

# Big Ideas : Big Returns

A Research & Advisory Service to  
Move Thought Leadership Forward

JULY 2022



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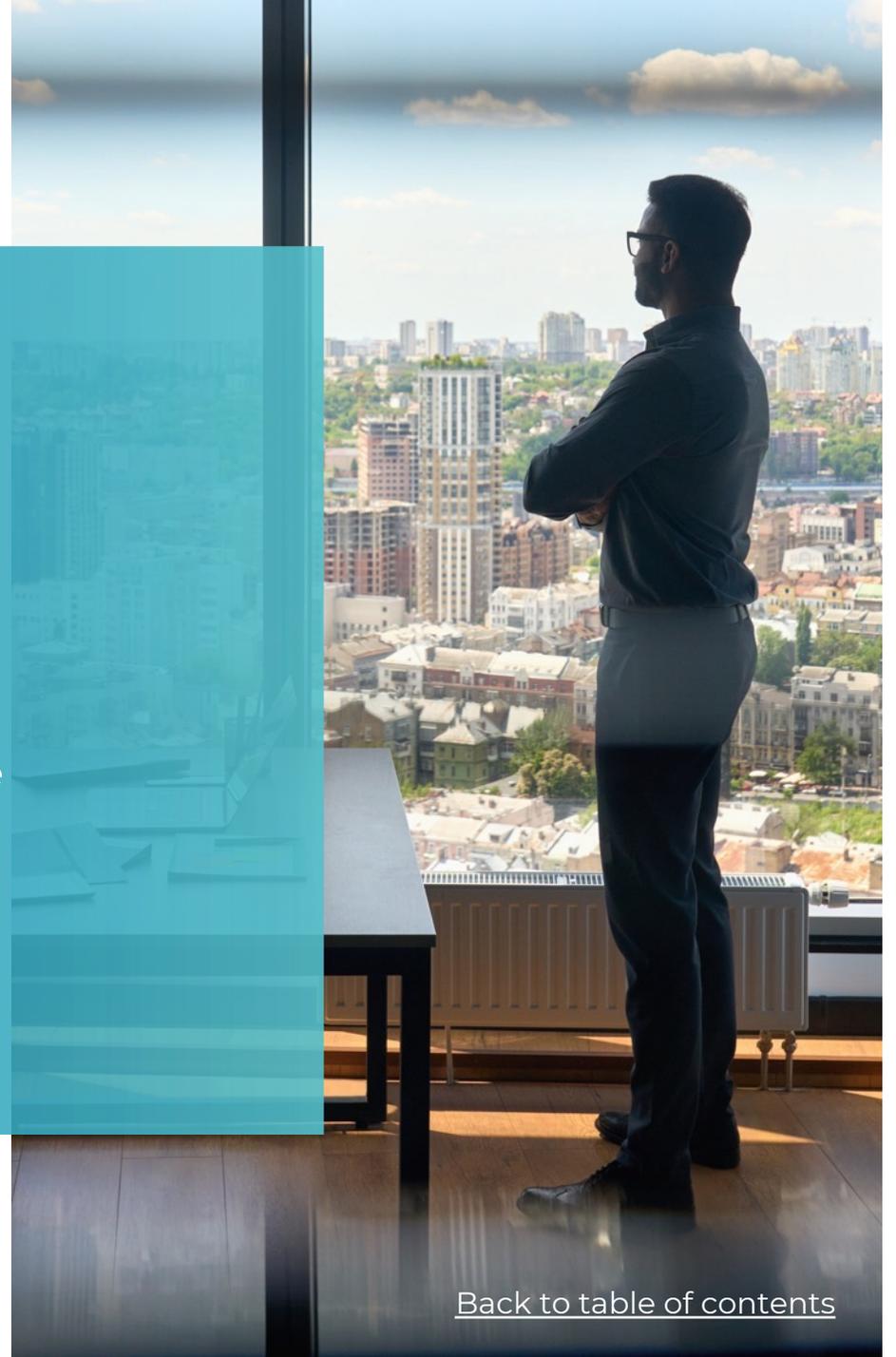
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# The B2B Thought Leadership Mandate

- B2B firms must lead with expertise to ID market challenges and solutions – product pitches only go so far: [LinkedIn/Edelman research reinforces this](#)
- Some B2B firms (e.g., professional services leaders) compete on thought leadership, but **success is elusive**
- Thought leadership is a relatively new discipline ... and there's **a paucity of deep case research** on how to do it well



# »» Do you face the following thought leadership challenges?

- Your efforts don't reflect or enhance the brand
- What you publish is me-too and isn't seen as credible vis-à-vis rivals
  - *Harvard Business Review turns us down too often!*
  - It reads like brochureware and comes off as blatant sales pitches!
- Client-facing teams don't use it
- It costs too much, doesn't move the needle, and generates little interest from customers
- You realize the importance of leading with big ideas, but you lack the funding
- Your expertise is not translating into revenue
- A few stars are more interested in building their reputation than the firm's



## Quick fixes fall short

- Superficial thought leadership research studies conducted by advertorial departments at traditional and specialty media/research houses
- Digital marketing services that confuse content marketing with thought leadership
- PR firms that see thought leadership as a service extension but lack deep knowledge to understand/codify your real expertise

*The market is hungry for **REAL**  
Thought Leadership **ON** Thought Leadership*



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# » Let us help you win on the power of your firm's thinking

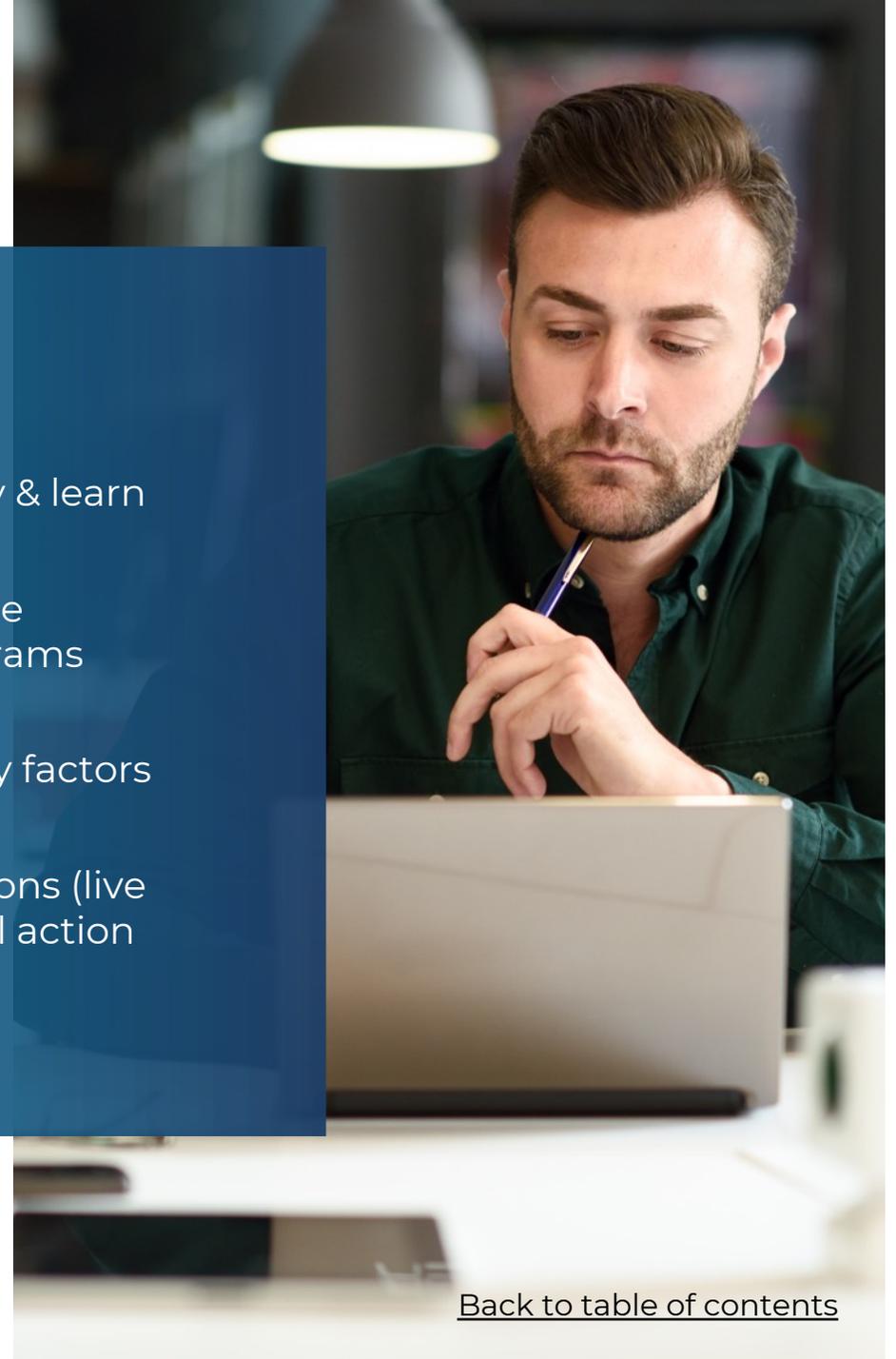
Be part of a research and advisory think tank ...

- ... that illuminates the **best & brightest thinking** on thought leadership ...
- ... and surfaces the most **effective, progressive, & empirically sound** approaches to argument development, execution, & delivery ...
- ... in a **practical, prophetic, & programmatic** fashion...
- ... and apply the learnings to deliver **exceptional** thought leadership **results** for your firm



# How the program works

- Together, we will design primary research studies to identify & learn from those organizations that are best of the best
  - ▶ You will gain insight from extensive interviews with the people responsible for great thought leadership programs @ B2B companies – large, mid-sized, and small
- Together, we will share rigorous and deep analysis of the key factors that make “the best” the best
  - ▶ You will participate in engaging and informative sessions (live and virtual) that convert research results into practical action



# The Model

A safe space to share pain points, best & worst practices, and success stories!



Case studies and research with experts



Living lab research with clients/ customers



Facilitated peer group sharing



Input from members: successes, struggles, etc.



PRESENTATIONS

REPORTS

ADVICE

## »» What you get

Insights powered by primary research  
& real-world evidence ...

... that help your organization produce **dramatically better** and **more impactful** thought leadership ...

... **marketed** with greater **precision** ...

... that generates more **opportunities & leads** ...

... which creates more **revenue** ...

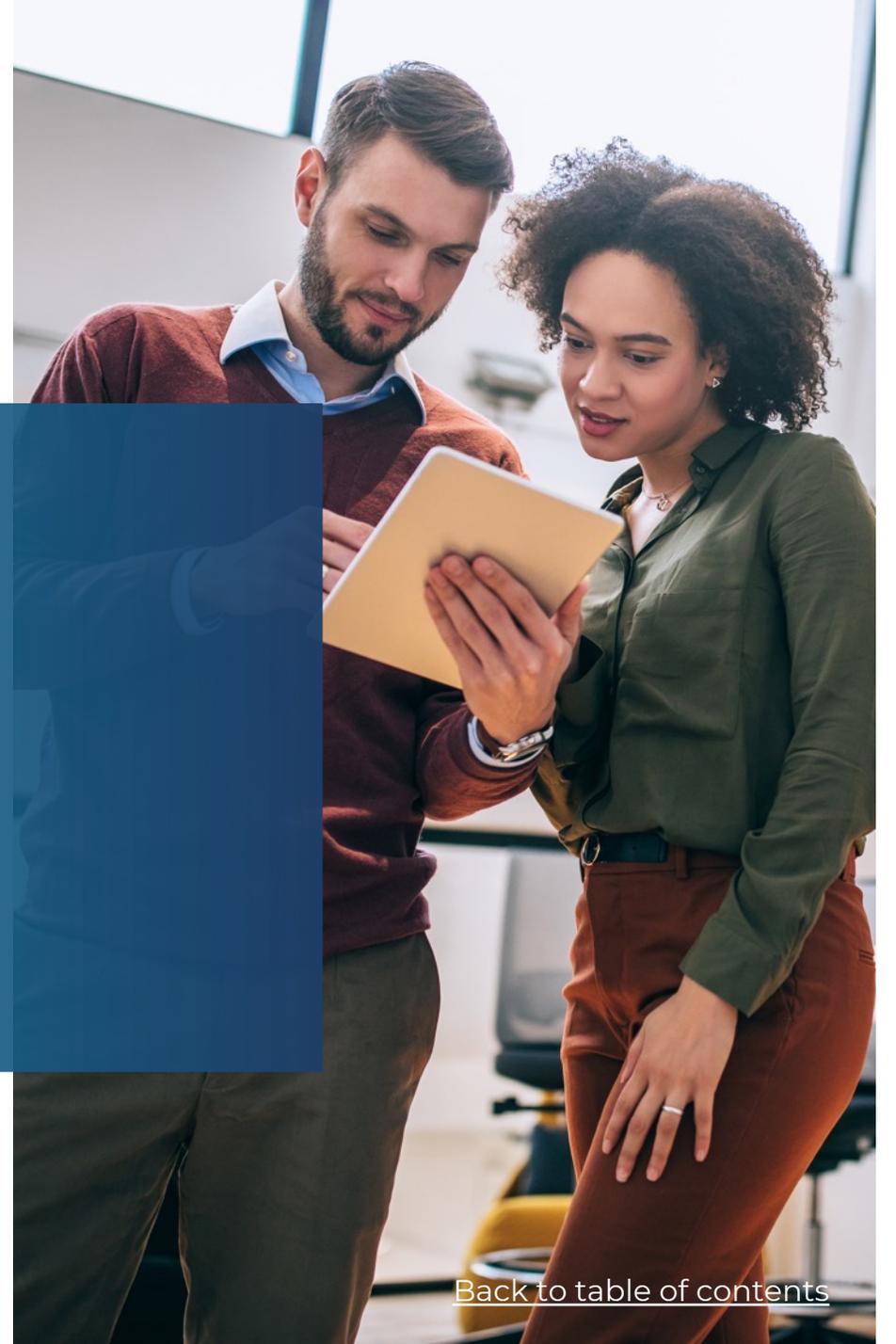
... which helps **advance your career**

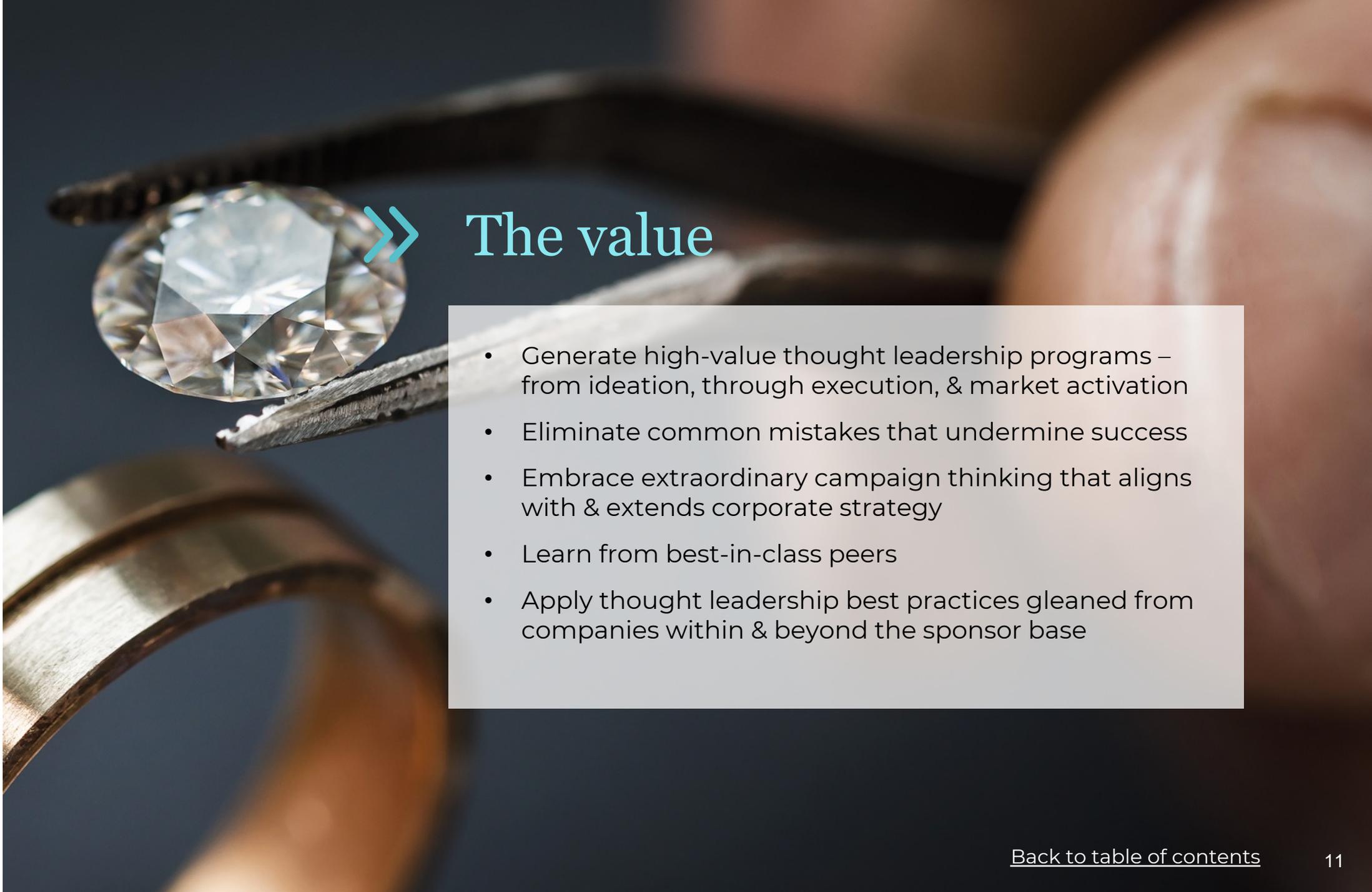




# The deliverables

- Deep custom research reports on thought leadership best practices across B2B sectors
- Informed advice drawn from real-world examples that reveal winning thought leadership discipline & activities
- A playbook to convert findings into actions to dramatically improve your thought leadership returns





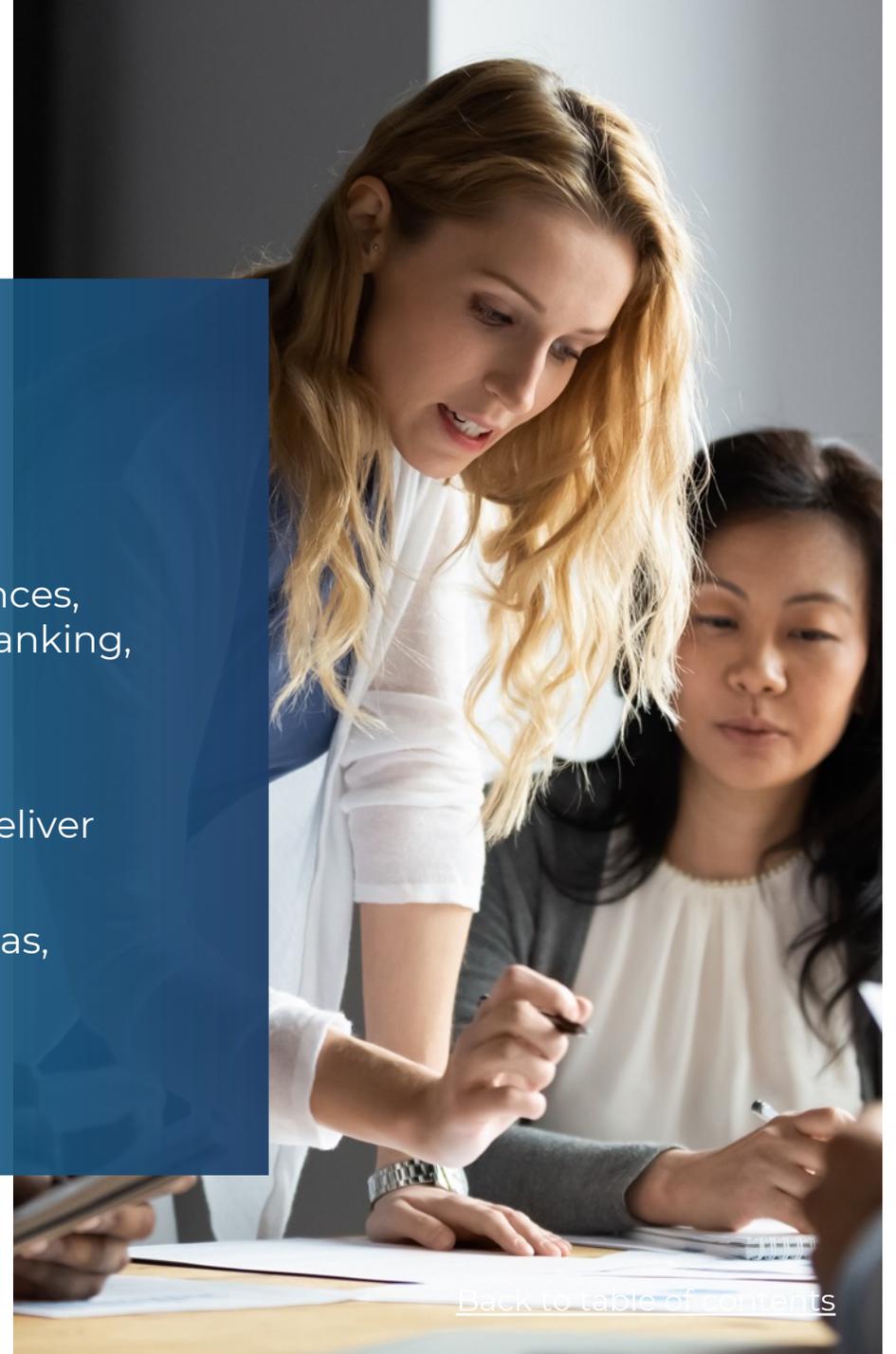
## The value

- Generate high-value thought leadership programs – from ideation, through execution, & market activation
- Eliminate common mistakes that undermine success
- Embrace extraordinary campaign thinking that aligns with & extends corporate strategy
- Learn from best-in-class peers
- Apply thought leadership best practices gleaned from companies within & beyond the sponsor base

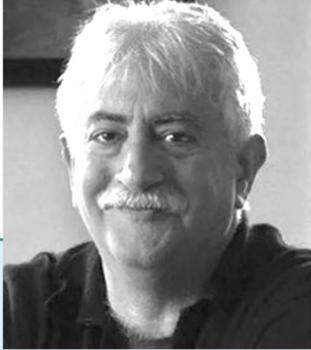


# Member profile

- B2B organizations that compete on their expertise
- Management consulting, IT services players, health/life sciences, legal, software, venture capital, private equity, investment banking, training & development, research, etc.
- Senior leaders who are responsible for thought leadership
- Research directors, editorial directors, CMOs, practice and deliver leaders, etc.
- Others that seek a competitive edge built on expertise & ideas, (academia, non-profits, specialty manufacturers, biz-dev organizations, think tanks, trade associations, etc.)



# Leading the research charge



## Bob Buday

**CEO**  
**Buday Thought Leadership Partners**

Author of *Competing on Thought Leadership*, Bob has helped dozens of B2B companies – including CSC Index with its Business Process Re-engineering initiative – develop, shape and bring big ideas to market with measurable business results.



## Alan Alper

**COO & Principal**  
**Buday Thought Leadership Partners**

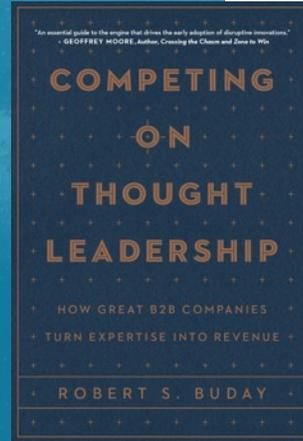
A content authority with 40 years-plus of journalism and industry analyst experience, Alan founded the award-winning thought leadership practice at Cognizant Technology Solutions, a leading global IT and business services firm.



## Thomas A. Stewart

**Author, Editor &**  
**Leading Authority on Intellectual Capital**

An author of three books on intellectual capital and service design innovation, Tom was Chief Marketing & Knowledge Officer at Booz & Co.; Editor-in-Chief of *Harvard Business Review*; & on the Board of Editors of *Fortune* magazine.



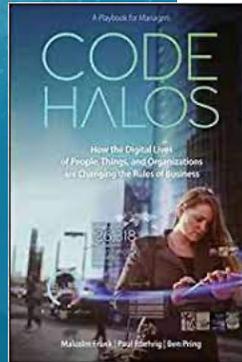
## More About Robert Buday

Bob's career in thought leadership began in 1987, as director of marketing at the consulting firm that created the blockbuster management concept of the 1990s, business reengineering. He was a key part of the marketing team that made "reengineering" a household word, ignited a \$5 billion-a-year consulting industry, and promoted three mega-bestselling books (Reengineering the Corporation, Reengineering Management, and The Discipline of Market Leaders).

He authored the 2022 bestselling book, "Competing on Thought Leadership" (Ideapress Publishing).

He is the co-founder of two pioneering thought leadership consulting and marketing firms (Buday TLP and Bloom Group LLC).

Bob was the first person to research thought leadership activities in professional services firms and the thought leadership profession, going back to 2006.



## More About Alan Alper

A content authority with 40 years-plus of journalism and big ideas publishing experience, Alan founded the award-winning thought leadership practice at Cognizant Technology Solutions, a leading global IT services firm.

During his 15 years at Cognizant, Alan led two award-winning book publishing projects — Code Halos and What To Do When Machines Do Everything. He also oversaw thought leadership activities related to Cognizant’s strategic partnership with The World Economic Forum, including the company’s presence at the forum’s Annual Meeting in Davos.

Prior to joining Cognizant, Alan was an award-winning journalist at a variety of business-tech publications and was editorial director at Gomez Advisors, a trailblazing e-commerce research and advisory services firm.

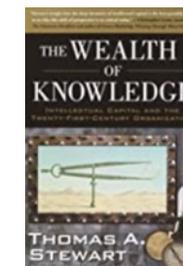
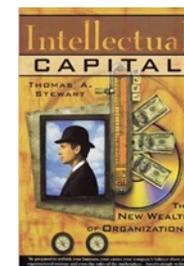


## More About Tom Stewart

For more than 30 years, Tom has been a leading light on how companies use cutting-edge management ideas to win in the marketplace. He ran Harvard Business Review (2002-2008) and Booz & Company's marketing and thought leadership activities, including the journal Strategy & Business (2008-2014). And he was the first editor at Fortune magazine to focus on management concepts (1989-2002 — “intellectual capital,” as he referred to it).

From 2014 to 2020, he led a research program on the mid-sized company market at Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business (the National Center for the Middle Market). More recently, he was chief knowledge officer of the consulting firm AchieveNext.

Tom has also been a thought leader himself, as author of three management books.





## Proposed initial topics

### 1 Idea challenged?

—  
The R&D behind market-changing concepts

### 2 Strategic focus challenged?

—  
Allocating thought leadership investments

### 3 Competency challenged?

—  
Identifying and fixing weaknesses in thought leadership programs

### 4 Credibility challenged?

—  
Getting your content in the most prestigious places

### 5 Sales team challenged?

—  
Arming your sales force to consult and convert with thought leadership

### 6 Marketing challenged?

—  
Designing and executing powerful thought leadership campaigns

### 7 Service delivery challenged?

—  
Turning thought leadership into scalable new services

# Ideation challenged?



## Issue

- We're a day late and a dollar short
- We are saying the same things as our competitors
- We're not looked at as thought leaders – only as an implementer of others' thoughts or yesterday's ideas
- We have lots of ideas, but they are small

## Result

- Hard to command a price premium because our expertise looks like a commodity
- Big investments in thought leadership research and marketing that aren't moving the needle
- Pressure from above to cut back on the thought leadership budget and programs

## Remedy

- Understanding best practices in thought leadership research and development: How the biggest management concepts were developed
- Insight into why our thought leadership doesn't engage our clients' executive leadership – or our own senior team

# Strategic focus challenged?



## Issue

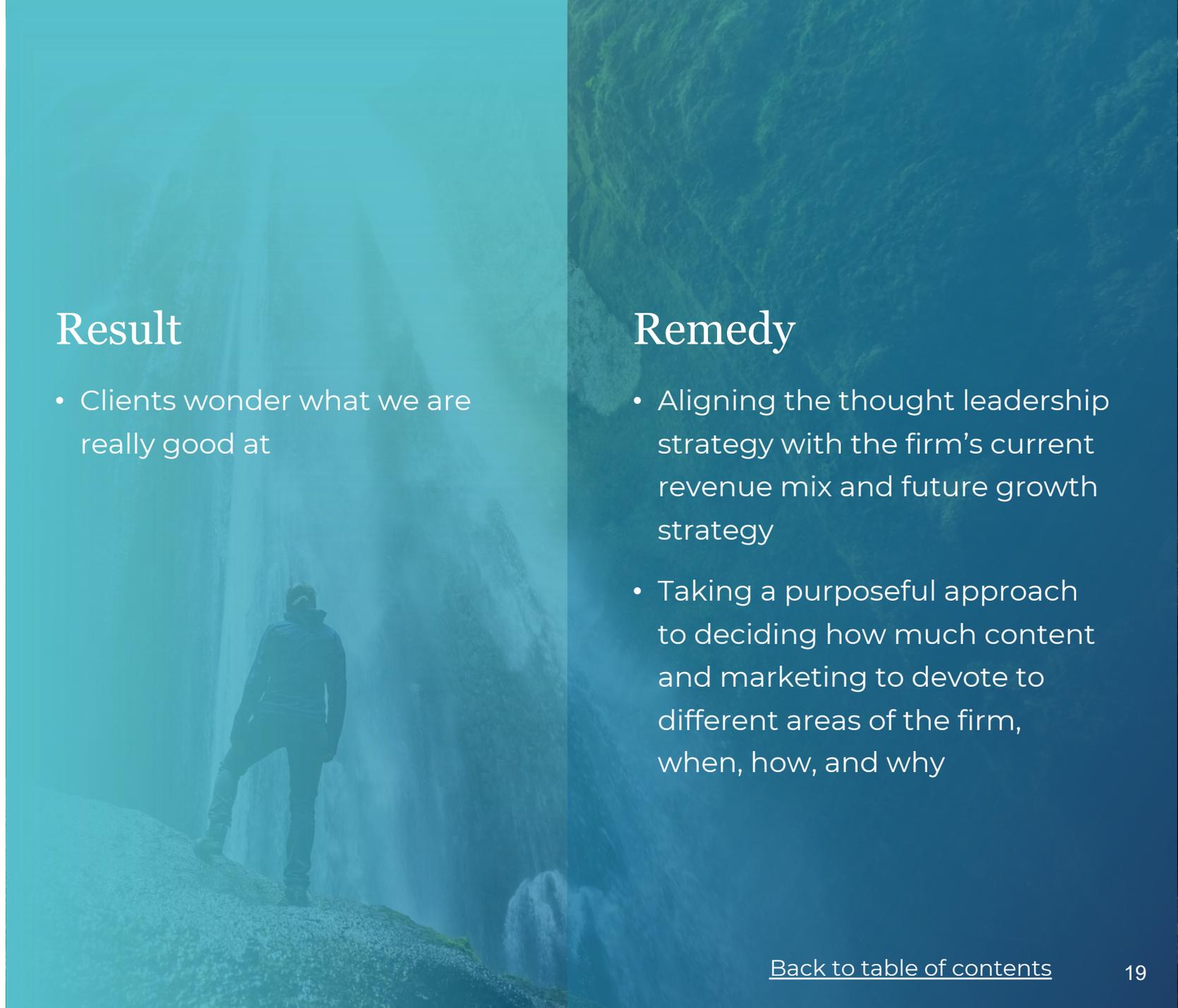
- We're producing too much thought leadership content in areas in which we have little or no expertise – or what we produce is fluffy, undifferentiated, or overly indexed toward hunch
- We're producing too little in areas in which we have substantial expertise

## Result

- Clients wonder what we are really good at

## Remedy

- Aligning the thought leadership strategy with the firm's current revenue mix and future growth strategy
- Taking a purposeful approach to deciding how much content and marketing to devote to different areas of the firm, when, how, and why



# Competency challenged?



## Issue

- To outsiders and some insiders, it appears that we do not know what we're doing, and how to improve our thought leadership programs

## Result

- Thought leadership gets a bad reputation
- Company leaders lose faith in it

## Remedy

- A rigorous process for assessing and improving the weaknesses in thought leadership programs



# Credibility challenged?



## Issue

- Lack the credentials our more famous competitors receive:
  - Publishing in *HBR*
  - Securing top-tier book deals
  - Getting keynote at key conferences
  - Being a trusted media sources
- We only publish on our website & LinkedIn
- We only speak at our own conferences or webinars
- The only op-eds we publish are advertorials

## Result

- Our ideas aren't endorsed by credible external experts

## Remedy

- Practical, proven advice on how to get published in top-tier journals by top-tier book publishers, etc.
- Guidance on how to land coveted speaking roles at influential conferences, etc.

# Sales team challenged?



## Issue

- Disconnect between thought leadership marketing and sales
- Our clients get excited about the thought leadership content we produce, but there's little sales follow-through because they've not read our work or embraced it
- We're always being asked to justify our budget/ existence

## Result

- The salesforce doesn't use thought leadership to open doors; thus, we're losing sales opportunities
- The salesforce (those closest to clients and revenue) denigrates us
- Clients wonder if we have the expertise that our publications profess
- Clients love our content but when they ask one of our salespeople about it, they don't know much

## Remedy

- Raise sales close rates by having much-better-informed salespeople
- More fruitful sales discussions with prospects about your firm's expertise
- Allies – not enemies – in sales

# Marketing challenged?



## Issue

- Have a lot of good content that few people know about
- Sales team ignores internal memos announcing the new thought leadership content
- Don't have a cadence or rhythm; thought leadership doesn't drive campaigns
- Marketing steals our budgets for their image and product marketing campaigns

## Result

- Our great ideas don't travel very far. Big lost opportunity in getting the firm's wisdom in front of the right people who could use it
- Big investments in content (research, books, etc.) reach a very small portion of the target audience that could use it.
- Too much content sits on a shelf or on a hard drive, or on the company's website

## Remedy

- Planning and executing effective marketing campaigns so that great content reaches a much bigger percentage of the audience who could act on it
- Our best content attracts the audience it deserves
- Thought leadership finally seen as a big driver of revenue

# Service delivery challenged?



## Issue

- When clients respond strongly to our content, we can't send enough skilled people in to sell and deliver the work ...
- ... so we burn through leads because they often sit idle ...
- ... which undermines repeat work because our referrals are few and our client references are poor.

## Result

- High cost of marketing and sales because we're churning through clients, with little repeat work in their companies.
- Reputational loss from not appearing to be as good as our *HBR* article or book suggests we are.

## Remedy

- Informed, in-depth, and practical advice on ways to use thought leadership content for service renewal and innovation.
- Valuable input on how to gain a delivery advantage, not just a marketing and sales advantage



## But wait, there's more ...

- Beyond these idea starters ... we will work with sponsors to:
  - ▶ Identify additional research themes
  - ▶ Customize our research agenda to fit your individual organization needs
  - ▶ Tunnel into those topics in our group meetings to optimize your thought leadership effort



# Annual sponsorship fees





# Benefits of membership

Strike strong, new relationships with thought leadership peers through four quarterly meetings, both in-person and virtual



Get novel insights based on best practices about how to solve challenges faced when developing thought leadership through in-depth, engaging research reports (2 per year)



Gain access to top thought leadership consultants – Bob, Alan and Tom – on the research topics at hand



## Proposed timeline



Market research planning with founding sponsors to fine-tune program, topics, deliverables, meeting cadence, etc. (July-August)

First topic kickoff (September through November)

Presentation of results (December)

Initial report issued (January)

# Questions?



For answers, contact:



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