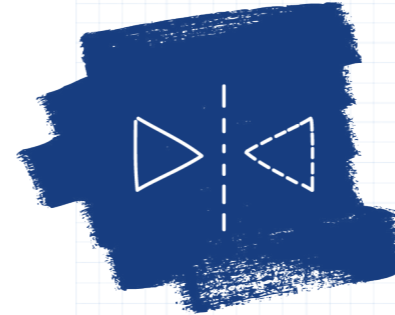
Brands must be prepared to turn detective and seek a forensic understanding of the factors behind their successes, but more important, the obstacles and barriers behind their undelivered innovations. We will showcase the Innovation Audit, a formalised, templated process for dissolving blockages and providing workarounds for common innovation pitfalls. Socrates famously said, "Know Thyself". Brands should truly get to know themselves to unlock innovation.

02. Reconnaissance
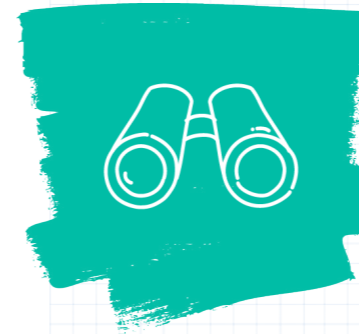
As part of our innovation efforts, we should also turn our attention to the competition. We've surveyed a host of brands' media innovations over the past 2 years to create a framework for understanding how brands innovate. We'll introduce four models of media innovation and explain how studying them can help prospective innovators locate their desired route into media innovation - either to join their competitors or find white space where they can innovate unopposed.

03. Roadmapping

Without an ultimate executional plan built on timings, we risk our efforts becoming just wishful thinking. Challenges around budgets, timings and mismatched objectives often scupper brilliant ideas coming to life in campaign. Roadmapping tackles this head on, deploying a framework that can work on any budget, derisks innovation, and timelines out a path to execution.

Why
Media Innovation Is Like *Exercise...*
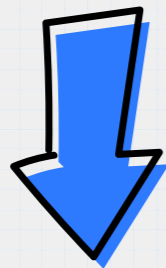
...and Why
You Probably need to *be Fitter.*

When we see theories and strategies and frameworks and templates such as the ones you're about to see, a common challenge can often be heard:

"You don't need deep intellectual analysis or sprawling strategic frameworks to be innovative. Just get on and be innovative, or don't".

This misses the point.

Not only in marketing, and not only in business, but also in life, we need structured plans, expert advice, achievable examples, and inspiration. That's why personal trainers, life coaches, dieticians and gyms exist: to show us the way.

**We need to plan to be future fit.**

Part One

The Three Laws of Innovation

The Theory

Why Innovation is Like Physics

If you want to land a robot rover on the moon, before you've designed the robot, or the mixed the fuel that will power it, or built the rocket that will launch it, you need to understand the laws of physics - velocity, trajectory, gravity - and how to harness their power. In media innovation, if you want to do something new and game-changing that will make consumers pay attention, there are also governing laws underpinning the fabric of technology, business, and society that marketers need to know. Three laws to be precise. Let's look at them here:
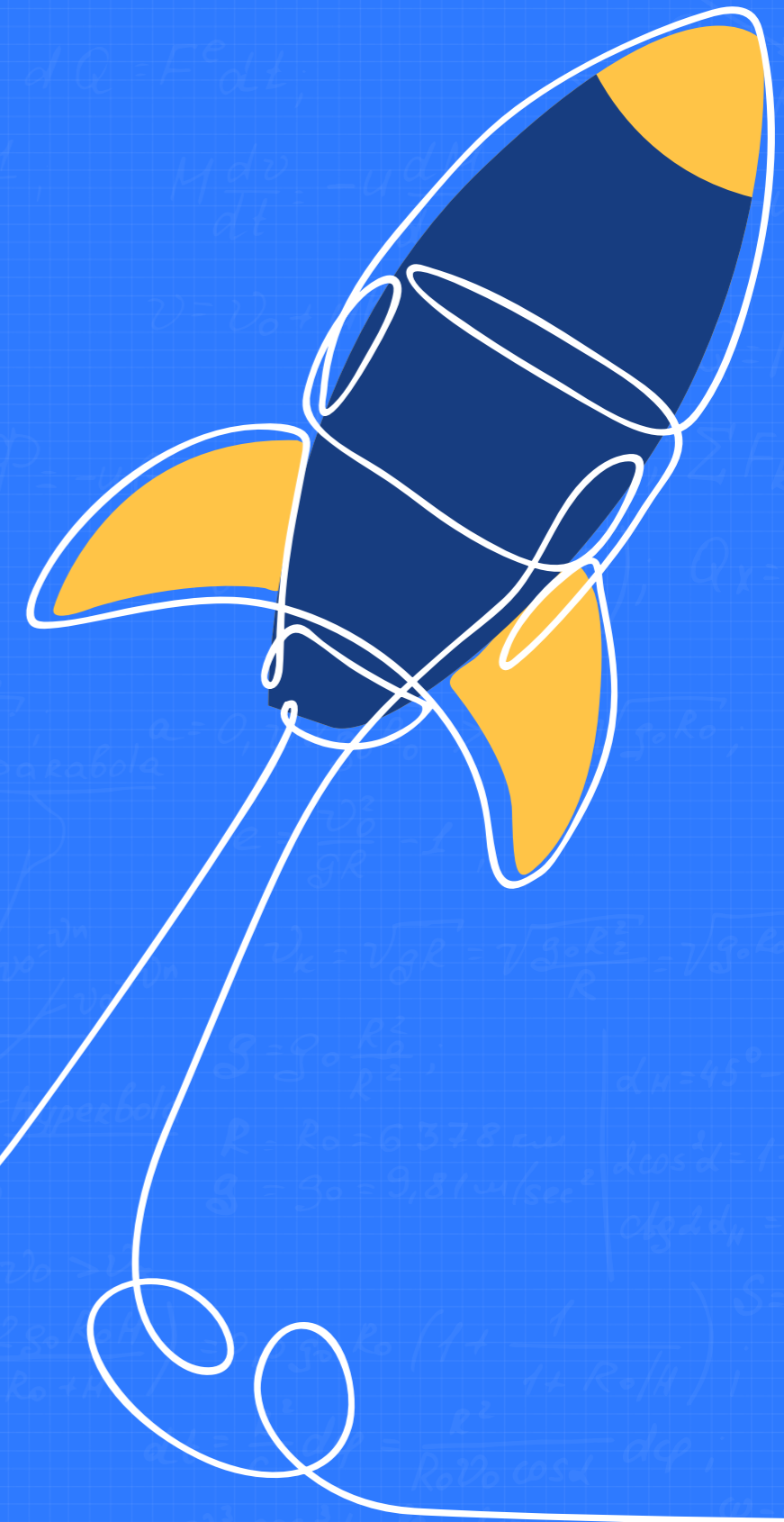
LAW 01

Innovation is FAILURE

(not just success)

> "The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing"
>
> HENRY FORD

If, as evidence suggests, our fear of failure is stifling our efforts to embark upon new ventures, we need to face up to the fact this is utterly counter to the mindset adopted by most successful innovators. It's easy for us to forget that for every Tesla there is a DeLorean, for every iPad there was a Palm Pilot, and for every Facebook there was a MySpace.

Like evolution, innovation is Darwinian in that it requires us to make mistakes. Organisms only appear perfectly adapted to their environment because we do not see the infinite long tail of unsuccessful attempts that have since ceased to exist. Failure is as much a part of innovation as success.

Though this is recognised by the many, it seems institutionalised by the few. In reality, the business world has little time for cul-de-sacs and dalliances, and expects immediate results, leading to an effect science writer Matt Ridley calls 'disinnovation', coined in his book How Innovation Works. Disinnovation is the premature ceasing of innovation upon our first encounter with failure.

Matt Ridley - Author

Despite being a technology-led species for 200,000 years, we have a history of throwing the baby out with the bathwater and mistakenly assuming high-profile failures in fields like power generation (Chernobyl) and aviation (The Hindenburg airship), mean those technologies and their potential future iterations would be fundamentally flawed forever. In fact, untold success could have been waiting just on the other side of the failures if we'd persevered past the flaws.

Not all companies suffer from disinnovation, however. SpaceX is famous for celebrating the utter dispensability of its prototypes in its quest to get vital data from its numerous explosive crashes. Finnish gaming company Supercell's petri-dish-style project teams are given explicit 'freedom to fail' creating an almost-Darwinian filtering system that means only the strongest games survive. Toyota's 'kanban' philosophy gives high-profile rewards to those drawing attention to mistakes on the production line.

These are companies lauded for their innovation. Though the examples above showcase innovation in manufacturing of products, could we still adapt this philosophy for marketing?

Actions for Marketers

Embrace
Failure

We can perhaps start to embrace failure by being more mindful of how we assess the success of our campaigns. Understandably, our post-campaign analyses give weight to hard numbers like reach, downloads, visits to site, and sales conversions. But consider if you're giving enough weight to knowledge gained that you could apply a second time. Whilst disinnovators swiftly dismiss, innovators think about refining, adapting, and improving the approach ready for round two.

To put it another way, if your metaverse or AI-led campaign activity has failed to set the world alight, you don't necessarily have to write them off and switch budgets back to TV. Fire-and-forget one-off executions rob brands of an opportunity to improve and eventually master a new media technology. Instead have honest conversations about how to push on through failures, regroup and try again, armed with new knowledge.

In short, learn to embrace failure and do things twice to increase your chances of gaining a competitive edge.
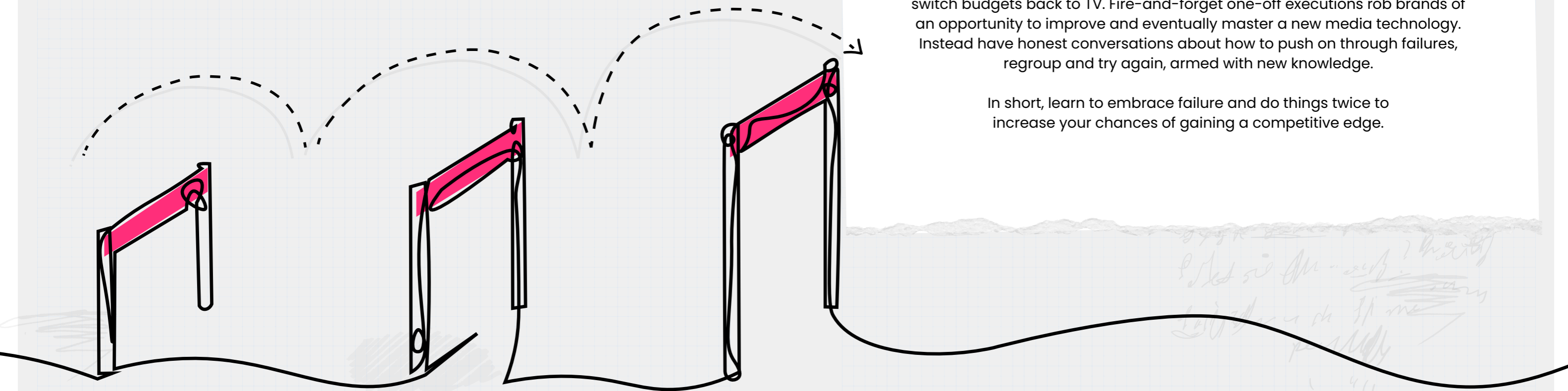
LAW 02
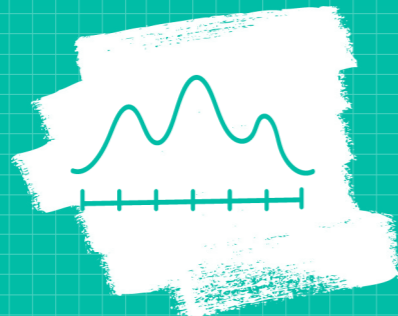
Innovation is a
SPECTRUM

(not just a word)

"Life isn't black and white. It's a million grey areas, don't you find?"

RIDLEY SCOTT

Often those requesting 'innovation' and those expected to deliver it have not agreed on a common definition. Mismatched objectives lead to murky outcomes.

The dictionary does not help either, stating innovation is: 'the introduction of new things, ideas or ways of doing something'. But here the word 'new' is not working anywhere near hard enough and brings us no clarity. 'Newness' does not correlate with how innovative something is. It does not necessarily follow that something 6-months old must be less innovative than something 1-month old. We're looking for more than the element of novelty. We're also looking for an effective measure of difference or change, together with an understanding of how much impact the novelty has. The story behind the inventions of Sir Clive Sinclair bear this out. See **Figure 1.**

See Figure 1

Figure 1:

Innovation Case Study

New to *Market*   VS   # First to *Market*

Let's illustrate the shortcomings of the word 'innovation' and its association with the idea of 'new' with an example featuring two brands and one inventor.

The 1982 launch of the Sinclair ZX Spectrum from British inventor Sir Clive Sinclair represented an innovative new approach to home computing. Affordable and supported by games publishers, it went on to sell millions of units across Europe. But just four months after it hit the shelves, the Spectrum was locked into competition with a rival, the USA's Commodore 64, which was superior to the Spectrum on a host of metrics.

Can we still claim that Britain's Spectrum was an innovation, given it had been beaten into second place by a US rival just four months after its release? Did being first-to-market give the Spectrum the right to be called 'innovative', even though it was not the better machine? Or is the Commodore deemed more innovative because it was 'newer'? Compounding that conundrum further, witness Sir Clive Sinclair's subsequent post-Spectrum venture. Three years later he launched the UK's first electric vehicle, the Sinclair C5. Essentially an EV-powered reclining

bicycle, it was a vehicle with no direct competitors, and defined a whole new market: affordable electric transport for the under 18s. But it flopped and disappeared without trace within 12 months, making no impact on the market whatsoever.

Which was the true innovation? The C5 vehicle was the first of its kind and had no rival, yet it failed and is rarely considered an innovation. The ZX Spectrum was one of many similar competing solutions, some superior, yet is considered an innovation in home computing.

The reality is the word 'innovation' does not get you very far forward. It can be ill-defined, and open to interpretation, and requesting 'more innovation' from partners is often not specific enough of an instruction.

Sir Clive Sinclair

So, what is a good working definition of innovation?

Experts and luminaries have been weighing in on this for years. They don't always agree. For some, innovation is a slow and steady improvement that yields great change over time. For others, it's a bolt from the blue delivering radical change; a 'big bang' moment.

Which is it? Well, why choose? Might it be more helpful to think of it as both of those things - and everything in between? Reframing innovation as a spectrum, a continuum, or band of fuzzy gradations can help head off issues over differing definitions and tackle the idea of what 'new' really means in practice. Envisaging innovation as a scale helps us plot our journey and calibrate our ambitions accordingly. Along that scale, there are waypoints of increasing complexity and sophistication, they are:

1 — *Incremental* **Innovation**

2 — *Exaptive* **Innovation**

3 — *Disruptive* **Innovation**
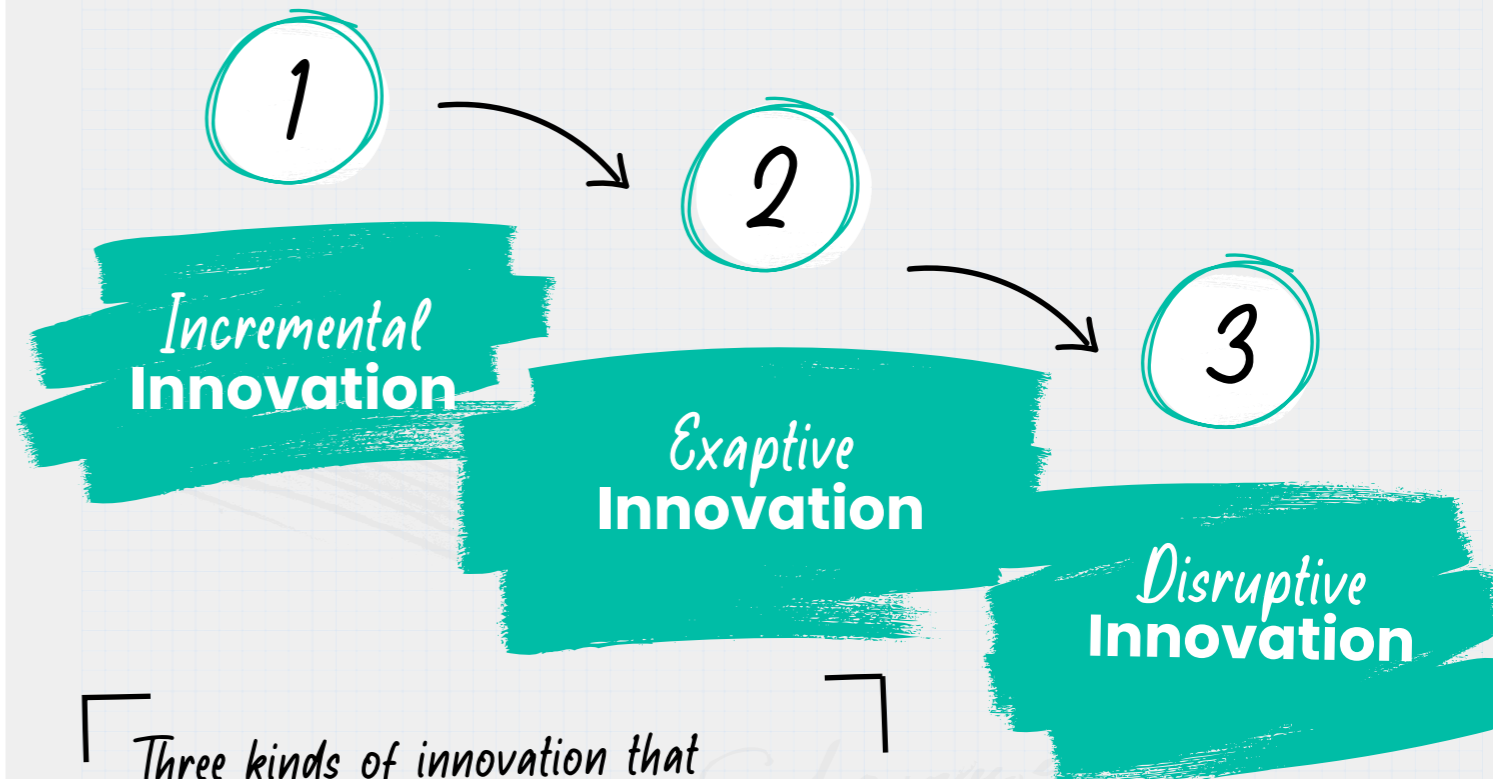
Three kinds of innovation that blur into one another at the edges, but that can help assist brands in understanding the kind of innovation they have in mind.

1 Incremental Innovation

Advocates of incrementalism state innovations are rarely a 'virgin birth'. They don't land in society fully formed and without foreshadowing. There is always a 'before'. Matt Ridley says:

> "Most innovation is a gradual process. The modern obsession with disruptive innovation is misleading".
>
> MATT RIDLEY

There are businesses, brands, and technological endeavours today that are converting that ethos into action; prioritising small and consistent wins rather than striving to create that new 'big bang' moment. In short, backing the tortoise in the race against the hare.

Pioneer Jeff Bezos's space tourism company Blue Origin, for instance, has the phrase 'Gradatim Ferociter' as its motto, meaning "step by step, ferociously". For Bezos, it's the little things done well laid end-to-end that ultimately delivers innovation.

Elsewhere, the philosophy of disproportionate benefits from marginal gains can be found in the developing world discipline of 'jugaad'. Born in India, 'jugaad' means thrifty but brilliant incremental innovations or smart recombinations of existing technologies. Whilst examples of jugaad can be found in resource-scarce rural India, it has more recently been adopted by the Indian space industry. The Indian Space Research Organisation used the jugaad principle to put a satellite in orbit around Mars by sending the launch vehicle into prolonged gravitational circuits of earth to build up a slingshot speed, rather than use expensive brute force rockets to blast their way clear.

The value of incremental improvement.
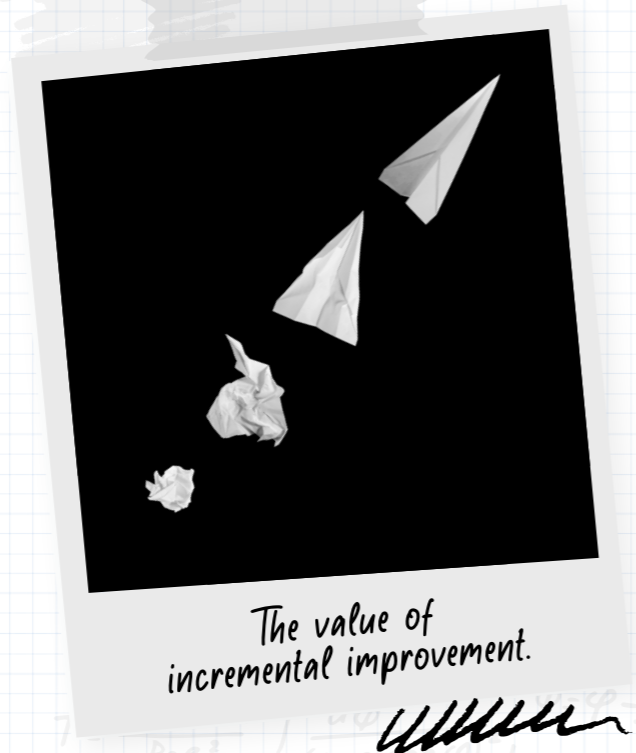
We can see this thinking in media and marketing too, with brands and agencies using smart but frugal tweaks or 'hacks' to deliver outsized impact. For instance, in New Zealand, mobile provider Skinny ran a series of outdoor and press ads containing a pre-written script for a radio ad, encouraging the public to ring in to record the script as a voiceover down the line. This clever shortcut helped save money on voiceover artists whilst also making Auckland's citizens famous - and won a Cannes Gold for its craft excellence.

Crucially, then, incremental hacks and shortcuts should still be seen very much as innovations. The compound interest of small improvements and nimble solutions teaches us how to flex our innovation muscle whilst remaining resource conscious. We must learn to recombine what we have to make what we need.

Innovation can be frugal.

Brands should ask:

What can we incrementally improve?

2 Exaptive Innovation

One stage on from Incremental Innovation is Exaptive Innovation. Exaptive Innovation is application of new inputs gathered from a place external to our experience. A fact-finding trip to a foreign land to bring new learning back home.

Some historical examples: The inventor of the printing press, Johannes Gutenberg had his eureka moment when he repurposed a device used in winemaking to create the first moveable typeset. Later in history, the Wright Brothers were only able to invent powered flight using principles adopted from the manufacture of bicycles, and not aviation.

Borrowing can also be found in business and marketing, with some brands seeking out opportunities beyond those default to the field. To that point, Red Bull is one of the most successful examples of Exaptation. The product was born after an Austrian businessman, Dietrich Mateschitz, visiting Thailand in 1982, witnessed its local population consuming an 'energy' drink. Unknown outside of Thailand, and understanding its raw appeal, Mateschitz set about co-opting it and adapting it for Western markets, positioning the product to be distinct from competing sodas. Today it is the most valuable energy drink in the world and defines the category.

But there are also examples of exaptation in Red Bull's media and marketing too. Initially, Red Bull began their ascent with traditional product sampling activity targeting 18–35-year-olds via free handouts in bars. By 1992, they shifted their focus into innovative branded events and content including street luge, cliff diving and kiteboarding.

By 2012 they made history by crossing the ultimate boundary and moved into the aerospace business with their edge-of-the-atmosphere Red Bull Space Jump. At every turn, Red Bull actively sought to cross thresholds described by orthodox marketing channels, by seeking inspiration from external territories and disciplines. Exaptation, then, teaches us to look beyond our immediate neighbourhood, and seek out opportunities to recruit and reformat innovations already in use elsewhere.

Red Bull Space Jump

Dietrich Mateschitz
Co Founder of Red Bull GmbH

Brands should ask:

What can we adopt and adapt?
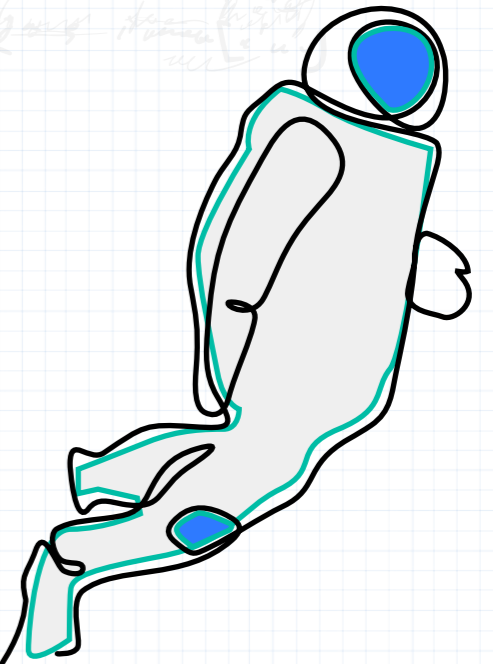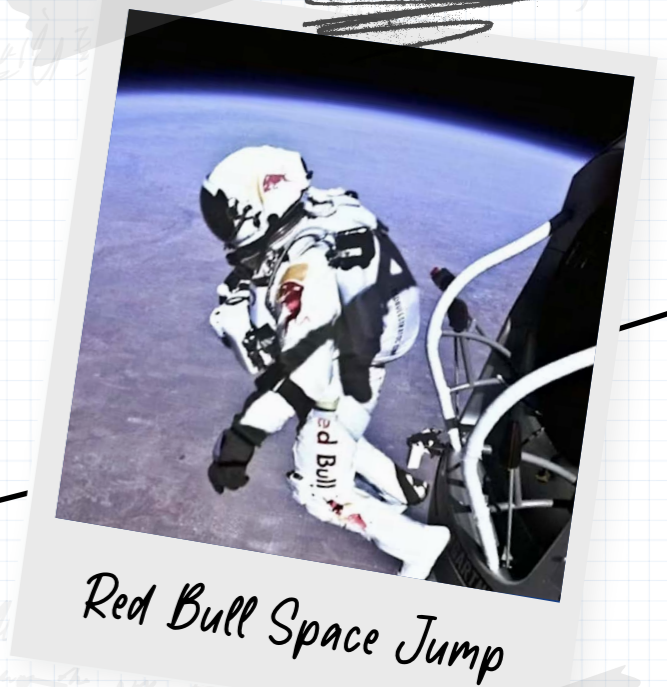
3 Disruptive Innovation

The Holy Grail of innovation is raw, unadulterated disruption: a product or service that takes the world by storm, redefining an industry and in some cases an entire culture.

Proponents of pure, revolutionary era-defining innovation cite revolutionary figures like Thomas Edison and Henry Ford. For them, innovation doesn't mean faster horses and longer candles. It means replacing horses with cars and candles with electric lights.

Likewise, in his book Zero To One, Peter Thiel, founder of Paypal, states the only way to truly innovate is to present a solution so far in advance of the competition that you redefine the category. In marketing, we would call these efforts 'media firsts'. Activity that sets tongues wagging: the Nike virtual store in Roblox, pollution eating billboards for VW, or owning the specific shade of pink for the launch of the Barbie movie.

True media firsts like this have manifold benefits. Not only do they drive media value for the brand, but they also deliver a first-mover advantage, allowing brands to become synonymous with certain platforms and experiences before their competitors attempt to muscle in on the space.

When marketers articulate innovation aspirations for their brand, they are more likely to be aiming for this kind of brand superstardom. But we must face the reality that disruption is more likely to require more time for planning, more budget, and carries more risk. Get it right and the consumers will be in awe. Get it wrong and you risk your activation delivering the worst result of all - forgettability - jeopardising the justification for any future innovation endeavours.

Nevertheless, brands should ask:

What can we disrupt?

?

Actions for Marketers

Dimensionalise Your Innovation

Any conversation about innovation should start by reframing innovation as a spectrum or a continuum. Look again at all three iterations - Incremental, Exaptive and Disruptive - and fashion a variety of options that flex according to your circumstances. All are legitimate.

If you want to de-risk big innovation plays, but are aching to progress your brand in media, then start with modest progressions. If you are looking for an internet-melting media first, like Red Bull Space Jump, that's great: just know the risks. Just remember that media innovation is not 'all or nothing'. Ask: what can we incrementally improve AND what can we adopt and adapt AND what can we disrupt?
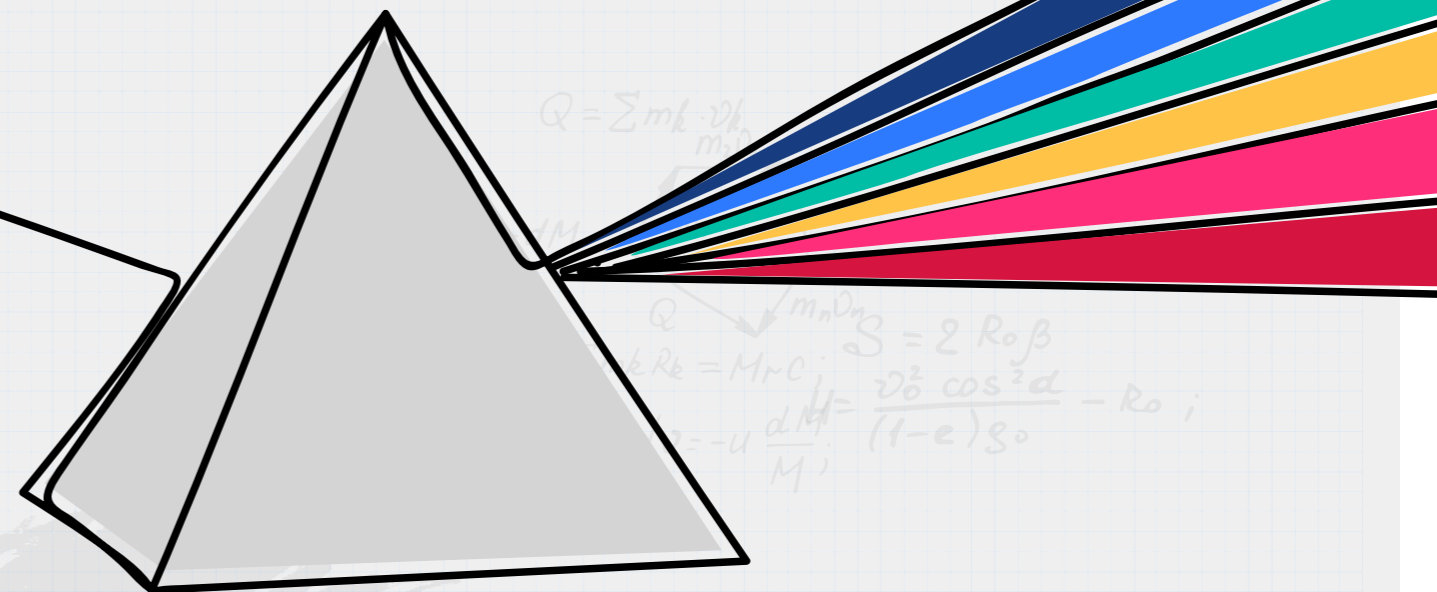
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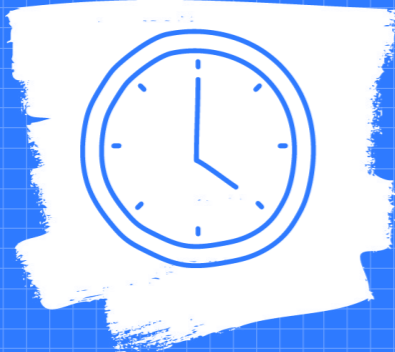
Innovation is
TIMELY

(not trendy)

"Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance."

SAMUEL JOHNSON

The last out of the three Innovation Laws addresses how marketers' relationship with innovation can often take the form of transient obsessions that die down once a technology has fallen out of favour.

The urge to showcase our latest technology acquisitions is understandable. We're sending a message to consumers: we are progressive and therefore we are credible. But this means the marketing and tech world can become driven by 'Future FOMO' - a fear of missing out on the future - and the focus on novelty results in an energy-sapping short-termism as we scrabble to adopt media trend after overlapping media trend.

This is not reflective of consumers' relationship with tech in the real world. We often get the timescales for tech adoption wrong, as a technology's ascendancy is different from its scaling and adoption. In 2023, there are people who still go into the bank to pay bills. There are adults who refuse to get a smartphone. There are buses in the UK that allow you to pay the driver in coins - and get change.

The fact is that technology takes its time to scale, embed and affect culture. Yet though the most impactful change we can make today will not come to tomorrow, we're still focused on 'the now'.There is a way round this.

Innovation takes its time.

In Rationality, Professor Stephen Pinker talks of combating the effect of 'discounting the future', the act of giving more weight to 'the now' rather than 'the later', and highlights mechanisms that can hold our future-selves to account. Whether it's signing up to a boot-camp or committing to 'Dry January' or 'Stoptober' it is possible to set the standard for future behaviours by committing fully in the present.

We need more of this in media and marketing. Brands should be dedicated to making a commitment to increasing innovation in their media and marketing over the longer term.
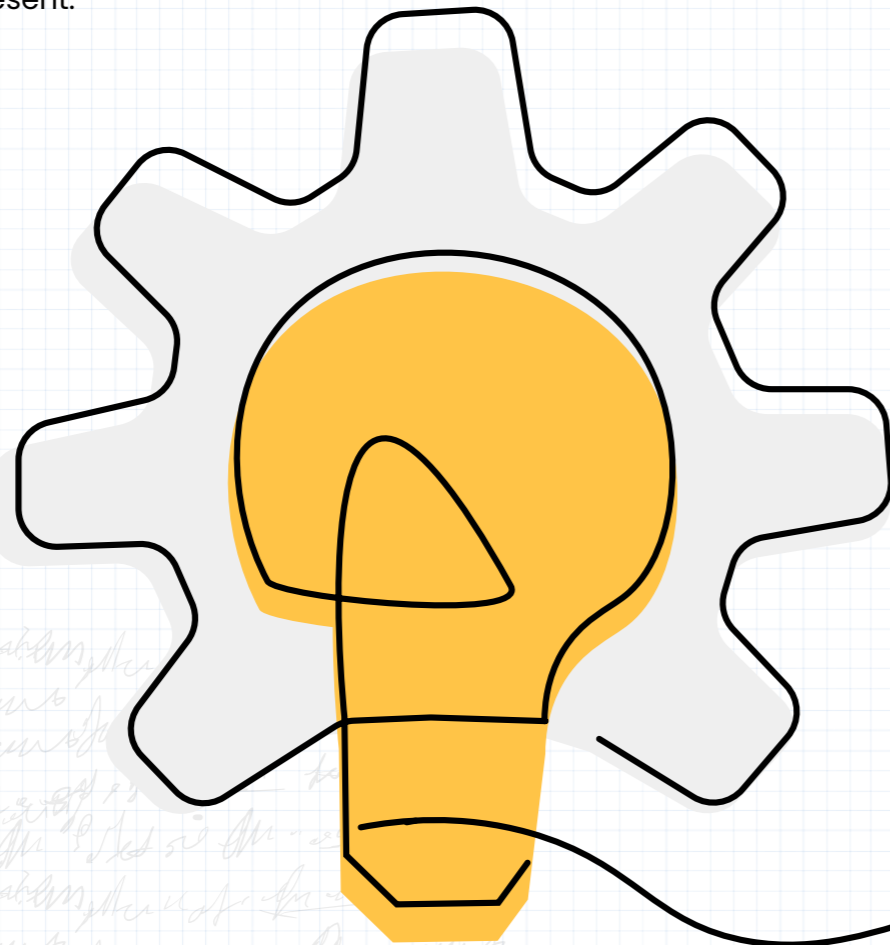
Actions for Marketers

Plan
Long Term

Instead of a series of 'one-off' dalliances with attractive media innovations, brands should cultivate a long-term relationship with the discipline of innovation, built on a culture of long-term planning that tracks the transition of technology over time. Think about embedding systems that support experimentation, reflection, and reorientation across the ebb and flow of tech and culture.

Part One

Summary:
The Three Laws of Innovation

1 *Innovation is* **Failure** → **Embrace Failure** *...And do things twice.*

2 *Innovation is a* **Spectrum** → **Dimensionalise Your Innovation** *Incremental | Exaptive | Disruptive*

3 *Innovation is* **Timely** → **Plan Long Term** *Innovation is not just execution. It's a discipline.*

Part Two

The OMG Innovation Agenda

The Practice

01
Reflecting

02
Reconnaissance

03
Roadmapping

Summary

A System
That Works

We've just described the Three Laws of Innovation. For a few years now we've been circumventing obstacles to innovation by using three corresponding responses - Embracing Failure, Dimensionalising Innovation and Planning Long-Term - to architect an Innovation System that marketers can deploy to create an Innovation Agenda.

Much of the following may seem obvious. But we do not always heed the obvious and can be guilty of neglecting fundamentals. Innovation should be as much about disciplined application of those fundamentals as it is about creativity and storytelling.

"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over and expecting different results.

ALBERT EiNSTEiN (APOCRYPHAL)

The OMG 'Innovation Agenda' system comprises of
three workstreams:

01

Reflecting

A new way to audit previous innovation efforts.

02

Reconnaissance

A new way to understand brands' media innovation successes.
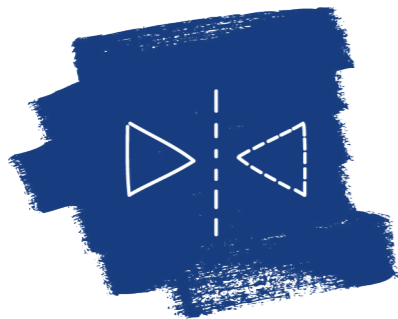
03

Roadmapping

A new way to ensure you execute innovation.

Ultimately, Reflecting and Reconnaissance are built on 'Innovation is Failure'. Roadmapping on Innovation is a Spectrum' and 'Innovation is Timely'.

Let's explain the system. ➡

See next page

Workstream 01

REFLECTING

A new way to audit
previous innovation efforts

"There is one art of
which people should
be masters—the art
of reflection."

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Innovation is hard and we should take the time to
recognise our efforts when we push the envelope and develop
our capabilities further. However, we must not forget
'Innovation is Failure'.

No approach to innovation can be complete without a candid conversation
about the flaws and blockages in previous approaches too. Marketers - both
clients and their agency partners - should have the courage to sit down to
have a lengthy and structured conversation about the barriers to innovation
in their business and how to work through them.

Although this may seem self-evident, there is a tendency within the industry
to reduce innovation feedback to a single tick box and 200-character
comment field on an end-of-year survey. Instead, shouldn't we look to
institutionalise a dedicated and detailed deep-dive debriefing of previous
innovation endeavours? We think so. This can be achieved via formalising
an Innovation Audit - an extensive and exhaustive analysis of a brand and
its agency's approach to innovation.

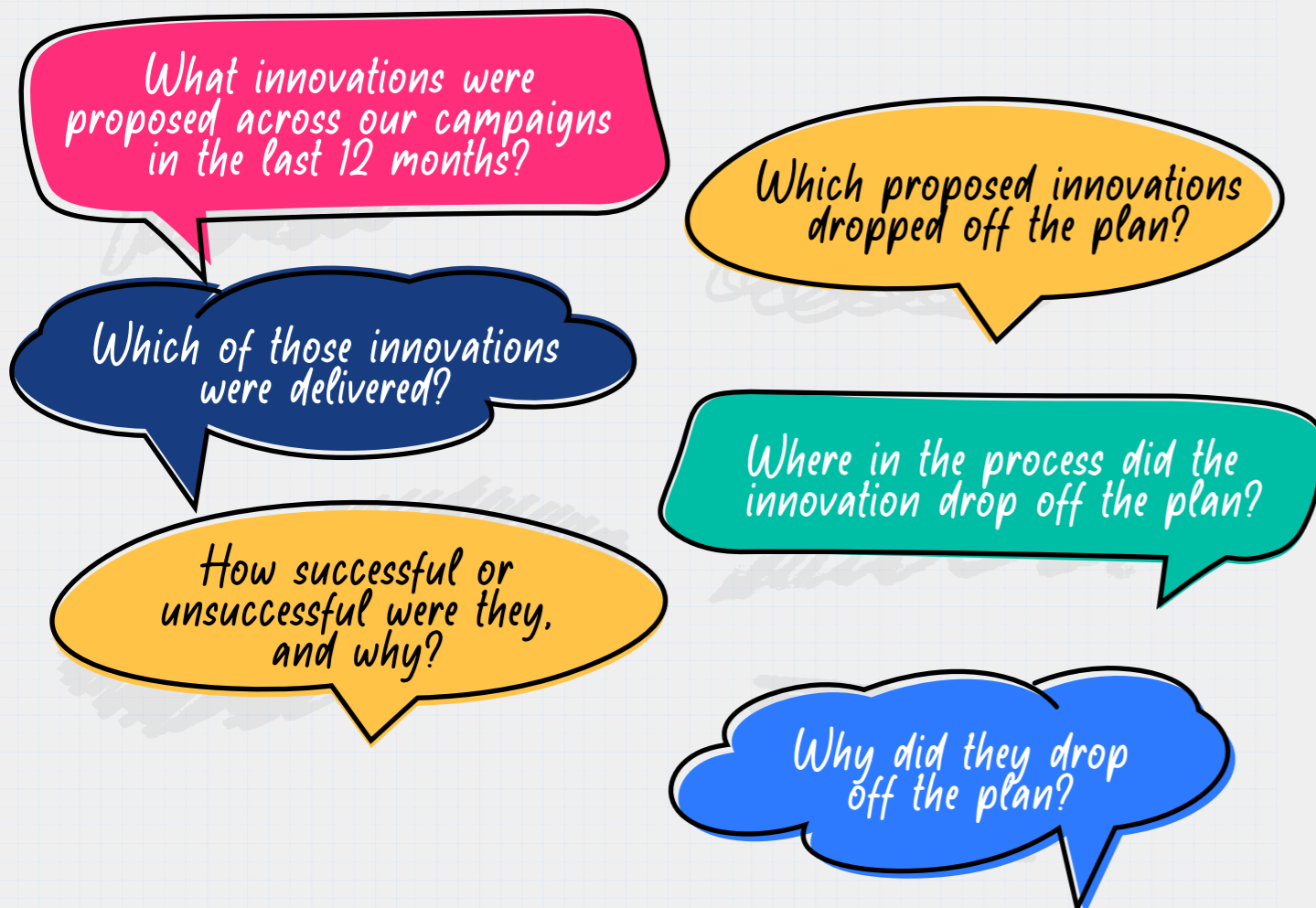It comprises two exercises.

Exercise 1

Exercise 2

**Retrospective
Analysis**

**Prospective
Analysis**

Exercise 1

Retrospective Analysis

Exercise 1 takes a look backwards to review previous innovation efforts in detail, so brands and their agency partners understand where there is scope for improvement. Rather than citing more general aspirations like "we should be more innovative next year", this first exercise is designed to get forensic and locate the specific knots and entanglements that have left innovations undelivered – whether they fell off the plan moments before sign off, or never made it beyond initial RFPs. It starts with all stakeholders drilling down into a checklist that includes questions like:

What innovations were proposed across our campaigns in the last 12 months?

Which of those innovations were delivered?

How successful or unsuccessful were they, and why?

Which proposed innovations dropped off the plan?

Where in the process did the innovation drop off the plan?

Why did they drop off the plan?

Breaking out old media plans, the comprehensive investigation should produce a one-sheet assessment that tactfully labels reasons for undelivered innovation. The output should tabulate campaigns, their aims and budgets, against the innovations recommended, both delivered and undelivered. You're looking to label obstacles and bottlenecks as accurately and honestly as possible. It could look something like **Figure 2.**

Figure 2:

Retrospective Analysis details delivered innovation & explains undelivered innovation

	Campaign 1	Campaign 2	Campaign 3
Objectives	Awareness	Engagement	Conversion
Budget	£1.2m	£500k	£100k
Innovations Used	DCO Audio	Playable Gaming Banner	None
KPI	75% reach	11% CTR	N/A

	Campaign 1	Campaign 2	Campaign 3
Innovations Proposed but not used	DCO TV	AR-enabled OOH	Mobile Chatbot
Reason	Reduced budget	Non-alignment between media and creative	Development time too long

Exercise 2

Prospective Analysis

Exercise 2 involves innovators and stakeholders conducting a Prospective Analysis. Whilst Retrospective Analysis seeks to assess previous performance, Prospective Analysis looks forward in time and uses the power of imagination to gain foresight into our future innovation pursuits.

Growing in popularity, Prospective Analysis, also called Prospective Hindsight, is a business thought-experiment where participants are asked to deliberately 'catastrophise' on any given business goal.
By imagining a parallel world where the goal has been spectacularly missed, and by attempting to diagnose how that future world came to be, participants can often predict reasons behind hypothetical failures with alarming prescience and accuracy and most important build solutions and devise bulwarks to mitigate against them.

Research conducted by The Wharton School and the University of Colorado found that Prospective Hindsight increases the ability to correctly identify ways to improve future outcomes by 30%, and incidentally can often prove quite cathartic and even fun, too. We can adapt this approach for media innovation.

The exercise begins with a provocation for innovators and stakeholders, such as:

"Imagine it's one year from now. Imagine we are having this meeting because, despite numerous exciting conversations about innovating within our campaigns, we have remained too predictable in our approach to planning and use of assets, and we have failed to deliver any innovation in media. Now list the reasons why that happened".

After a further brainstorm or discussion, and once reasons for future failure have been identified, de-duplicated and grouped together, partners and colleagues can rank them by likelihood. All told, that could look something like **Figure 3.**

Figure 3:

Prospective Analysis anticipates future reasons for a failure to innovate

Future Failure	Predicted Reason	Ranked by Likelihood
Budget	Reduced budget or last minute budget cuts	1
Timing	Briefed too late, development time too long versus planning cycle, legal inertia	2
Objectives	Innovation does not meet objectives, has not been defined, or measurement criteria misaligned	3
Resourcing	Not enough manpower, siloed or conflicting decisions, lack of dedicated innovation resource	4
Unbefitting	Innovation was too risky, unworkable, unoriginal, not on-brand	5

Collating the factors revealed both during Retrospective Analysis and Prospective Analysis may reveal some overlap because systemic barriers persist over time. However, the exercise may throw up new future barriers not seen before that also need to be countered.

But how do we counter it? What do we do once we understand our barriers, blockages, and obstacles?

Bringing It All Together

And Building Solutions

Business leader and author of A Beautiful Constraint, Adam Morgan, cites how Warburton's bakers banned the specific phrase "...we can't because..." from meetings. Instead, the default became "...we can if...".

Morgan has long-been an advocate of discouraging businesses to think of themselves as 'victims' of hidden constraints. Instead, the mere act of acknowledging the constraint and looking it straight in the eye is the first step to its circumvention.

To that point, the aim of the Retrospective Analysis exercise is not to point fingers, but to codify solutions using an open conversation about blockages as the jumping off point. The final output of the audit, then, should be to articulate countermeasures and workarounds pointed at the specific barriers identified, both former and foreseen, framed as a 'Can-If' statement.

More important, guardianship should be assigned to those challenges and their solutions. This can be a particular person, a group of people or a department. Again, the aim is not to preselect a fall-guy, but rather to designate stewardship of a 'Can-If' suggestion.

Overall, the output should be formalised, institutionalised, and shared with all parties - brand and agencies - as a document that alerts us to future challenges but provides workarounds. As an example only, a complete Innovation Audit could look like **Figure 4**.
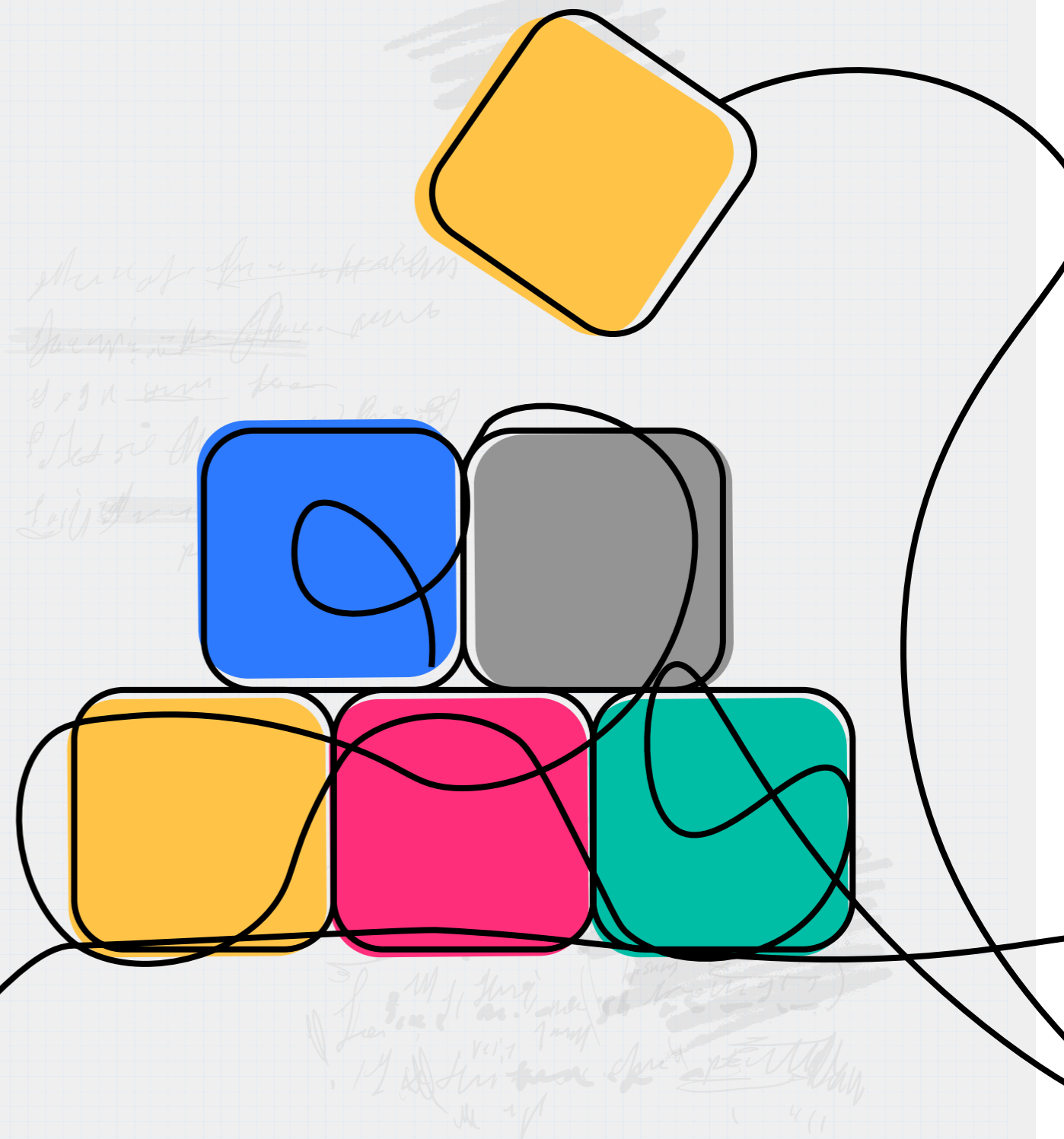
See figure 4

Prospective Analysis – How Will We Do?

| Future Failure	Predicted Reason	Ranked by Likelihood	Can If	Owner
Budget	Reduced budget or last minute budget cuts	1	Plan gold, silver and bronze budget tiers that can ratchet up or down. Focus on affordable incremental innovations	Sarah, Strategy Omri, Digital
Timing	Briefed too late, development time too long versus planning cycle, legal inertia	2	Lock-in all-encompassing dates and gates framework as part of FY planning process	Nick, Client Partner
Objectives	Innovation does not meet objectives, has not been defined, or measurement criteria misaligned	3	Concretise objectives and establish upfront KPI framework aligning on how success can be measured, and which innovation territories should be investigated	Sarah, Strategy Dan, Effectiveness
Resourcing	Not enough manpower, siloed or conflicting decisions, lack of dedicated innovation resource	4	Make teams more nimble. Empower decision makers. Streamline approval process. Ensure regular flow of Information. Deliver structures for horizontal cross-party alignment.	Venkat, CMO Marisa, COO
Unbefitting	Innovation was too risky, unworkable, unoriginal, not on-brand	5	Ensure ideas are showcased early enough in the process	Jake, Creative
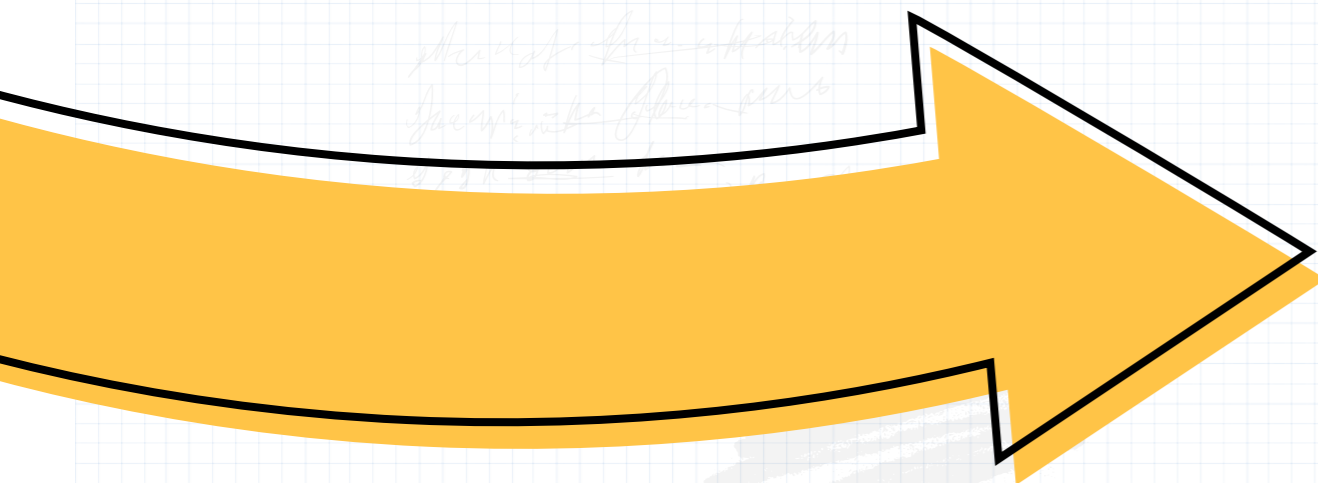
Marketers are of course at liberty to borrow or interpret as much of this process as they deem necessary, providing the central idea is preserved: to produce a compressed summary of prior performance, future challenges, and workable solutions.

Actions for Marketers

Formalise a process for identifying and dissolving blockers to innovation

Ultimately, marketers should be looking to produce a one-page diagnosis and prognosis of past and future innovation efforts and share it with all stakeholders. A formalised attempt to identify barriers and build measurable corresponding solutions can only elevate efforts and a self-reflective process is critical for brands wanting to be more innovative.
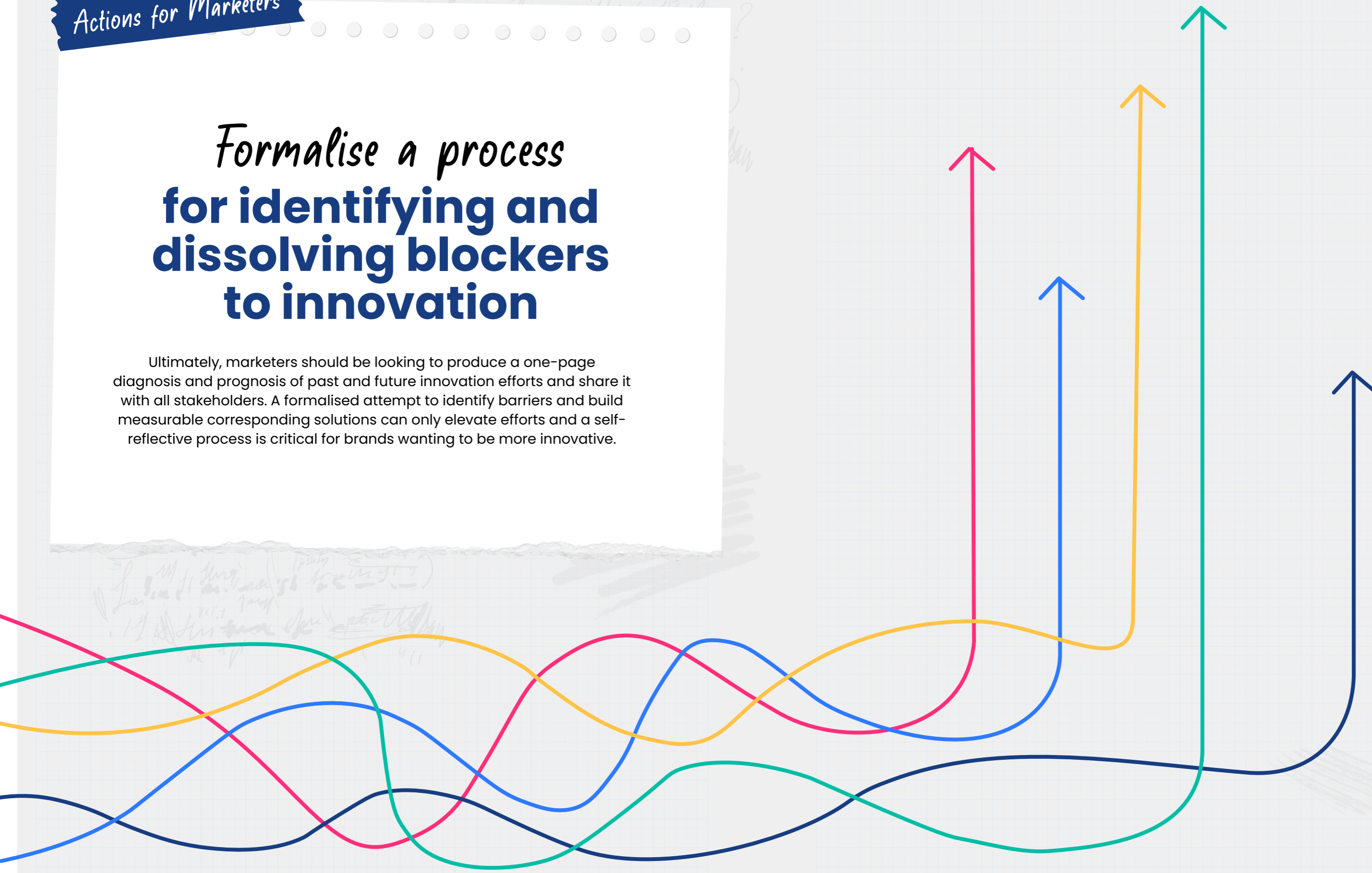
Workstream 02
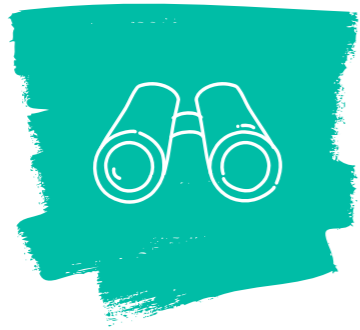
RECONNAISSANCE

A new way to understand other brands' media innovation successes

"If you're the smartest person in the room, you're in the wrong room".

ANON

During Reflection, we've used the Innovation Audit to look inwardly. Now let's turn our attention to the outside world.

What else is happening in the world of marketing that we can adopt, adapt and improve? What are our co-workers, contemporaries and competitors doing that we can learn from? How can we apply the principle of exaptation and shift our gaze away from the day-to-day and embark upon a fact-finding trip to a foreign land to bring new knowledge back home?

What can we adapt, adopt and improve?

Plotting Innovation with a
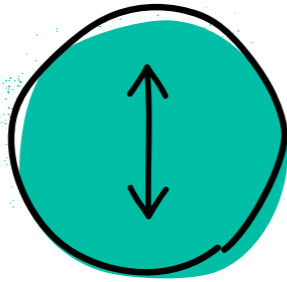# Competitive Matrix

By indexing and plotting coordinates for remarkable media innovations, we can better map common territories for media and marketing innovations and take a view on where we might wish to play. We've surveyed a host of innovations over the past 2 years, to create a framework for understanding how brands innovate. The framework operates on two axes.

Horizontal Axis
Mediation to Creation.

Mediation is advertising and marketing techniques built on the 'where', 'when' and 'who' of a campaign e.g., channel, format, targeting. Creation is the authoring of aesthetic and artistic elements of a campaign, birthing new ideas, assets, or products.
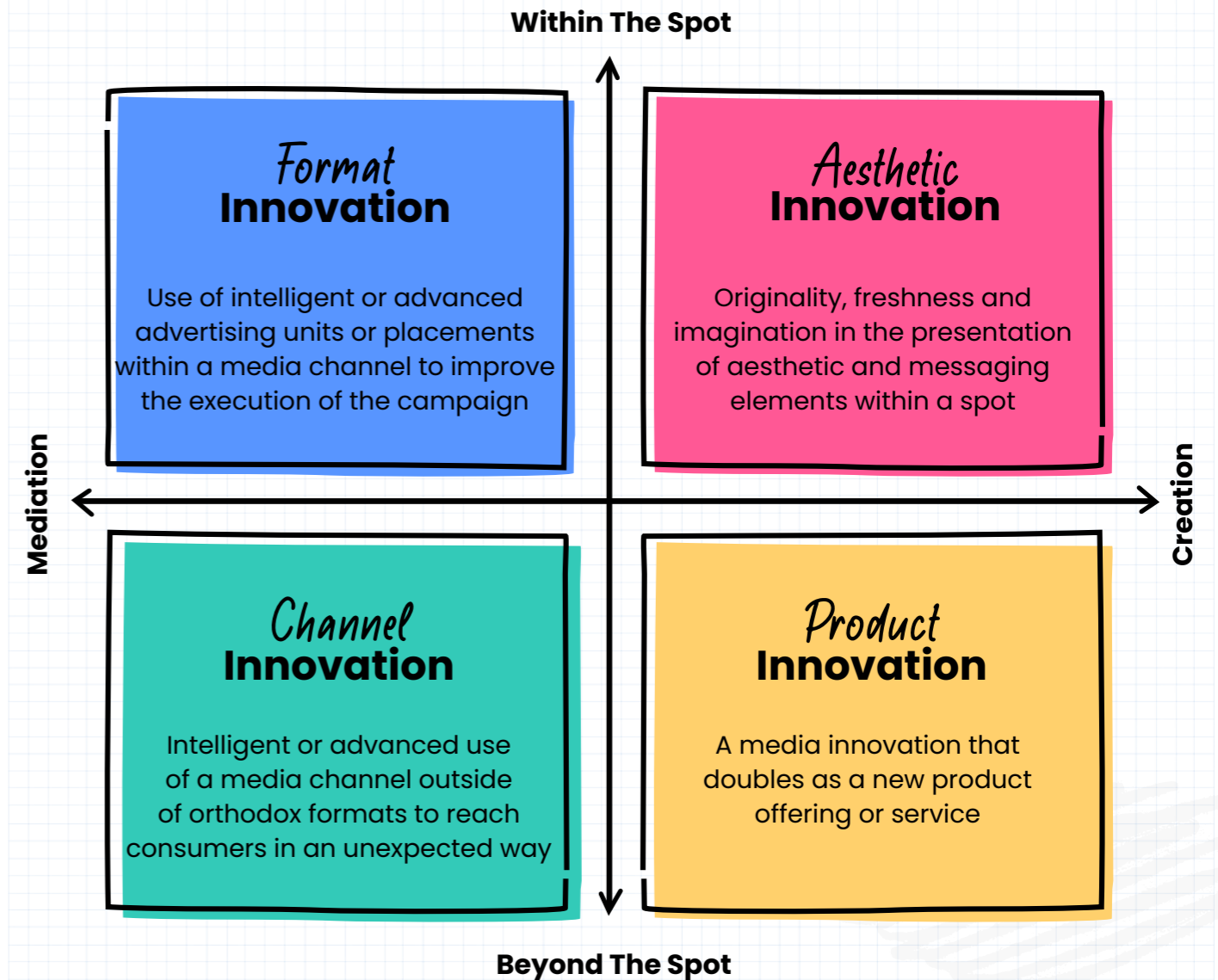
Vertical Axis
Within The Spot to Beyond The Spot.

Within The Spot is messaging within the frame of standard advertising formats, from inside the 30" spot or on a 6-sheet OOH. Beyond The Spot is advertising living beyond the walls of the traditional media format and moving into territories of association, integration, and editorialising.

These two axes intersect to create four models of media innovation, as in **Figure 5.**

Figure 5:

A competive matrix plots how and where brands innovate

Within The Spot

Format Innovation
Use of intelligent or advanced advertising units or placements within a media channel to improve the execution of the campaign

Aesthetic Innovation
Originality, freshness and imagination in the presentation of aesthetic and messaging elements within a spot

Mediation

Creation

Channel Innovation
Intelligent or advanced use of a media channel outside of orthodox formats to reach consumers in an unexpected way

Product Innovation
A media innovation that doubles as a new product offering or service

Beyond The Spot

Studying these four models can help prospective innovators locate their desired route into media innovation to either muscle in on a competitor's space, or indeed find white space where they can innovate unopposed. These four models are not mutually exclusive and debating the fuzzy classification and interplay between media and creative could only ever be a productive exercise.

Dramatising
Four Styles Of Innovation

Crucially, it is helpful to see these four styles of innovation dramatised via standout media innovation case studies to understand the levers available to brands.
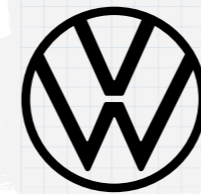
1. **Format Innovation**
2. **Channel Innovation**
3. **Aesthetic Innovation**
4. **Product Innovation**

1 Format Innovation

Advanced advertising units or placements within a media channel to elevate the execution of the campaign and to deliver efficiency and engagement. For example: innovative banners, new programmatic technology, a progressive OOH format.

| Volkswagen	Schuh	Warner Bros
Pollution-eating OOH	**Hi-Tech Treasure Hunt**	**Accessing New Forms Of Data For Retargeted Ads**

On a quest to deliver on their sustainability promises, and promote their new ID.3 electric vehicle, Volkswagen designed an out-of-home poster from a material that absorbed environmental pollutants. The format innovation meant the placement itself became a dramatisation of the product benefit.

To restore its awareness post-pandemic, retailer Schuch deployed a series of hi-tech media formats to create a virtual treasure hunt. From native in-game banners to outdoor ads featuring QR codes to geo-tagged augmented reality executions, users following the treasure trail through paid placements were driven into physical stores to redeem their prize.

During COVID, Warner Bros promoted digital downloads of their films by using data on Amazon Prime lockdown streaming habits to segment and retarget ads to consumers across the Amazon ad network. The accessing of Prime's viewing data for retargeted formats had never been attempted before.

2 Channel Innovation

Pushing beyond paid spots into intelligent use of a media channel itself. Injecting the brand deeper into the fabric of the channel to build associations. For example: partnerships and sponsorships, ambient and guerrilla, editorial integrations.
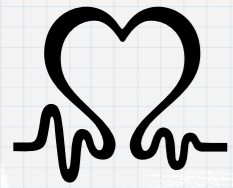
British Heart Foundation

Reactive TV Spot

CUPRA

New EV Model Natively Integrated Into Forza Game

Timberland

Influencer Integration

After Denmark's Christian Eriksson had an on-pitch heart attack, and knowing it would be discussed during Denmark's next game's punditry, British Heart Foundation secured ITV's first-in-break pre-match slot to show a tactical ad extolling the virtues of knowing CPR. As correctly predicted, the ad followed seamlessly from an in-studio discussion on Eriksson's collapse featuring BHF ambassador, Graeme Souness.

Autos manufacturer Cupra built their new EV concept vehicle - a car not available in the real world until 2025 – into Forza Horizon 5 as a playable option. The early-glimpse built both a sense of anticipation and exclusivity and made the virtual car a virtual smash-hit with gamers.

Long associated with the rap and hip-hop community, Timberland sought to drive their eco-credentials by teaming up with homegrown rap superstar, Loyle Carner, a passionate exponent of 'urban greening'. In partnership with Loyle and MTV, produced mini-documentary Concrete Green, entwining the brand's eco credentials and its hip hop legacy to tell the story of one guy's journey to make a difference in his local area by creating a new multi-use, green community space. The influencer integration extended through the line and into POS and OOH placements.

3 Aesthetic Innovation

Originality and freshness in presentation of aesthetic, artistic or messaging elements within a spot to deliver impact, memorability, and engagement. For example: the world's first ad written by an AI or creative copy that reflects current events or its location.

Skinny

Brand Gets Consumers To Record Their Ads

Buscopan

Tactically Creative Messaging

Nike

AI-powered Sport & Thought Experiment

Budget mobile company Skinny ran a series of outdoor and press ads replete with pre-written script for a radio ad, and an accompanying telephone number, encouraging the public to ring in to record the script as a voiceover down the line. The best voiceovers were then flipped into radio ads to run in commercial airtime.

After the revealing insight that IBS sufferers are more likely to be women interested in fashion, Buscopan sought to create a series of ads in the style of fashion spreads showing models clutching their stomachs in catwalk-style poses, all targeted during London Fashion Week. The context and the tactical placement of the ads inspired the creative route.

Nike used AI to analyse the playing style of teenage Serena Williams versus the present-day Serena, before pitting them against one another in a 'virtual match' to show the evolution of Serena's performance data across the decades. The time-bending theoretical head-to-head generated video content that went viral across YouTube.

4 Product Innovation

A media innovation that extends beyond the spot to become a new product offering or service in itself. For example: an ad unit housing a customer service chatbot.

Specsavers

OOH Displaying Real-Time Appointment Slots For Eye Tests

To combat the issue of customers missing scheduled eye test appointments, whilst other customers were finding it difficult to secure appointments, data-led outdoor deep-linked to Specsavers booking database to show real-time appointment availability at nearby stores.

Philadelphia

NPD-led Promotion

In New York, the moment a bagel is sliced, it is deemed 'prepared food' and incurs extra tax. Accordingly, Philadelphia pioneered a cream-cheese injected bagel requiring no cuts, thus avoiding the tax. Using a famous bagel shop in NYC as the activation's epicentre, consumers were encouraged to visit the store to purchase their Tax-Free Bagel and share their experiences on social media.

Actions for Marketers

Use The Competitive Matrix To Construct A Media Bucket List

Competitive analysis is a common exercise for many brands. Our aim here, however, is to formalise the process and consolidate findings into a "media bucket list"; a crystallisation of a brand's aspirations. Using the matrix above, and thinking about format, channel, creative innovations found within the four boxes, brands should ask:
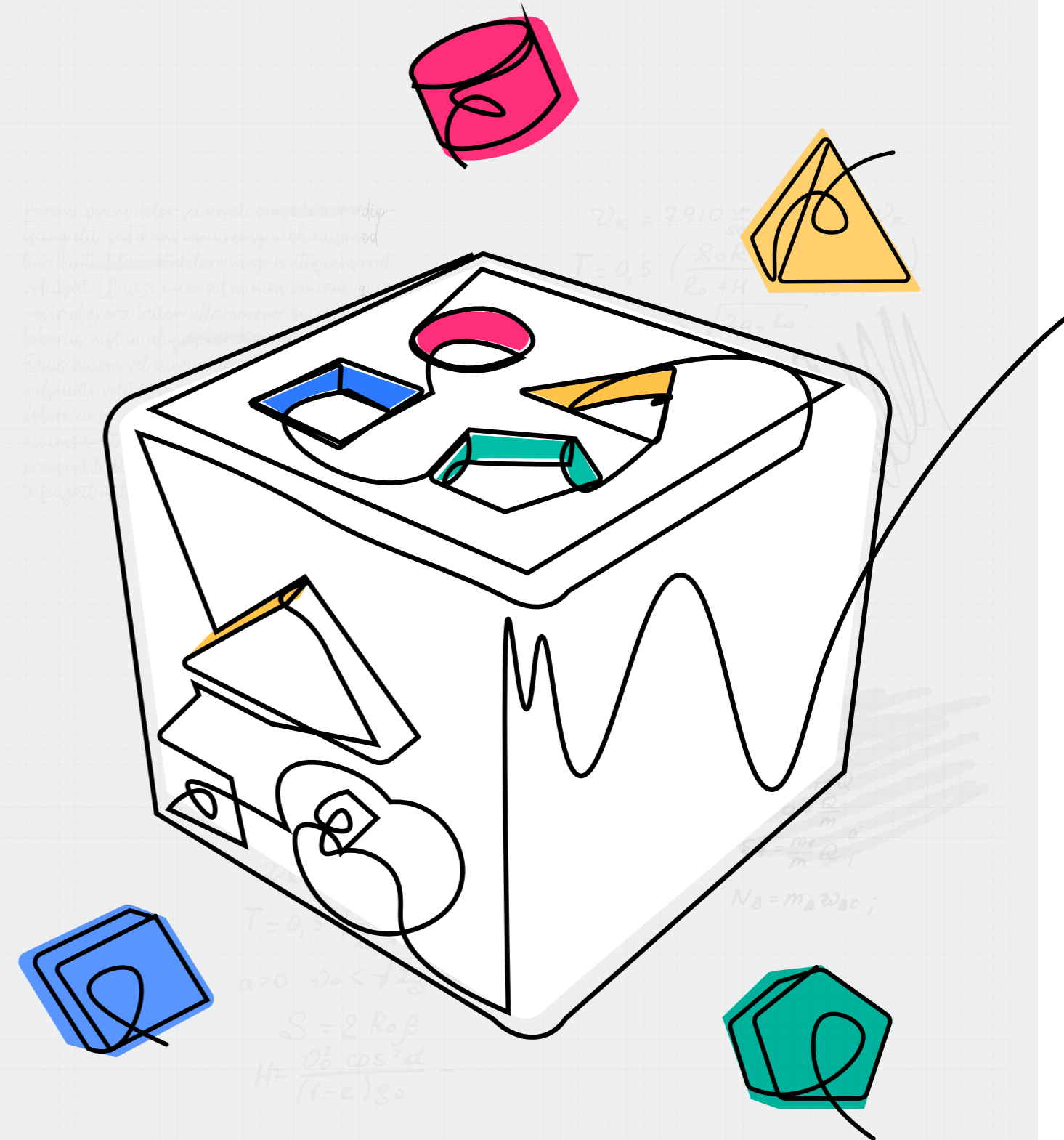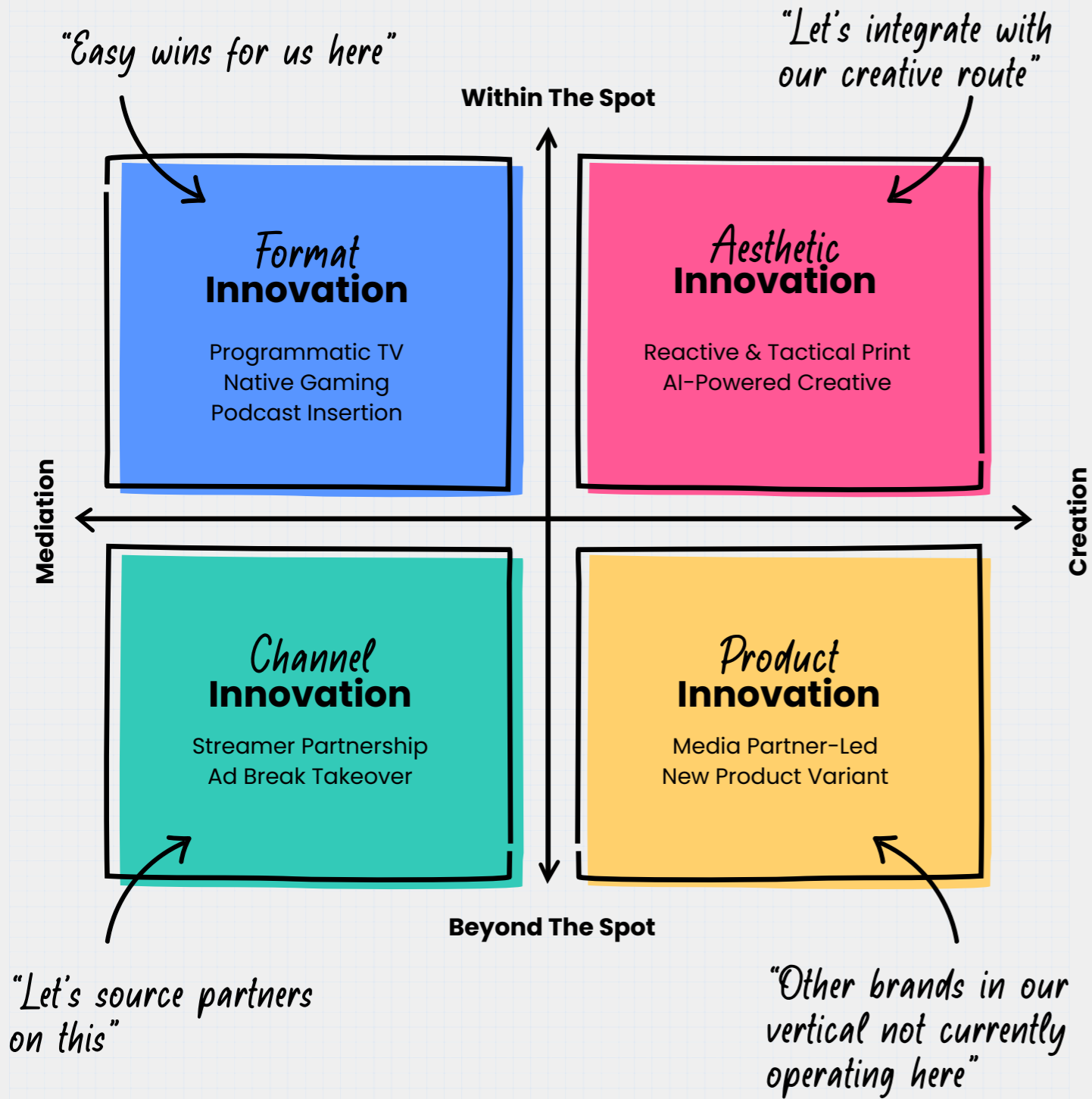
- **Which channels, formats and approaches have we used in the past?**

- **Which channels, formats and approaches could we use in the future?**

- **Where are other brands playing?**

- **Where do we want to be on this matrix?**

- **What have we never done that we'd like to do?**

It's vital to state, however, strategic aptness remains key. The FOMO felt when witnessing another brand deliver an innovation triumph can sometimes fuel knee-jerk style executions. We would never advocate a brand innovate for innovation's sake, or merely because a competitor has used it. We talk more about strategic fit in the next section.

However, surveying the competition is important. Constructing a media bucket list is an effort to swell the toolbox to answer business objectives in increasingly progressive ways. Understanding what other brands are doing gives you more options.

Figure 6:

Make a media bucket list and think about where you want to play

"Easy wins for us here"

"Let's integrate with our creative route"

Within The Spot

Mediation

Creation

Format
Innovation

Programmatic TV
Native Gaming
Podcast Insertion

Aesthetic
Innovation

Reactive & Tactical Print
AI-Powered Creative

Channel
Innovation

Streamer Partnership
Ad Break Takeover

Product
Innovation

Media Partner-Led
New Product Variant

Beyond The Spot

"Let's source partners on this"

"Other brands in our vertical not currently operating here"

Workstream 03

ROADMAPPING

New ways to guarantee your innovation roll-out

"Having a vision for what you want is not enough. Vision without execution is hallucination."

THOMAS EDISON

So let's put this into action.

After the Reflection stage, brands should have gained an understanding of their blockages both for prior and future efforts via a candid and transparent audit. After the Reconnaissance stage, brands might better understand where they sit in relation to the innovations efforts of the industry at large and have a sense of where to play next versus other brands.

However, without an ultimate executional plan built on timings, we risk our efforts becoming just wishful thinking. As is often diagnosed by the audit, challenges around budgets, timings and mismatched objectives often scupper brilliant ideas coming to life in campaign.

Roadmapping, the last part of the process, tackles this head on and deploys a framework that can work on any budget, that de-risks innovation, and that timelines out a path to execution. It achieves this by responding to the remaining two innovation laws:

Execution is everything.

Innovation is a Spectrum and Innovation is Timely.

Introducing
"Do-Progress-Pioneer"

As we've seen with Innovation is a Spectrum, it's not enough to just 'define innovation' as a single, monolithic sentence. We should be talking about innovation definitions plural. Plural in recognition of the fact that innovation is a continuum of gradations.

In the search for those gradations and steps, some innovators turn to 70-20-10: spend 70% on orthodox activity; 20% on elevation of the existing; 10% on a big risky and disruptive project. But the problem with the 70-20-10 system is that if budgets are cut it's likely your 20% and 10% bucket allocation will be dropped first. You need a system that protects innovation and flexes when budgets change. Second, it assumes it knows the price of innovation by allocating an arbitrary 20% and 10%

respectively - even before you know what the innovation is. You need a system that allows for innovation within everything you do. Third, and perhaps most important, the framework doesn't tell you how to innovate. You need a system that directs on how and when to innovate. 70-20-10 can be too prescriptive in its structure, too inaccurate in its budgeting, and yet too vague in its direction to deliver meaningful innovation.

Instead, we want to introduce you to three alternative words:

Do. Progress. Pioneer.
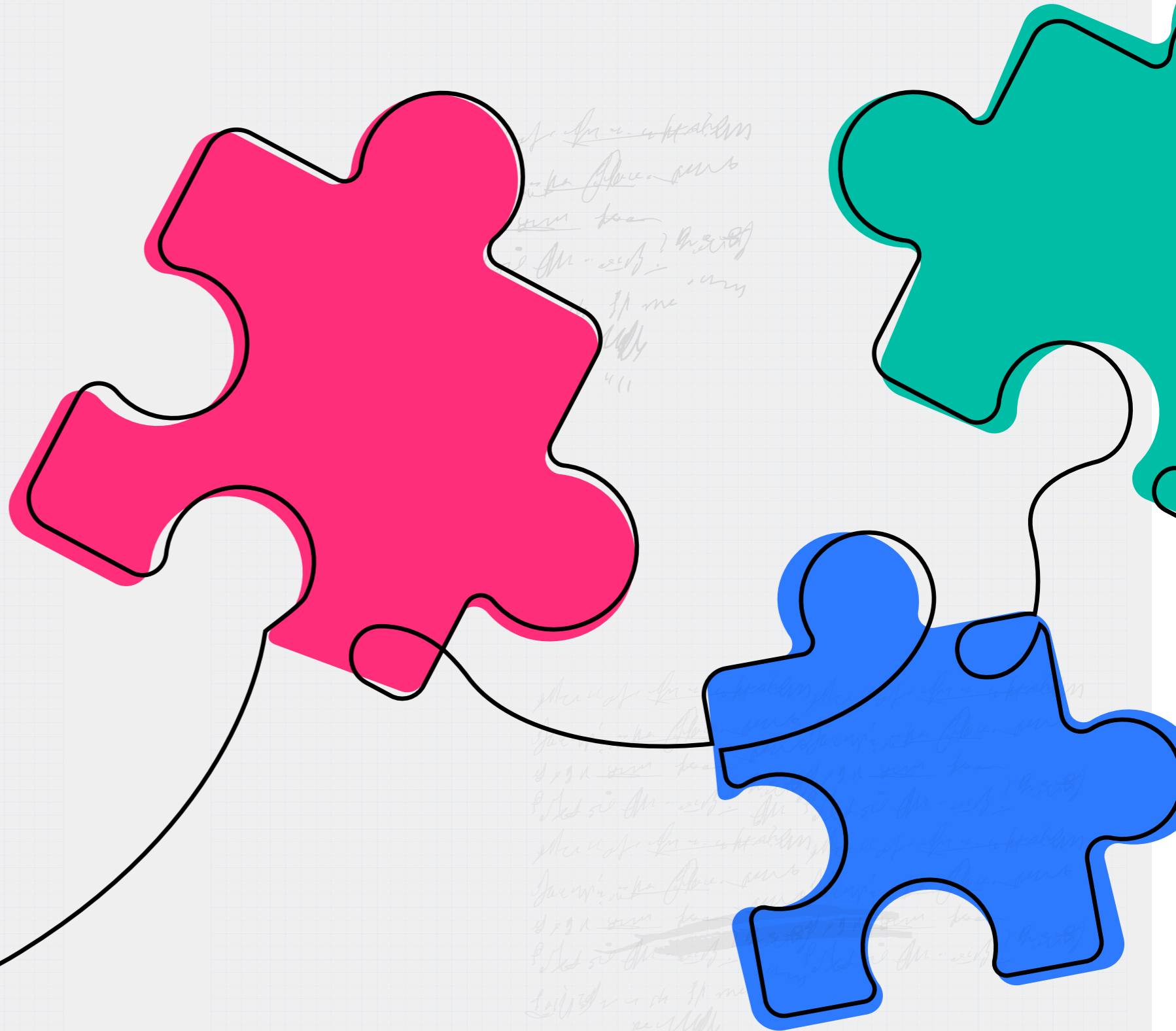
The OMG Do-Progress-Pioneer *Framework*

Do-Progress-Pioneer corresponds directly to the three iterations of innovation - Incremental, Exaptive and Disruptive - and frames its innovation gradations as verbs to direct the extent of our ambition.

In brief, "Do' demands immediate action through incremental gains. 'Progress' encourages us to push into adjacent opportunities. 'Pioneer' is a rallying cry to change the game. The Do-Progress-Pioneer spectrum essentially enjoins us to calibrate our innovation efforts.

Baked into Do-Progress-Pioneer, also, is a definition of 'newness'. Recall our Sinclair Spectrum versus Sinclair C5 case study about how 'newness' is too vague a concept to be useful.

To restate, 'new' and 'first' are not the same thing. An innovation that is new to your brand, though not a media first, is still an innovation for you. Indeed, across the spectrum, innovations that are new to your brand, new to your vertical and new to all advertising are all valid expressions of 'newness'.

With this new vocabulary to grade our ambitions, and with a new understanding of 'new', we can consolidate into one grand innovation framework. See **Figure 7.**
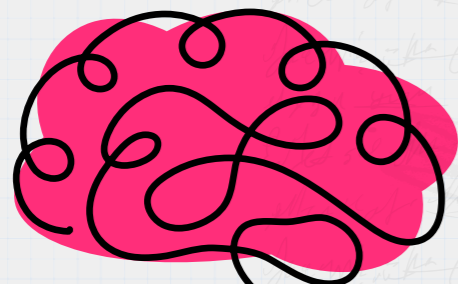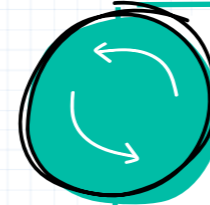
Figure 7:

Do-Progress-Pioneer calibrates innovation on a scale

DO
New To Brand

Modest, incremental improvements to innovations already in use, or innovations which are new ground for business specifically. A competitor may already be using it, but for you, it's new.

PROGRESS
New To Vertical

Innovations that are new to an entire industry or vertical. You must be the first brand ever or business amongst your competitive set to deploy this innovation.

PIONEER
New To Advertising

Innovations that are truly groundbreaking and disruptive. No one from any company, from any vertical, at any point has attempted.

The ultimate aim is to start populating this framework with innovation opportunities.

Populating the
Do-Progress-Pioneer Framework

The above structure is designed to house and dimensionalise your media bucket list - from basic table-stakes innovations that will raise the floor to skyscraping Cannes-winning goals.

Drawing on the inspiration from the Reflection and Reconnaissance phase, and knowing the next year's marketing objectives and the media strategy that will deliver it, and taking account of the bottlenecks previously identified by the audit, we start populating the framework like this:
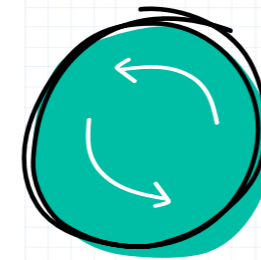
DO
New To Brand

DO innovations are strategically apt media innovations that deliver modest, incremental but nonetheless vital improvements to your marketing. A competitor may already be using it in their media plans, but you have not yet entered that space.

With DO innovations we are looking to commit to twists and nudges to existing media approaches, usually Format Innovations, perhaps Channel Innovations. This is the floor-raising or levelling-up exercise that drives us to swap our standard MPU banners for a more engaging interactive or playable units. Or upgrade our audio ads from programmatic podcast insertions to live presenter endorsement reads to match our competitor's efforts.

Again note, this is not about advocating an approach where we merely copy our competition, nor throw strategically inappropriate innovations into the mix to keep pace with our rivals. Rather this is about recognising a minimum requirement for innovation via the affordable formats demanded by our objectives that we would be using anyway.

Though some brands may wish to reject certain media innovations on the basis that a competitor has got there first, it's vital to note numerous media innovations and cutting edge adtech are now a basic inclusion in advertising campaigns no matter the marketing objective. For instance, once upon a time programmatic-led DCO or QR code-led OOH would have been media-first innovations for a brand. Now they are standard tools in a marketer's toolkit. Remember: innovation means 'new', not first. If it's new for you, it's an innovation.

Most important, because these are incremental, table-stakes innovations needed to hit a minimum standard, the DO column innovations should be considered compulsory. Relatively speaking, they are not much more costly than regular media formats required by most strategic approaches and can be found within standard channels. Whilst ambitious executions like branded metaverse worlds are difficult to get over the line, the same cannot be said for small nudges to affordable formats familiar to the brand.

The key provocation is:

What have we never done that we should have done by now?

PROGRESS
New to Vertical

PROGRESS innovations are new to vertical and encourage brands to lift and shift media innovations already in use by other brands outside their category, before adapting them to lead your competitive set.

As Progress innovations are one step on in terms of sophistication from DO innovations, they are more likely to be Channel Innovations and Aesthetic Innovations. Brands should look again at the Competitive Matrix to plot where competitors' innovation efforts sit. Look at verticals beyond your own and think about the principle of Exaptive Innovation. If you're an FMCG brand, don't be just obsessed with what other FMCG brands are doing. Look at what finance is doing in media innovation, or the travel industry.

As an example, take the aforementioned Skinny Mobile execution where the telco brand encouraged customers to call in to record their radio ads for them. A luxury auto company may feel that this would not be appropriate for their brand due to a different customer profile and media strategy. However, general principles can still be extracted. In this case the provocation of using innovation to make your consumers the subject of your adverts. Though their media strategy may be worlds apart from a local and agile telco company, a high-end auto brand could still look to turn its most powerful customers into advocates with a premiumised innovation-based mechanic designed to capture authentic reviews.

The details of the execution are less important versus the provocation delivered and the principle that can be transposed. Conduct your reconnaissance as wide as possible and understand which styles of innovation are at home in which verticals and ask how they can be imported and reversioned.

The key provocation is:

What innovations have we never seen in our competitive set that we would like to do?

PIONEER
New to Advertising

PIONEER innovations are new to advertising and echo the pure disruptions of the Travis Scott concert in Fortnite, the first-ever-ad on the Las Vegas Sphere, or maybe the yet-to-come, first-ever influencer endorsement in space. These are genuine media firsts that melt the internet with much of the analysis centring on the innovation's capacity to drive fame and win awards.

We find media firsts throughout history: the first advert on TV was for Gibbs SR toothpaste in 1955; the first ever paid banner ad was for AT&T in 1994; the first Facebook ad was for Morgan Chase Bank in 2006; the first-ever sponsored SnapChat lens was for the Peanuts Movie in 2015; the first-ever ad on the Las Vegas Sphere was for YouTube in 2023. There will be many more opportunities for brands for pure media firsts, no doubt, and contrary to this report's lobbying for a more realistic and modest framing of innovation, there's still nothing wrong with dreaming big and aiming for the moon.

But whilst the Peter Thiel approach to innovation, whereby a singular brand rewrites the rules of the game and sets the standard for all future brands, is laudable indeed, we must be clear on the chances of success for such a venture. Innovations like these really are moonshots, taking on an almost mythological air that requires enormous dedication and resource to deliver.

Nonetheless every brand should feel it has the right to attempt innovations on this scale. See **Figure 8.**
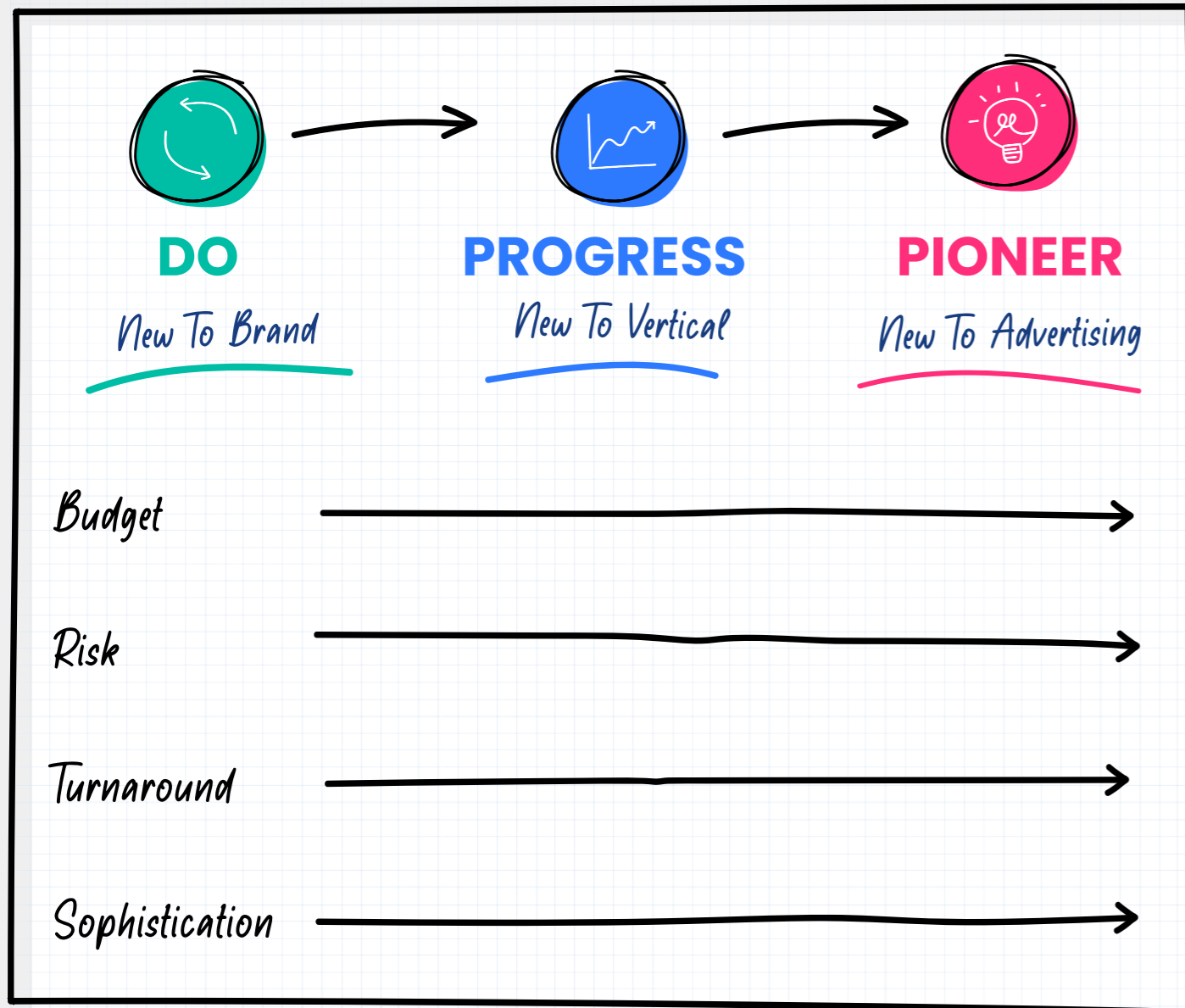
The key provocation is:

What media innovations have never been done by any brand ever?

See Figure 8

Figure 8:

Do, Progress and Pioneer are all legitimate iterations of innovation, but understand the implications of pushing right

DO
New To Brand

PROGRESS
New To Vertical

PIONEER
New To Advertising

Budget

Risk

Turnaround

Sophistication

Populating your Innovation Agenda with territories, solutions, channels and ideas, will create your roadmap, your wishlist and your Rosetta Stone for the next 12 months in media. The framework with its three pillars provides the structure for innovation success. They dimensionalise innovation, and are calibrated to ambition, appetite for risk, access budget and time for development. It could look something **Figure 9.**

Figure 9:

An example Innovation Agenda with innovation opportunities aligned to the Do-Progress-Pioneer framework

	DO New To Brand	PROGRESS New To Vertical	PIONEER New To Advertising
📺	Programmatic TV	Streaming Content Partnership	Branded Virtual Viewing Rooms
📰	Advanced DCO	Live Broadcast Banners	New Forms of Targeting
🔊	Dynamic Podcast Insertion	Voice Activated Ads	Virtual Gigs
🪧	Programmatic / Dynamic OOH	Mega OOH Special Builds	Augmented Reality OOH
🎮	Native Integration In Gaming	Twitch Streaming Partnership	Original Game
🧠	Generative AI Used In Creative	Computer Vision Targeting	Meta-Human As Branded Campaign Asset

Deep-Linking The Innovation Agenda to
# Strategy And Campaign Execution

The Innovation Agenda is more than a laundry list of nice-to-have innovations and should be deep-linked to the heart of your planning process so that it is injected directly to your strategy and campaign objectives for the next year.

When we are going about the business of responding to a brief and planning our campaigns, we select our channels and formats by shining them through the lens of our planning principles, to allow us to reach our target with our message. We usually start with a notional list of media channels and formats, from TV to outdoor, to banners and search, to events and sponsorship, and given the objectives and budget, refine down to an interconnected and structured shortlist of media channels designed to message our target market efficiently and effectively.

The Innovation Agenda is designed to work hand-in-glove with that process. This is because every media channel has a Do, a Progress and a Pioneer,

no matter what the brief, and conversely every innovative or technologically progressive media canvas, no matter how sophisticated, has an affordable and accessible entry point. Thus, all innovations on an Innovation Agenda are broadly applicable across 12 months of campaigns precisely because they can be found within the general media channel toolkit from which you would ordinarily be selecting your campaigns tool anyway.

A brand's agenda should be keyed to a brand's short-, mid- and long-term objectives. A brand like Porsche that rarely uses linear TV, has no need for a 'row' of linear TV Do-Progress-Pioneers. But given its desire to deliver 'experiences' for its consumers,
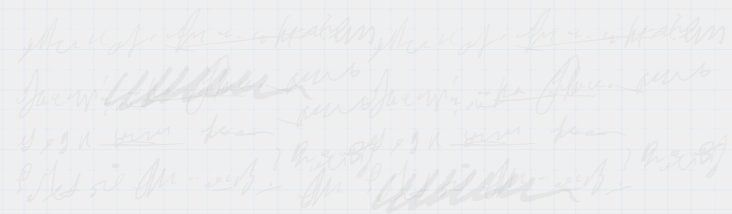
sponsorships, partnerships, and events should be included. Similarly, a brand such as Lidl, aiming for reach and frequency, may want to prioritise the inclusion of TV on its Innovation Agenda, knowing it may be able to push the envelope within a well-understood and well-used media channel.

The goal is to make innovations - whichever iteration brands feel ambitious enough to tackle - a fundamental and compulsory part of the process of planning and execution, deep-linked in the overall goals for the year, and reflecting the individual objectives of its constituent campaigns. If budget is an issue, then prioritise floor raising exercises with the introduction of incremental

improvements that a competitor may already be using. If you want to trigger an email at your rival's HQ, demanding "why aren't we doing this?", look to see what innovations you can introduce that are new to your vertical. If you're looking for a big blow-out fame-driving disruption that will make your brand the envy of the marketing world, know that this requires even more budget, more time, and more risk.

Ideally a brand would want to talk about how to deliver along all three waypoints, Do, Progress and Pioneer, as a way of formally recognising the compound interest of modest media innovation and the requirement to expand into untested territory, and the search for the holy grail of marketing - the media first.

Measuring the
Do-Progress-Pioneer Framework

It's vital that this process is measurable, and so a key strut of the Innovation Agenda's construction is also an accompanying set of KPIs. In this instance, we're measuring two things: Media KPIs and Delivery KPIs.

Media KPIs

Naturally, we need the innovations within the agenda to hit their media KPIs as deep-linked back to campaign KPIs and strategic KPIs. However, when innovating, we must calibrate our expectations of those KPIs very carefully in advance. A common challenge among media innovators is proposing an idea which, though groundbreaking, might be deemed unsuccessful if the wrong KPI was assigned.

The DO column, then, is almost always measured by traditional media KPIs- for instance, clicks, visits, time spent on site, conversions - because they will most likely sit in well-understood and well-measured media channels and represent incremental opportunities. As we move into our PROGRESS column, we still may see traditional media KPIs

as a form of measurement, but also given this may be new territory for brands, a first for its vertical, brand lift and awareness studies may need to complement measurement to better understand its success within the category. Last, in the case of PIONEER ideas, we must be realistic about the KPIs we can obtain. Though we can launch a complicated and extensive study about how many test drives were booked in the Staffordshire area because of being the first brand of EV on the Moon, the KPIs for such a monumental marketing achievement are cultural, and should be measured in buzz, earned media, stakeholder satisfaction and awards. It is vital when we are building our Innovation Agenda, then, that we do not calibrate its success by the wrong metric. See **Figure 10.**

Figure 10:

Ensure you are measuring your innovation by the right metric
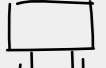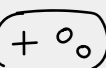
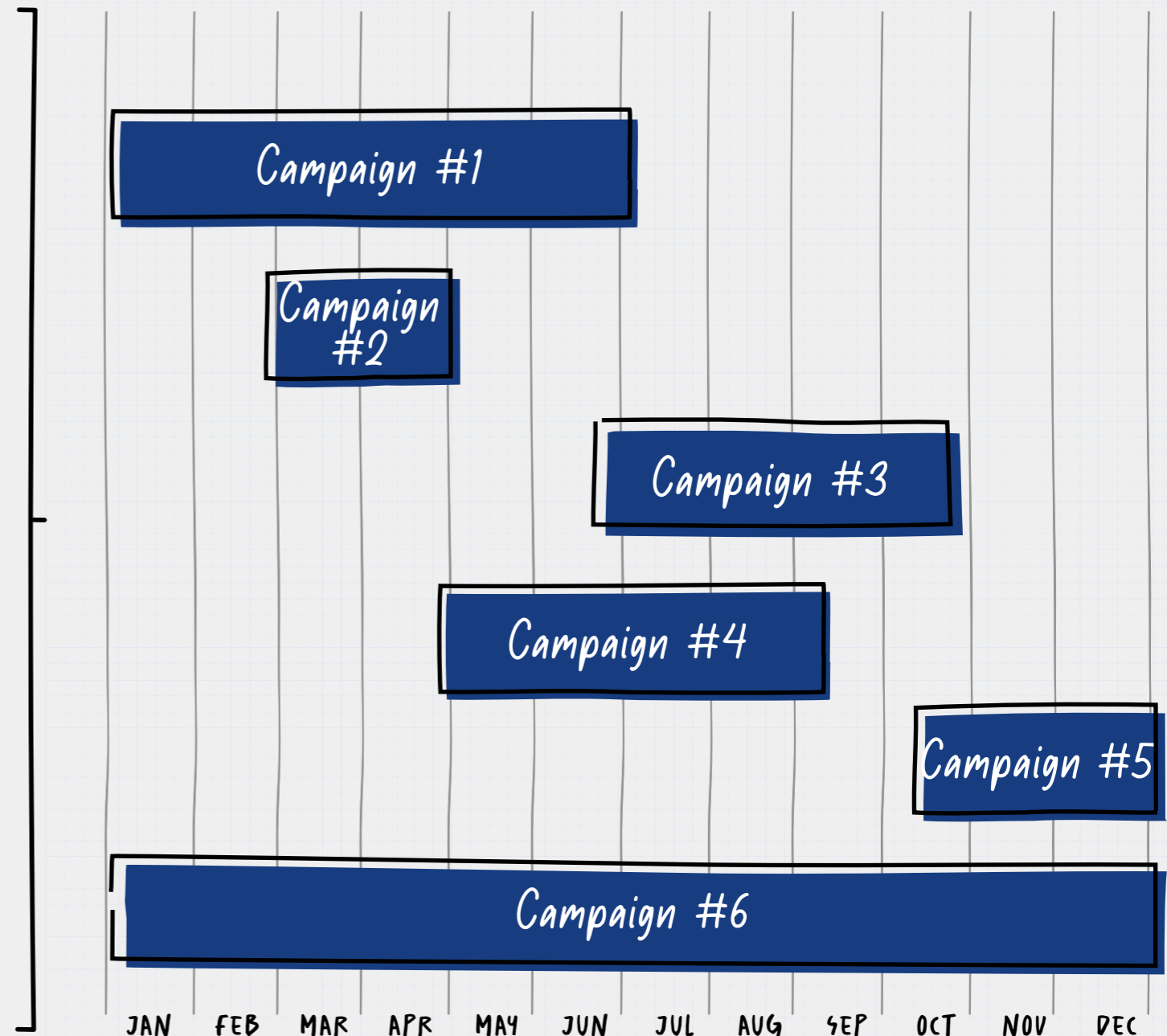| DO New To Brand	PROGRESS New To Vertical	PIONEER New To Advertising
MEDIA KPIS	MEDIA & MARKETING KPIS	CULTURAL KPIS
Clicks	Clicks	Brand uplift
Engagement	Engagement	Brand awareness
Conversions	Conversions	Industry buzz & press coverage
Time on site	Brand uplift	Awards
Downloads	Brand awareness	Stakeholder satisfaction

Delivery KPIs

Second, the aim of a brand and their partners, then, is to ensure the Innovation Agenda's innovations surface across the next 12 months of campaign activity. **[See Figure 11]** Brands need to decide how many Dos, how many Progresses, how many Pioneers should be on the agenda, with a recommendation to aim for 6 per column, making 18 innovations in total. Then, more important, brands set the target for how many of those 18 media innovations will make it into campaigns across a given period. An example KPI could be: "Over the next 12 months, across our next 6 campaigns, we will endeavour to hit the KPIs of 3 x DOs, 2 x PROGRESS and an option target of 1 x PIONEER."

As part of this process, 3-, 6-, 9- and 12-month check-ins are recommended to monitor which media innovations from the agenda have been included as part of proposed plans, and which made it to execution. Those that have dropped off the plan between proposal and execution are cross-checked against the Prospective Analysis and its predictions of failure, with the problem's owner taking note for the next Innovation Agenda.

Figure 11: The Innovation Agenda's innovations surface across the next 12 months of activity – whatever and wherever that may be

	DO New To Brand	PROGRESS New To Vertical	PIONEER New To Advertising
	Programmatic TV	Streaming Content Partnership	Branded Virtual Viewing Rooms
	Advanced DCO	Live Broadcast Banners	New Forms of Targeting
	Dynamic Podcast Insertion	Voice Activated Ads	Virtual Gigs
	Programmatic / Dynamic OOH	Mega OOH Special Builds	Augmented Reality OOH
	Native Integration In Gaming	Twitch Streaming Partnership	Original Game
	Generative AI Used in Creative	Computer Vision Targeting	Meta-Human As Branded Campaign Asset

Campaign #1, Campaign #2, Campaign #3, Campaign #4, Campaign #5, Campaign #6

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

Evolving Your
Innovation Capabilities Over Time

As a reminder, the last innovation law is Innovation is Timely. To restate, rather than wear ourselves out overreacting to spiking trend after trend, we might be better off redeploying our resources to build innovation capability over time, committing to a monitoring of technologies as they evolve.

The Innovation Agenda system also fulfils this requirement. Though the Innovation Agenda is a 12-month plan, each Agenda should be viewed as a stepping stone, with annual plans executed to build innovation capability over time.

As technology matures, what was once innovative becomes commonplace.
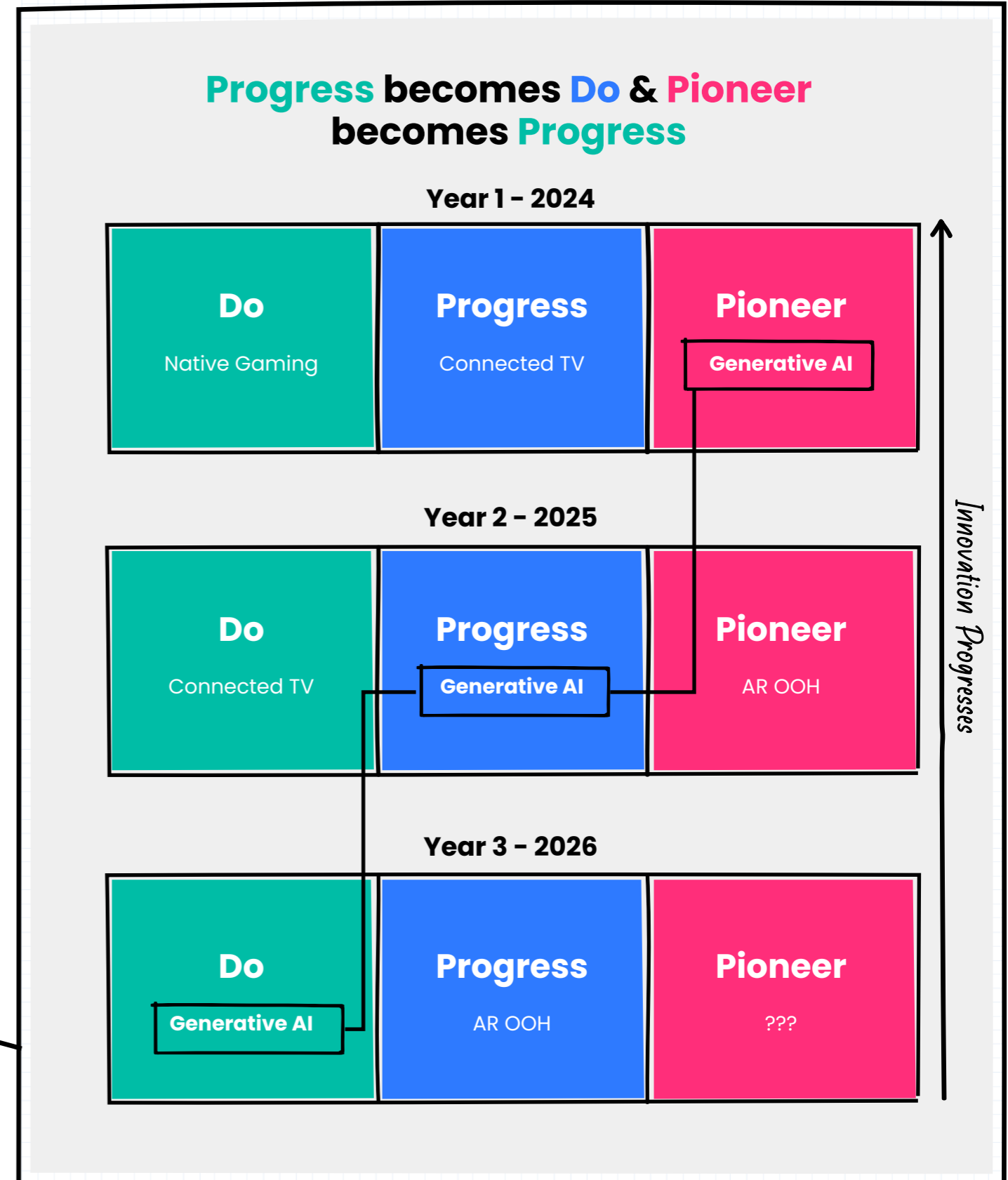
Or to put it another way, every PIONEER becomes a PROGRESS, which becomes a DO. There was a time when AR would have blown people's minds. Now it is built into the planet's 10 billion smartphones. Likewise, there may be a point where certain applications of Artificial Intelligence, now a PIONEER, will one day become a DO. **See Figure 12.**

As well as planning the year ahead in media innovation, then, the higher aim of the Innovation Agenda system is making a commitment to tracking a technologies path and earmarking opportunities for testing and learning as it becomes more prevalent and normalised in consumer society.

Figure 12: Innovation Agendas should be a yearly event to build capability over time

Progress becomes Do & Pioneer becomes Progress

Year 1 – 2024

Do	Progress	Pioneer
Native Gaming	Connected TV	Generative AI

Year 2 – 2025

Do	Progress	Pioneer
Connected TV	Generative AI	AR OOH

Year 3 – 2026

Do	Progress	Pioneer
Generative AI	AR OOH	???

*Innovation Progresses*

Actions for Marketers

Build An
Innovation Agenda

Plot your media innovation ambitions along a scale. Identify easy incremental improvements for 'DO'. Think about how you could lead the category with 'PROGRESS'. Dream big with the disruptive ideas for 'PIONEER'. Construct a 12-month Innovation Agenda that formalises and roadmaps opportunities in all three columns that will appear throughout your campaigns., set your KPIs and innovate!
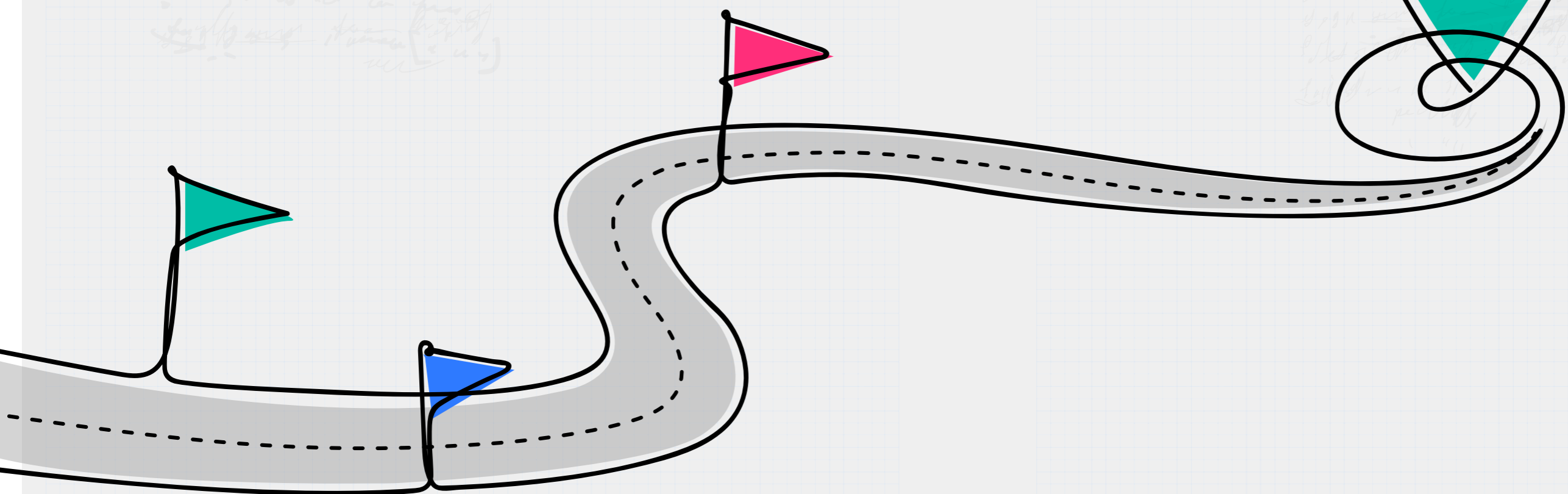
Part Two

Summary:
The OMG Innovation Agenda
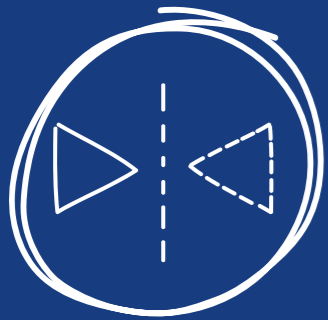
01 Reflecting

Formalise an Innovation Audit

Find your blockages, anticipate future barriers

02 Reconnaissance

Use a competive matrix to construct a media bucket list

Where should you be playing?
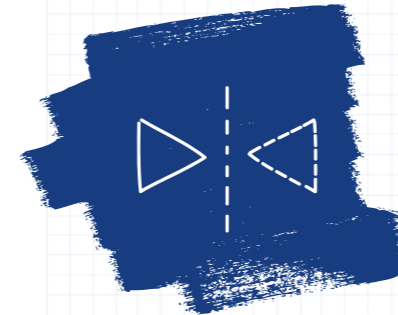
03 Roadmapping

Build an Innovation Agenda

Do | Progress | Pioneer

How to Innovate:
Summary

For brands and their marketers wanting to innovate in media, we have laid out tools and frameworks for thinking and actions to help achieve that trickiest of goals.

Remember the approach, built on
Three Innovation workstreams

01. Reflecting

Seek a forensic understanding of your successes, but more important, your barriers to future undelivered innovations - and move to circumvent them in advance. Understand that failure is fine, providing you learn from it.

02. Reconnaissance

Understand what your competitors and your industry at large is up to in the media innovation space. Work out what you will need to adopt and adapt as table-stakes and use the work out where there is room to play using the Competitive Matrix.

03. Roadmapping

Dimensionalise your view of innovation and consider all iterations to help on your quest by using the Do-Progress-Pioneer framework. Enshrine your plan to innovate and hold your future-self to account.

Does it matter if you fail?
No - as we said, innovation is failure.
Does it matter if we don't try?
Yes - and here's the reason why:

Is It Important
That Brands Innovate?

Yes, brands who innovate in media demonstrate their worth. Novelty and originality send a clear message to consumers about a brand's comfort in engaging with the future which in turn can make a powerful statement about prowess and their preparedness. Also, let's not forget, it's fun to work on.

But it's not just about novelty. Innovation also needs to effect an improvement. Otherwise, it would just be merely innovation for innovation's sake. When that phrase arises, we are acknowledging that innovation is best when it is in service of solving for a wider objective. More pointedly, innovation is an original and smart solution that must increase or decrease a specific, nominated value - for instance cost, speed, friction, cut-through. You are solving something and measuring the effectiveness of the solution.

But it goes even deeper than that. If you are a marketer, you are partly responsible for the technological, cultural, and social development of humankind.

The first press ad in a newspaper in 1704, was the first example of funding of a medium that was to later connect citizens with their world like never before. The first television advert was in 1941, and later the term 'soap opera' derived from the soap powders companies who ran commercials in these new daily dramas. When Mark Zuckerberg bought virtual reality company Oculus Rift for $2bn in 2012, he could only do so because of the colossal ad revenues he'd collected since 2004.

Media technologies change behaviour. Brands align with new behaviours by advertising on new media. Brands fund media technology. Media technologies change behaviour. The cycle continues.

Ultimately, all technology is an extension of humanity. An axe is an extension of the arm. A bicycle is an extension of the leg. Media technologies are extensions of our faculties for communication. Our voice, our ideas, our hopes, and dreams.

Innovation is what makes us better at extending that part of humanity through technology.

You are part of this cycle whether you know it or not. It's your responsibility to do this well.

SO GO BE
innovative

Previous thoughtleadership from
OMG Futures

Avoiding The Regretaverse: How Not To Mess Up In The Metaverse

With all the clamour around The Metaverse, it's likely that many brands might end up banished to the dark parallel world of "The Regretaverse"; a place of virtual failure built on short-term planning, faddish overreactions and wasted marketing budget. Don't misunderstand: we know The Metaverse is shaping up to be the channel of channels, containing all other media inside its belly. We know marketers and brands need to respond. We know some are already knocking it out of the park. But it's so easy to get this wrong. And many are. We need straight-laced but pin-sharp principles on how brands can avoid falling into "The Regretaverse". A tough-love lightning-fast how-to guide on making the best of the biggest change to the media landscape in decades.

Read here

Closer To The Edge: The Next Decade In Tech

Closer To The Edge: The Next Decade In Tech focuses on what the ensuing 10 years could hold for humanity as glimpsed at Europe's biggest start-up conference, Slush. Analysing and deconstructing the next-gen start-ups encountered across those two days, OMG Futures has been able to extrapolate five macro-trends that will influence our lives into the mid-to-long term, together with framing their effects on society, culture and economics and, most important, what brands need to do about it to prepare for tomorrow, today.

Read here

Thrive: The Future of Wellbeing

Consumers will always have the same basic needs: health, wealth, love and companionship, but the technological and societal expression of those needs is about to become evermore complex and sophisticated and thus it will be incumbent upon companies to fulfil those needs in evermore complex and sophisticated ways. The Future of Wellbeing codifies the principles that will allow businesses and brands to prepare for what could be the biggest change in human requirements in centuries.

Read here

OMG OMNICOM MEDIA GROUP

Omnicom Media Group (OMG), the media services division of Omnicom Group Inc. (NYSE: OMC), delivers transformational experiences for consumers, clients and talent. Powered by the Omni marketing orchestration system, OMG connects best-in-class capabilities that enable our full-service media agencies OMD, PHD and Hearts & Science to deliver more relevant and actionable consumer experiences; more productive and proactive client experiences; and more collaborative and rewarding talent experiences for the more than 24,000 people serving the world's leading brands in OMG agencies around the globe.

OMG FUTURES

Operating within Omnicom Media Group UK, OMG Futures is a special business unit dedicated to getting clients to the future, faster. It consults on future megatrends in media, tech and culture to deliver direct application for clients' marketing today. OMG Futures has authored numerous flagship thought leadership pieces including: Hit The Switch - The Future of Sustainable Business; Thrive - The Future of Wellbeing; Closer To The Edge – The Next Decade In Tech. It also delivers a Futures Accelerator programme to make future innovation opportunities tangible and actionable in the now. Finally, it also operates a programme of tech outreach to innovative start-ups and platforms that could form part of clients' future campaigns.

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OMG UK

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OMG FUTURES