

ITI8740/ITX8522: Software Development Team Project. 2026

06. Measurements and Metrics.

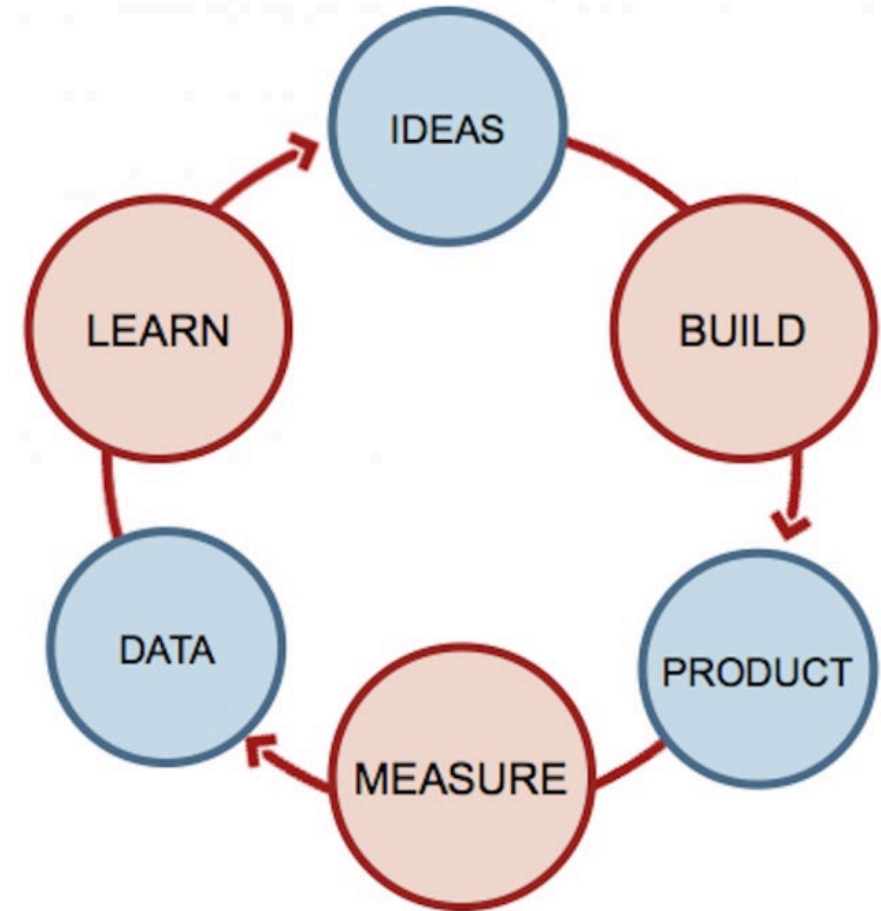
Martin Verrev

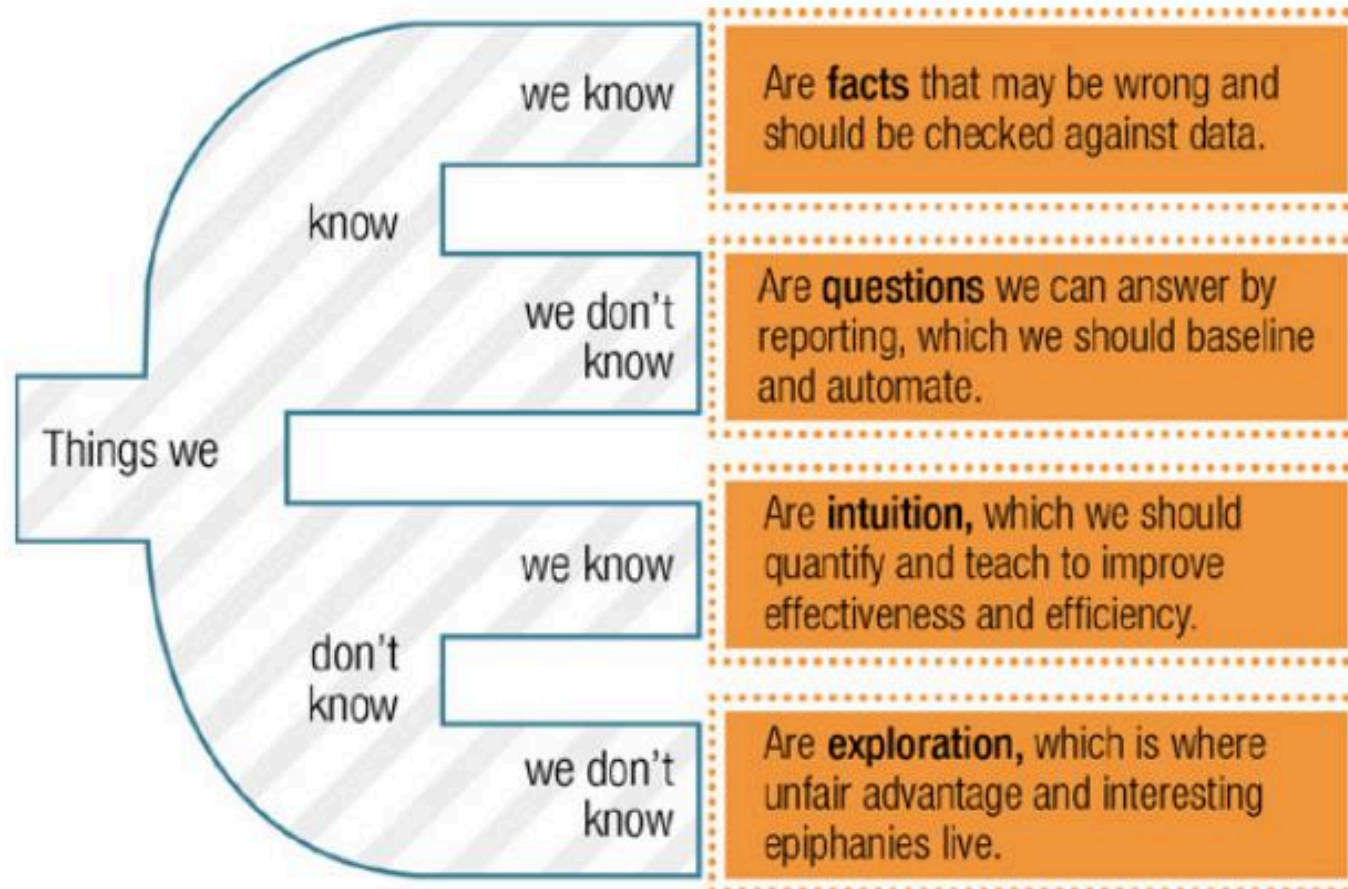
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The response US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld gave to a question at a U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) news briefing on February 12, 2002, about the lack of evidence linking the government of Iraq with the supply of weapons of mass destruction to terrorist groups.

What we know already

1. Document your plan
2. Identify the riskiest part of the plan
3. Systematically **test** your plan





Measurement is set of observations that reduce uncertainty where the result is expressed as a quantity.

D.W. Hubbard. How to Measure Anything: Finding the Value of *Intangibles* in Business.

<https://www.howtomeasureanything.com/>

Measure is a classification of raw data such as a number or value.

Metric is a quantifiable measure that is used to track and assess the status of a specific process.

Analytics is about tracking the metrics that are critical to your business.

Startup Metrics Differ from Those in Existing Companies

The track the results of pass/fail tests and the iterations they lead to:

- Have the customer problem and product features been validated?
- Does the minimum feature set resonate with customers?
- Who in fact is the customer

In addition to the startup metrics above, the relatively few financial metrics that a startup board should be tracking are cash-burn rate, number of months' worth of cash left, short-term hiring plans, and amount of time until the company reaches cash-flow break-even."

A Good Metric

- **Comparative.** Being able to compare a metric to other periods, groups etc. helps you understand which way things are moving.
- **Understandable.** If people cannot remember and discuss it, it's much harder to turn a change in the data into a change in the culture.
- **Usually a ratio or a rate.** Ratios are comparative, easier to act on than raw data; and also good for comparing factors that are somehow opposed (eg. cost-vs-time) or for which there's an inherent tension.
- **Actionable.** A good metric changes the way you behave.

It is easy to get overwhelmed

<https://medium.com/@nathanbeckord/the-startup-metrics-dictionary-eca434b11ae2>

But metrics define good outcome

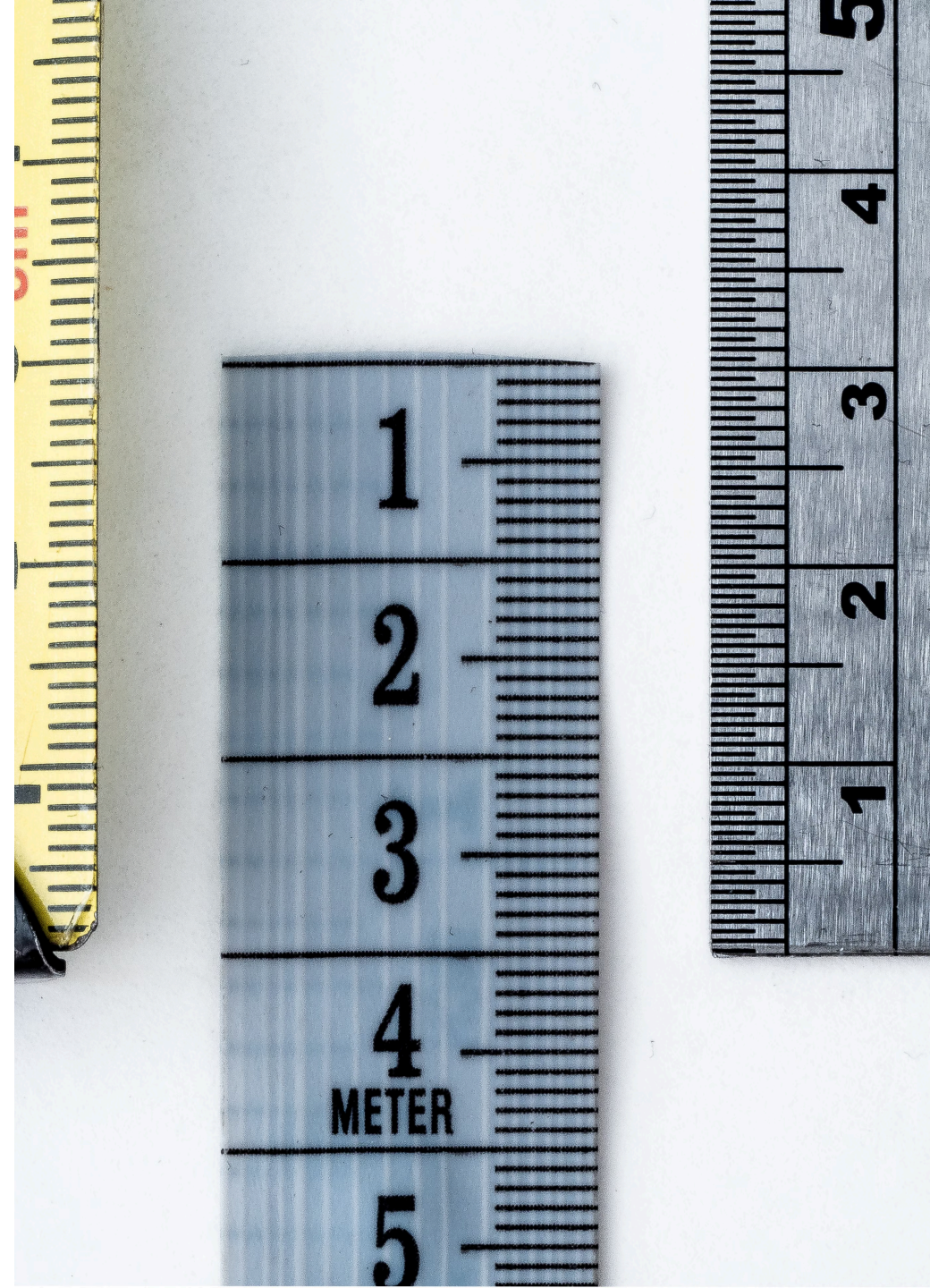
See examples from [Exhibition / France Design Impact Award at Disainiöö 2026](#)

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/QtoxKZfo1CFoA1sV9>

Accounting metrics make your predictions more accurate. Show how close you are to an ideal model and if your results match your business plan. *Example:* Sales revenue for period.

Experimental metrics optimize the product, pricing, or market. Changes in metrics change the product.

Agree on change before collecting data: e.g. "*if > 50% respondents say they won't pay for a feature, don't build it*" or "*if MVP doesn't increase order size by X%, try something else*".
Example: Results of a test.



Five Considerations for Choosing Metrics.

1. Qualitative vs Quantitative.

Qualitative metrics are unstructured, anecdotal, revealing, and hard to aggregate but provide deep insights. **Quantitative** metrics involve numbers and statistics, and provide hard data but less insight.

2. Vanity vs Actionable.

Vanity metrics (*edevusmeetrika*) might make you feel good, but they don't change how you act. **Actionable metrics** (*tegevusmeetrika*) change your behavior by helping you pick a course of action.

Five Considerations for Choosing Metrics.

3. Exploratory vs Reporting.

Exploratory metrics are speculative and try to find unknown insights to give you the upper hand, while **reporting metrics** keep you abreast of normal, managerial, day-to-day operations.

4. Leading vs Lagging.

Leading metrics (*edasivaatavad*) give you a predictive understanding of the future; **Lagging metrics** (*tagasivaatavad*) explain the past.

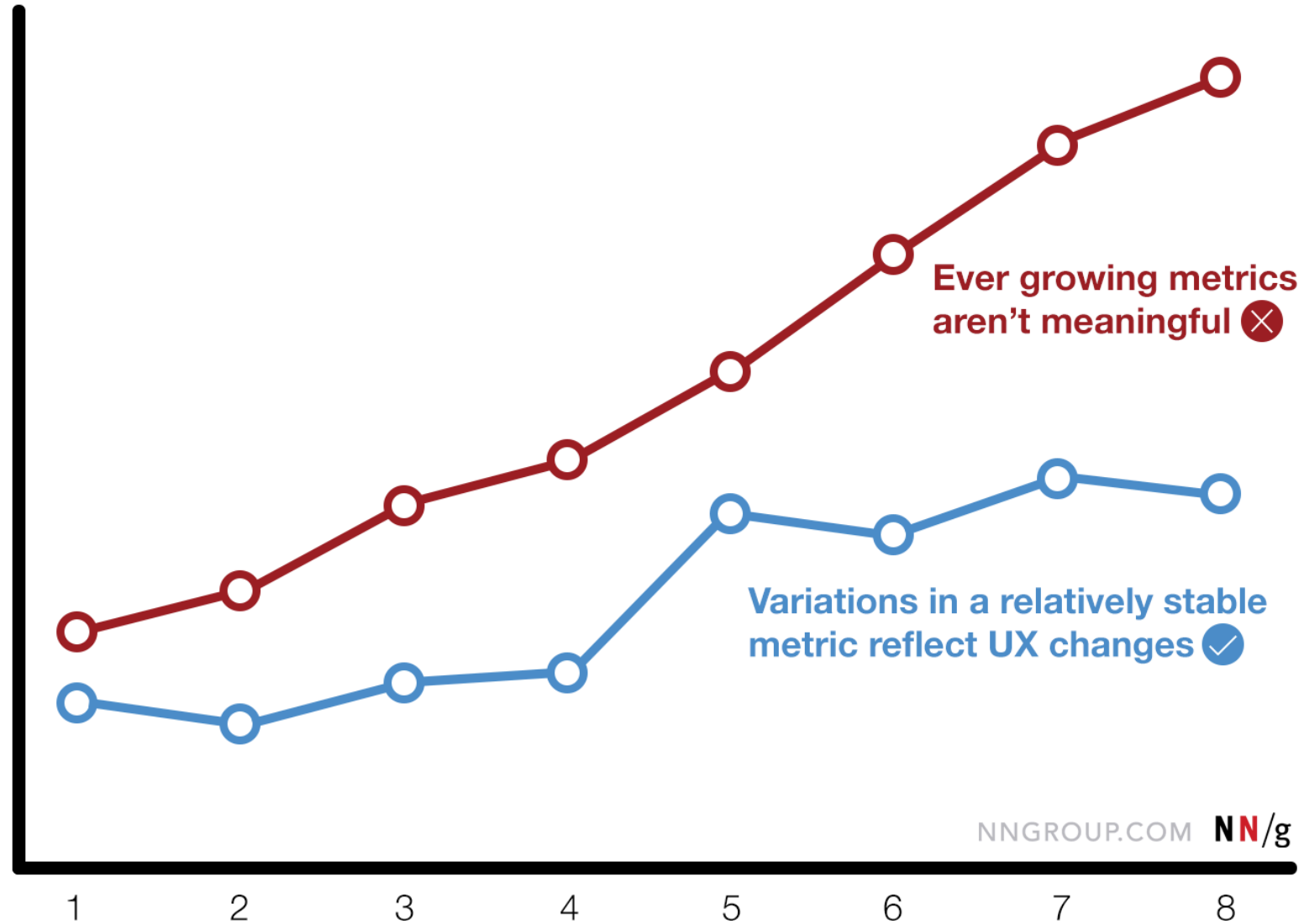
Leading metrics are better because you still have time to act on them.

Five Considerations for Choosing Metrics.

5. Correlated vs Causal.

If two metrics change together, they are **correlated**, but if one causes another to change, they are **causal**. If you find a causal relationship between something you want (eg revenue) and something you can control (eg showing ads), then you can change the future.

Vanity metrics are metrics that make you look good to others but do not help you understand your own performance in a way that informs future strategies. These metrics are exciting to point to if you want to appear to be improving, but they often aren't actionable and aren't related to anything you can control or repeat in a meaningful way



Vanity Metrics Checklist

- **total signups**: Tells us nothing about what those users are doing or whether they're valuable to us.
- **total active users**: a little better but still increase over time.
- **# of hits**: problematic if your site has many objects. Count people instead.
- **# of page views**: Count people instead.
- **# of visits**: is it one or many people.
- **# of unique visitors**: tells you nothing about what they did, why, or if they left.
- **# of followers/friends/likes**: nothing more than a popularity contest.
- **time on site/number of pages**: poor substitute for actual engagement.
- **emails collected**: collected does not mean opened and acted on what is inside them.

Categories of metrics

Financial

- **Revenue** is perhaps the most fundamental financial metric for any startup. It represents the total income generated from your products or services.
- **Gross profit** measures the profitability of your startup's core operations by subtracting the cost of goods sold (COGS) from your revenue.
- **Burn rate** refers to the rate at which your startup consumes cash to cover its operating expenses, such as salaries, rent, marketing, and other costs.
- **Runway** represents the estimated length of time your startup can sustain its operations before running out of cash. It is calculated by dividing your current cash balance by the monthly burn rate.

Categories of metrics

Customer

- **Customer acquisition cost (CAC)** measures the amount of money your startup spends on acquiring new customers
- **Customer lifetime value (CLV)** represents the total revenue a customer is expected to generate throughout their relationship with your startup.
- **Customer churn rate** measures the rate at which customers stop using your product or service within a given period.
- **Net Promoter Score (NPS)** measures customer loyalty and satisfaction by asking customers to rate, on a scale of 0 to 10, how likely they are to recommend your product or service to others.

Categories of metrics

Product

- **Activation rate** measures the percentage of users who successfully complete a desired action or onboarding process after signing up for your product or service.
- **User retention** measures the percentage of users who continue to use your product over a specific time period.
- **Adoption rate** measures the speed at which users embrace and start using your product after the initial exposure.

In a startup, you don't always know which metrics are key, because you're not entirely sure what business you're in. You're frequently changing the activity you analyze. You're still trying to find the right product, or the right target audience. In a startup, the purpose of analytics is to find your way to the right product and market before the money runs out.



AARRR Metrics Framework (also: Pirate Metrics)

A framework for product-led growth businesses

Goals

- show companies how to narrow the focus to only metrics that can directly affect the health of their business
- help these companies use the right data to gauge the success of their product management and marketing efforts, then improve those initiatives that aren't working.

Customer Lifecycle

- **Acquisition:** Where do users come from?
- **Activation:** How to turn users into active customers.
- **Retention:** How to make customers come back.
- **Referral:** How to get customers recommend your service.
- **Revenue:** How to make customers pay.

The AARRR Framework (Growth Funnel)



AARRR Cheatsheet

Stage	Metrics
Acquisition	Traffic, mentions, cost per click, search results, cost of acquisition, open rate
Activation	enrollments, signups, completed onboarding process, used the service at least once, subscriptions
Retention	engagement, time since last visit, daily and monthly active use, churns
Revenue	Customer lifetime value, conversion rate, shopping cart size, click-through revenue
Referral	Invites sent, viral coefficient, viral cycle time

The One Metric That Matters (OMTM)

Pick OMTM

Pick a metric from the riskiest portion of your business.

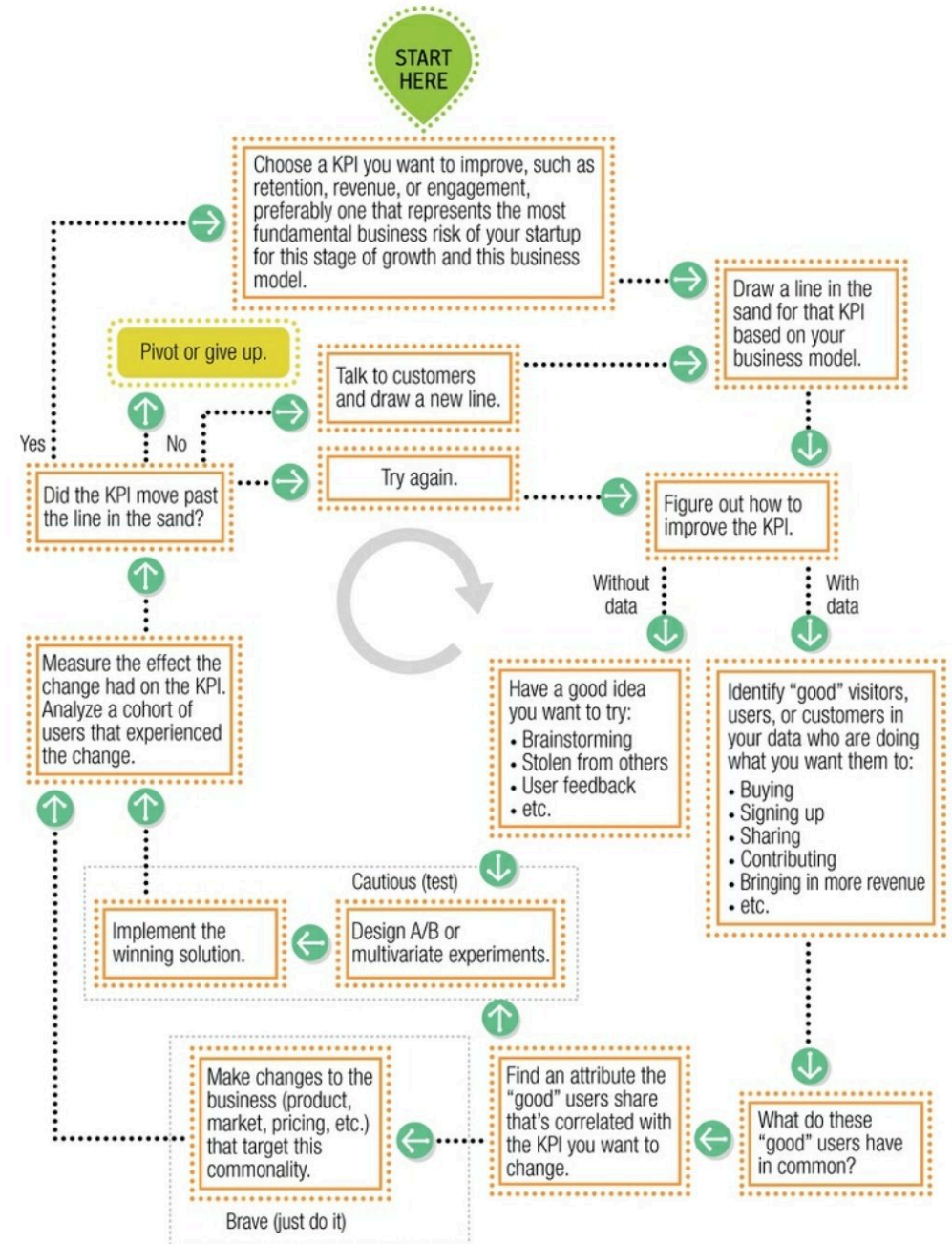
1. Picking and using a OMTM gives you a single metric that **answers the most important question you have.**
2. **The OMTM forces you to draw a line in the sand.** Picking a metric implies picking a goal to hit.
3. **It focuses the entire company.** Having an OMTM focuses your entire company and avoids trying to report too many things: (*data puking*).
4. **It inspires a culture of experimentation.** You make what you measure. Focusing on a single metric, you push your team to run experiments to move the metric upward.

Lean Analytics Cycle

Lean Analytics is about finding a meaningful metric and running experiments to improve it until that metric is good enough to move to the next problem or the next stage of your business.

Full Image:

[https://pbs.twimg.com/media/EON0yPOUcAAUDXD?](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/EON0yPOUcAAUDXD?format=jpg&name=large)
[format=jpg&name=large](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/EON0yPOUcAAUDXD?format=jpg&name=large)



1. **Empathy** — Looking for a real, poorly-met problem, then, figuring out how to solve that in a way customers will accept and pay for.
2. **Stickiness** — Finding the right mix of features that keeps users around.
3. **Virality** — Finding ways to fuel growth organically and artificially.
4. *Revenue** — Finding a scalable and sustainable business.
5. **Scale** — Finding a way to scale up the business.



Figure 5-5. Frameworks, frameworks everywhere

Lean Analytics: Use Data to Build a Better Startup Faster

Alistair Croll. Benjamin Yoskovitz.

<https://leananalyticsbook.com/>

"Your competition will use this book to outgrow you."

— Mike Volpe, Hubspot

THE LEAN SERIES

Alistair Croll & Benjamin Yoskovitz

LEAN ANALYTICS

Use Data to Build a
Better Startup Faster

O'REILLY

Eric Ries, Series Editor

Story: Out of the picture: why the world's best photo startup is going out of business.

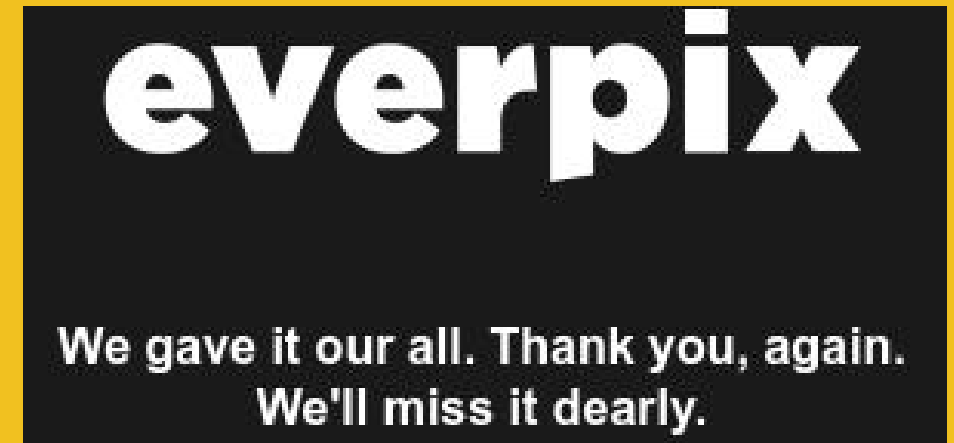
<https://www.theverge.com/2013/11/5/5039216/everpix-life-and-death-inside-the-worlds-best-photo-startup>

Overview: Crunchbase.

<https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/everpix>

Metrics: Everpix Intelligence.

<https://github.com/everpix/Everpix-Intelligence>



Further Reading

- A Founder's Guide to Startup Metrics. <https://medium.com/swlh/startup-metrics-370a07de9ff7>
- Vanity Metrics: Definition, How To Identify Them, And Examples. <https://www.tableau.com/learn/articles/vanity-metrics>
- Andreessen Horowitz 16 Startup Metrics. <https://a16z.com/2015/08/21/16-metrics/>
- Startup Metrics: 12 important KPI's to track. <https://www.gilion.com/basics/startup-metrics>
- Seth Godin's Blog - Avoiding False Metrics. <https://seths.blog/2012/05/avoiding-false-metrics/>.
- **Startup Metrics for Pirates: AARRR! - Dave McClure.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irjgfW0Blrw>
- AARRR Metrics Presentation: <https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/startup->

Thank you!