

PLAT4ORM

**COMMUNICATIONS
TIPS AND TRICKS
FOR STARTUPS SEEKING
ACQUISITION OR IPO**

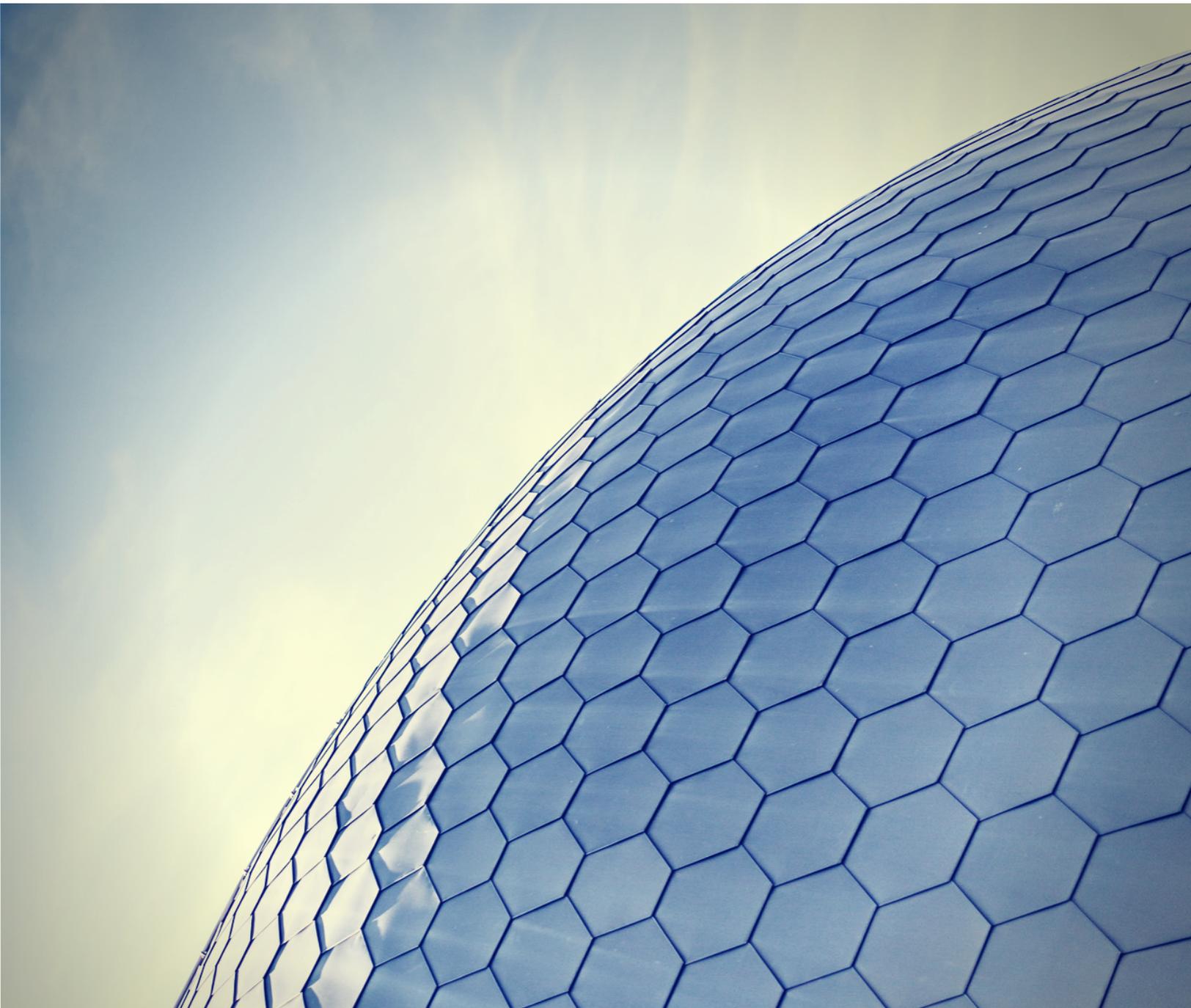
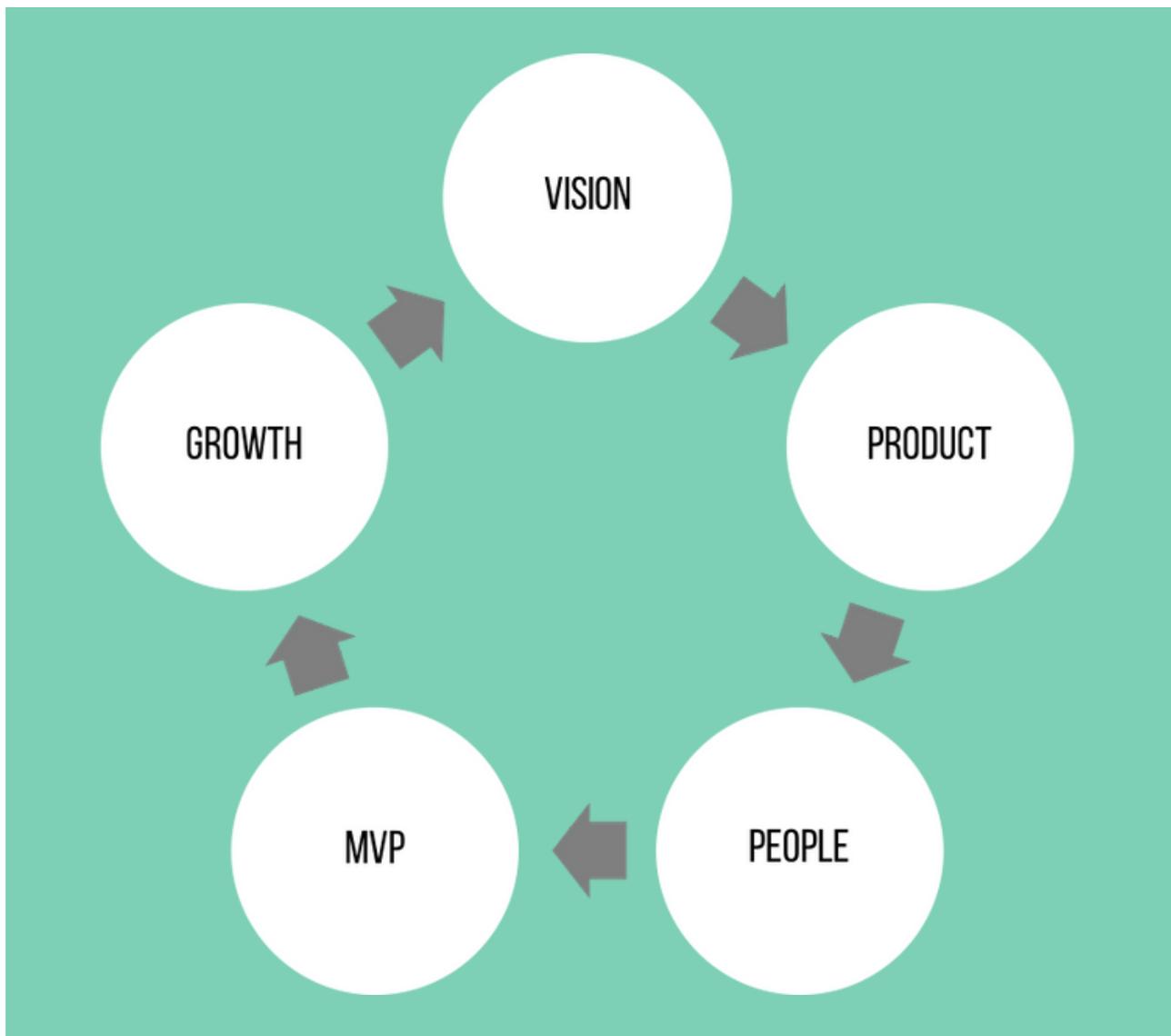


TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT MAKES A COMPANY READY FOR IPO?	03
DETERMINING YOUR EXIT STRATEGY	04
POSITIONING FOR ACQUISITION	07
PREPARING FOR IPO	14

WHAT MAKES A COMPANY READY FOR ACQUISITION OR IPO?





DETERMINING YOUR EXIT STRATEGY

WHEN **ACQUISITION** IS THE RIGHT APPROACH

INCREASED
COMPETITION

DESIRE
TO SCALE

FISCAL
SENSE

OPPORTUNITY

WHEN **IPO** IS THE RIGHT APPROACH

COMPELLING
BUSINESS CASE

CLEAR
STRATEGIC
ROAD MAP

>\$100M SALES
AND
PREDICTABLE
GROWTH

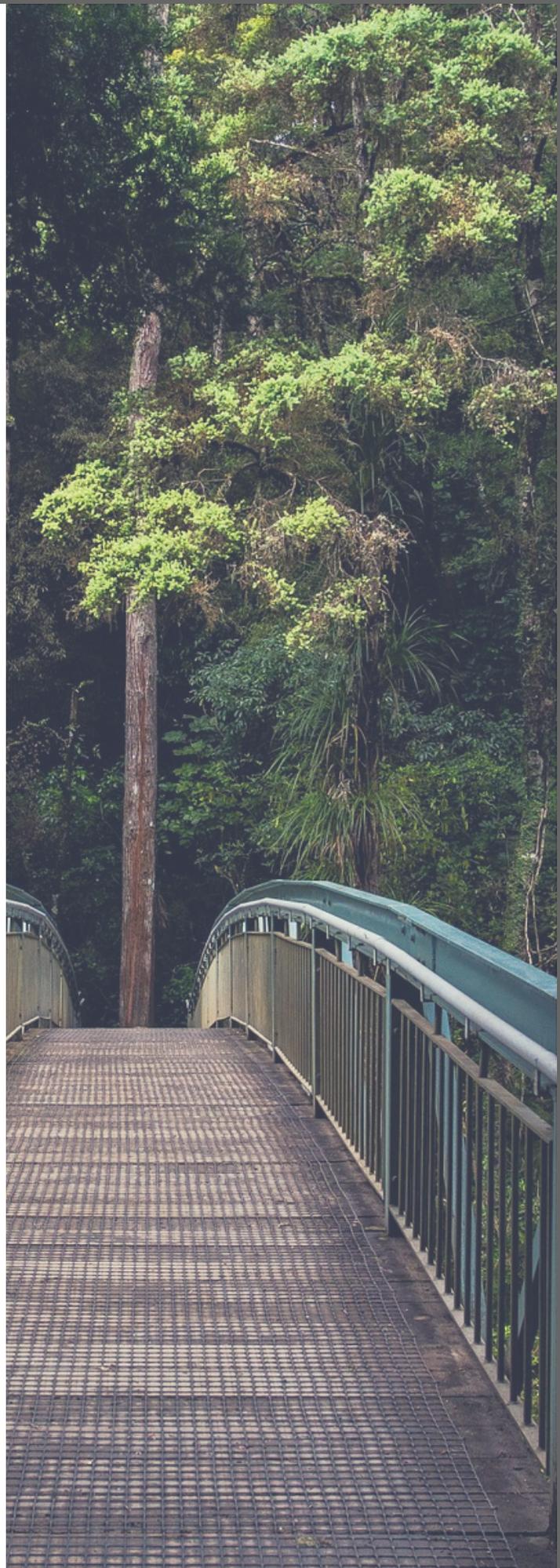
LIMITED
VULNERABILITY

A black and white photograph of a modern office interior. The ceiling features exposed metal ductwork and industrial-style pendant lights. In the foreground, there are several office desks with ergonomic chairs. A semi-transparent red rectangular overlay is positioned in the center of the image, containing the title text in white. In the background, a person is visible working at a desk near a window.

POSITIONING FOR ACQUISITION

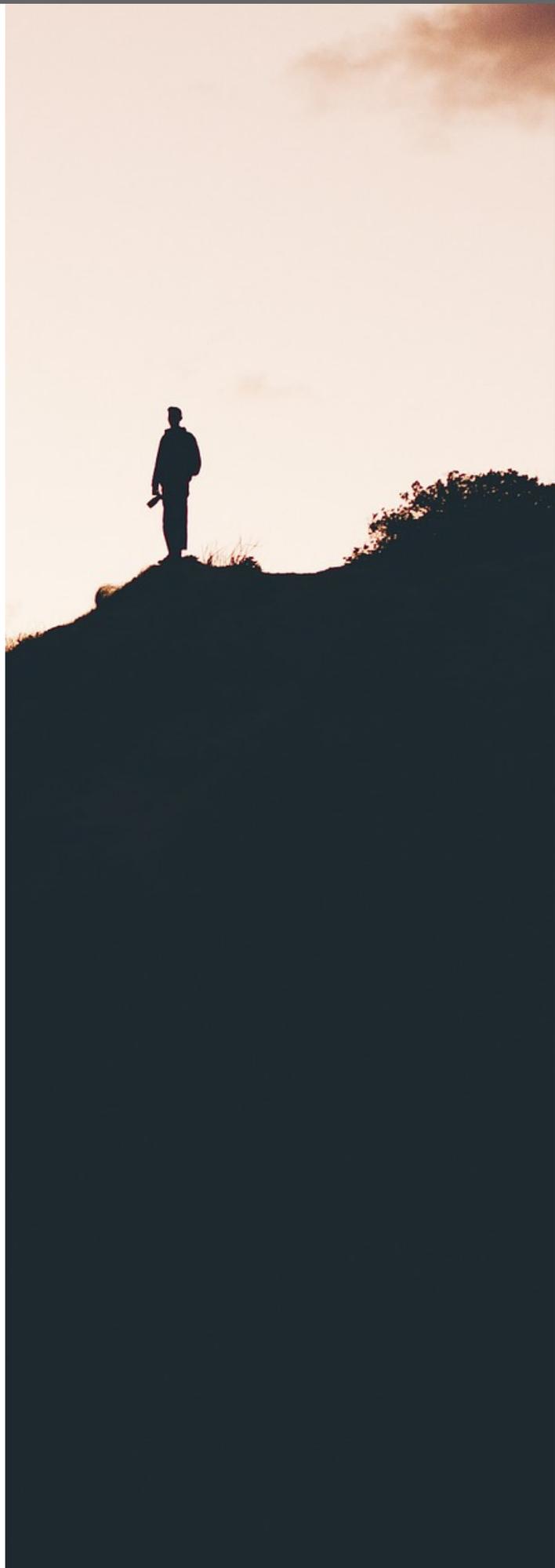
BUILD A VISION

- Company's buy a vision – not just assets
- Need to establish long term viability or product fit with a larger company
- Be clear on your long-term mission
- Don't focus solely on exit
- What can your product do for customers
- Control the bottom line



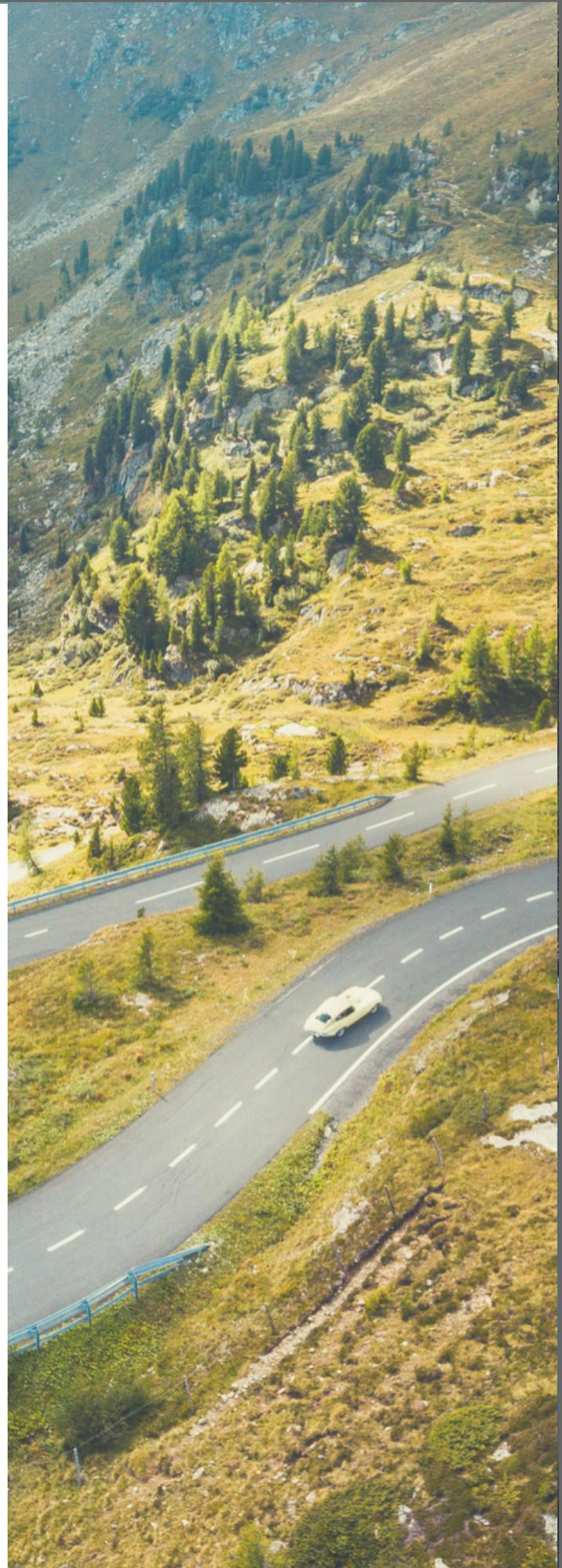
POSITION YOURSELF AS A LEADER

- Build recognition
- Get on the radar of acquiring companies
- Who is your competition, and how do you stack up against them?
- Prioritize product reviews and analyst relations
- Boost profile via awards opportunities
- Prioritize the speaker circuit



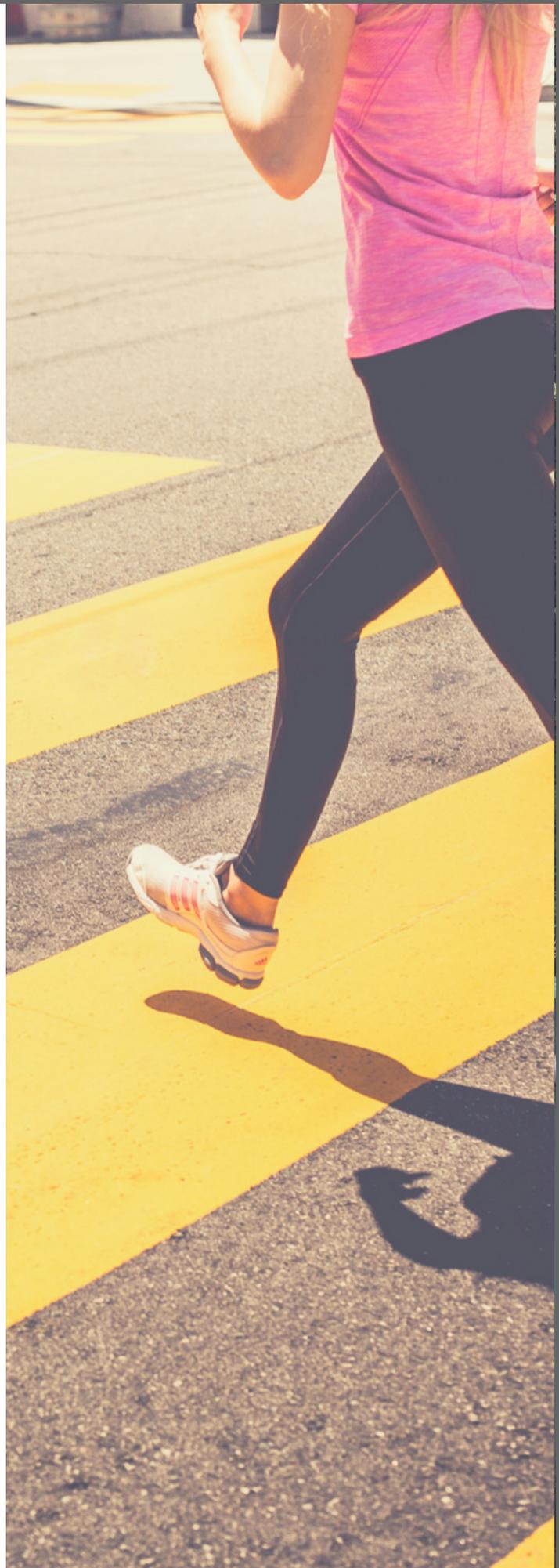
STRATEGIC PRIORITIZATION

- Do not deprioritize external communications
- External reputation is crucial - impacts valuation
- Leverage PR resources strategically
- Know your target and tailor strategy towards them
- Drive the right coverage in the right vehicles
- Appeal to the right influencers
- Coordinate efforts across the company
- B2B – tell your innovation story
- B2C – build your subscriber base



EXECUTE

- Focus on targeted press relations
- Prioritize analyst relations
- Seek out award opportunities
- Focus on the speaker circuit
- Invest in thought-leadership campaigns and have something to say



CASE STUDY

Lex Machina

- Lex Machina was acquired by LexisNexis for undisclosed amount.
- Lex Machina is a legal analytics firm well known in the intellectual property space for creating “Moneyball for the law.”
- Lex Machina wanted to create legal analytics for other federal areas
- In searching for VC money, found LexisNexis who had a vision of the data driven lawyer.
- PR approach:
 - Chose to work with PR as their main source of marketing (word of mouth)
 - Before: Worked with 2 other PR agencies. data analytics driven coverage vs. product coverage; launch/analytics coverage; visibility only in IP-driven press
 - Viewed as niche
 - After: focused on company/ legal analytics story (big picture); bylined articles; product-focused analytics coverage

CASE STUDY

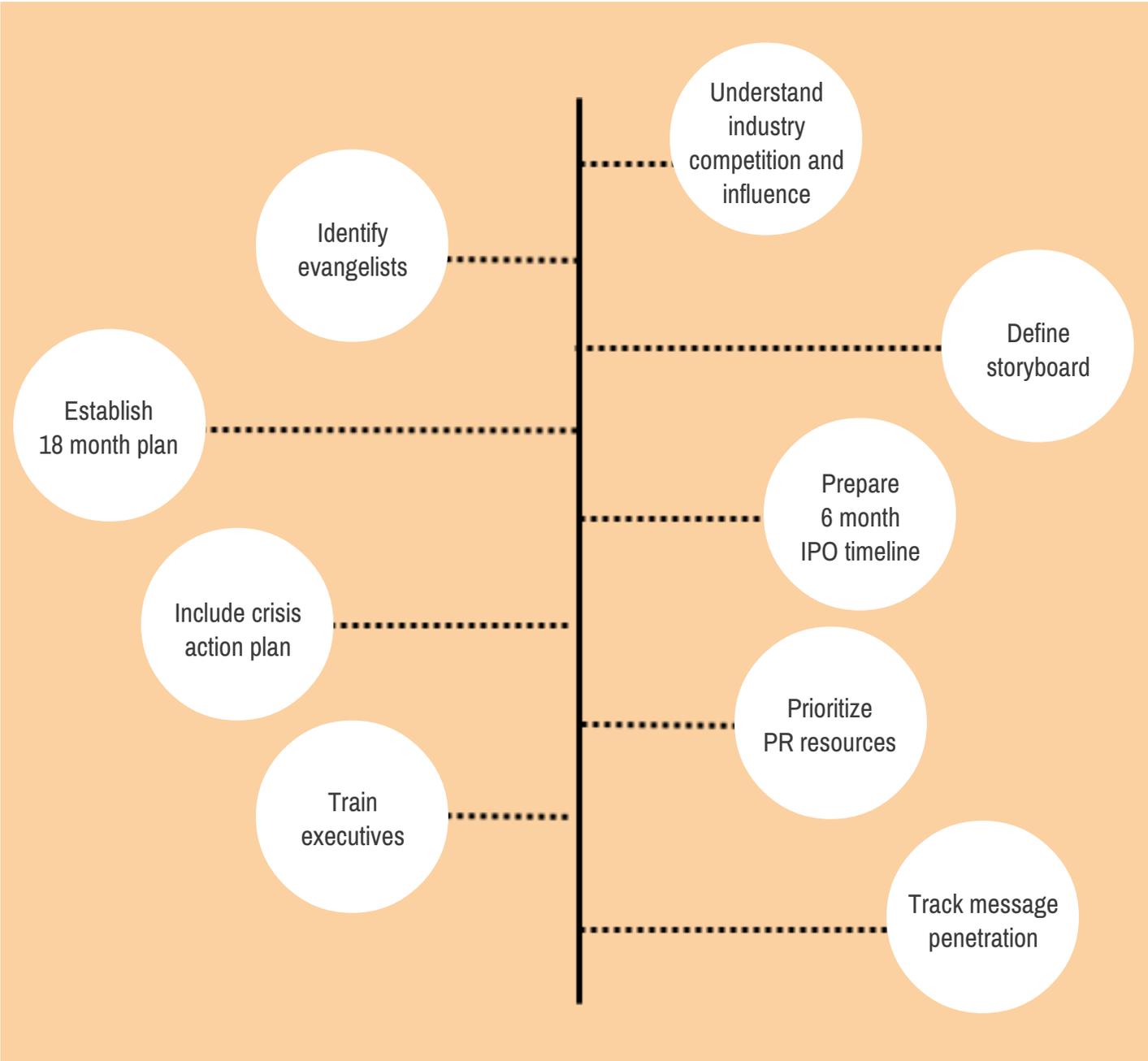


- Founders known for their technological-prowess; funded by Kholsa Ventures
- Early entrant to hot SDN market
- Significant buzz around product potential
- Hired to launch product; focused on analyst relations and thought-leadership as product had not been yet released to market
- Acquired 2 weeks before product hit the market for \$176M by Juniper Networks

An aerial, black and white photograph of a modern multi-story apartment complex. The building features a central courtyard with landscaping and a paved area. The image is rotated 90 degrees clockwise. A large, semi-transparent red rectangle is overlaid in the center, containing the text 'PREPARING FOR IPO' in white, bold, sans-serif font.

PREPARING FOR IPO

DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN AND TIMELINE



UPEVEL

BUSINESS MESSAGE

CUT THE HYPE

IDENTIFY
KEY TARGETS

CREATE VALUE-DRIVEN
BUSINESS MESSAGING

ENSURE CONSISTENT
MESSAGING ACROSS
COMMUNICATIONS
CHANNELS

AMPLIFY YOUR VOICE

**INCREASE
ENGAGEMENT WITH
MEDIA AND
ANALYSTS**

**AMPLIFY EVENT,
SOCIAL MEDIA, BLOGS
AND BYLINE
PROGRAMMING**

**PRIORITIZE BUSINESS
AND TIER 1 PRESS**

**INCREASE CUSTOMER
COMMUNICATIONS**

**INCREASE
PARTICIPATION IN
INDUSTRY EVENTS**

ESTABLISH LEADERSHIP

FINANCIAL
ANALYSTS ARE KEY

INCREASE
COMMUNICATIONS
WITH INDUSTRY
ANALYSTS

FOCUS BYLINES
AND BLOGS ON
INDUSTRY VISION

INCREASE
EXECUTIVE
COMMENTARY ON
ISSUES AND
TRENDS

BUILD 1:1 MEDIA
RELATIONSHIPS
WITH EXECUTIVE
TEAM

PRIORITIZE SPEAKING
OPPORTUNITIES

CASE STUDY



ACCURAY®

MEDICAL DEVICE MANUFACTURER OF THE CYBERKNIFE

- Created new market segment called Radiosurgery, which competes with traditional devices delivering radiation therapy. Accuray was 10 years old when it filed for IPO
- Began 6 months pre-IPO (little brand identity, <12 news stories)
 - Re-messaged company with new positioning
 - Rewrote website copy
 - Media + analyst blitz
 - Awards
 - Bylines
 - Patient
 - Stories
- Key challenges: Target customer was not ideal for consumer press
- Result: Highest grossing IPO of the year; Year 1: 270+ articles; Year 2: 1,300+ articles