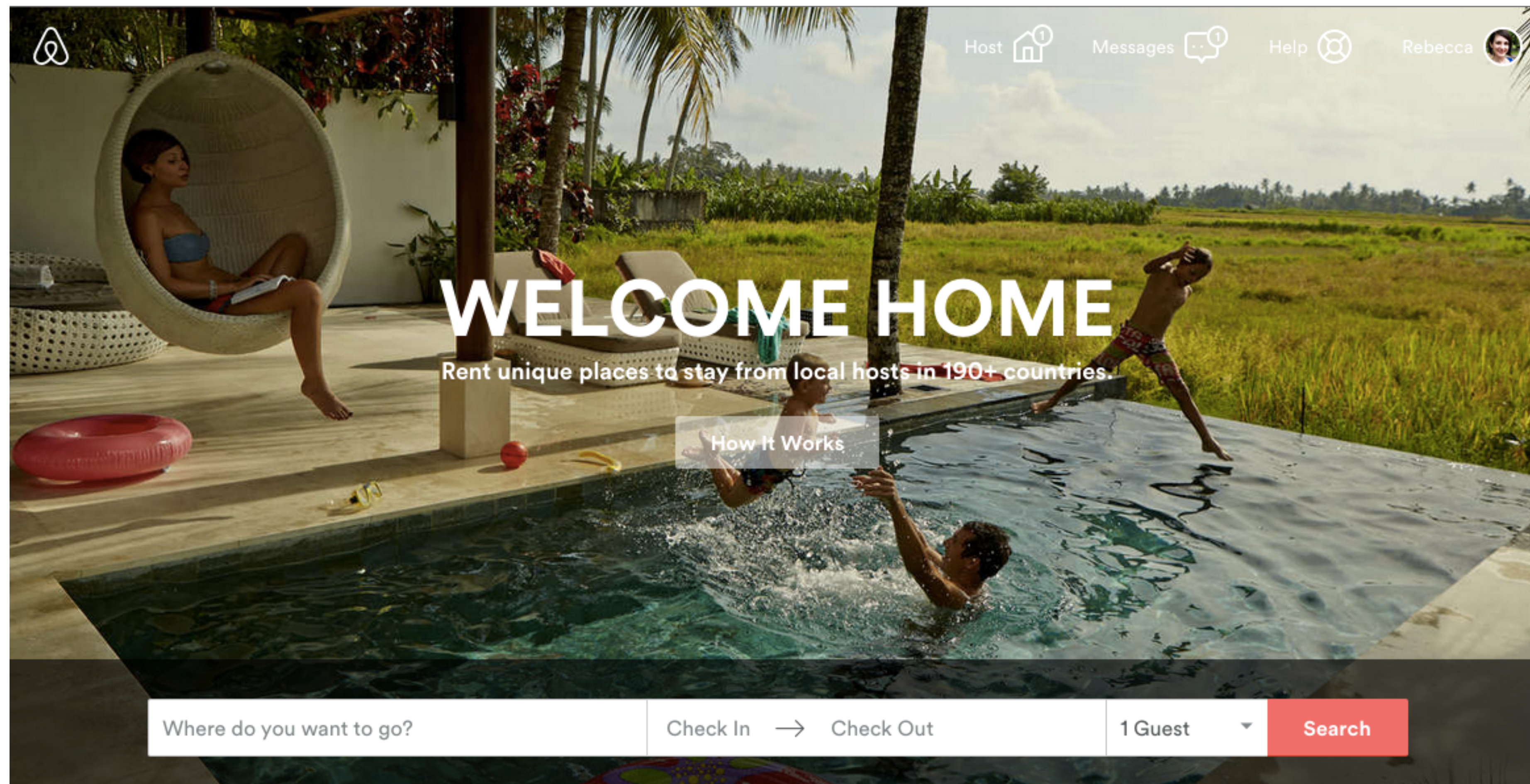# Productizing Email for Explosive Growth

Rebecca Rosenfelt

Growth Product Manager

airbnb

About Airbnb

1.5+ million homes
34,000+ cities
190+ countries
25,000,000 guests

How Email Drives Airbnb

User to User

Airbnb to Host

Airbnb to Guest

User to User

Airbnb to Host

Airbnb to Guest

Problem:
No consistent, scalable way to communicate with guests

(outside of transactional emails)

Email:
The story of a growth lever

Back in 2014….

Trips so good, you can almost taste them

Rome, Maui, Buenos Aires—destinations as delicious as they are delightful. Homemade pizza in the plaza, seared ahi by the beach, a perfectly grilled steak at the corner cafe—no ordinary eatery can satisfy these cravings.

So give yourself a break from tepid takeout, and head straight to the source of your favorite flavors by **booking an Airbnb getaway** in your dream food destination. Learn the local tricks at a cooking class, whip up feasts in your own gourmet kitchen, or leave it to the pros at neighborhood restaurants

Bon appétit,
Airbnb

- Manual
- One-off blasts
- 3rd party tool

Build a New Growth Lever in 3 Simple Steps

1. Scope
2. Grow
3. Optimize

1. Scope

2. Grow

3. Optimize

Scope

Scope

1. **Make sure the opportunity is big enough**

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2. Watch what others are doing, but **find out if it's working**

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3. Pick a goal, but **watch all metrics**

Scope

1. Make sure the opportunity is **big enough**

2. Watch what others are doing, but **find out if it's working**

3. Pick a goal, but **watch all metrics**

4. Run lightweight tests to prove you can **move your metric**

Scope

1. **Make sure the opportunity is big enough**

   Dove into user data, looked at booking patterns, activation rates, retention, etc

   Opportunity —-> First time bookers

Scope

2. Watch what others are doing, but find out if it's working

Signed up for a ton of email

Used our networks to talk to the people working on email at companies who seem to do it well
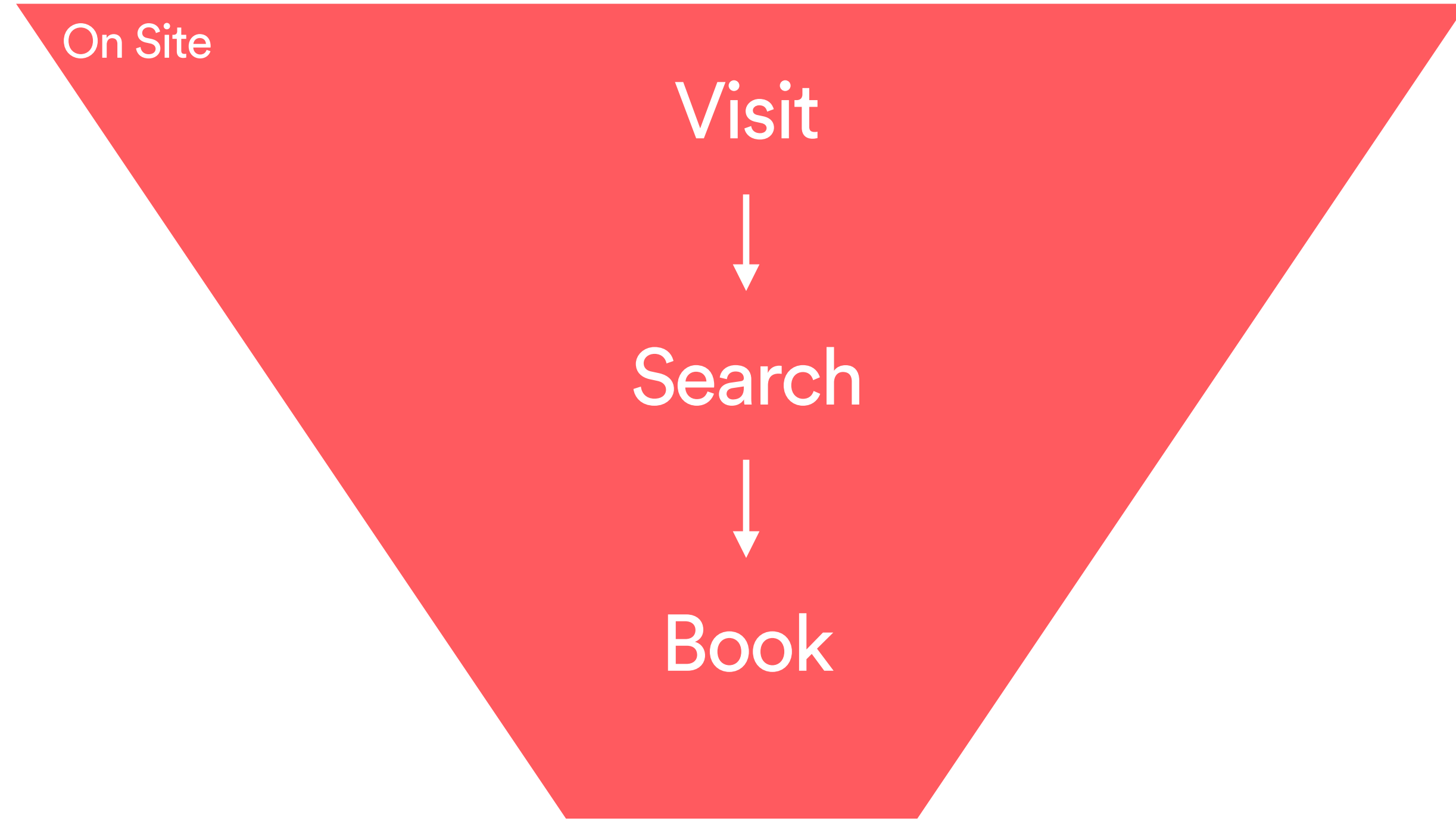
Scope

3. **Pick a goal, but watch all metrics**

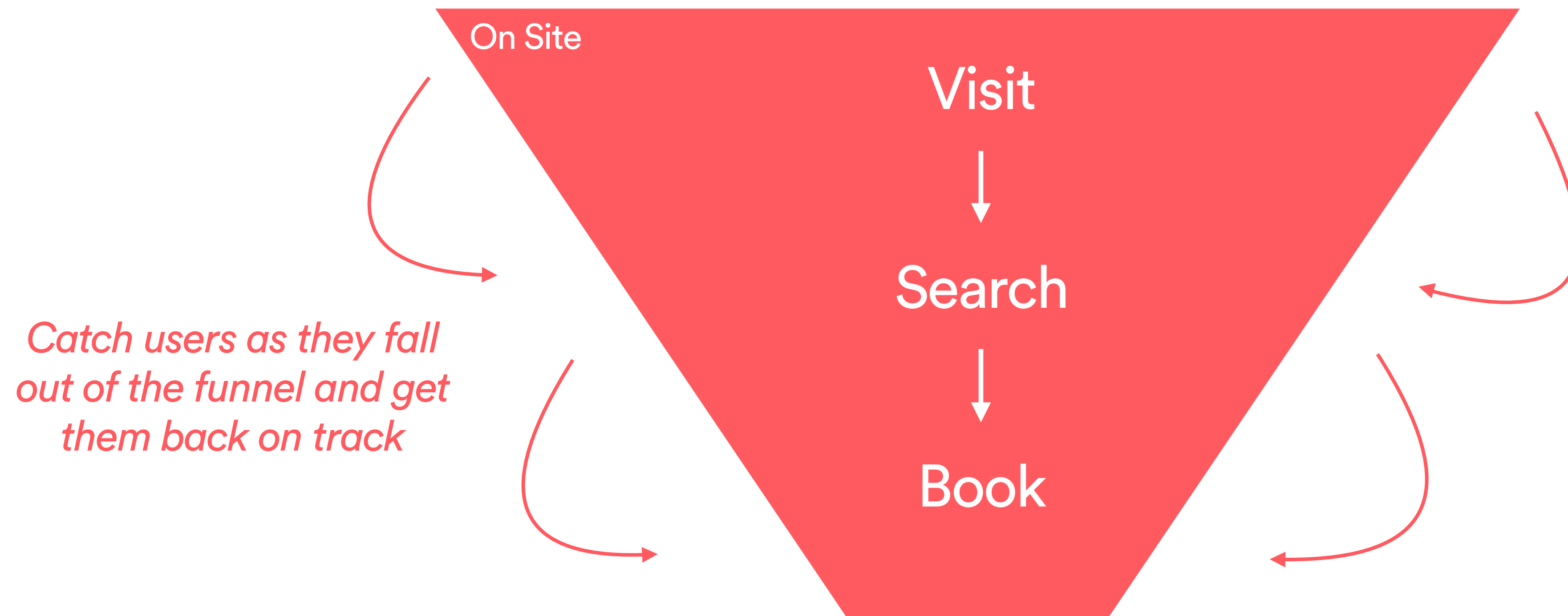   *Leading indicators vs drag metrics vs goal metrics (more later)*

Scope

4. **Run lightweight tests to prove you can move your metric**

Do stuff that doesn't scale (yet)

Scope

On Site

Visit
↓
Search
↓
Book

Scope

On Site

Visit

↓

Search

↓

Book

Catch users as they fall out of the funnel and get them back on track

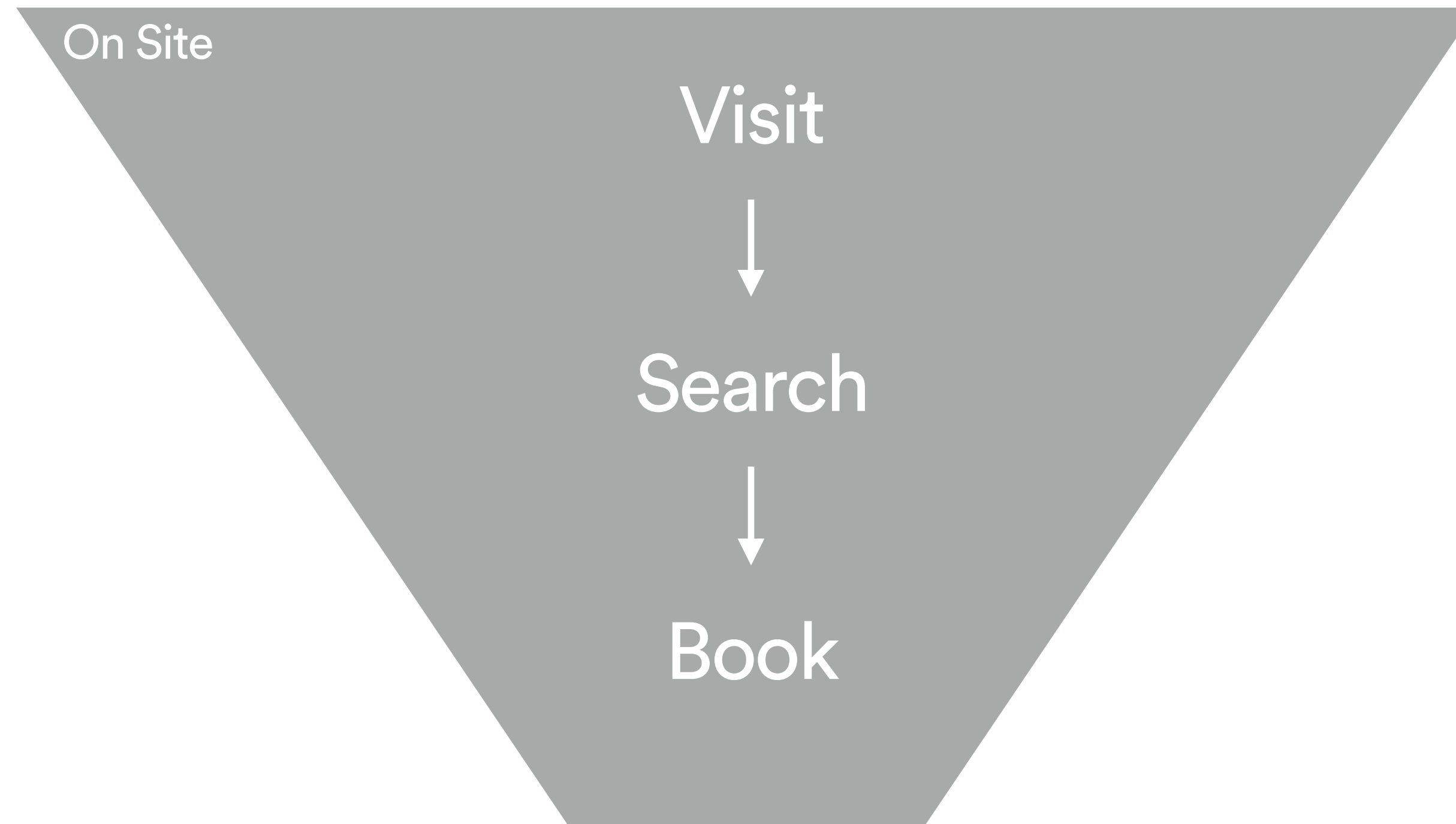# Scope

Inspire

↓

Off Site
On Site

Visit

↓

Search

↓

Book

1. Scope

2. Grow

3. Optimize

Grow
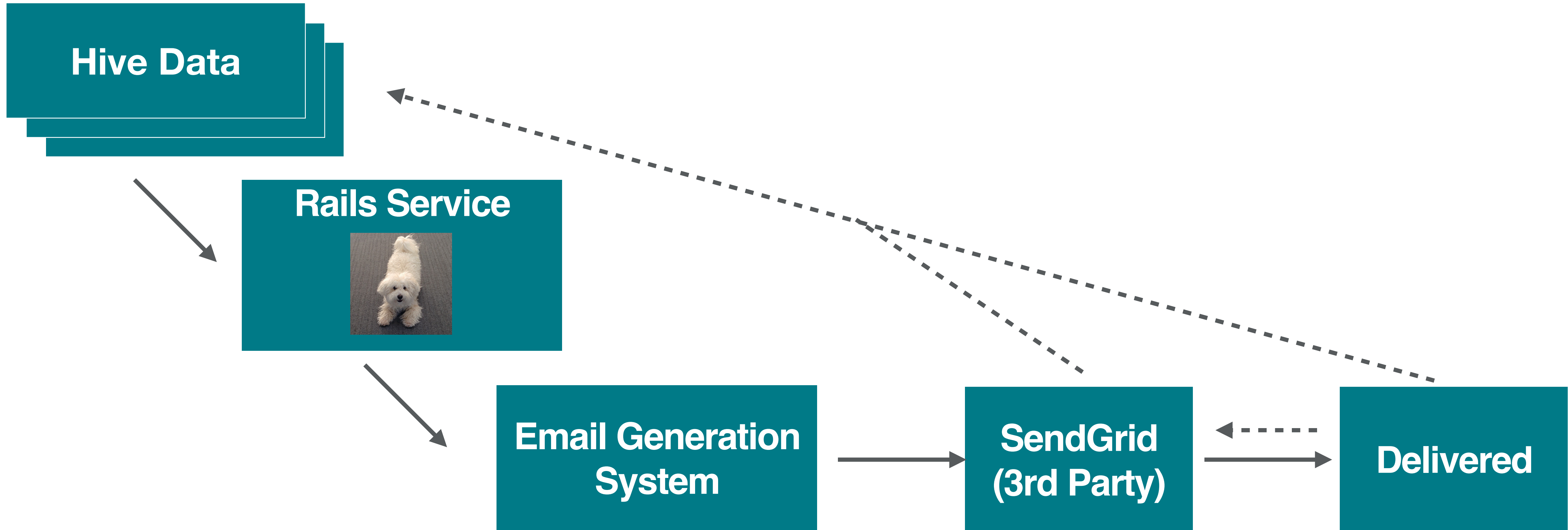
V1: Simple rake task to schedule trigger emails

V2: Robust internal Rails service to scale to broader audience

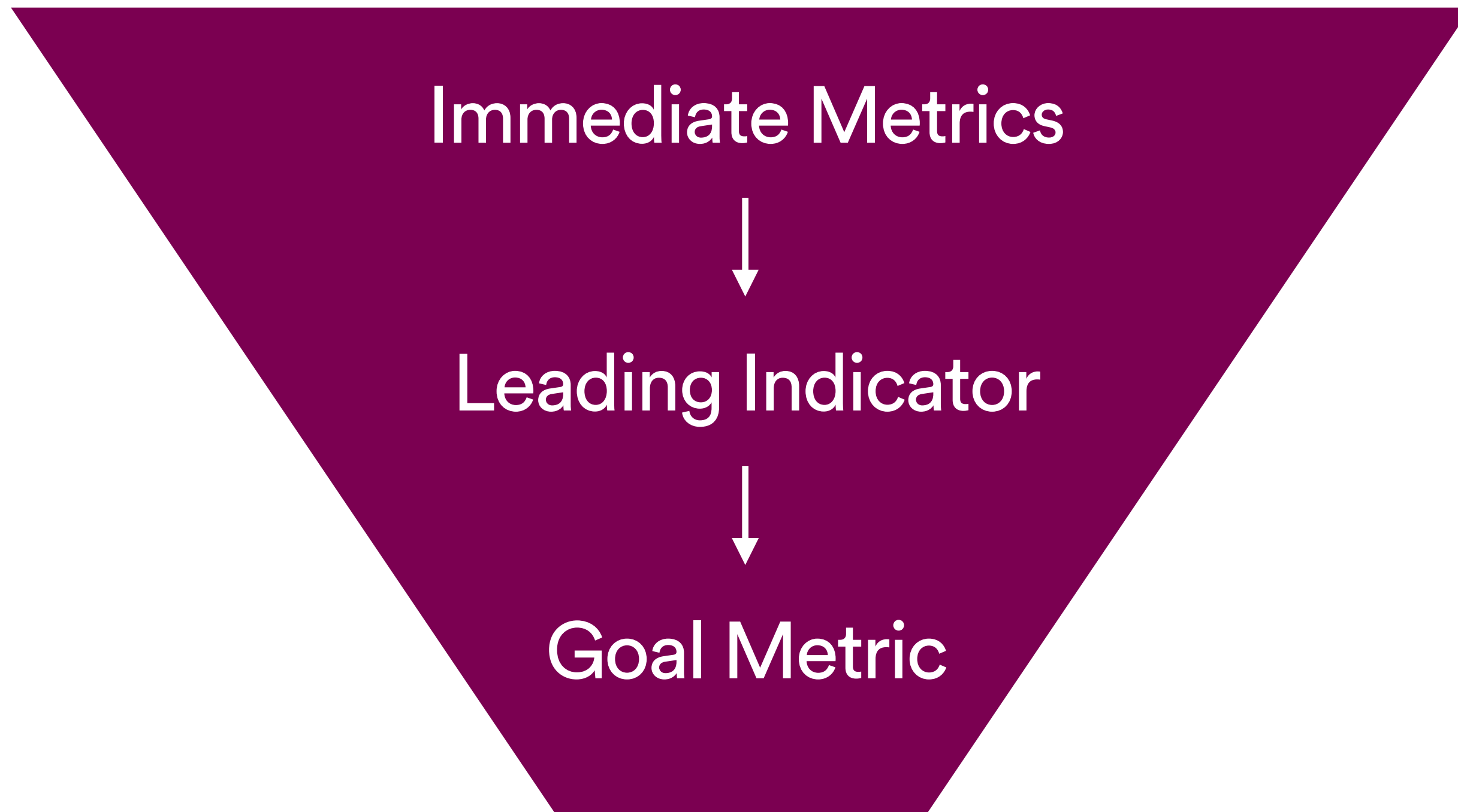# Architecture that Scales

Current Architecture

Hive Data → **Rails Service** → **Email Generation System** → **SendGrid (3rd Party)** → **Delivered**

1. Scope

2.Grow

3.Optimize

Optimize - Pick Your Metrics

Immediate Metrics

↓

Leading Indicator

↓

Goal Metric

Optimize - Pick Your Metrics

Immediate Metrics

↓

Leading Indicator

↓

Goal Metric

Did they love or hate the email?

Optimize - Pick Your Metrics

Immediate Metrics
↓
Leading Indicator
↓
Goal Metric

Did they love or hate the email?

Are you moving in the right direction?

Optimize - Pick Your Metrics

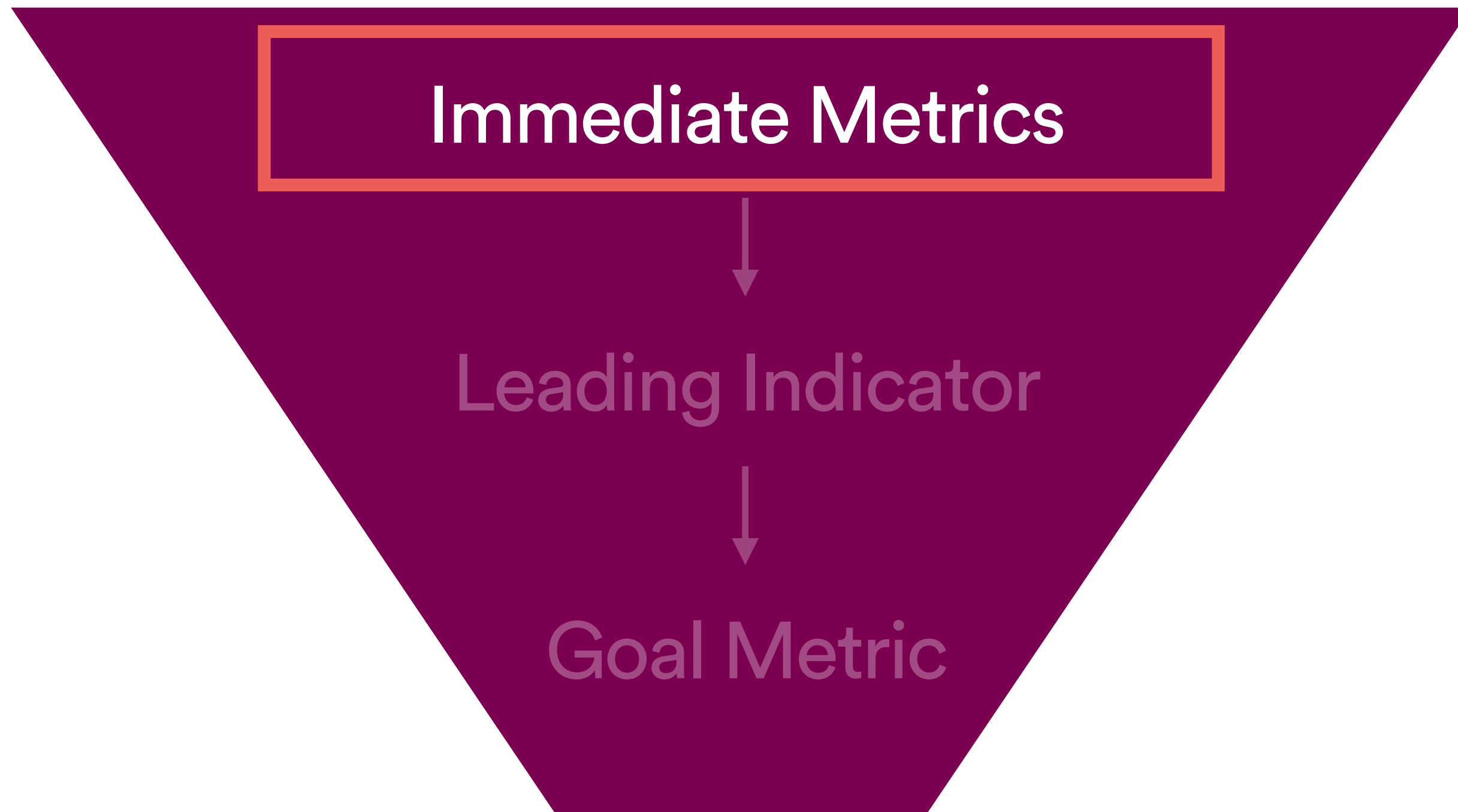Immediate Metrics

↓

Leading Indicator

↓

Goal Metric

Did they love or hate the email?

Are you moving in the right direction?
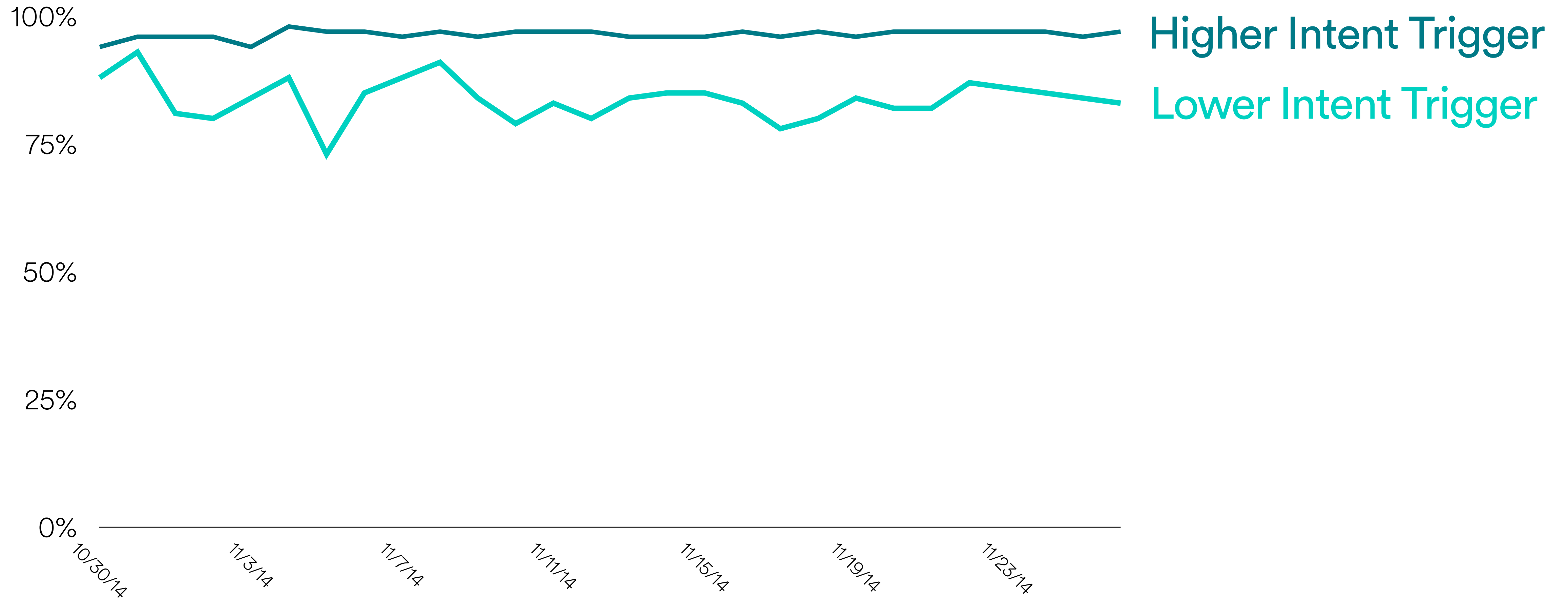
Did you achieve your objective?

Optimize

Immediate Metrics

↓

Leading Indicator

↓

Goal Metric

Optimize

% Quality Score $= 1 - ($unsubscribed/clicked$)$

Helpful measure of people you annoy vs people you delight
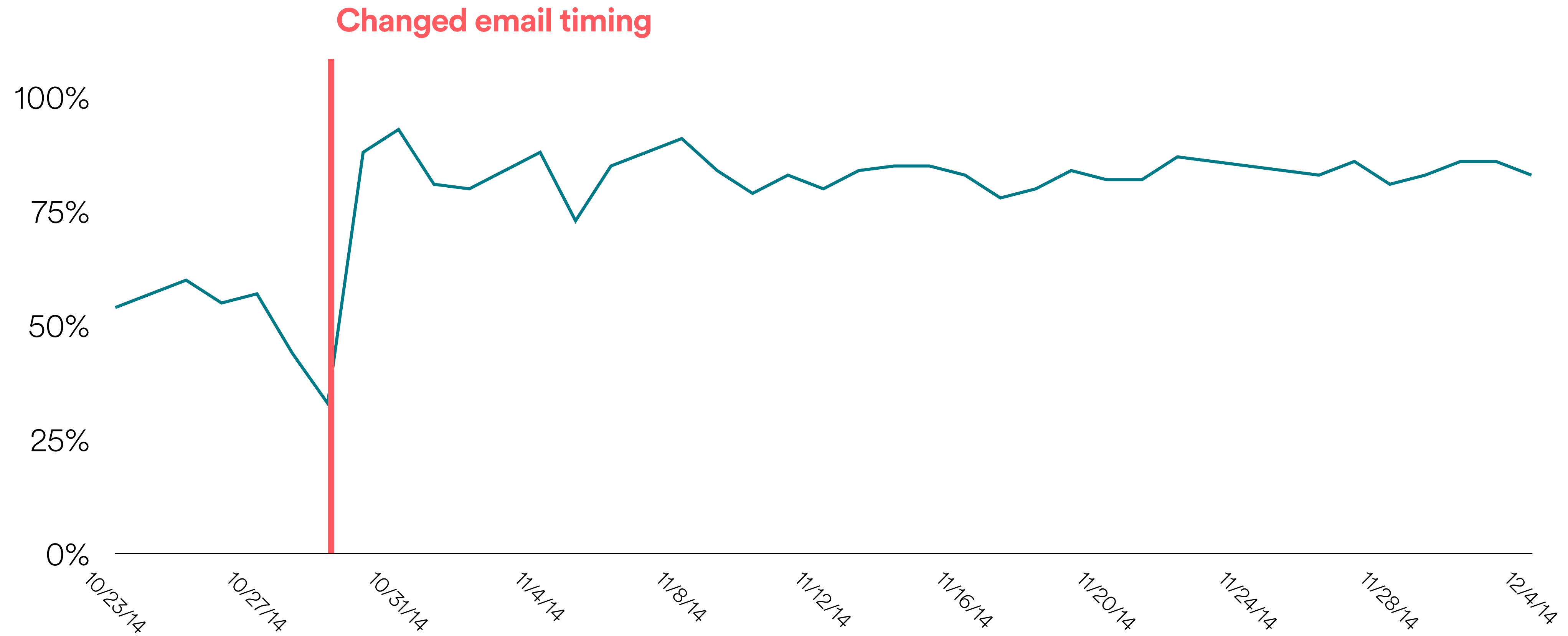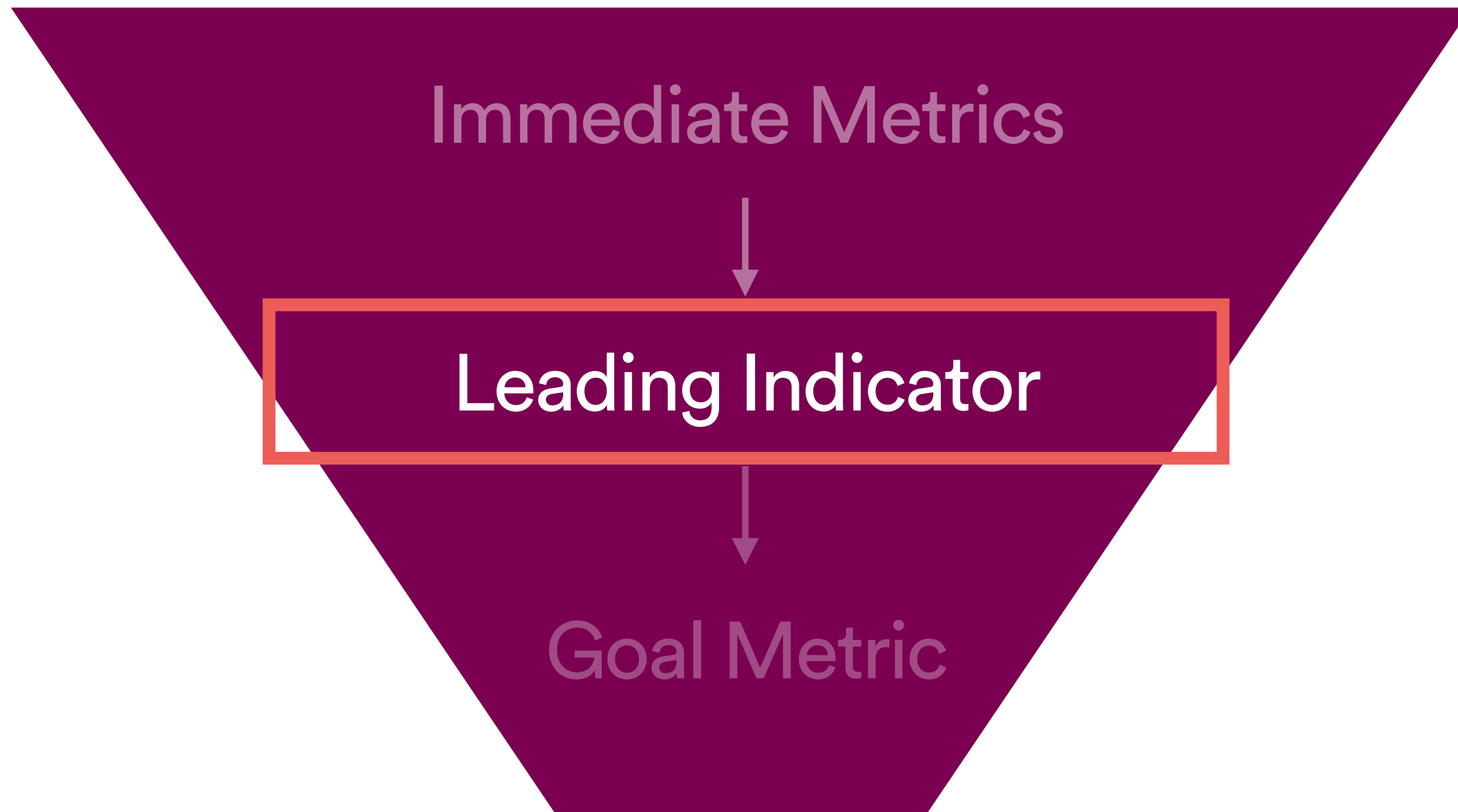
Optimize

Quality Score

Higher Intent Trigger

Lower Intent Trigger

Optimize

Quality Score For One Email

Optimize

$$\% \text{ Quality Score} = 1 - (\text{unsubscribed}/\text{clicked})$$

Optimize

Immediate Metrics

Leading Indicator
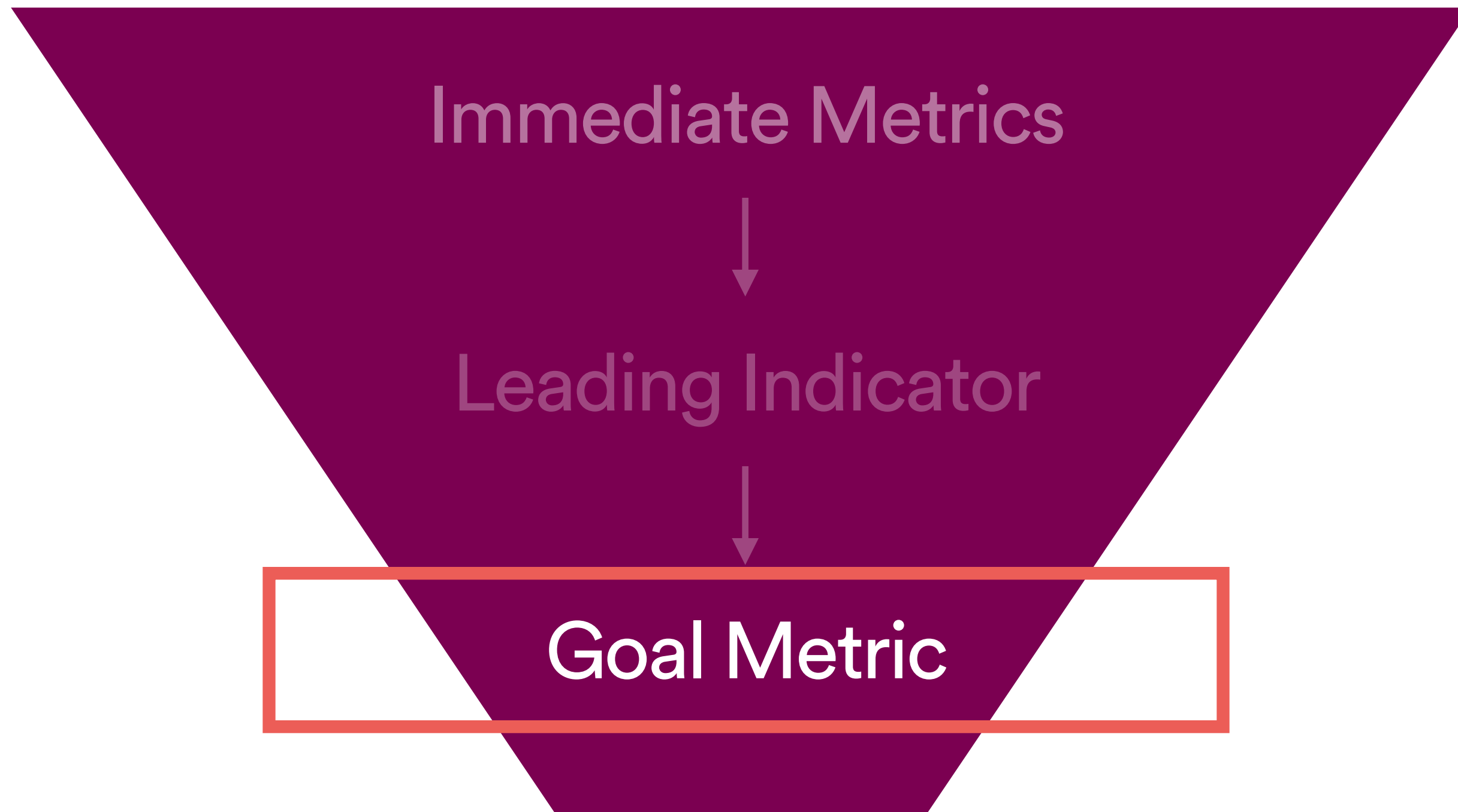
Goal Metric

Optimize

Medium term:

Find something correlated with the down-funnel behavior you're trying to drive

Optimize

Pssst - it's ok if you can't definitively prove causality!

Optimize

Immediate Metrics

↓

Leading Indicator

↓

Goal Metric

Optimize

A long term holdout group is a wondrous thing

Optimize

90% Users Receive Email

10% Users Don't Receive Email

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec

At the end of the year, how do these two groups compare?

Long Term Holdout Learnings

Email:

Drives our goal metric (hooray!)

Gets people to host (wha?)

Gets people to refer friends (cool!)

Drives other products' success (nice!)

Where did all this get us?

Email Today

Email Today

Growth!

Growth!

Will drive 12% of incremental growth this year,
more next year

Email Today

Email Today

Operations!

Email Today

Operations!

Marketing and product can tag team

Email Today

Email Today

New Opportunities!

Email Today

New Opportunities!

New channel to users - useful for all

Thank you!

http://twitter.com/rrosenfelt

www.linkedin.com/in/rebeccarosenfelt/