

Design is not dead

...but the Narrative might be



Pamela Mead
SVP Global Design, SumUp

Personal
reflections

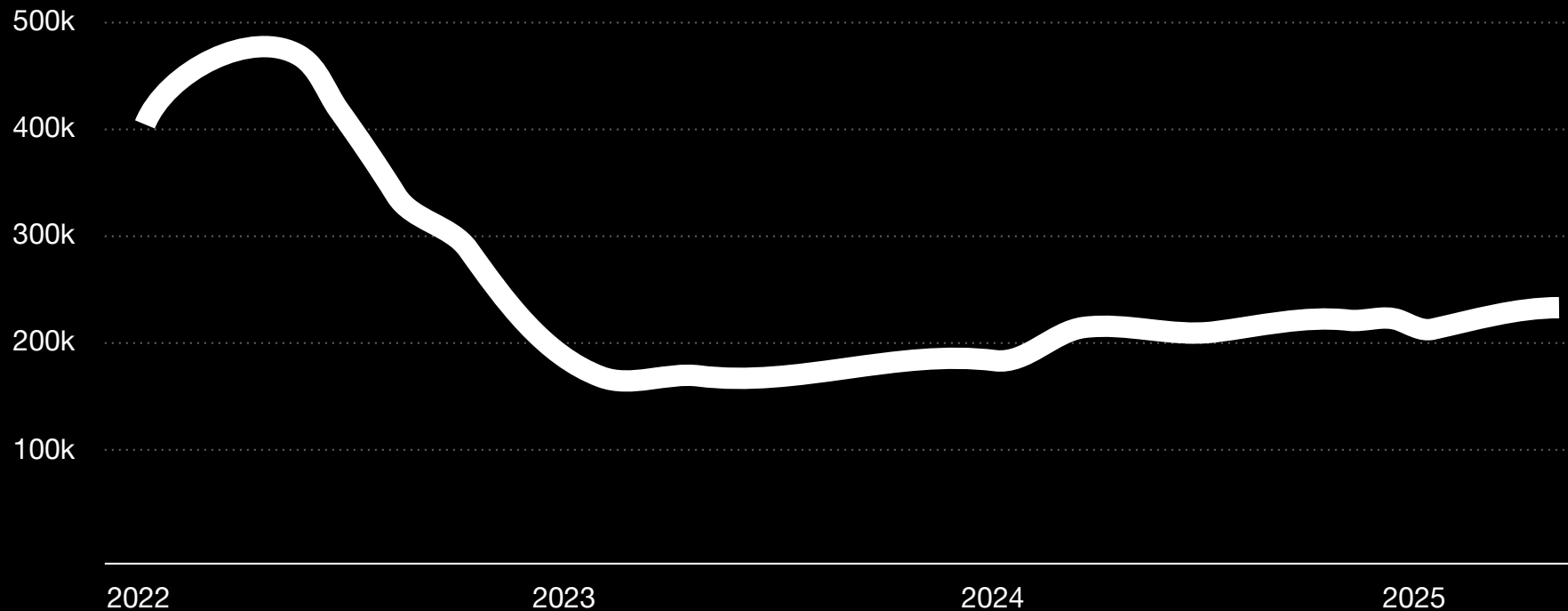
UXDX
Berlin

May 19
2025

of Open Tech jobs

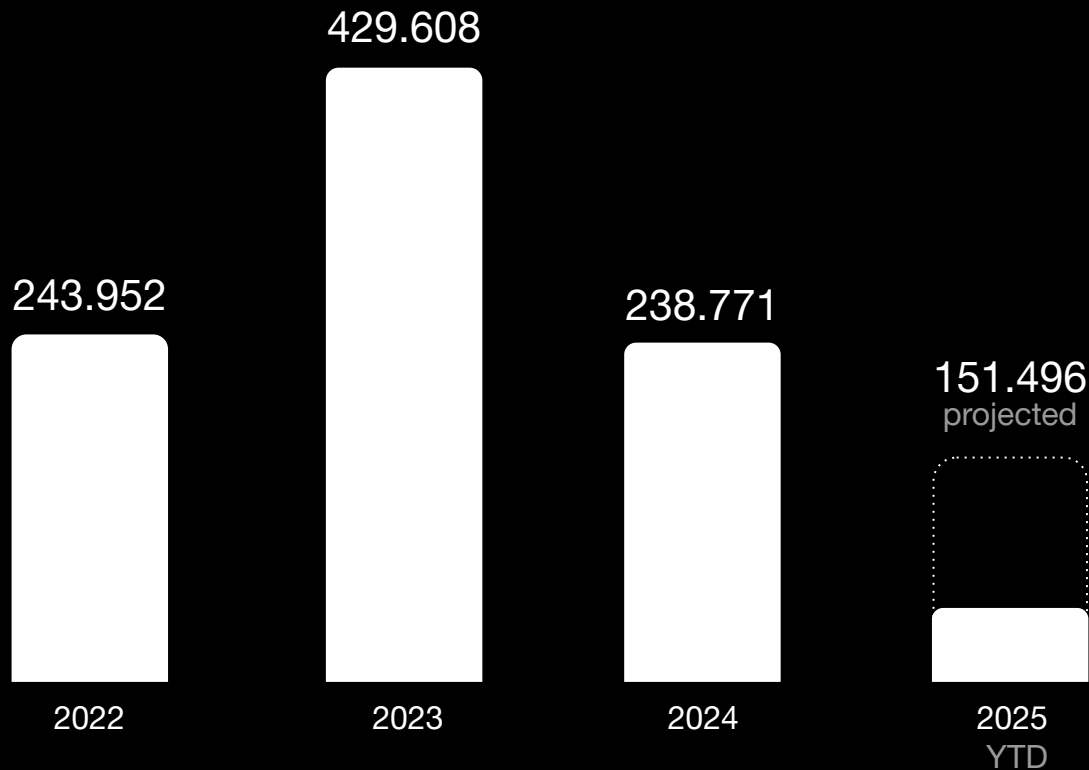
Source: trueup.io/job-trend

USA centric



Tech employees impacted by layoffs

Source: trueup.io/layoffs



How likely it is to be laid off compared to Engineering=1

Causl Effect by Bhav Patel using layoffs.fyi data

2.6x

Product

2.3x

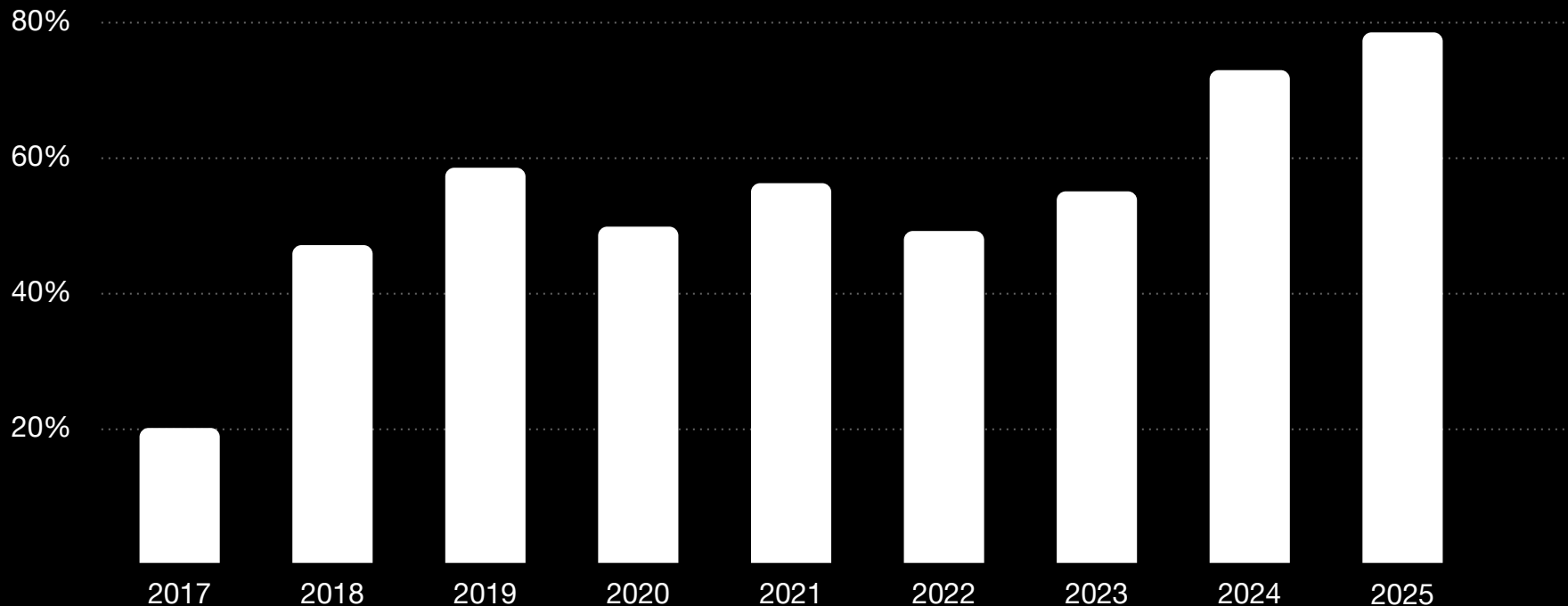
Design

3.6x

Research

Companies using AI In at least one business function

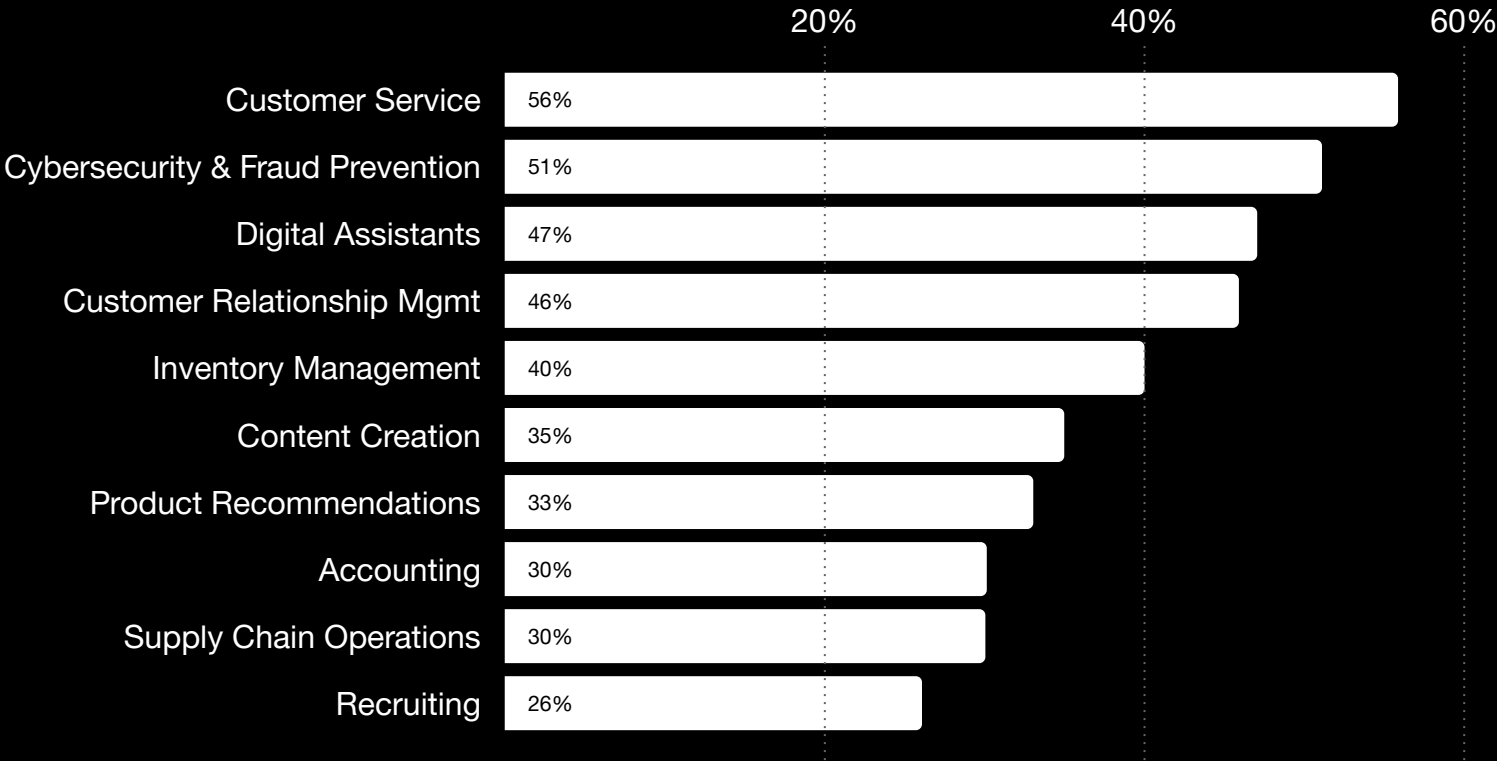
Source: Exploding topics



Companies using AI

Most common business function

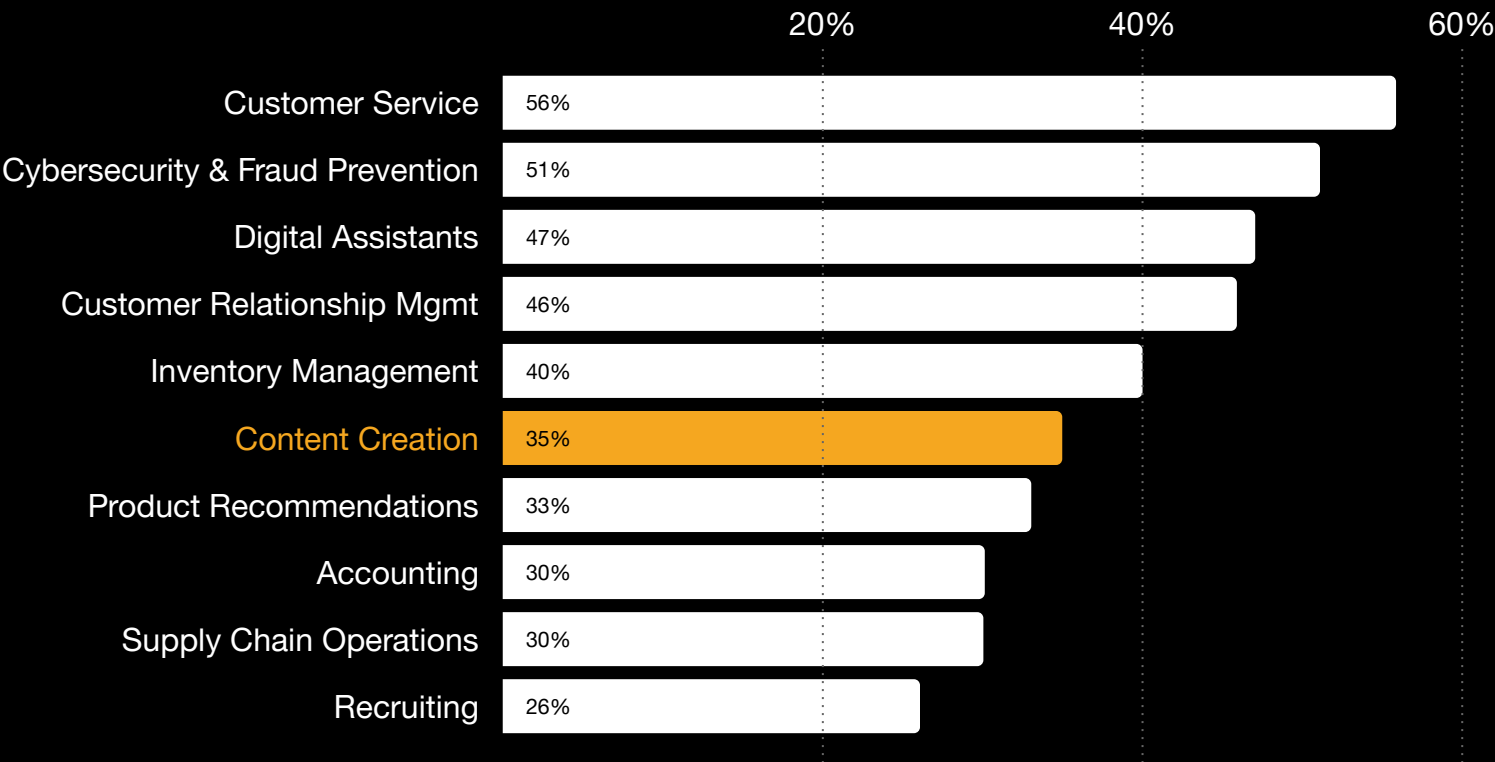
Source: Exploding topics: How many companies are using AI



Companies using AI

Most common business function

Source: Exploding topics: How many companies are using AI

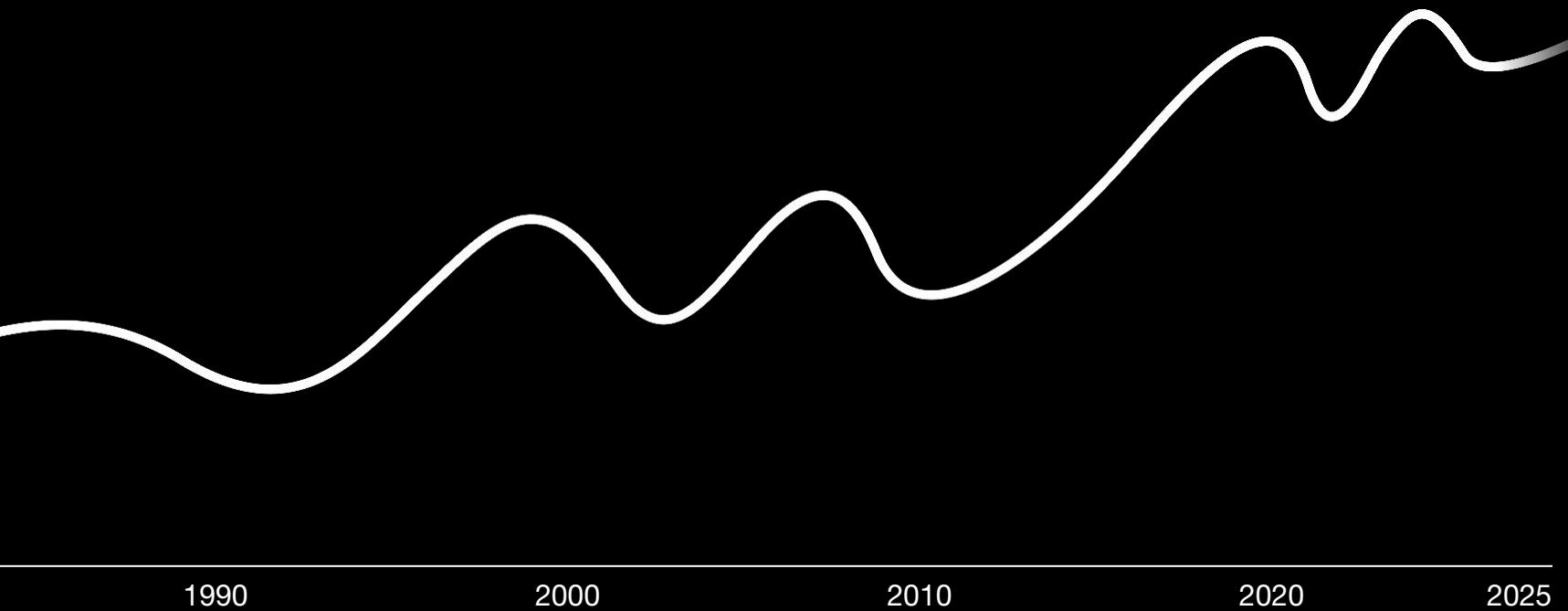


Resume Builder survey 2023

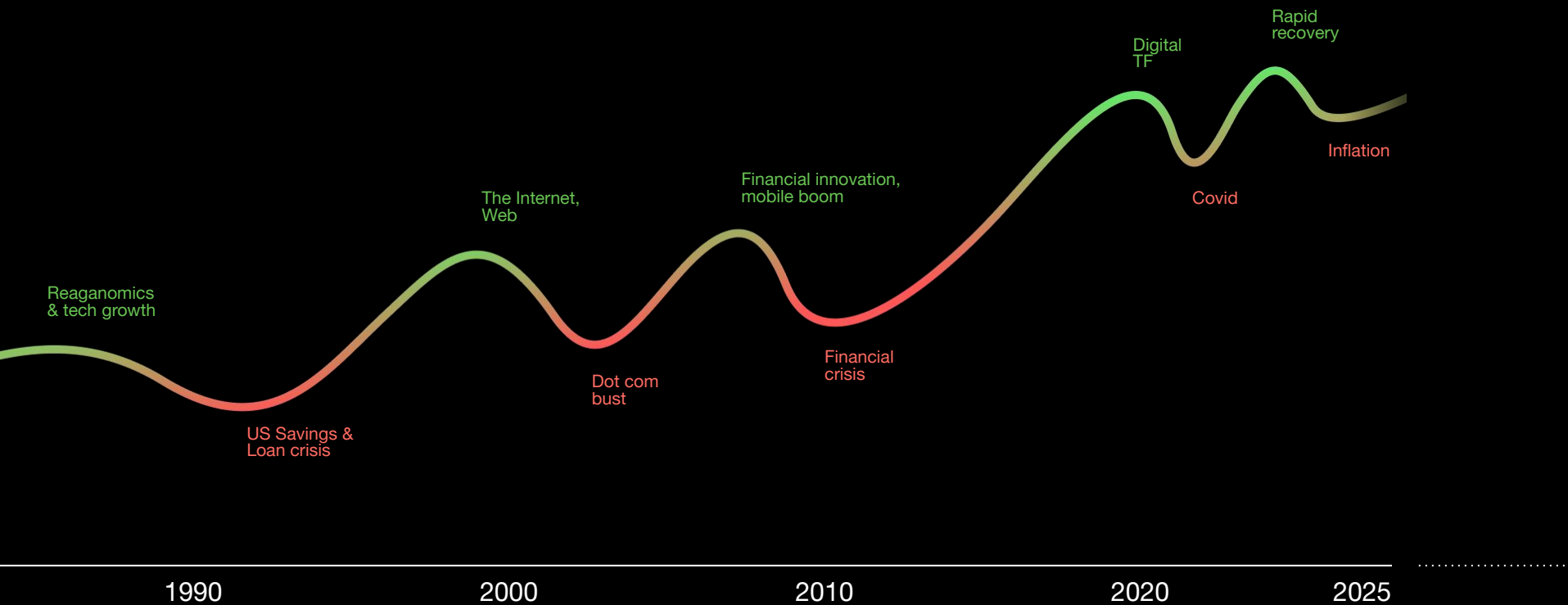
“ 37% say they’ve replaced
workers due to AI ”

Boom & Bust Cycles

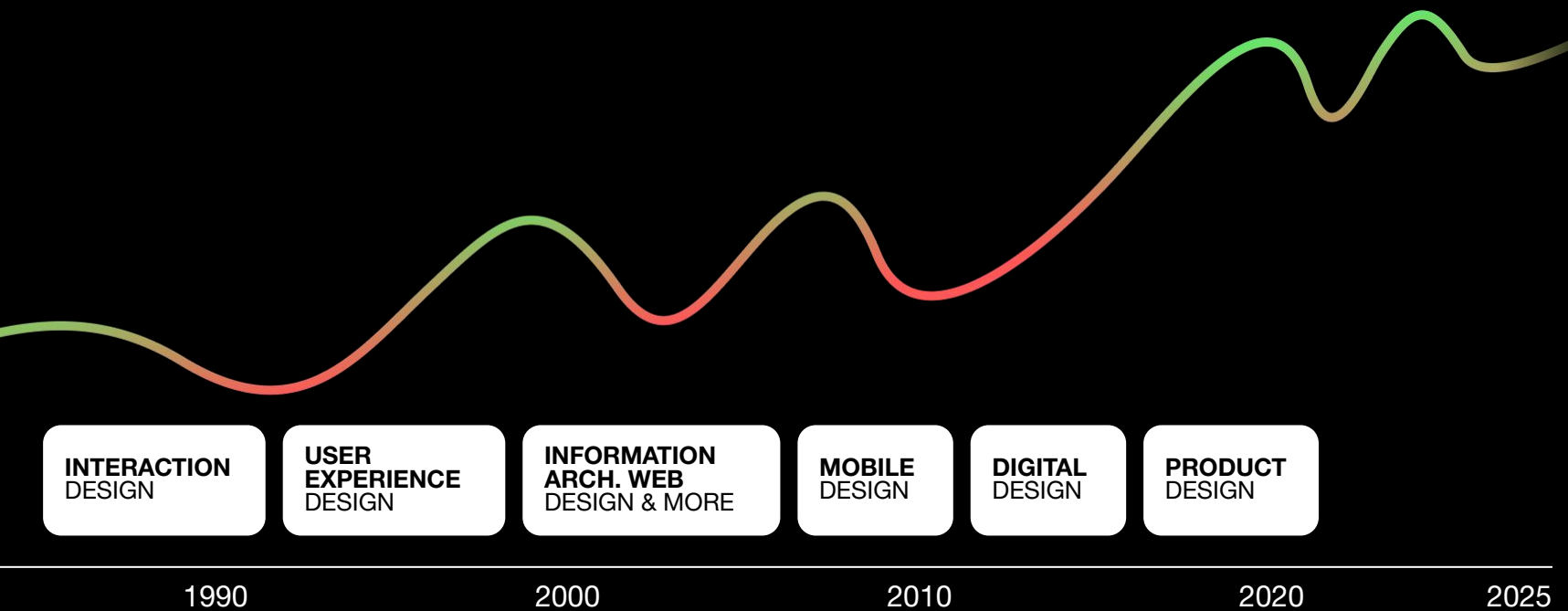
Disclaimer: illustrative cycles



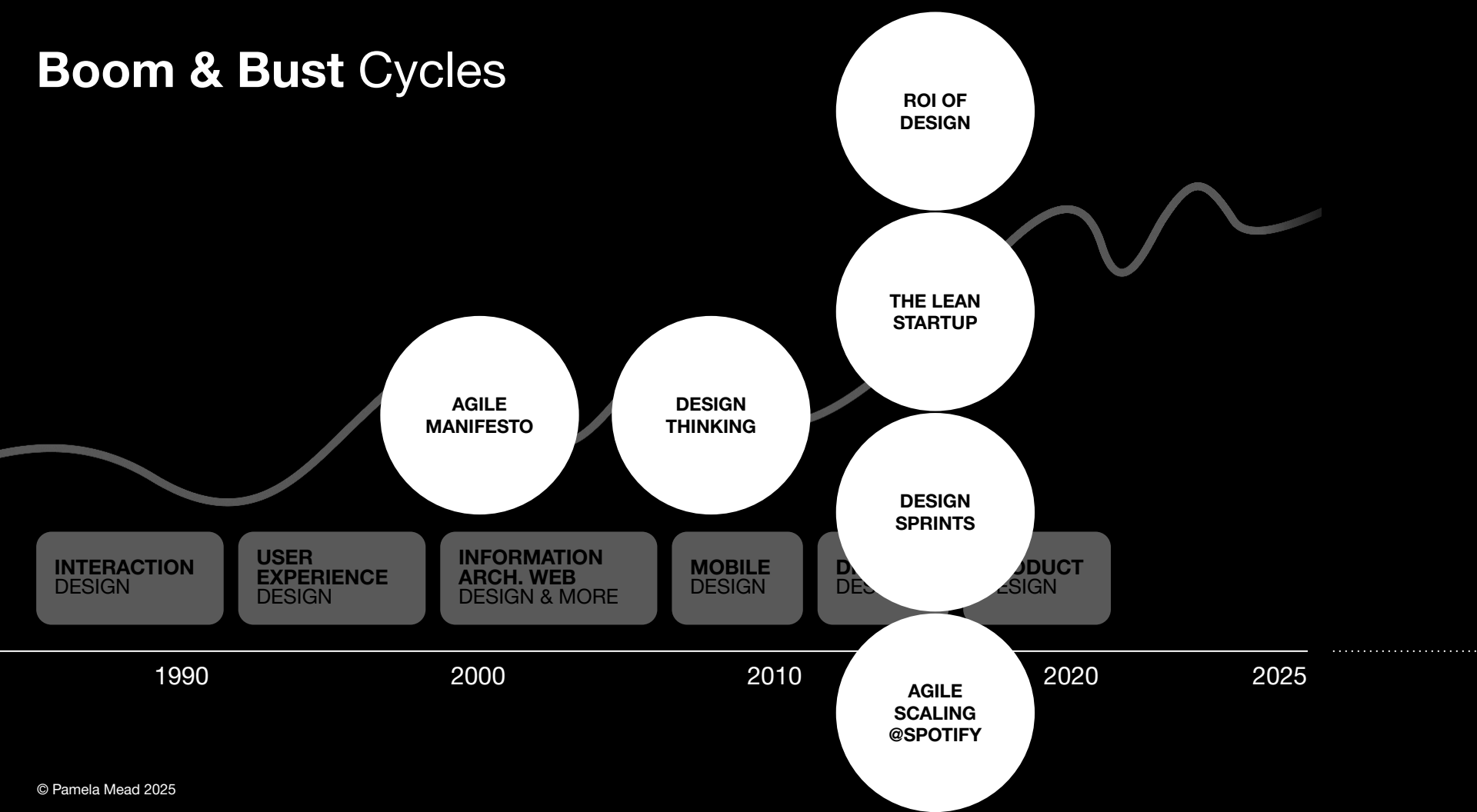
Boom & Bust Cycles



Boom & Bust Cycles



Boom & Bust Cycles



The Commoditized Unicorn



Write UX copy

Define transitions

Design pixel-perfect icons

Layout screens & components

Conduct user validation

Align across teams

Create flows



Returning to our **roots**

Design \neq *Net* \neq **PLAY**

Design = Science

Erika Hall, Thinking in Triplicate, Medium 2018

“ Design is a set of decisions, **a set of choices** among the infinite ways to solve a problem. The more intentional and skillful the choices, the better the design. ”



Designers are not **heroes**

Designers



Protectors
of users



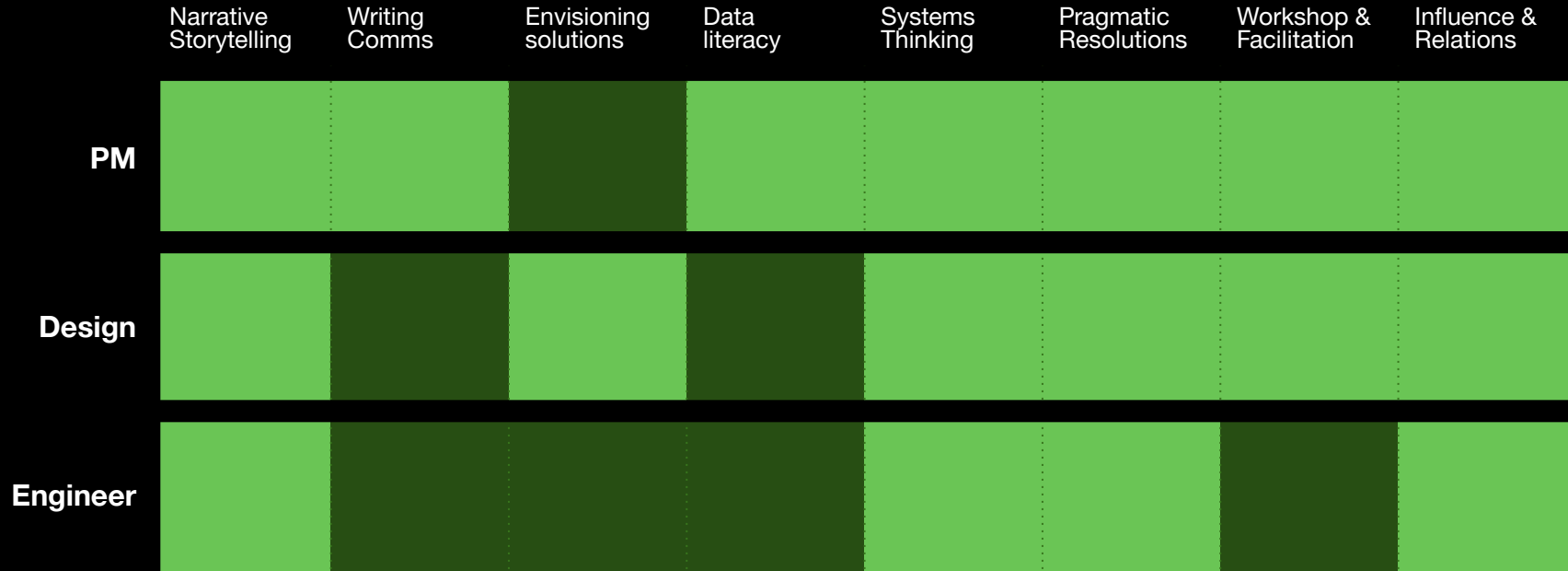
Arbiters of
“good” design



Solve all
problems

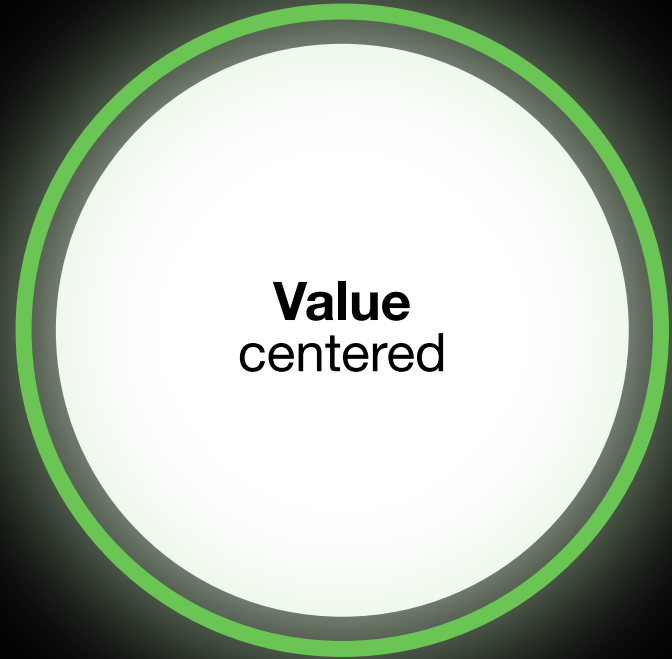
Dance of skills

Disclaimer: design biased



Erika Hall, Thinking in Triplicate, Medium 2018

“Design is only as
user-centered as the
business model allows.”





From bust to boom

AI **≠** **THREAT**

Winning the AI battle



PM

DESIGNER

ENGINEER

Winning the AI battle



PM

DESIGNER

ENGINEER

From commoditizing to
maximizing design

Return to
our roots

Radical **value**
centricity

Surf the
wave of AI

not

Design is **ALIVE**

