



Innovating Inside & Outside the Core

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Pam Henderson, CEO NewEdge, Inc

IRI 2026

**INNOVATORS
SUMMIT**





Seán Adam
Vice President of Corporate Strategy



Pam Henderson, Ph.D.
CEO and Founder

What value is there in
Foresighting & Strategic Planning
in times of rapid change?

Connecting Customers Globally



85% NA - 5% EMEA - 10% APAC

Mission

To connect our customers around the world with innovative technologies, exceptional products, and high-quality services.



Strong Growth Position

In fiber optic products, conductor accessories and network services

Core Values



1984

AFL founded



**CUSTOMER
FOCUSED**



**COMMUNITY
CENTERED**



12,000+

Worldwide
team members



130+

Countries sold to

25

Languages spoken

1

Globally unified
team

AFL – Who We Are



Foundational strength

40 Years in U.S. Electric Grid. Infrastructure provider to Energy, Data Center, and Broadband markets.



Growth engines

AI Data Centers and Interconnection, Broadband, Electric Grid and Power Infrastructure, Large Venue Wireless



Financial stability

Resources, tools and a stable economic history lower risk in business decisions



Innovative solutions

Products, services and strategic thinking to build a lasting partnership



Business integrity

Transparent, consistent high levels of accountability to solve your business needs



17

Global manufacturing locations



ISO

AFL facilities are certified for various ISO standards



3,000 +

Global Products



17

Unique North American Services

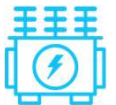
Core Market Segments



Broadband

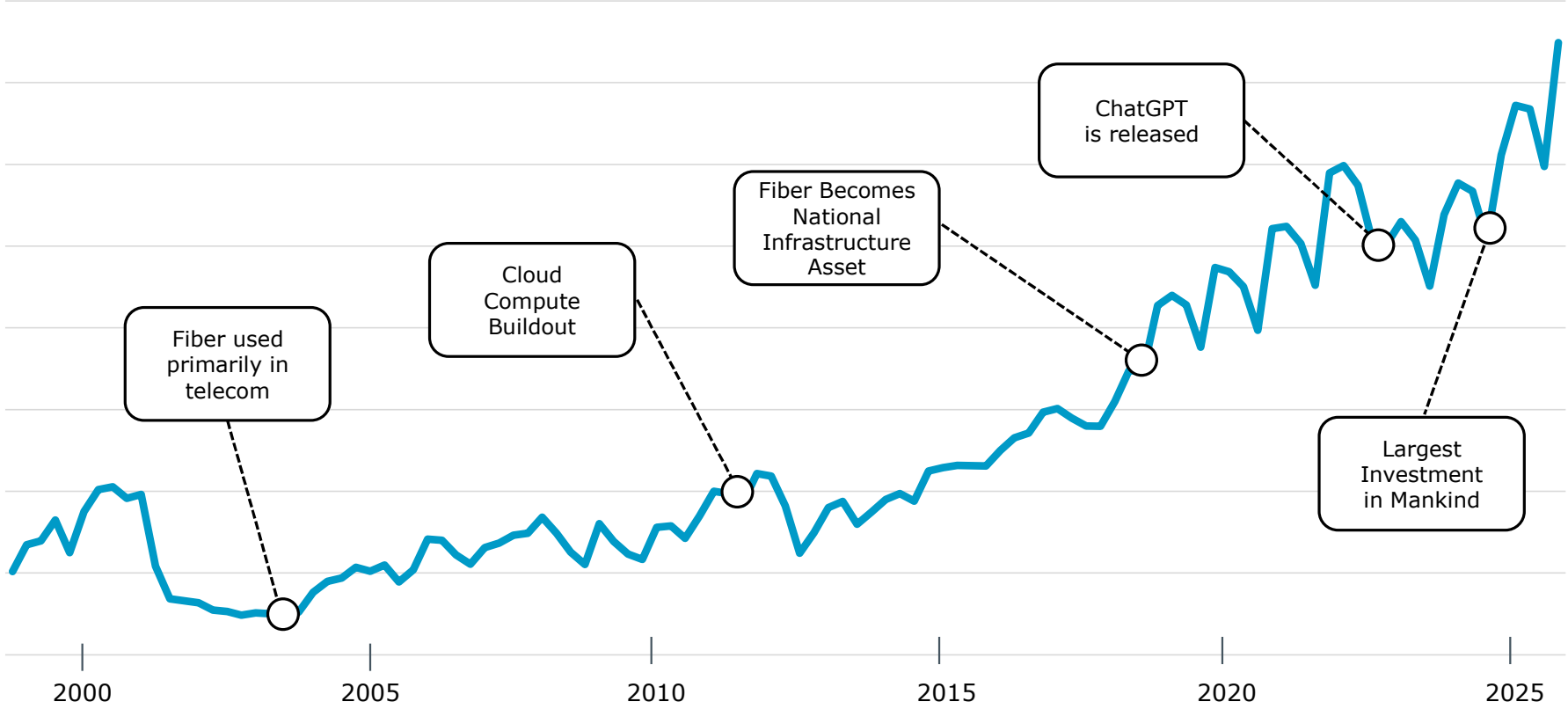


Data Centers



Energy

History of Fiber Demand



AFL's Story – Key Issues



Recent leadership
change



Issues
within the industry



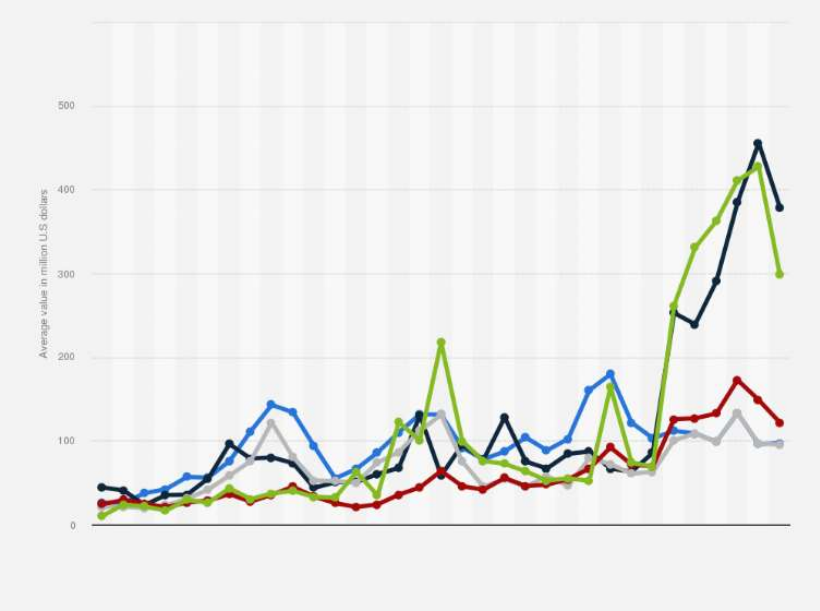
Needed to
deep dive
into growth markets

Deep Dive into Key Businesses

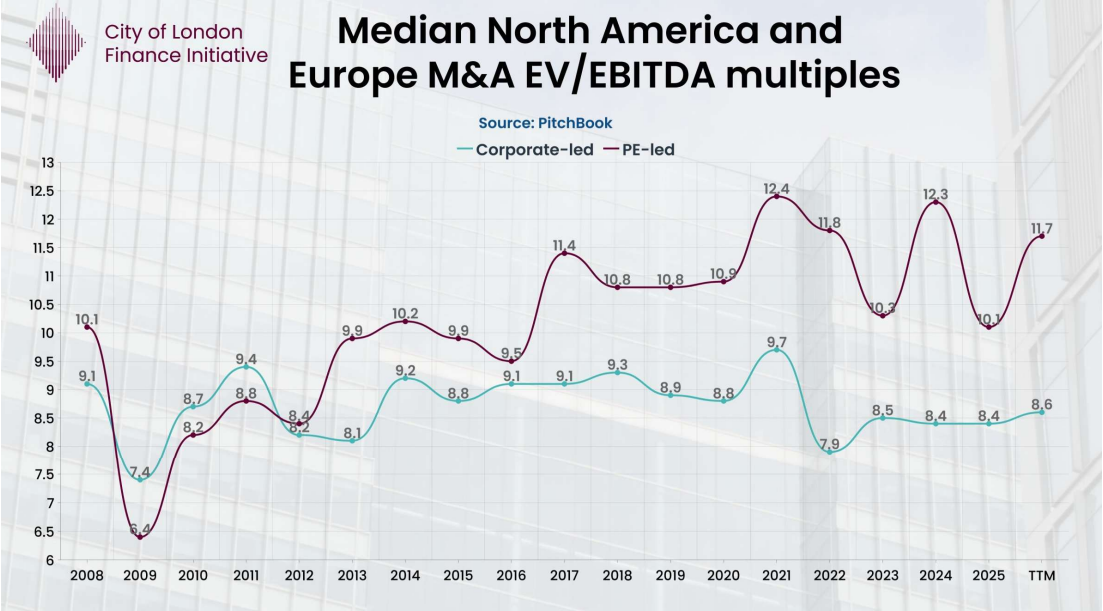


Pace & Price: Inorganic Growth Difficult

Pace



Price



Closing the \$1 Billion Gap



**AFL Global HQ &
New Innovation Center**



**NewEdge
Opportunity Accelerator**

Why NewEdge?

- »»» *Outside In*
- »»» *Deep Knowledge*
- »»» *Foresight into Action*
- »»» *Design & Align*

Pursue opportunity
with an experienced
Team

Wrote
THE BOOK

on *Opportunity*

15+

Years as Professor at
Carnegie Mellon & WSU

75+

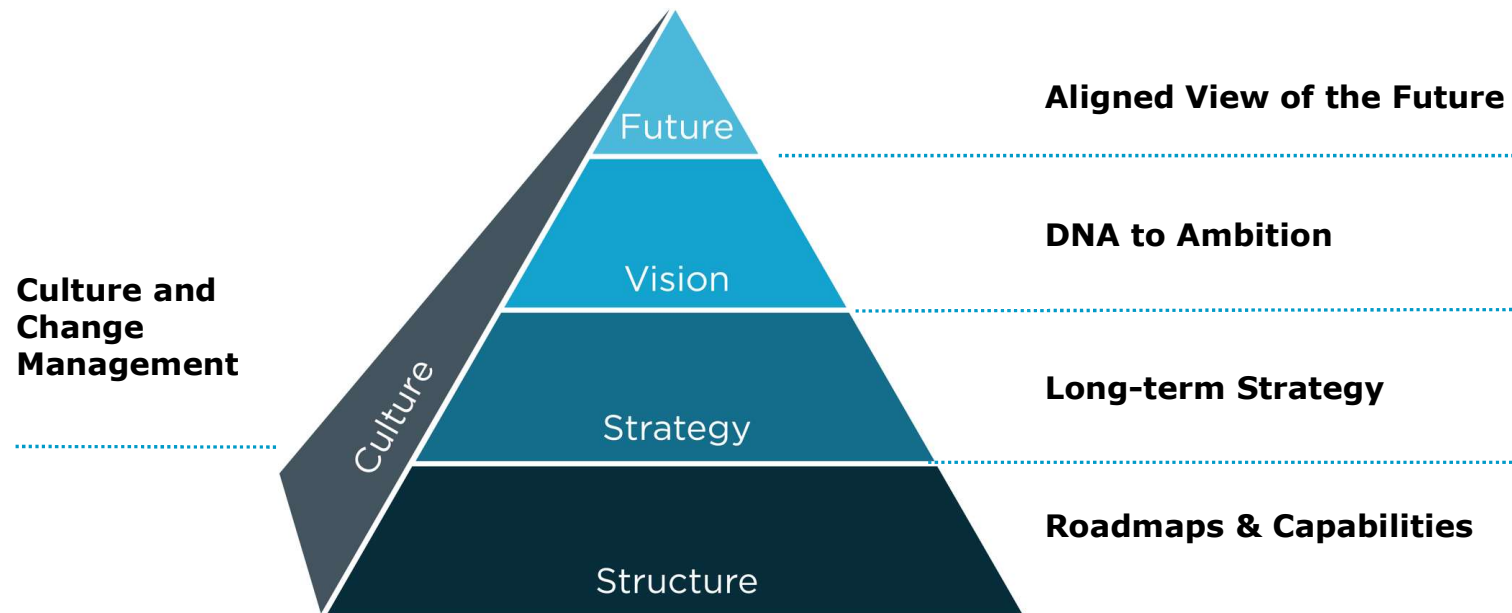
Fortune 500 clients

25

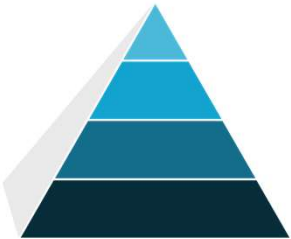
Years in business

15 Years in the
Opportunity Accelerator

Opportunity-centric Growth Strategy



Simultaneously *Designing & Aligning* for Growth



Structure follows Strategy

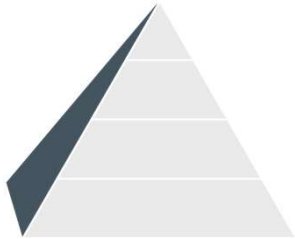
Design Strategy

Building a growth strategy without aligning the culture, results in needing change management after the fact



Align Culture

Culture programs untethered from a new strategy misses out on building the needed mindsets for growth



Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast

Program Overview

1

Aligning on a
View of the
Future

2

Establishing a
Growth Vision

3

Identifying
Opportunities

4

Aligning Culture & Ways of Working

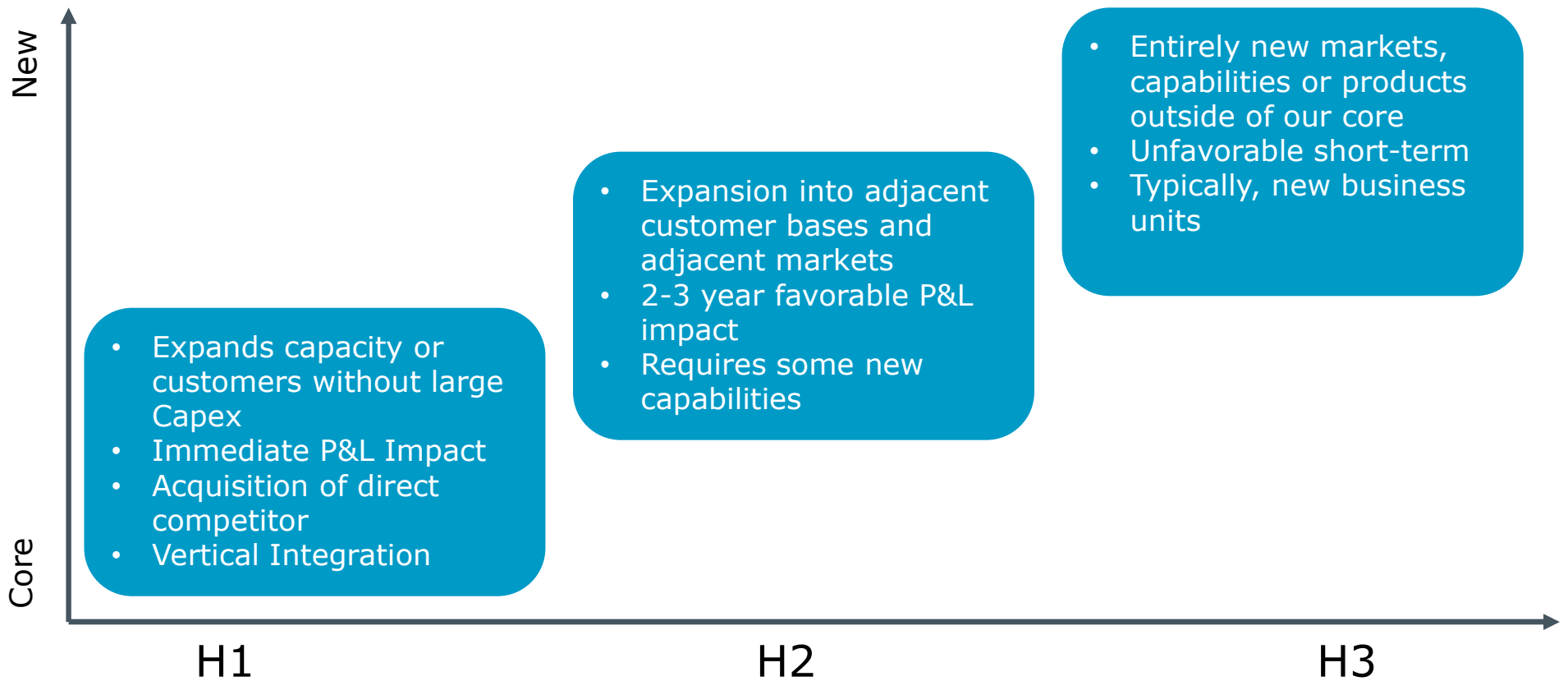
The Right Team Prepares for the Future

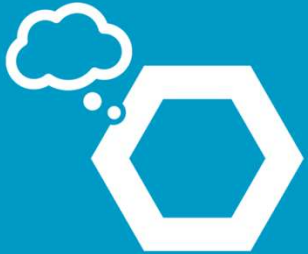
Pathway to Success

- **Cross-functional & global**
- **Opportunity Mindset**
- **Aligned**
- **Alert**
- **Agile**



Defining Horizon 3



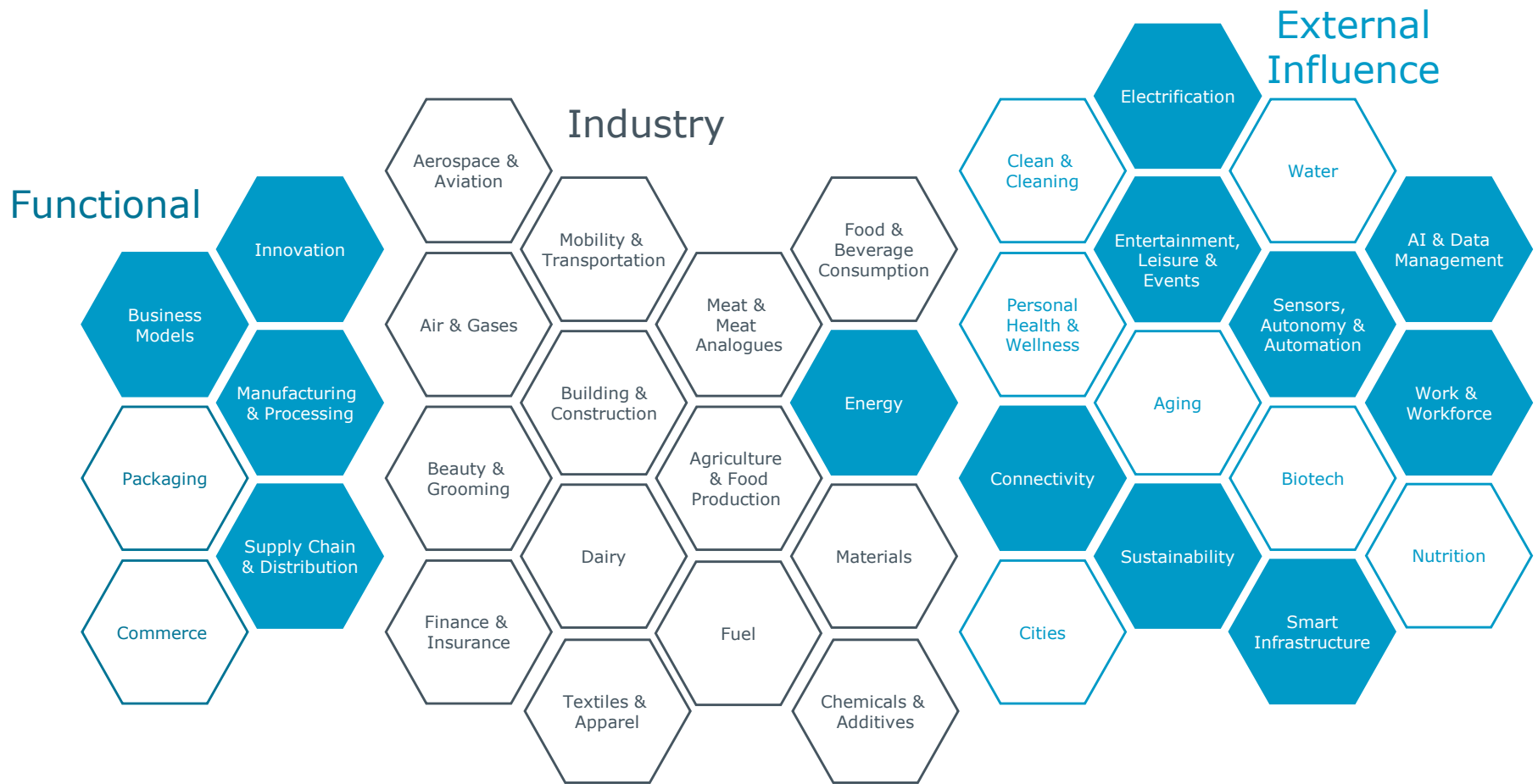


Opportunity
Driven
Growth®
System

Creating an Aligned
*View of the
Future*

Moving beyond typical foresights

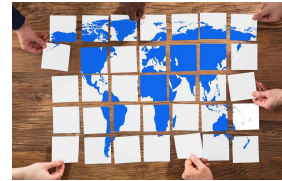
1. Address *Timeframes – Trends, Foresights & Scary / Fairy Tales*
2. Take a *Systems approach*
3. Link to *Opportunity*
4. Make it *Digestible*



Top 10 Themes



AI Arms Race



Tensions Between Local & Global



Democratization of Energy



Emerging Edge



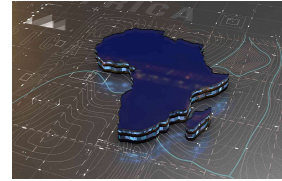
Automation to Autonomy



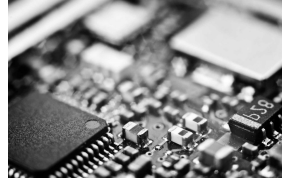
Blurring Industry Lines



Ubiquity of Connectivity



Evolving Sandboxes



Rise of Micro



Agile & Applied Innovation

Key Deliverable

Future Proofing Playbook

Current / Past State

Impact & Strategic Imperatives

Disruptors & Inevitabilities



Immediate Outcomes of the *Future Proofing Playbook*:



Leadership agreed on AI's influence of the future



Teams were tasked to understand the AI space more clearly / promptly



Established **clarity on critical areas** to monitor and future signals to watch





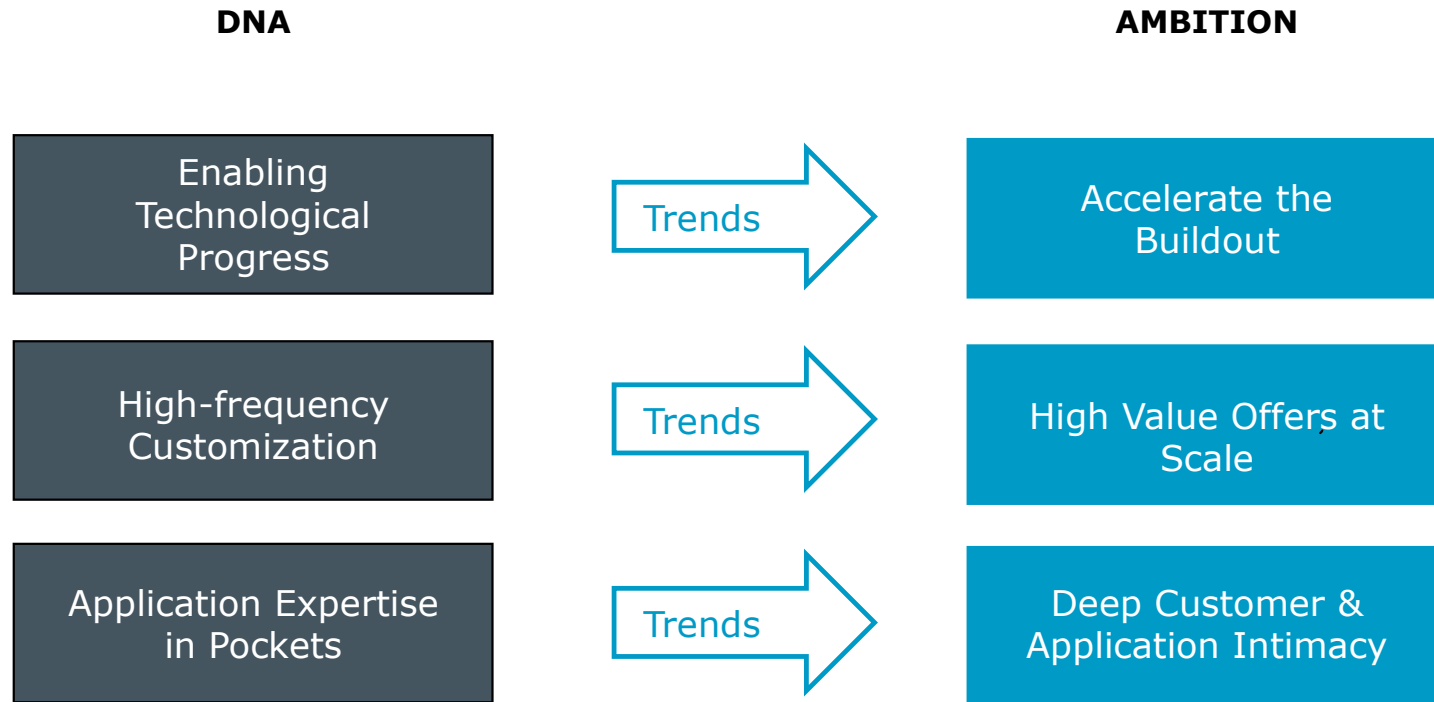
Opportunity
Driven
Growth®
System

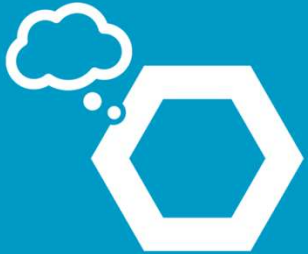
Defining your
DNA to
North Star

Why Define Your DNA?

- Integrates all approaches *to define the core*
- Surfaces why *customers trust* you
- Isolates the *Why* behind success
- Brings together the *Core, Future & Mission*
- Builds conviction on opportunities *further from the core*
- Gives clarity on *H1, H2, H3 without moonshots*

Trends Linked to DNA Lead to Big Opportunity





Opportunity
Driven
Growth®
System

Identifying
Horizon 1-3
Opportunities



OPPORTUNITY MAP

Speed of Build over Speed of Signal

H1

Integration & Design to Solve Customer Problems

H2

At the EDGE

H3



Opportunity
Driven
Growth®
System

Aligning
Company Culture

Branded the Project



Leadership Support



Immersion



Cross-Functionality



Continuous Engagement



But...

Conditions were changing!

Foundational Insights Allowed us to Sense Signals in the Market

Cross-Functional Teams

Aligned DNA

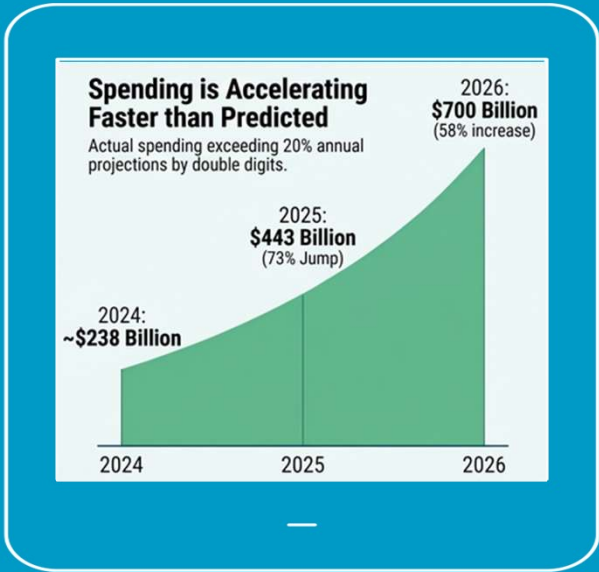
Ecosystem

View of the Future

Leadership

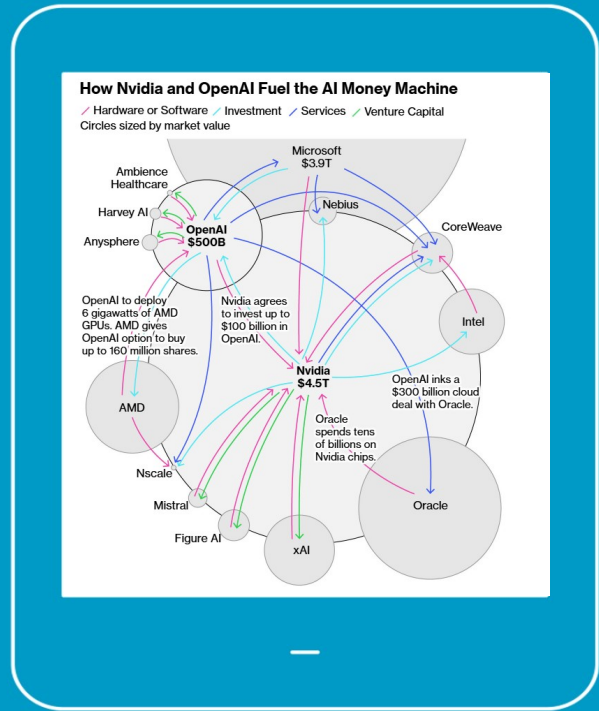


Witnessing the Largest Investment in Mankind With AI

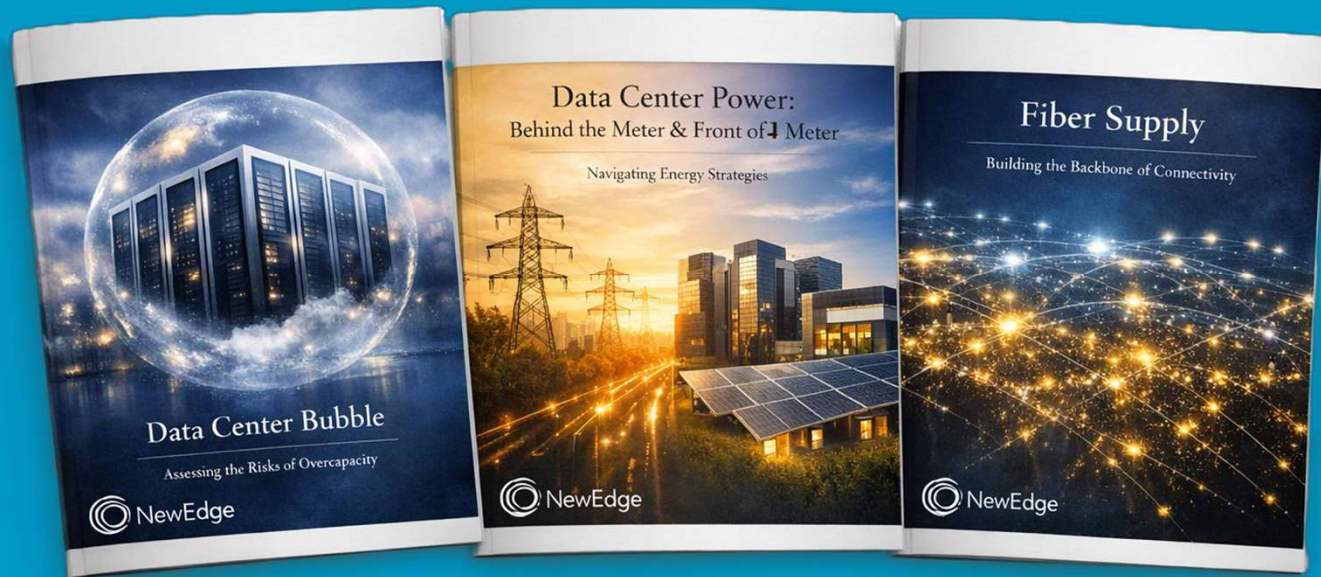


Annual Spend Predictions Are Exceeded by double digits

The Circular AI Investment Money Machine Worth Trillions



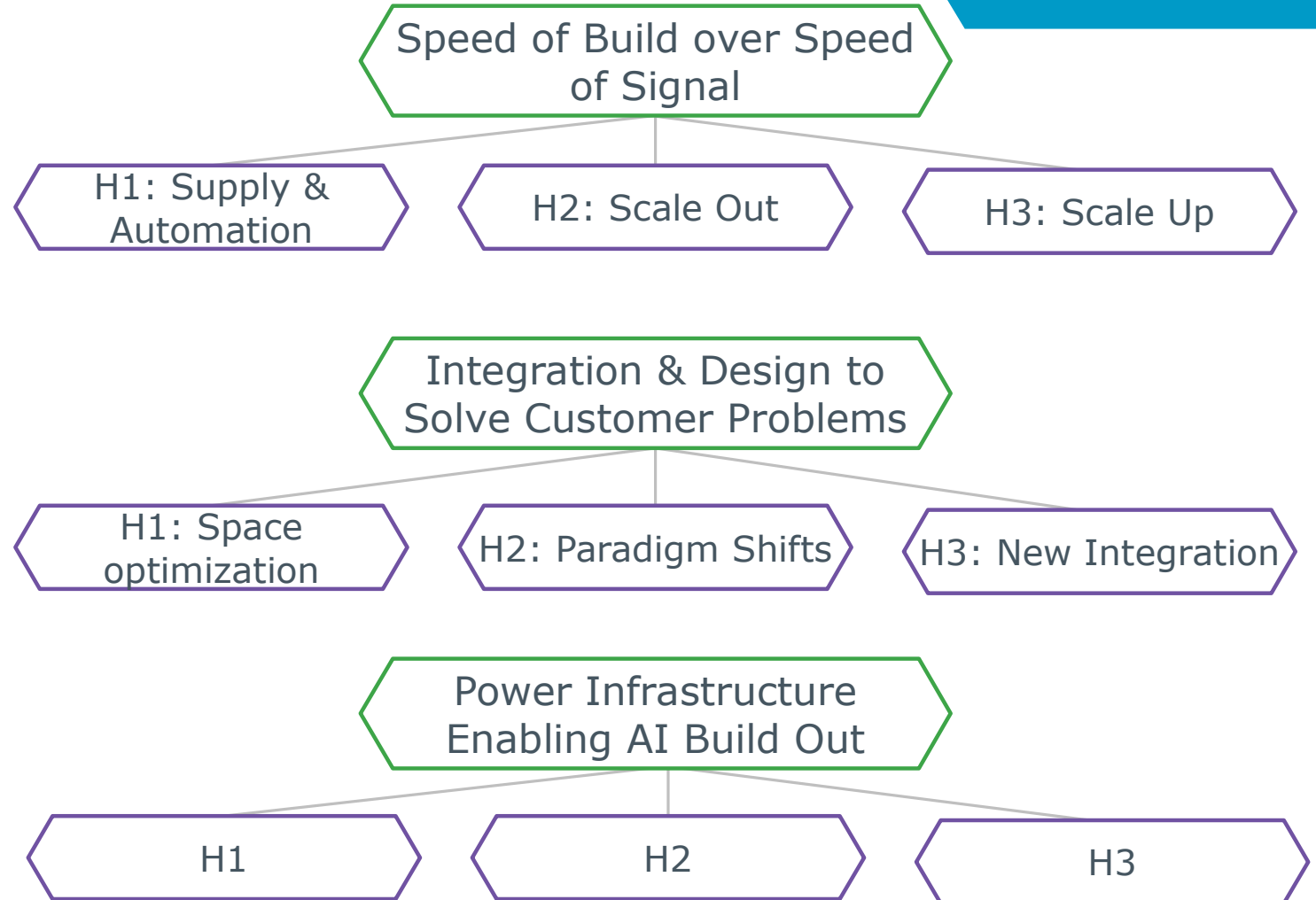
Grounded in NewEdge Perspective Reports



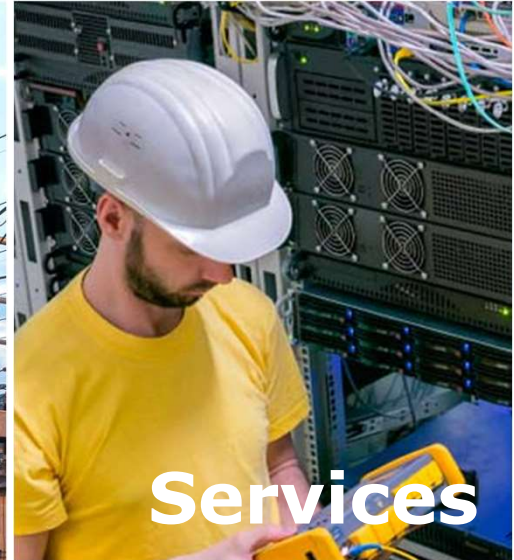
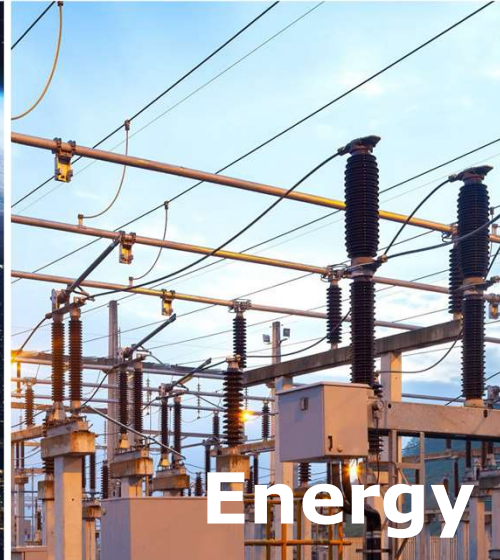
You don't mine for silver *During the Gold Rush*



OPPORTUNITY MAP



Long-Term Planning Key Businesses

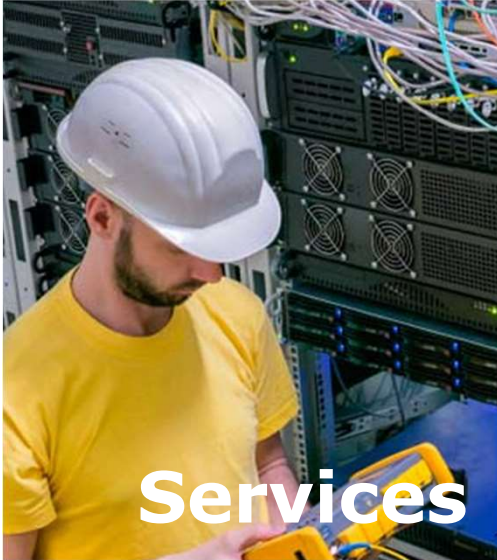
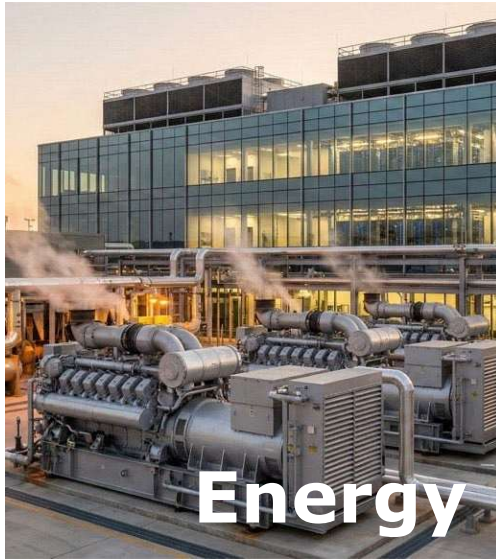


Aligned View of the Future

DNA and North Star

Opportunity Maps

Horizon 2 & 3 in the Businesses



Scale up /
Scale out

Beyond
Broadband

Power
Infrastructure

Build out
Services

Where AFL Landed

- Knit together *the organization*
- Provided a *foundation* for *better planning*
- Expectation & behaviors for *Agility*
- Navigate *Horizon 1 to Horizon 3*
- Strengthened AFL's relationship with *Fujikura Leadership & Board*



*“This is the right way to
do strategy”
-Fujikura Board*

*Apply this approach to
all our businesses and
functions – from Supply
Chain to Innovation*

New Ways of Working

Operating Principles



Aligned Teams Win



Walk a Mile in Others' Shoes



Frank but Professional



Aim High

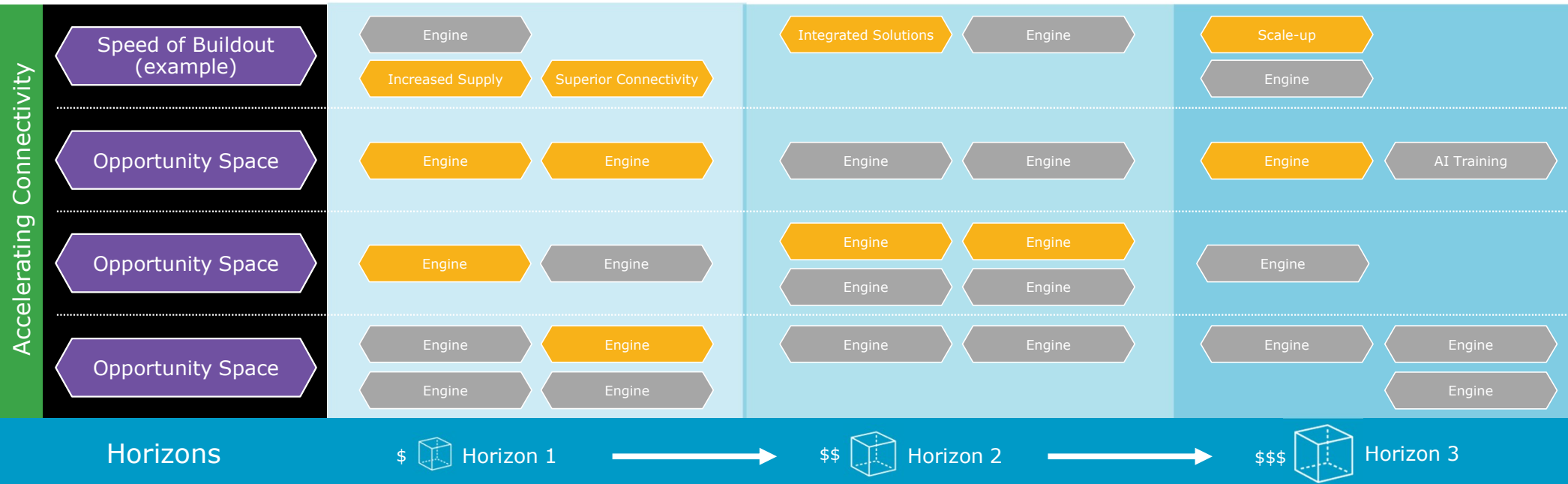
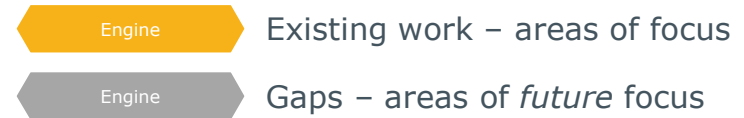


No Excuses



Lead with Humble
Confidence

In Motion: Roadmapping



DNAs to Ambition

• Enabling Technological Progress

• Accelerate the Buildout

In Motion: AI Strategy



“You Can Kill an Idea; You Can’t Kill an Opportunity”

Next Steps: Capability Building

- Dallas *Innovation Center*
- *Design Thinking* training
- *Voice of the Ecosystem* and *Ethnography*

Want to learn more?

Scan the QR code to discover more about our approach and additional resources





IR M.