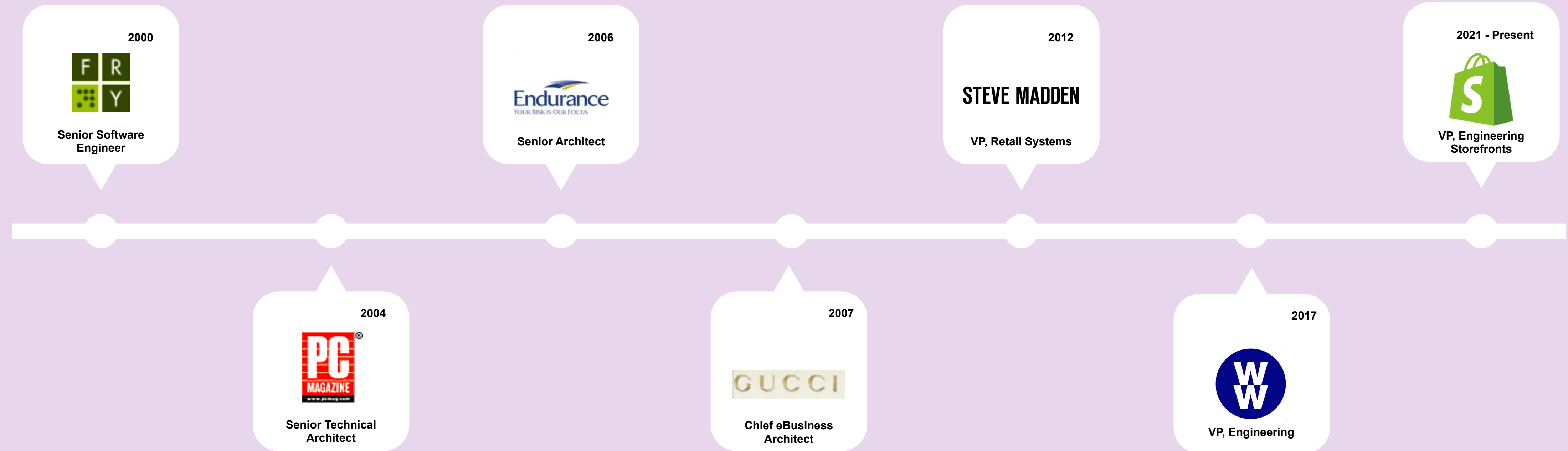


Better Engineering through Business Understanding

Rodney Woodruff
VP of Engineering, Storefronts
Shopify
[@rodnejwoodruff](#)

Career Snapshot



**We want to build products and capabilities
that ...**

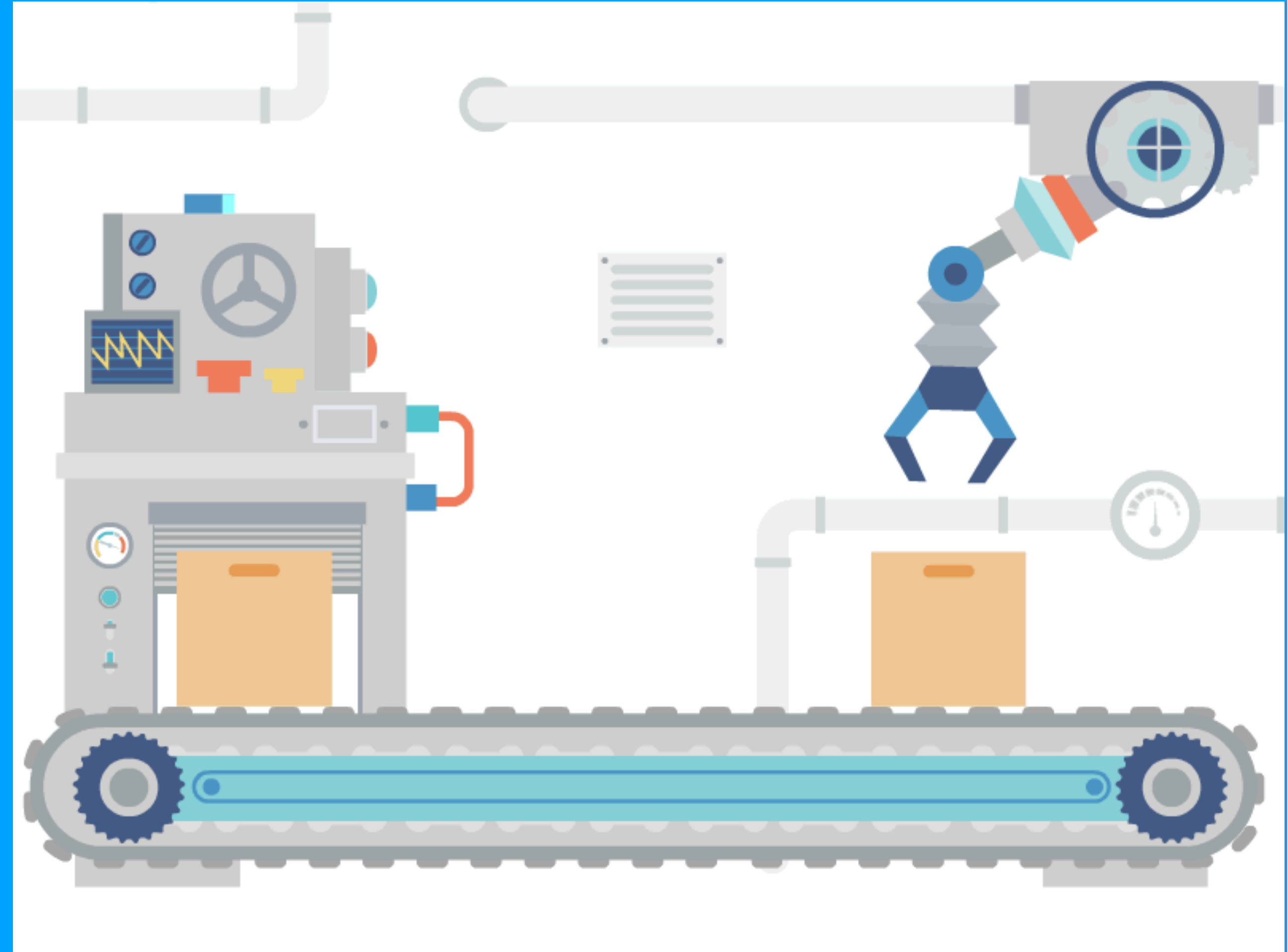
People anticipate



Surprise & Delight



Work



Allows for more
innovation



**We spend too much time being
short order cooks**



Accomplishing this requires ...

- Knowing the general purpose of a business
- Aligning on mission and vision
- Partnering to build the “right” products and capabilities



The purpose of a business is to offer value (through products and/or services) to customers, who pay for the value with cash or equivalents.

Alan Weiss

Business Actions

Research &
Development

Create new value

Marketing

Create need

Finance

Create better cashflow

Alan Weiss

If the purpose of a business is to make money, how much do we need to know about making money as Tech leaders?

Key Finance Terms

ok, just some

- Revenue
- Cost Reduction
- Time to Market
- Return on Investment
- Capital Expenditure
- Operating Expense
- Cost Avoidance
- Cost Savings
- EBITDA



**What is your company's mission or
vision statement?**

Making commerce better for everyone

Shopify's Mission

To give merchants a home on the internet that they're utterly proud of

Storefronts' Goal

Shopify Product Principles

- Everyone works on product
- Build what most merchants need, most of the time
- Make the important things easy, and everything else possible
- Maximize merchants' time





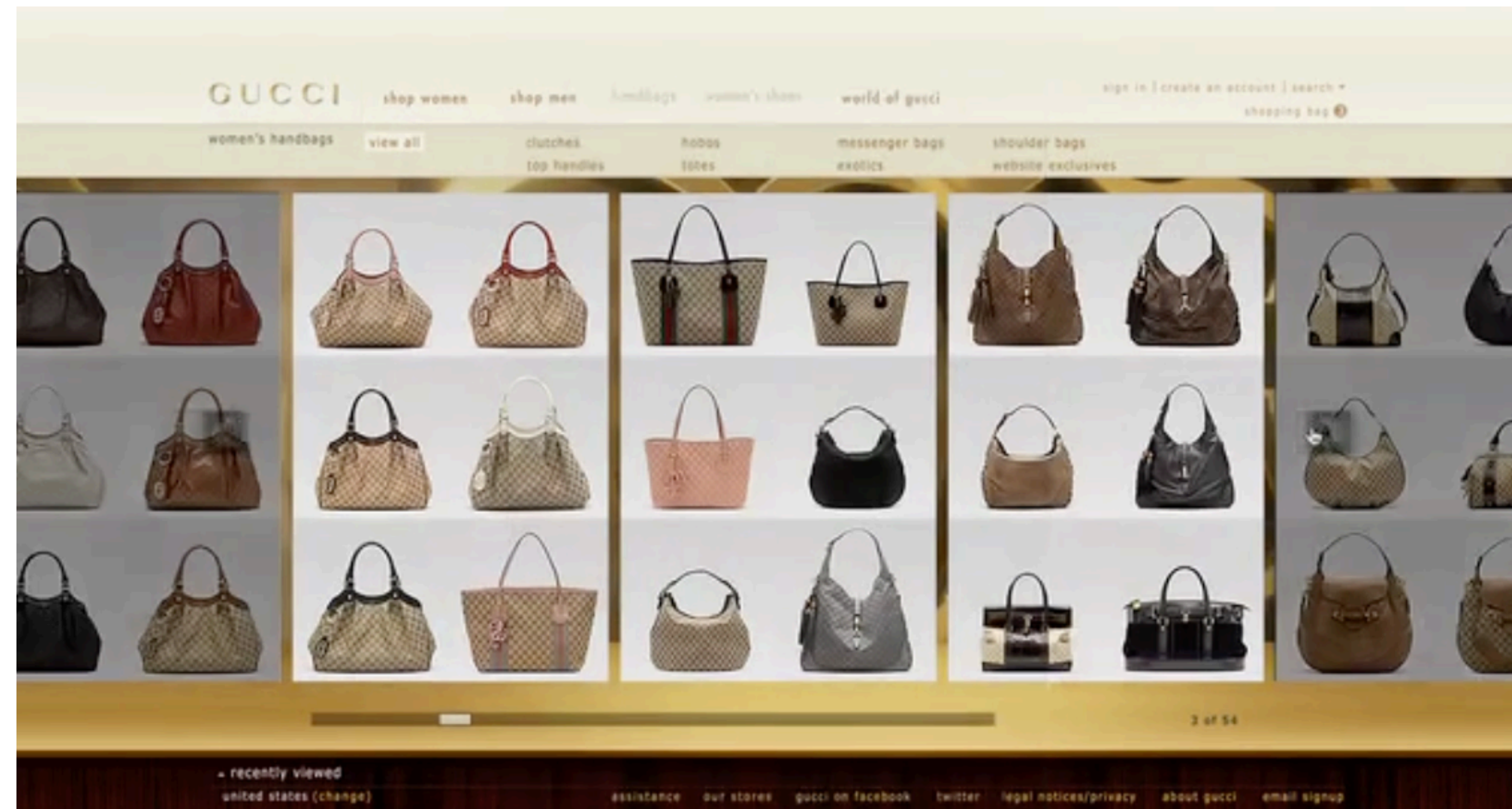
Hydrogen & Oxygen

Merchants want more control to create their story.

Revenue

Visual Merchandising

It takes way too long to merchandize a category which is making it difficult to get the site ready for its season or to actually modify an existing category page.



Time to Market



Best Way Shipping

There has to be a better way to provide the quality of service that customers expect while also reducing our costs.

**Cost Reduction/
Revenue**

Recap

- The goal of a company is to make money
- Know your company's mission and goals
- Know how the products you build help make money and fulfill those missions and goals
- Partner closely
- Increase empathy
 - Talk to users
 - Use your product
 - Make room for your team to do these as well
- Trifecta Model (leaddev.com) — James Stanier (Shopify Director of Engineering)



Thank you!!



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