Building Your First Platform Team in a Fast Growing Startup



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QCon London 2024

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Photo by Mukuko Studio on Unsplash
Once upon
a startup

You need a platform regardless of your size!

You already have a platform!

Platform as a Product

Trust is a currency

Tradeoffs is the key to success

Photo by Carlos Torres on Unsplash



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PAL DevEx @ KOGNIC

CNCF Ambassador

Speaker



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Wanted!
Head of DevOps!
10x developer
10x developer
10x developer
10x developer
10x developer

Desired effects

Quick iterations

Flexibility

Developer focus

Cloud native

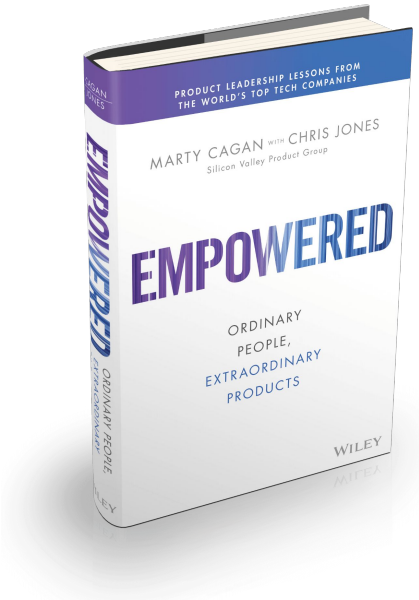
Photo by Klim Musalimov on Unsplash



Developers and Operations
vs
DevOps

Empowered Product Teams

Marty Cagan



Product Teams

- they are *cross-functional* (product, design and engineering)
- they are focused on and measured by *outcomes* (rather than output)
- they are *empowered* to figure out the best way to solve the problems they've been asked to solve.



"solve problems in ways our customers love, yet work for our business"

Team Topologies

Matthew Skelton & Manuel Pais



Stream-aligned team

Stream-aligned team

Stream-aligned team

Stream-aligned team

Enabling team

Complicated Subsystem team

Platform team

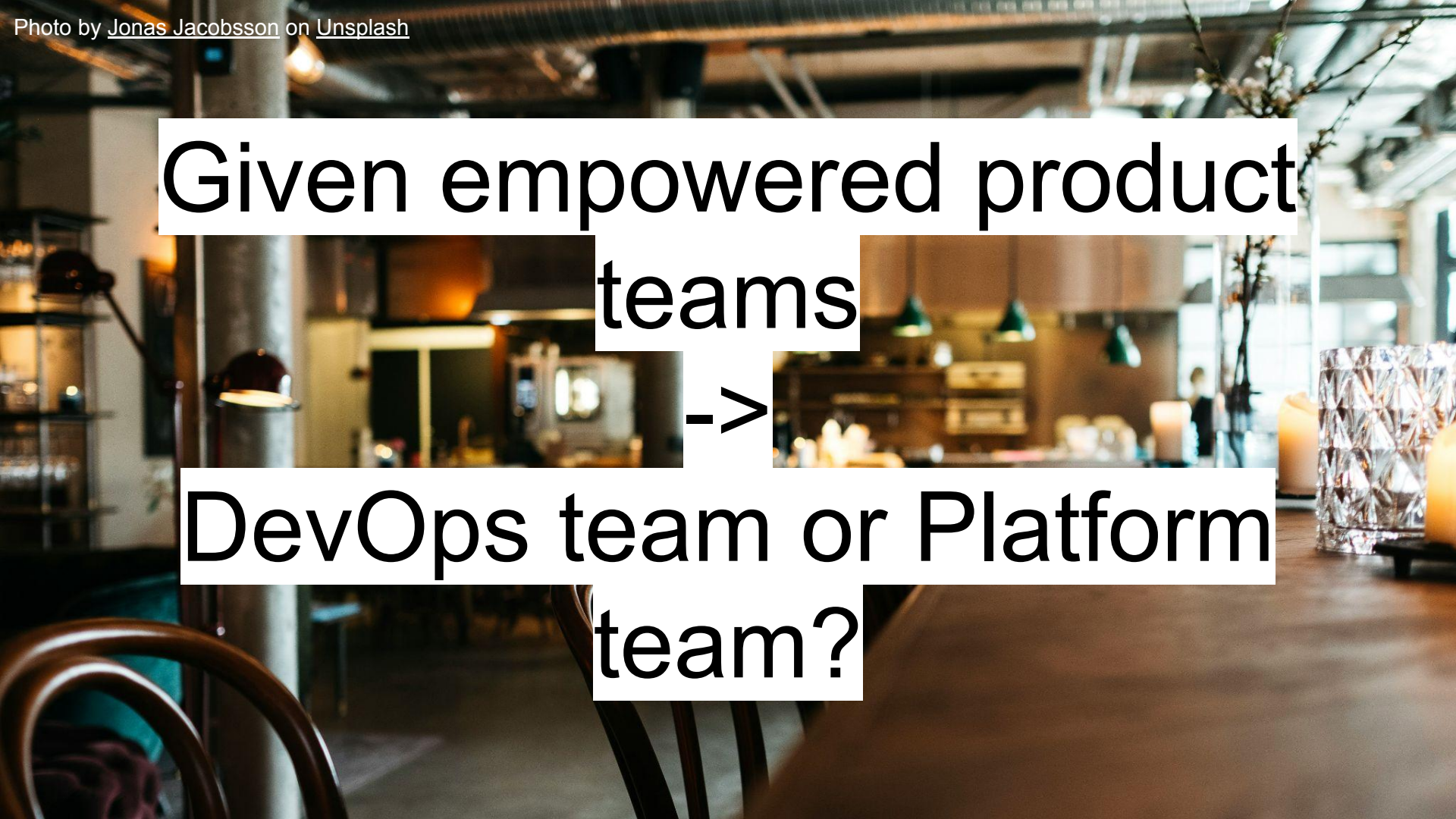
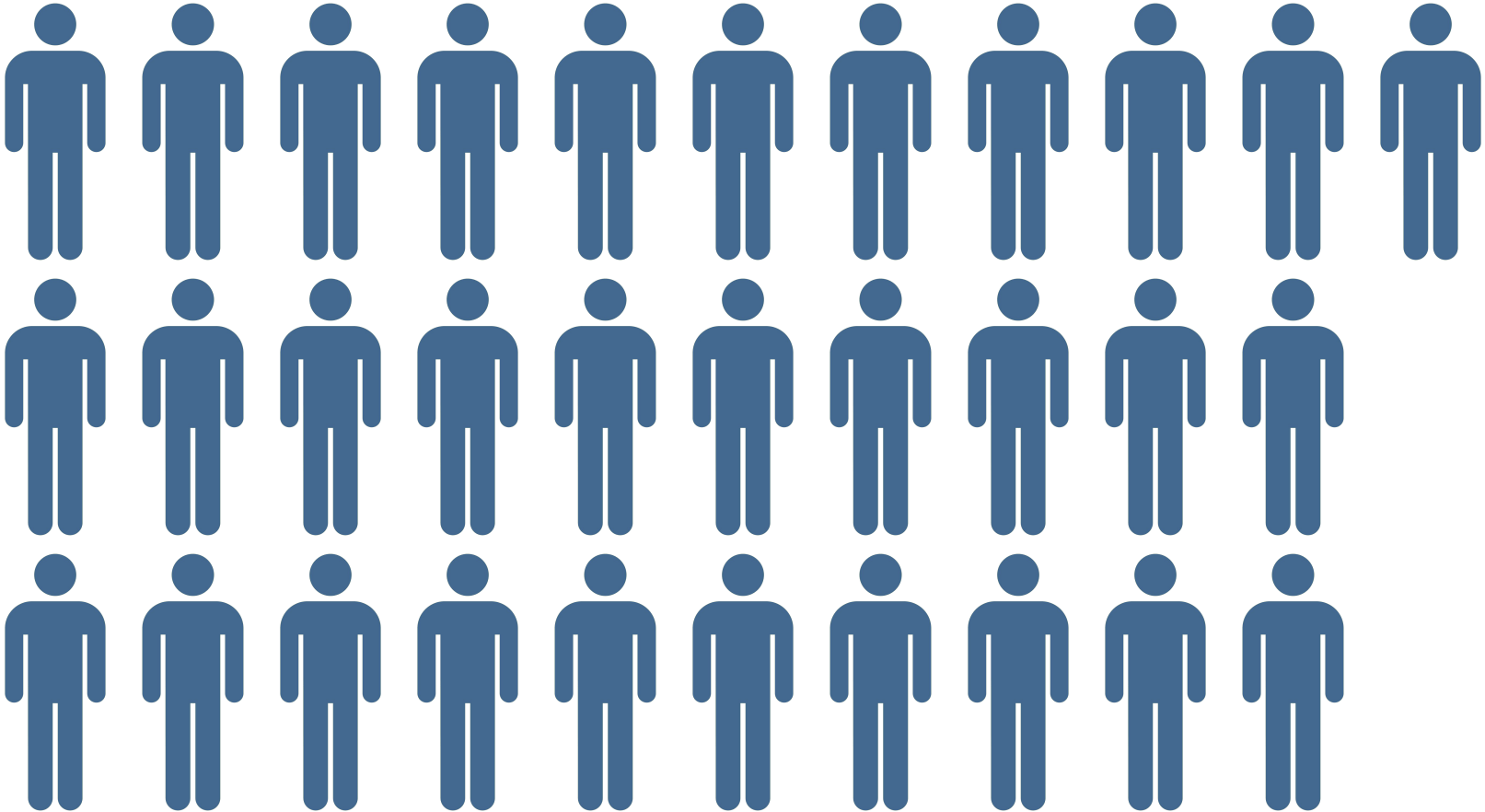
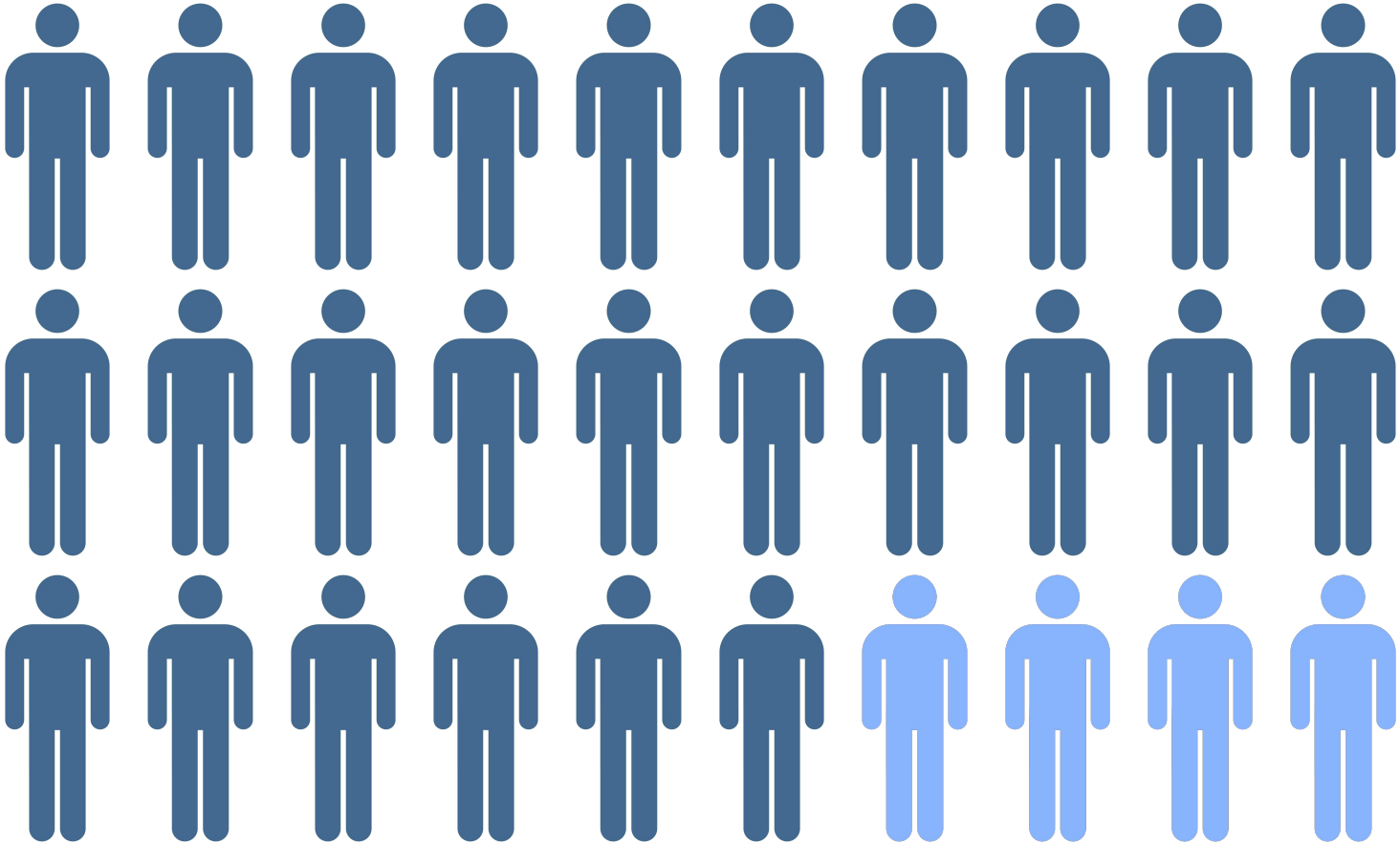


Photo by Jonas Jacobsson on Unsplash
Given empowered product teams
->
DevOps team or Platform team?





Implicit Platform



Photo by uve sanchez on Unsplash

A platform exists, but less structured and less intentional

Our implicit platform



influxdb





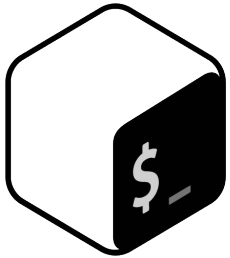






Grafana

circleci



BASH

THE BOURNE-AGAIN SHELL



Google Cloud

Define Platform?

Base Platform

- solve the basic needs

CI/CD

runtime

observability

Implicit Platform



Intentional Platform

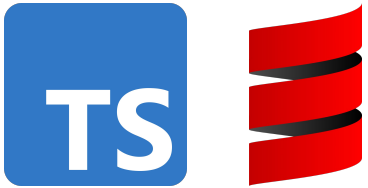
Our platform now



Grafana



OpenTelemetry







circleci



GitHub



argo



Google Cloud

Platform as a Product



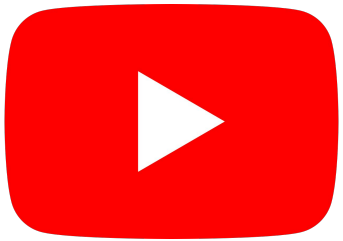
Photo by Irene Kredenets on Unsplash

Boosting Developer Platform Teams with Product Thinking

Samantha Coffman

Platform Engineering Day Europe 2024





Finding the right problems

Autonomous teams and platform



Photo by Jesse Bowser on Unsplash

Is autonomy limitless?

Non-optional paved road

compliance

security

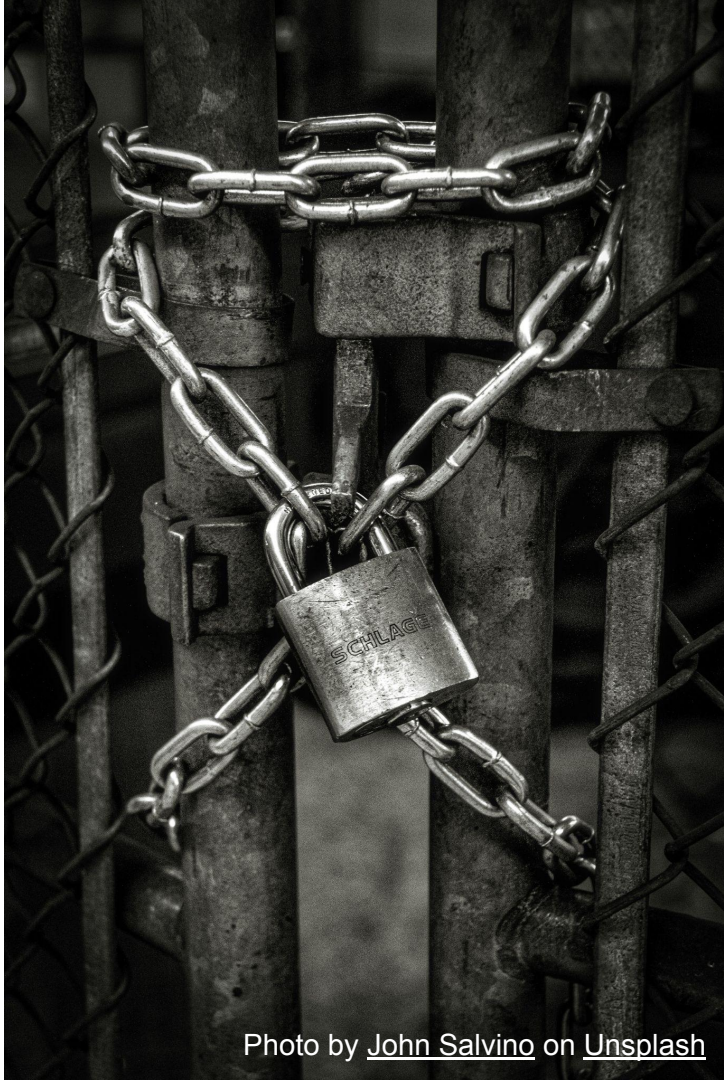


Photo by John Salvino on Unsplash

Finding the right problems

Problem Statements

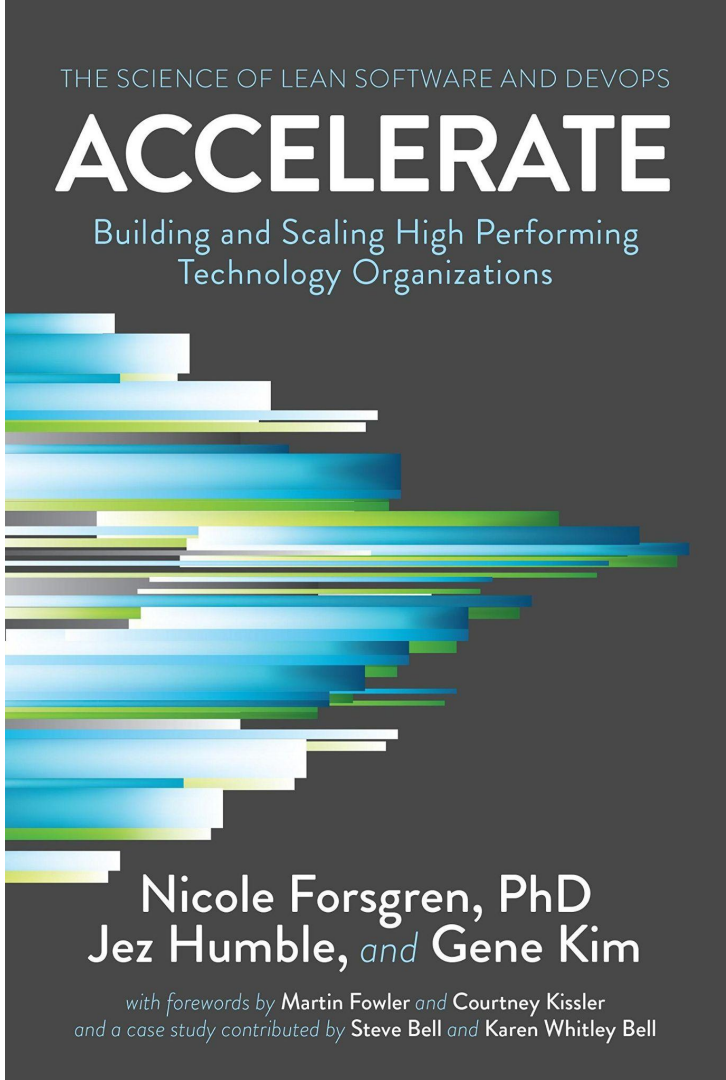
- Teams are blocked from performing tasks
- The tasks teams perform takes long time
- The tasks teams perform are unreliable and prone to failures

Trust is currency

- *eng*



Trust goes Up and Down

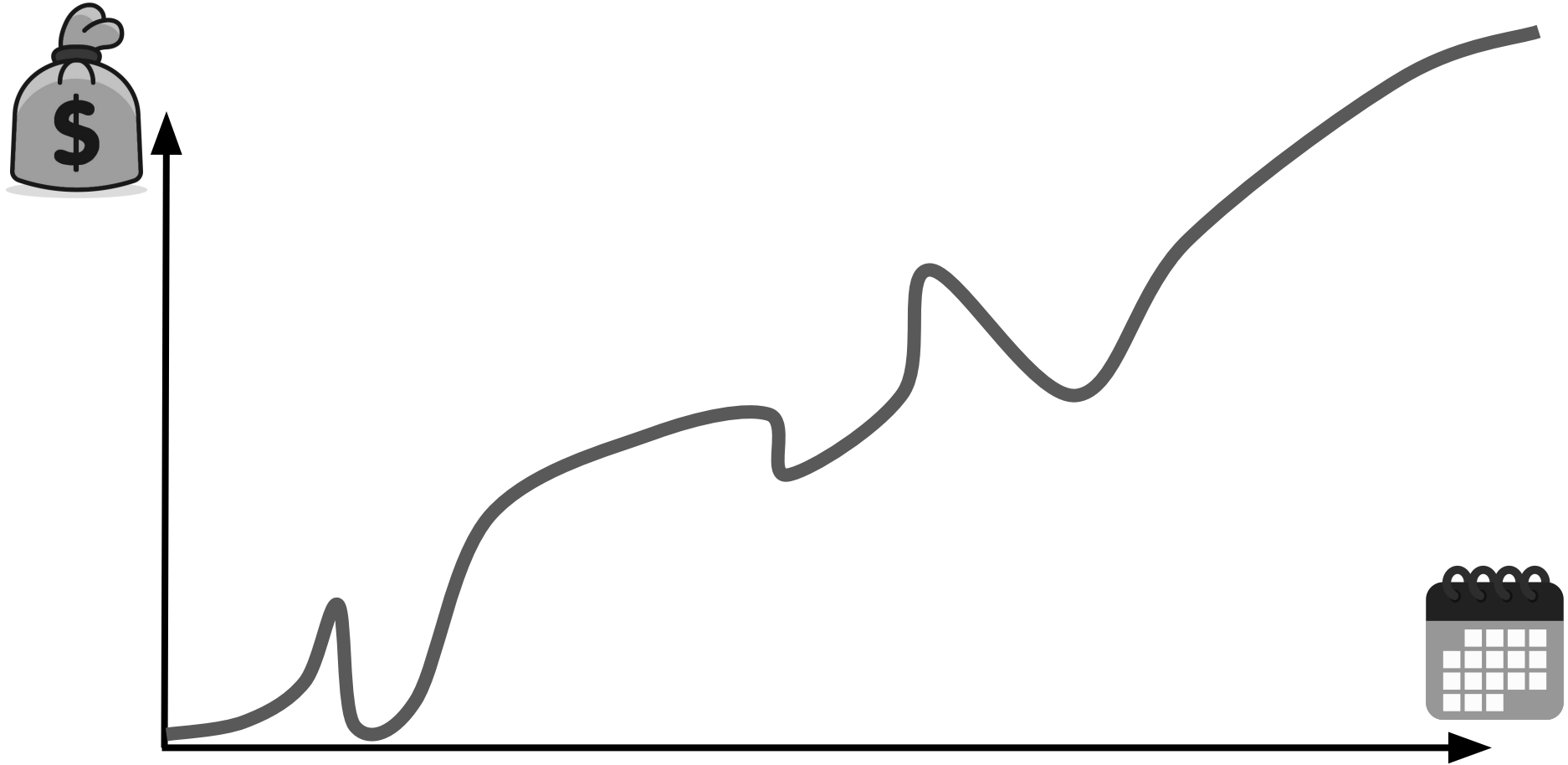


Earning

- Removing pain points
- Approachable and helpful
- Proactive
- Understand teams perspective

Spending

- Enforcing processes
- Blocking progress
- Migrations
- Assumptions



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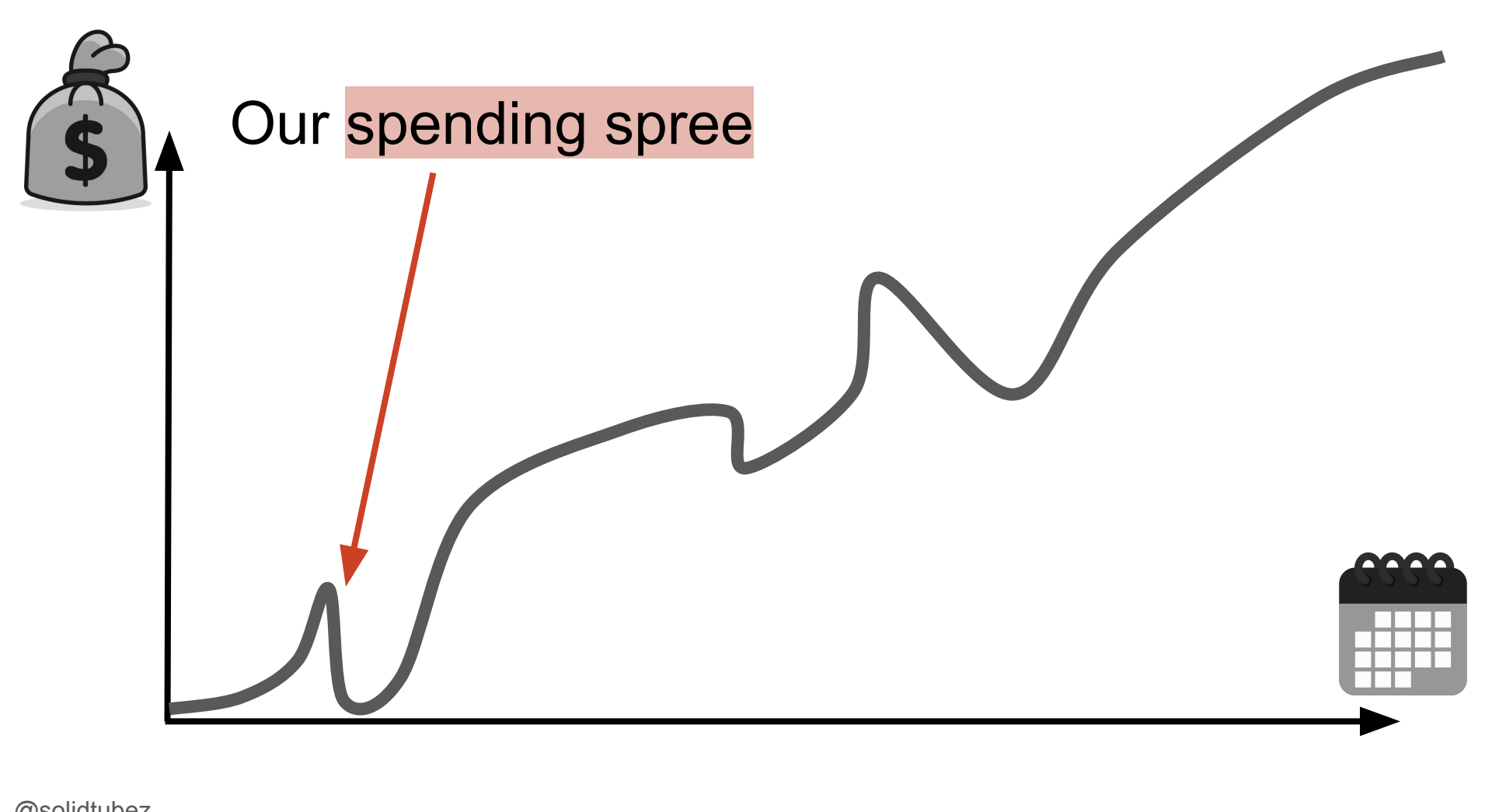
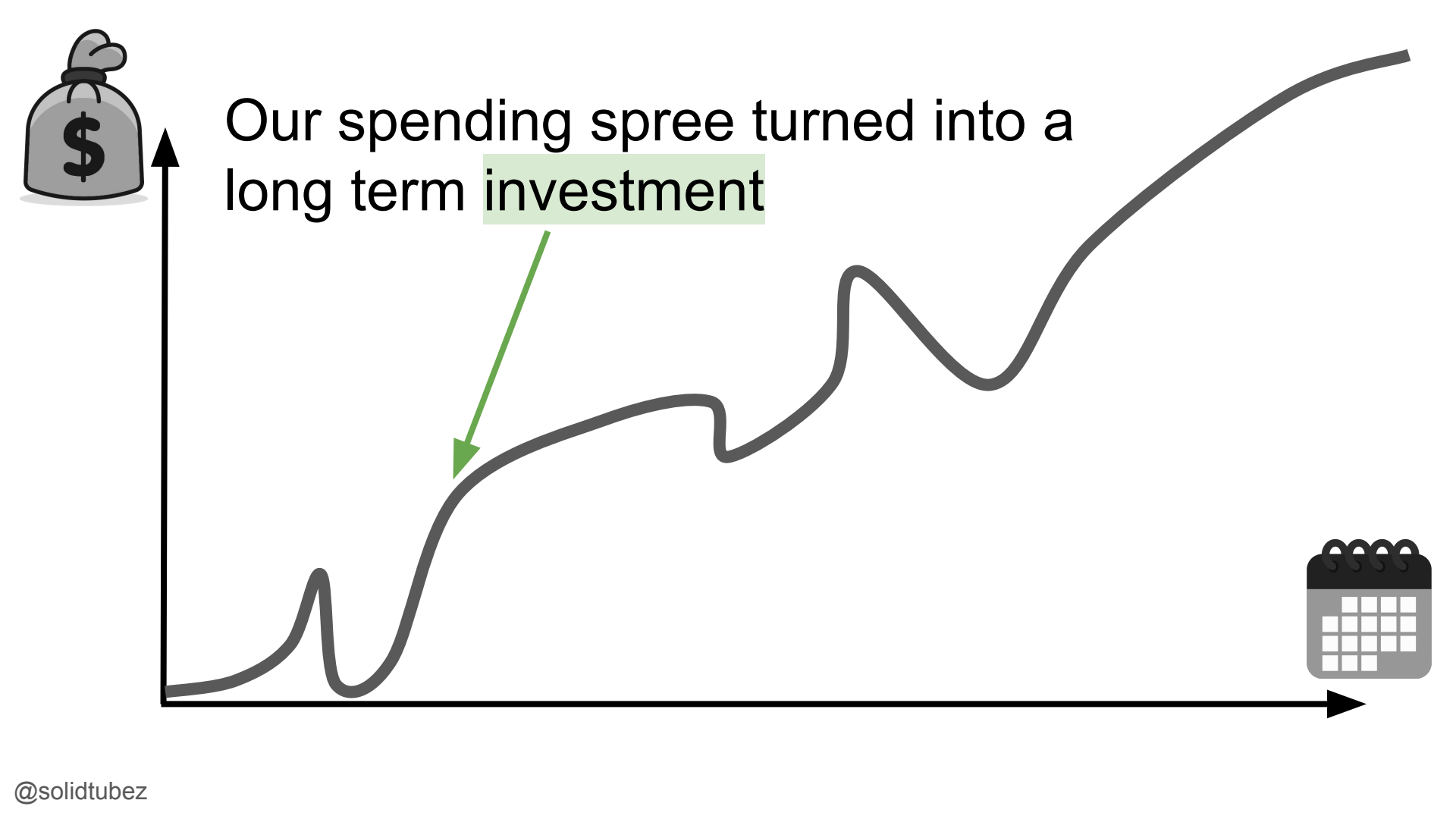

Our spending spree


Our spending spree turned into a long term investment

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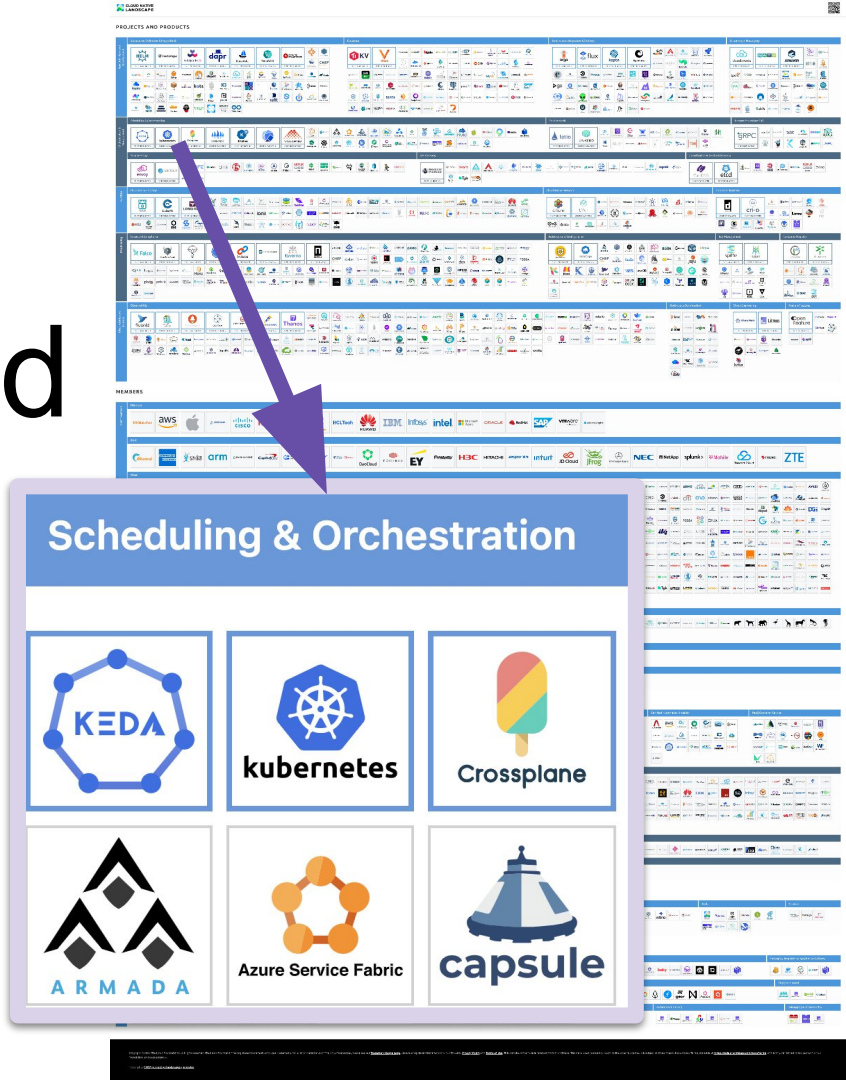
Small teams need to do tradeoffs



What can you live without?

- Service Mesh
- mtls
- Developer Portal
- Design System



Photo by Jesse Bowser on Unsplash

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Please vote and leave feedback!



Remember to vote and share feedback on the InfoQ App or online.

Any questions?