

Making the business case for *contributing* to open source

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OPEN SOURCE
STRATEGY FORUM
2018

“In short, software is eating the world.”

—Marc Andreessen, WSJ, August 20, 2011.



"In short, ~~software~~ is eating the world."

open source

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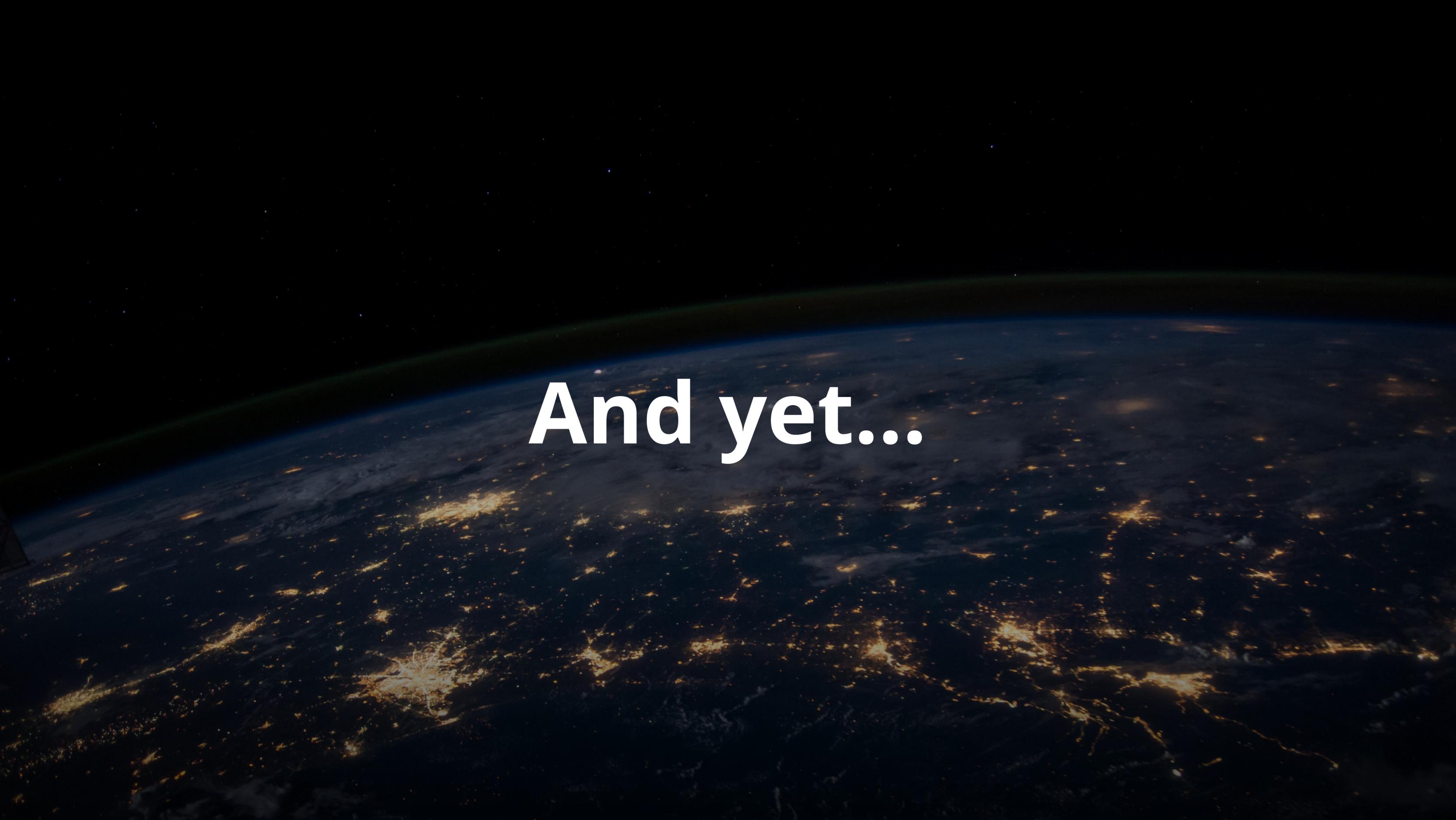
96%

OF APPS CONTAIN
OPEN SOURCE COMPONENTS

57%

OF CODEBASE IS
OPEN SOURCE

Source: Black Duck 2018 OSSRA

A satellite view of Earth at night, showing city lights and the curvature of the planet against a starry background. The text "And yet..." is overlaid in the center.

And yet...

Why should companies *contribute* to open source?

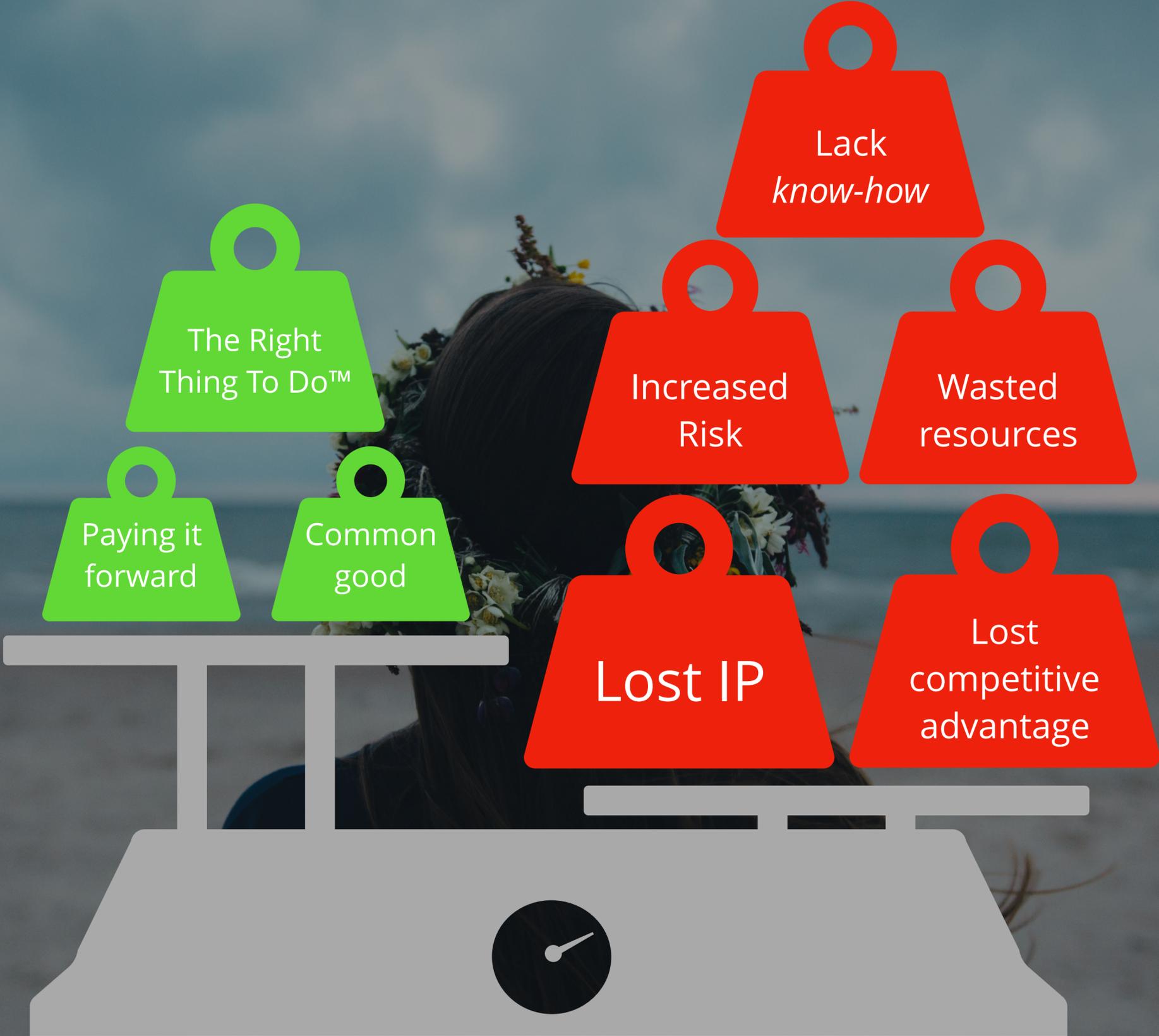
Common good

The Right Thing To Do™

Paying it forward

Etc.



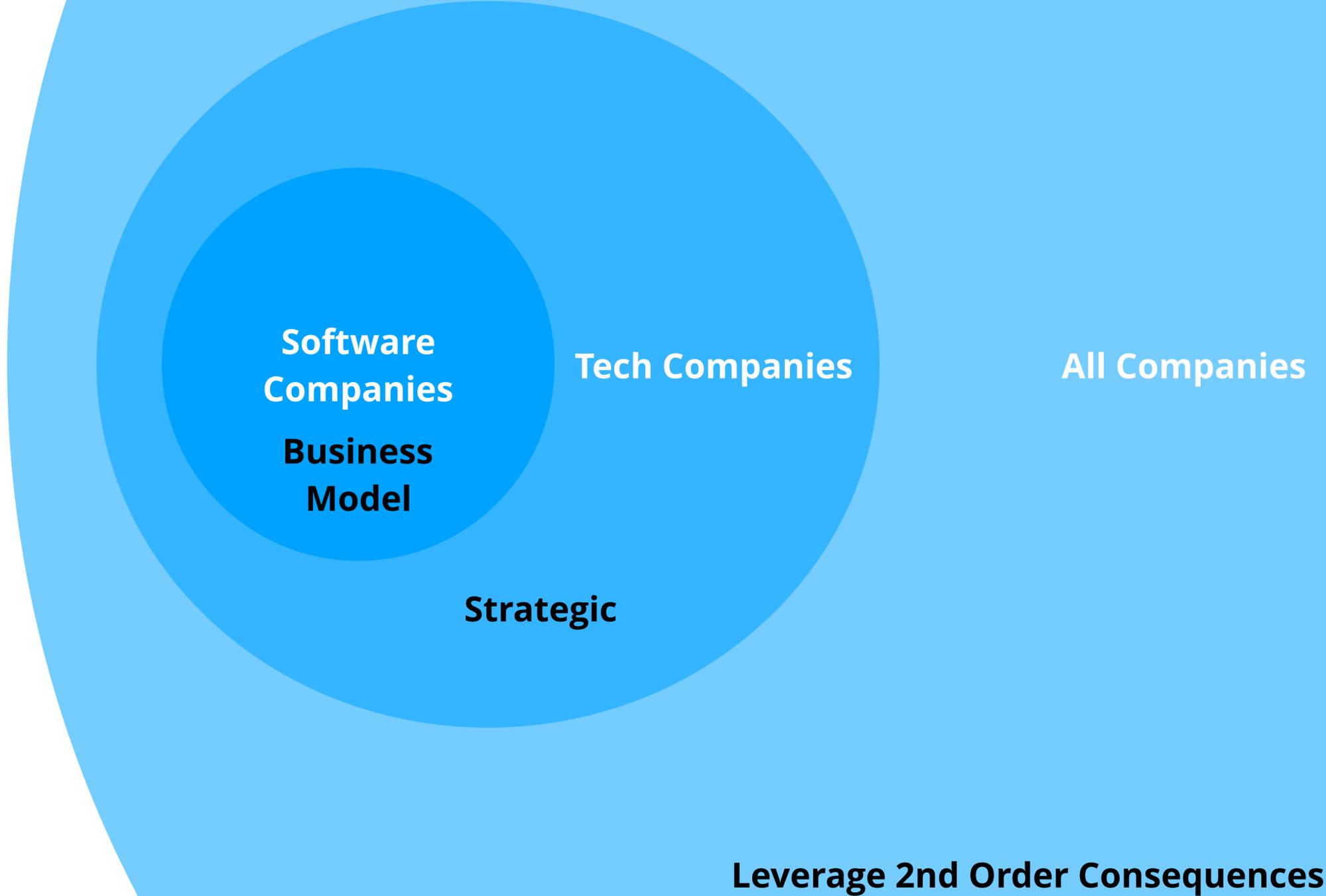


The ROI of *using* open source is well understood.

The ROI of *contributing* to open source: not so much.



ROI of *contributing* to open source



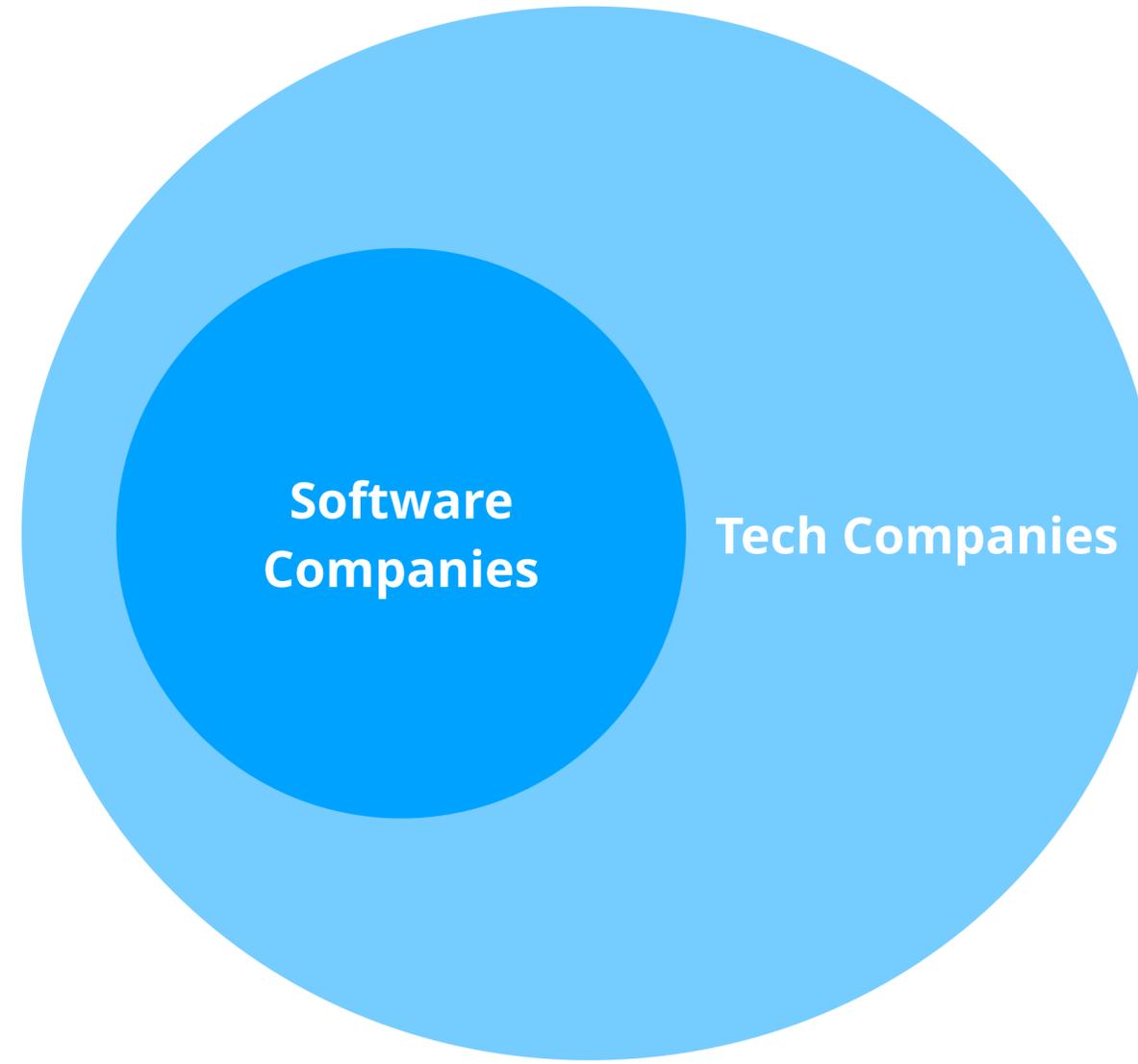


AUTOMATTIC



GitHub

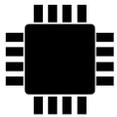




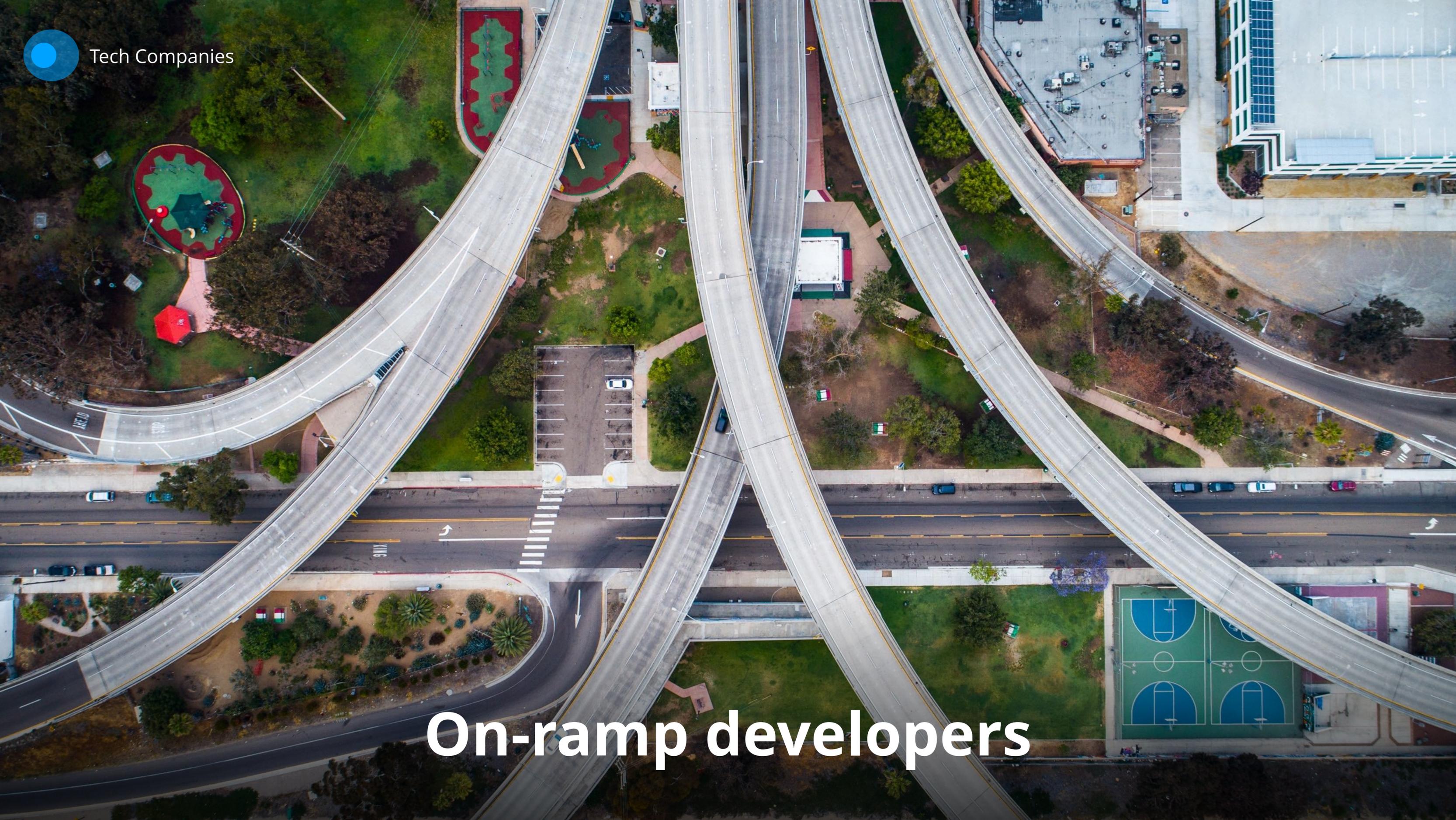
**Software
Companies**

Tech Companies

Commoditize Your Complement

Company	Focus	Complement
		
		
		
		



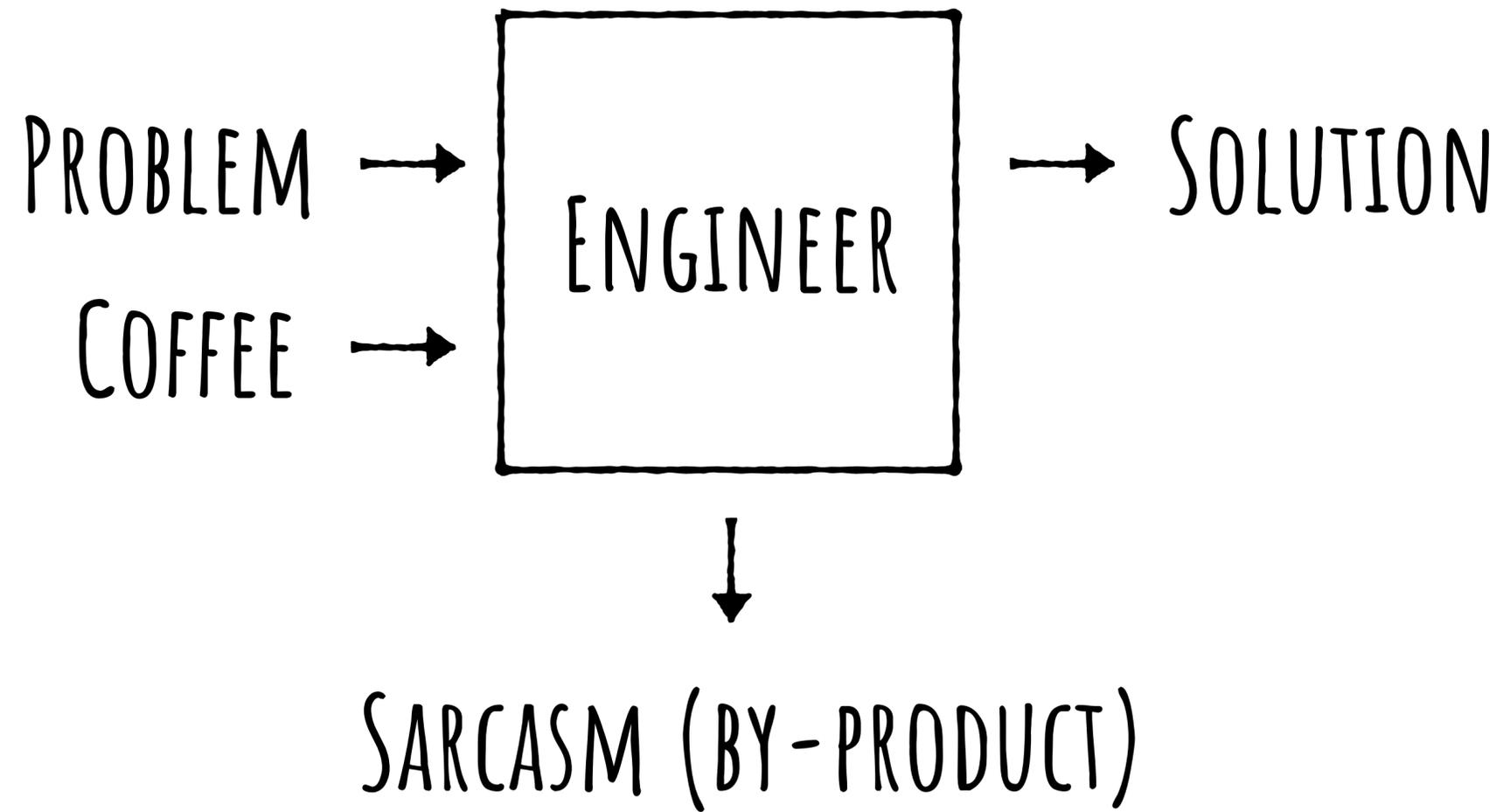


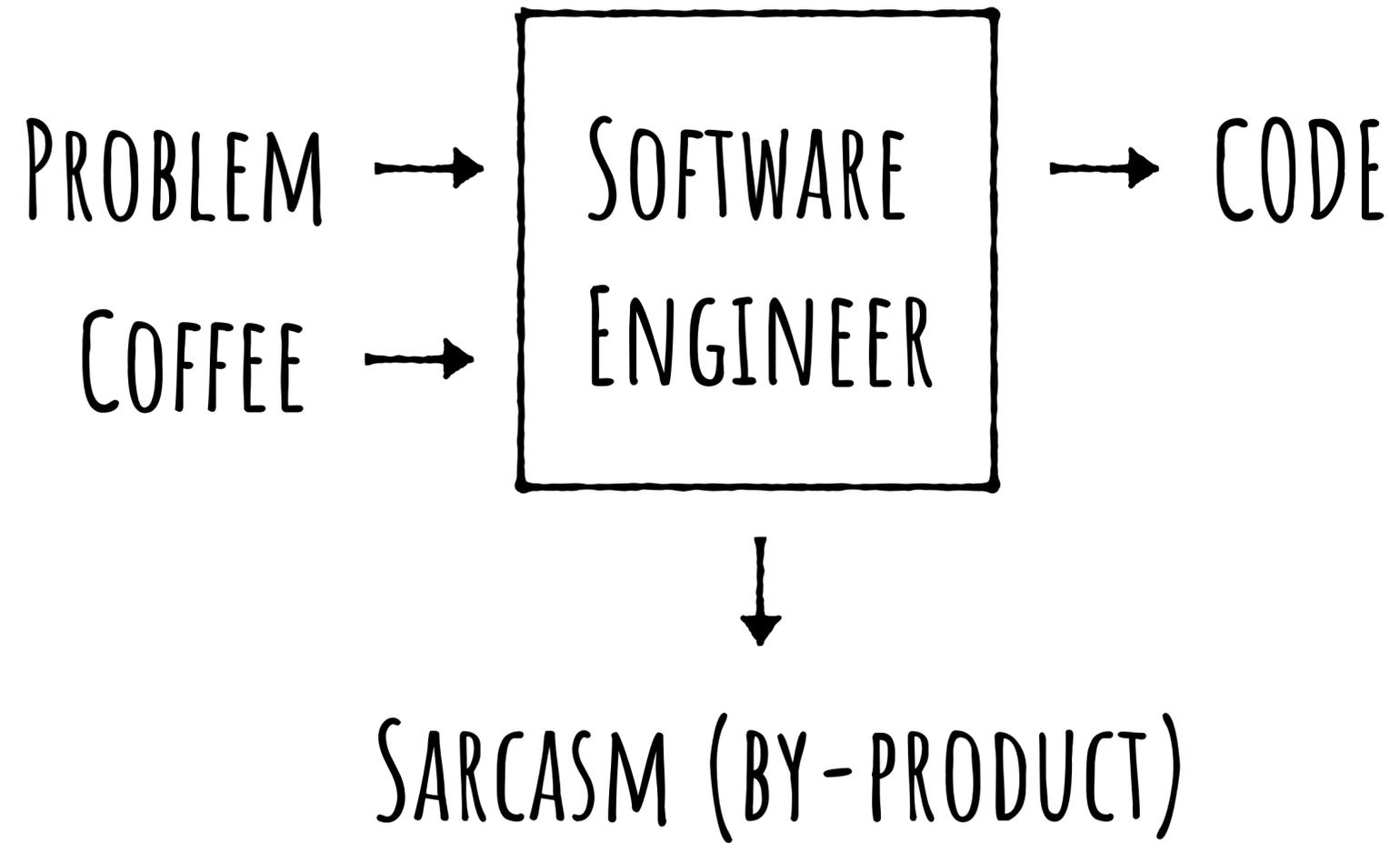
On-ramp developers

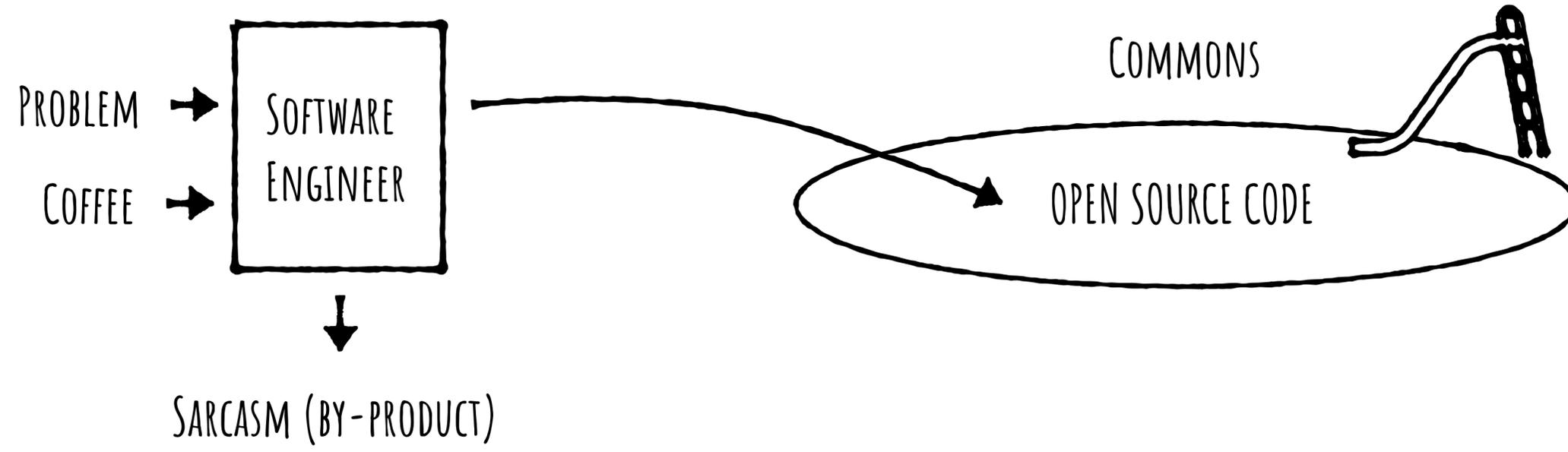
**Software
Companies**

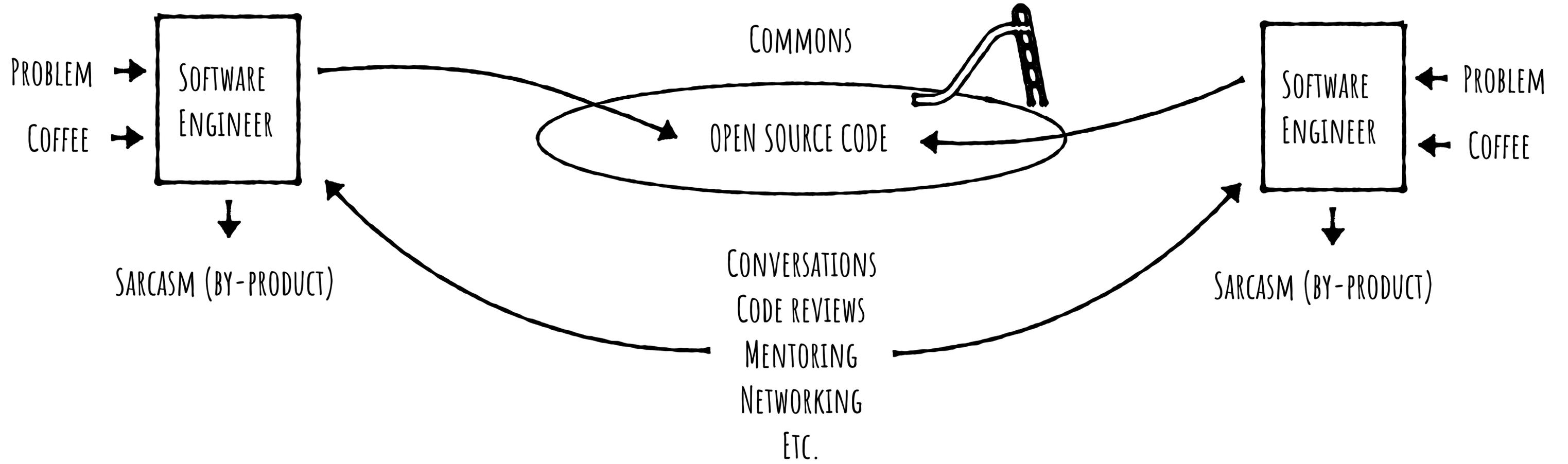
Tech Companies

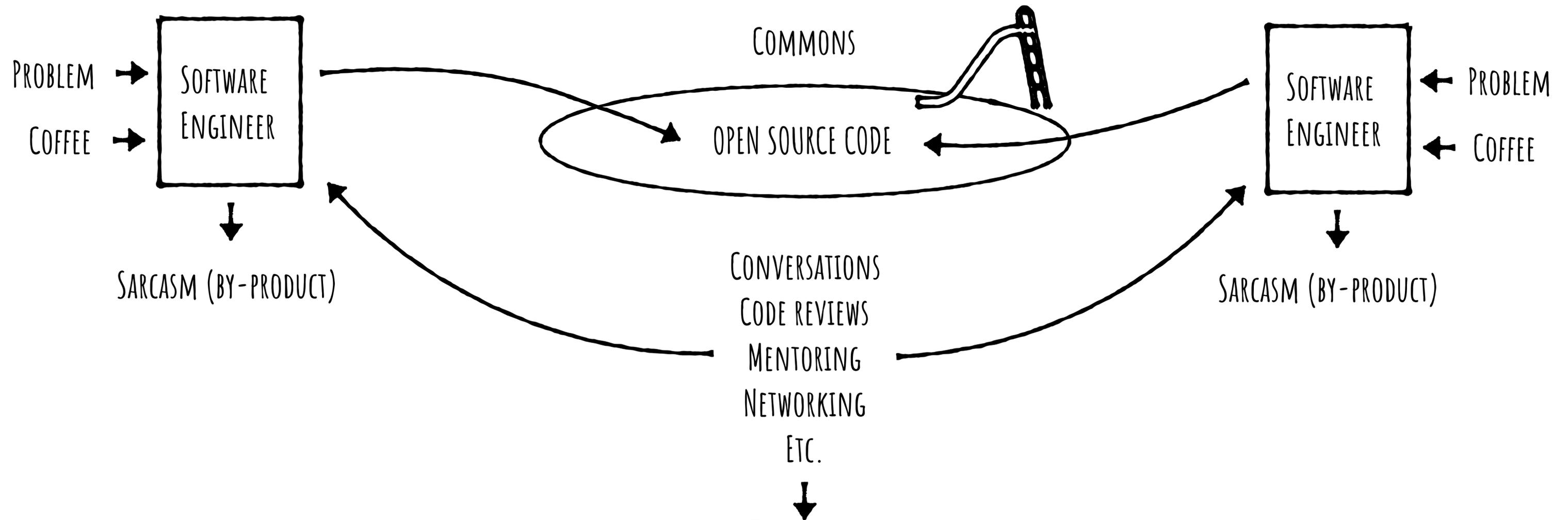
All Companies











- INCREASE CODE QUALITY
- IMPROVE DOCUMENTATION
- LOWER TECHNICAL DEBT
- INFLUENCE PROJECT DIRECTION

- LEVEL-UP ENGINEERS
- IMPROVE SOFT-SKILLS
- ADOPT BEST-PRACTICES
- ACCESS TO EXPERT NETWORK

- PERCEIVED AS INDUSTRY LEADER
- ACCESS TO TALENT POOL
- REMOTE FRIENDLY
- REDUCED CHURN
- IMPROVED CULTURE & MORALE

- INCREASE EFFICIENCIES
- "KNOWLEDGE SPILLOVER"
- SERENDIPITY
- INNOVATION

2x

TWICE AS EFFICIENT

Contributing firms capture up to 100% more productive value from usage of open source than their free-riding peers.



Source: Franck Nagle, [Learning by Contributing](#), 2017.



75%

OF FACEBOOK'S NEW ENGINEERING RECRUITS MENTION FACEBOOK'S OPEN SOURCE PROGRAM AS A KEY REASON THEY ACCEPTED THEIR OFFER



"But we also noticed some effect that we didn't expect. All the public visibility [sponsoring Webpack] have given us lead to a situation where we suddenly became one of the most interesting companies to work for as a JavaScript developer. [...]"

"We've hired a lot of really great engineers who mentioned during their job interview that our sponsoring for Webpack was one of their primary motivations for applying, [...]"

*—Patrick Gotthardt, Lead JavaScript Architect,
Trivago, 9 July 2018.*





Lost competitive advantage

“I skate to where the puck is going to be, not to where it has been.”

—Wayne Gretzky



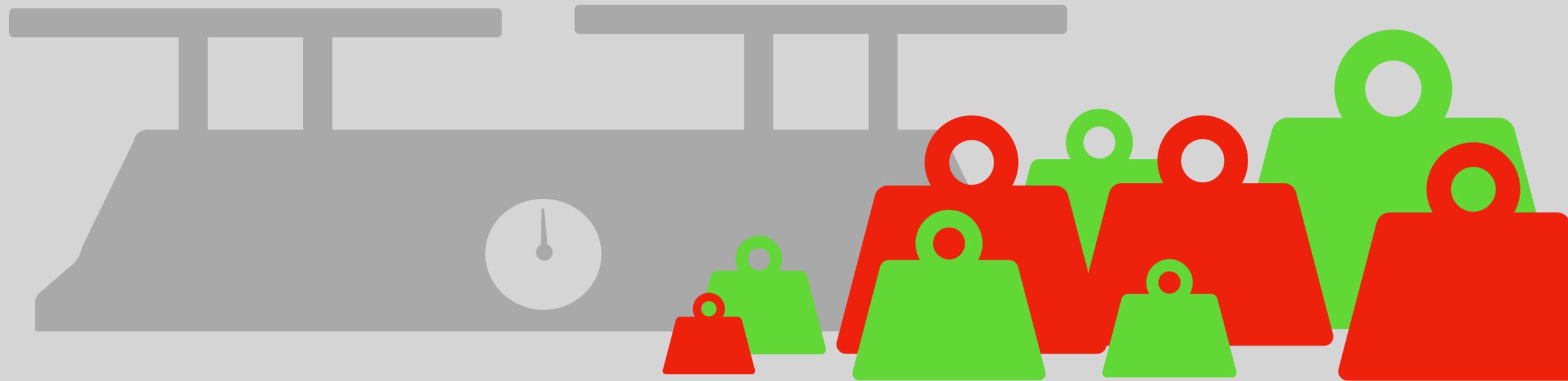


“In today's world of fast-paced internet services deployment, owning IP has become considerably less important than turning research results into innovative products as quickly as possible, and deploying them at scale.”

— Yann LeCun, *Business Insider*, Aug. 3, 2018.



- Focus on business outcomes.
- Be reasonable.
- Show empathy to other's needs in the organization.
- Aim for small wins. Start small.
- Remember it's a mindset shift.



Patent Troll



Lost IP



Thank you!