

AI STARTUP DEFENSIBILITY PLAYBOOK: MARKET SHAPING



ACCELERATE CREDIBILITY & ADOPTION ACROSS INDUSTRIES

WHAT IS MARKET SHAPING?

Market shaping is a bold, strategic act of leadership.

- **It's the deliberate effort** by a startup or scale-up to influence how an industry evolves—rather than simply reacting to it.
- **It's a strategy** that creates new rules, builds ecosystems, and guides the market toward new opportunities and value.
- **It's a proactive approach** that positions a company not just as a player—but as a catalyst for change within its sector.

In AI and deep tech, the winners don't wait for markets — they build them. Market shaping turns uncertainty into opportunity, influence into growth.



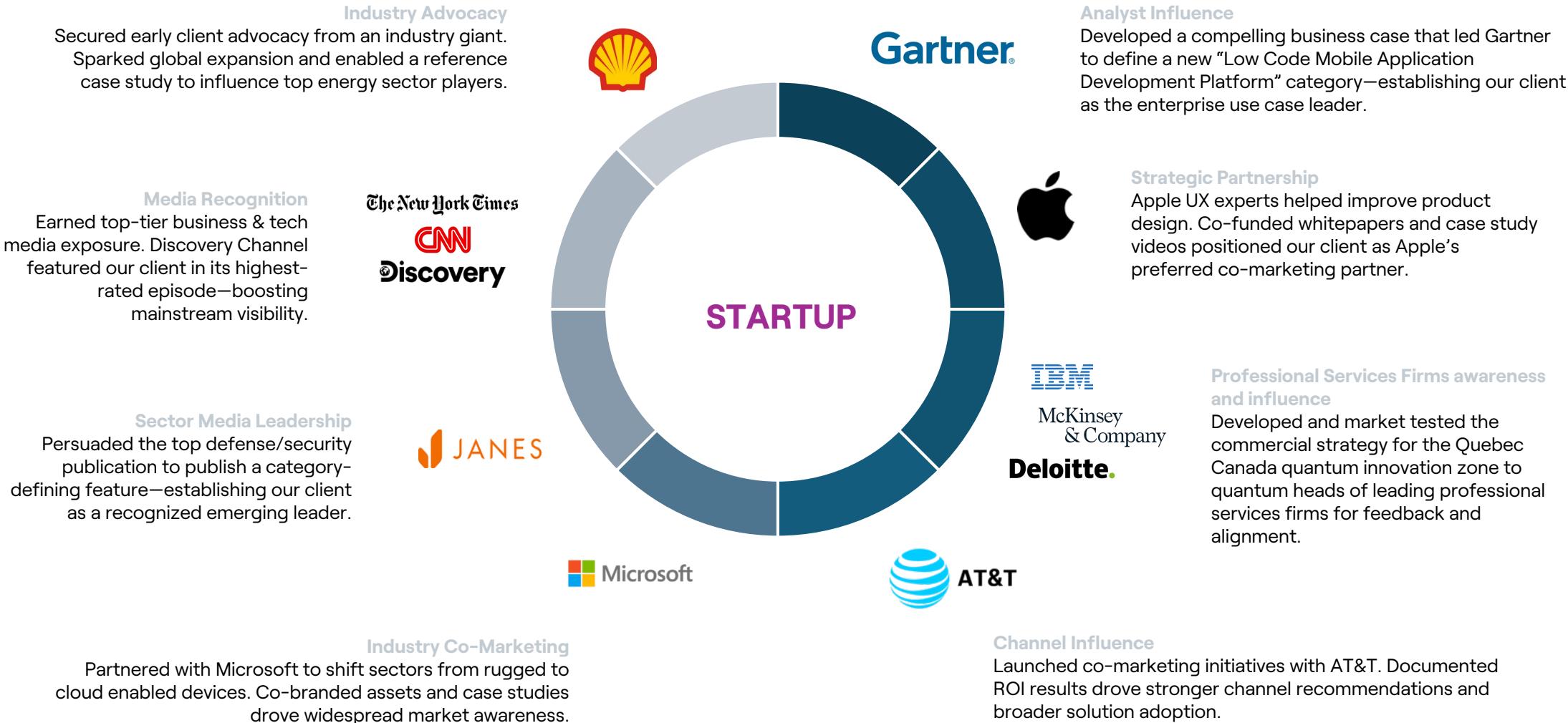
WHY LAUNCH A MARKET SHAPING STRATEGY?

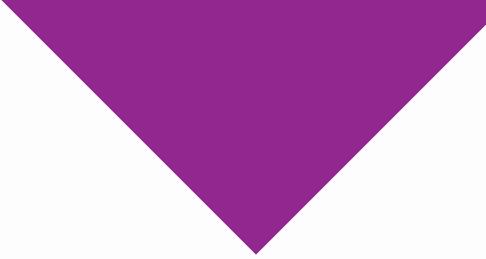
- **Market-Shaping Defensibility:** Build lasting defensibility through category leadership and ecosystem lock-in – the differentiation (moat) that attracts investors and clients. Market shaping outpaces technical features and proprietary workflows as a defensibility strategy.
- **Enterprise Sales Acceleration:** Leverage advocacy, analysts, media, industry partnerships and customer references to shorten sales cycles and increases deal value.
- **Strategic Investor Attraction:** Build market credibility to secure strategic and venture investment.
- **Category Definition Before Incumbents:** Define the market before big tech or copycat competitors can commoditize it.
- **Trusted Brand Story:** Build media and analyst recognition – so clients and buyers follow the leaders, not the noise.



Market Shaping = Strategic Opportunity Creation

Examples of our impacts across analysts, industry leaders, partners, channels and media





OUR STRATEGIES DELIVER LEADING GLOBAL 500 BRANDS



SECTOR AWARENESS



Objective: Quantify the operational efficiencies and impacts of improved compliance and safety measures at the world's largest FLNG facility to assess broader applicability across its global operations.

Outcomes:

- Shell leveraged the case study to present ROI insights to operations leaders and HQ executives, fostering internal alignment.
- A Global Master Service Agreement (MSA) was signed with the innovation partner, driving increased usage and revenue growth through thousands of new users.
- The case study became the foundation for delivering credibility and sales growth across the energy sector.



ACCOUNT GROWTH



Objectives:

Build global awareness within CAT's international operations and dealers of our client's emerging technology solution and positive business impacts to stimulate expanded opportunities.

Outcomes:

Document operational improvements achieved through innovation in work efficiency, cost savings, and compliance adherence.

- Highlighted significant operational gains while exceeding work/safety compliance standards.
- Served as an internal blueprint for automation adoption across CAT dealers.
- Positioned as a showcase solution for optimizing business processes for a Global 500 brand attracting new clients and expanding existing accounts.

CHANNEL STIMUALTION



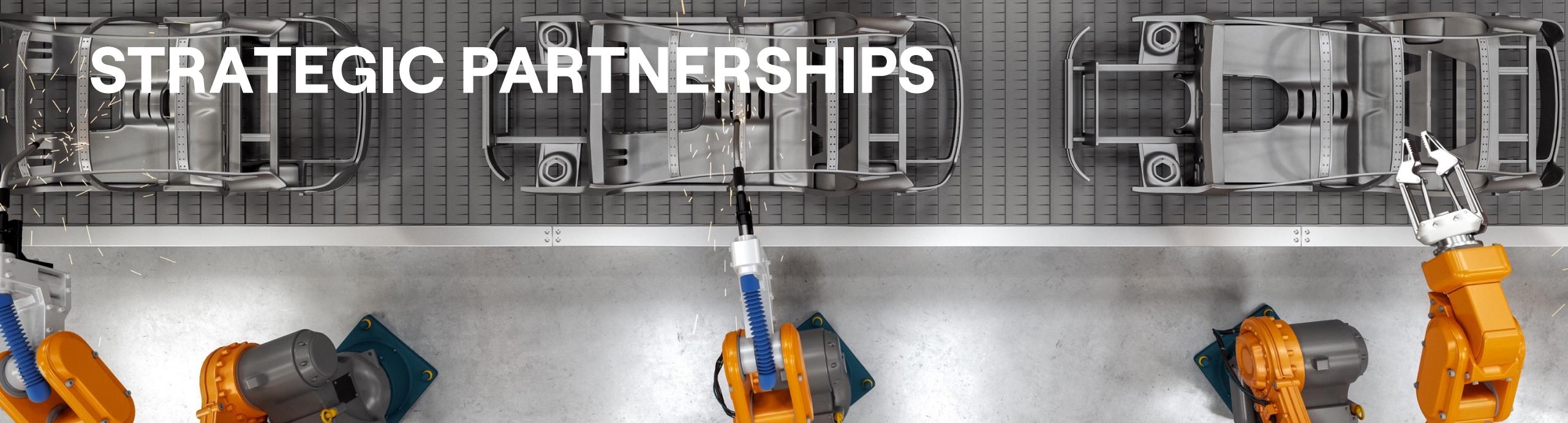
Objectives: Document how small and medium business in the United States are adopting innovation to meet business objectives.

Outcomes:

- We developed a series of written and video case studies that were used across AT&T Retail and resellers channels featuring our clients' Low-Code field automation platform.
- One of the case studies, Jet's Pizza, became a national TV advertising campaign focused on innovation.
- The stories and advertising spiked awareness and engagement with resellers across America resulting in increased sales in the retail sector.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



Objectives: Partner with Apple to co-fund and co-market customized iPad-based solutions that empower field service automation across key industries—including medical, manufacturing, logistics, and energy—through tailored productivity applications.

Outcomes:

- Accelerated iPad adoption across multiple industries using impactful video case studies.
- Boosted our innovation client's brand awareness and sales into multiple business sectors.
- Strengthened our client's strategic position as a lead B2B co-marketing partner with Apple.
- Apple's UX experts collaborated with our clients to improve the solution's user interface

MEDIA EXPOSURE



OPTO SECURITY

Objectives: Leverage industry media attention to capture Tier-one media exposure

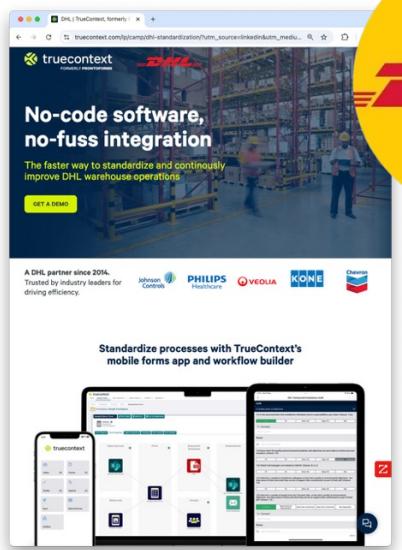
Outcomes:

- Northern Pixels captured positive exposure in the world's leading security and defense publication Janes.
- We leveraged this exposure to capture a feature story in The New York Times and Discovery Channel's Future Weapons (50M weekly TV viewers)
- The company was acquired by Toyota group.

The New York Times

Discovery

JANES



Objectives: Document an industry leading early-stage client's experiences into a compelling case study to trigger expansions and stimulate growth in a new target sector.

Outcomes:

- Convinced DHL to agree to case study to measure the positive impacts of adopting innovation for improving heavy equipment logistics across European operations.
- They saved thousands of hours annually via digital workflows.
- Deployed mobile workflows to optimize efficiency across diverse use cases.
- The case study became a template for DHL to reproduce the innovation deployment in multiple locations driving new revenue opportunities for our innovation client and opened multiple opportunities in a new target sector.



OPEN NEW MARKETS

SPECIALIZED SECTORS



Panasonic
TOUGH PAD

Objectives: Develop a strategic partnership with an established player for collaborative marketing to build brand and anchor clients.

Outcomes:

- Panasonic has military grade intrinsically safe devices that can be used in highly sensitive security, defense, aviation and energy use cases.
- We convinced Panasonic to co-produced video case studies to promote how the joint solution drives new levels of safety, compliance and productivity.
- The content was widely used at trade events/reseller networks driving adoption across participating brands boosting sales for our innovation client.



NEW SECTOR GROWTH



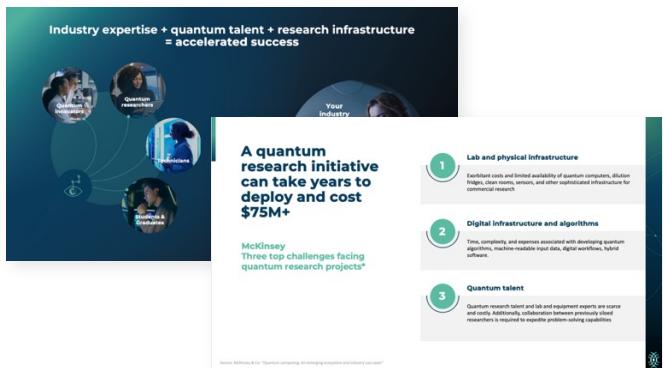
Objectives: Demonstrate the solution's impact on asset lifecycle operations, including installation, maintenance, service, and replacement for a new target sector for our client.

Outcomes:

- We engaged JCI with advocacy options, including a deep dive ROI video and shorter social media video highlighting their service level improvements for clients with our clients' technology.
- The video grew adoption internally at JCI, boosting sales and achieving cost savings.
- Attracted new manufacturing clients in the sector by showcasing increased annual sales and long-term commitments through compelling storytelling.



LEVERAGE TARGET SECTOR ECOSYSTEM LEADERS

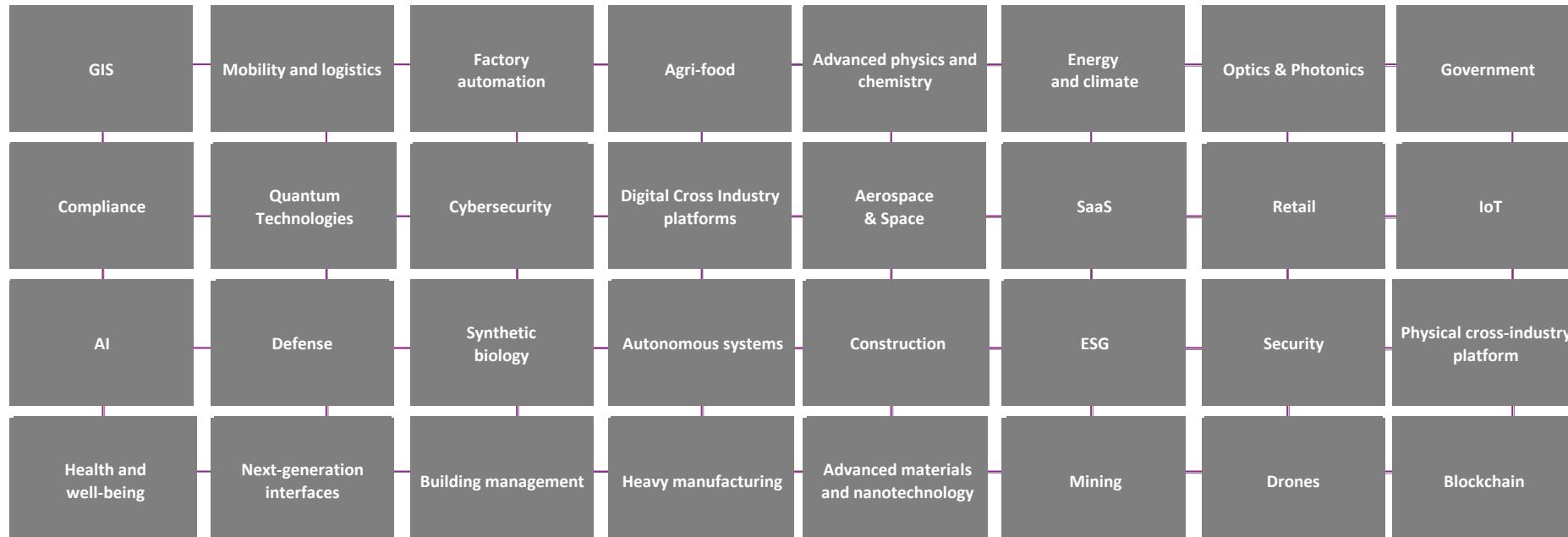


Objectives: The Canadian Quantum Innovation Zone (\$435M funded) faced three significant hurdles achieving commercial success. They required a strategy that would improve their brand awareness, strengthen the success rate of Quantum tech startups and evolve the Zone into a commercially self funded sustainable success.

Outcomes:

- Northern Pixels was contracted to develop the commercial strategy, and we engaged leading global thought leaders from IBM, Deloitte, McKinsey, Goldman Sachs, Amazon, other Quantum tech zones... to market-test the strategy and tactics to build consensus among stakeholders.
- The approach demonstrated that aligning global experts, helped align diverse private, public and partner stakeholders to a common goal.

The Leader in AI & Deep Tech Market Shaping



HALLIBURTON

Downer
Relationships creating success

Purell

PG&F

Cooke

OBAYASHI

CAT

VINCI

ExxonMobil

TRANE

Including co-marketing advocacy
with global tech leaders





Accelerating Market Leadership

Our Proven Service Stack

Capture Global 500 Clients

Accelerate validation and conversion from proof-of-concept to market adoption. Attract leading enterprise brands in key sectors to drive sustainable growth

Communication that generates value

Craft narratives that resonate with investors, innovation partners, and target industries.

Leverage media to amplify dominance

Position your brand at the intersection of business, innovation, and industry influence. Amplify category authority — Use earned media to strengthen positioning and reinforce alliances.

Define digital thought leadership in the AI-driven landscape.

Own your digital categories — Optimize discoverability, differentiation, and credibility through integrated search and conversational AI positioning.

Design that drives results

Creative execution that accelerates commercialization — from websites and sales assets to investor videos that have fueled market adoption and successful exits.

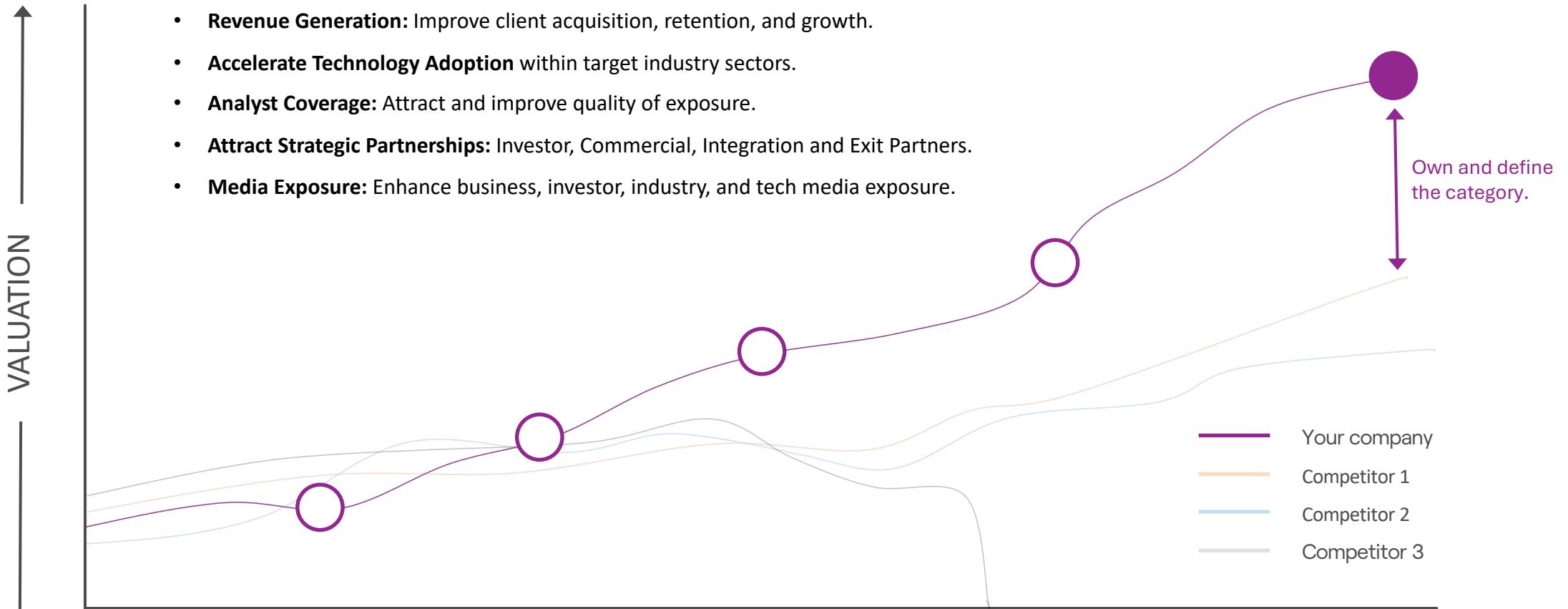
Align market forces behind the vision

Engage champions who expand your reach and reinforce your vision. Align market momentum behind your mission — Inspire key voices to advocate for your value and leadership.

Messaging foundation

Clarify your market story with precision and purpose. Translate your innovation into clear outcomes, competitive advantage, and a compelling future narrative.

MARKET SHAPING DRIVES BUSINESS RESULTS



NORTHERN PIXELS

We're the only marketing agency founded by tech startup leaders who have built, scaled, and exited startups.



Acquired by Battery Ventures

“Mark has a powerful ability to surround himself with great people. He and his team crafted and executed a marketing strategy that significantly boosted our brand awareness and credibility. This not only fueled our sales growth but also established us as the leading enterprise solution in our product category.”



Alvaro Pombo
Founder & CEO, TrueContext



Acquired by Toyota Group

“Northern Pixels was instrumental in shaping our foundational marketing strategy and catapulting us onto the global stage. Their expertise secured us top-tier coverage in leading business and industry media, firmly establishing our position as an emerging category leader.”



Eric Bergeron
Founder & CEO, Optosecurity



\$435M-Funded

“Northern Pixels crafted a groundbreaking commercial strategy that directly confronted the most pressing challenges within the Quantum Zone. At its core, the strategy empowered quantum startups, significantly enhancing their chances of success while creating a ripple effect to draw even more innovators into the zone. By securing validation from leading global experts in quantum technology and business, they not only built unparalleled confidence in the plan but also established a bold, forward-thinking blueprint for the future of the industry.”



Richard St-Pierre
Managing Director, DistriQ Quantum Innovation Zone





The only marketing agency founded by leaders who have built, scaled, and exited deep tech startups.



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- 100+ market shaping programs
- Global 500 customers delivered to clients
- Industry leading partnerships established

Ready to learn more?

BOOK A MEETING