



SESSION 1: ALIGNMENT BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE

How Interlachen Created a Foundation for Transformation

BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM WEBINAR SERIES | HIGHLINE PARTNERS

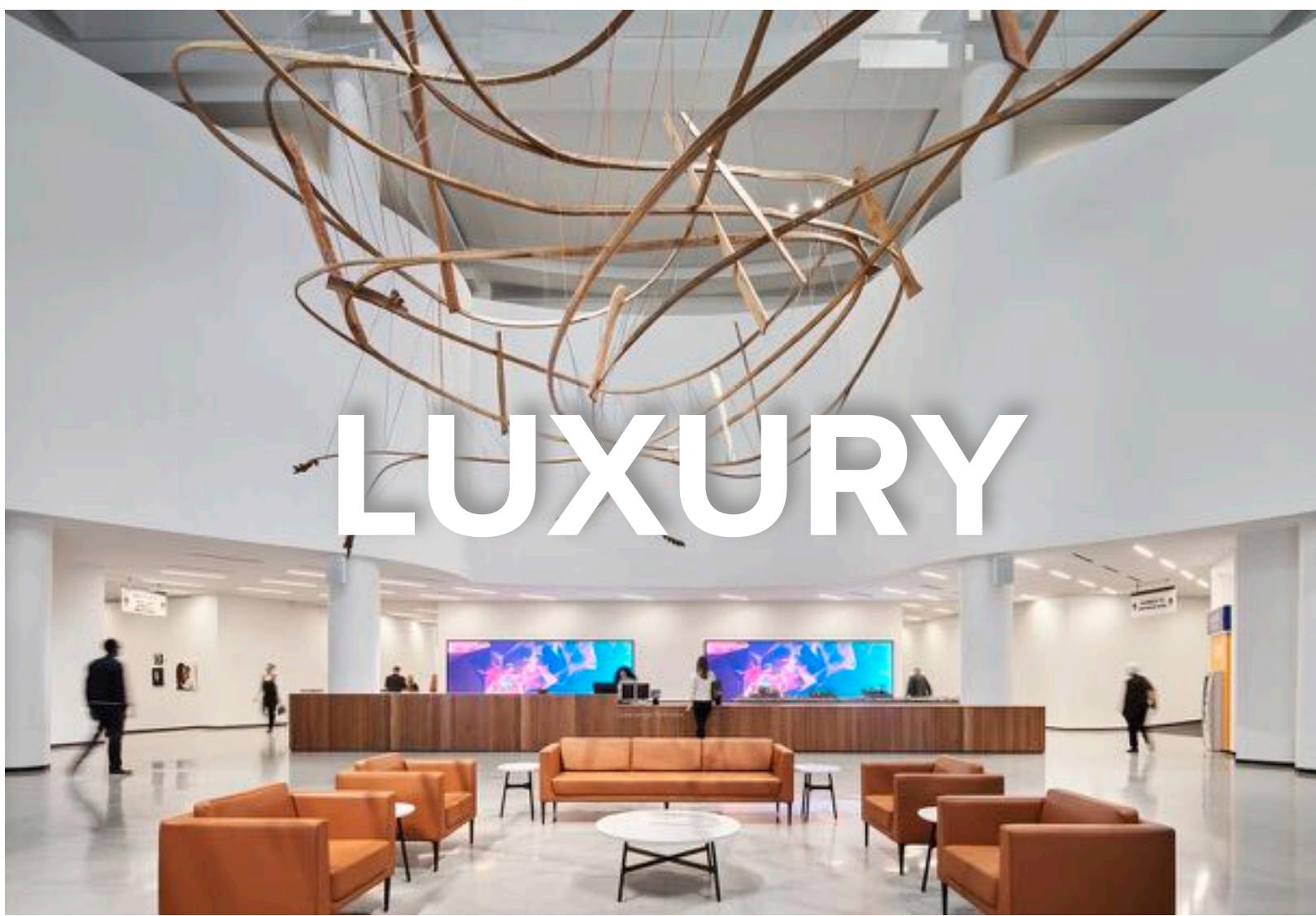


HIGHLINE PARTNERS

Transformational Brand Strategy

Founded by ad agency veterans, our team has deep experience across some of the best brands in the world.





Brand is powerful, but clubs are weird.

We spent two years adapting our approach to fit the unique challenges faced by clubs. We are grateful to GMs who spent the time with us, giving us insights into the club industry.

If you think of brand as your logo, you're missing out on how you can use it as a tool to address so many more challenges.



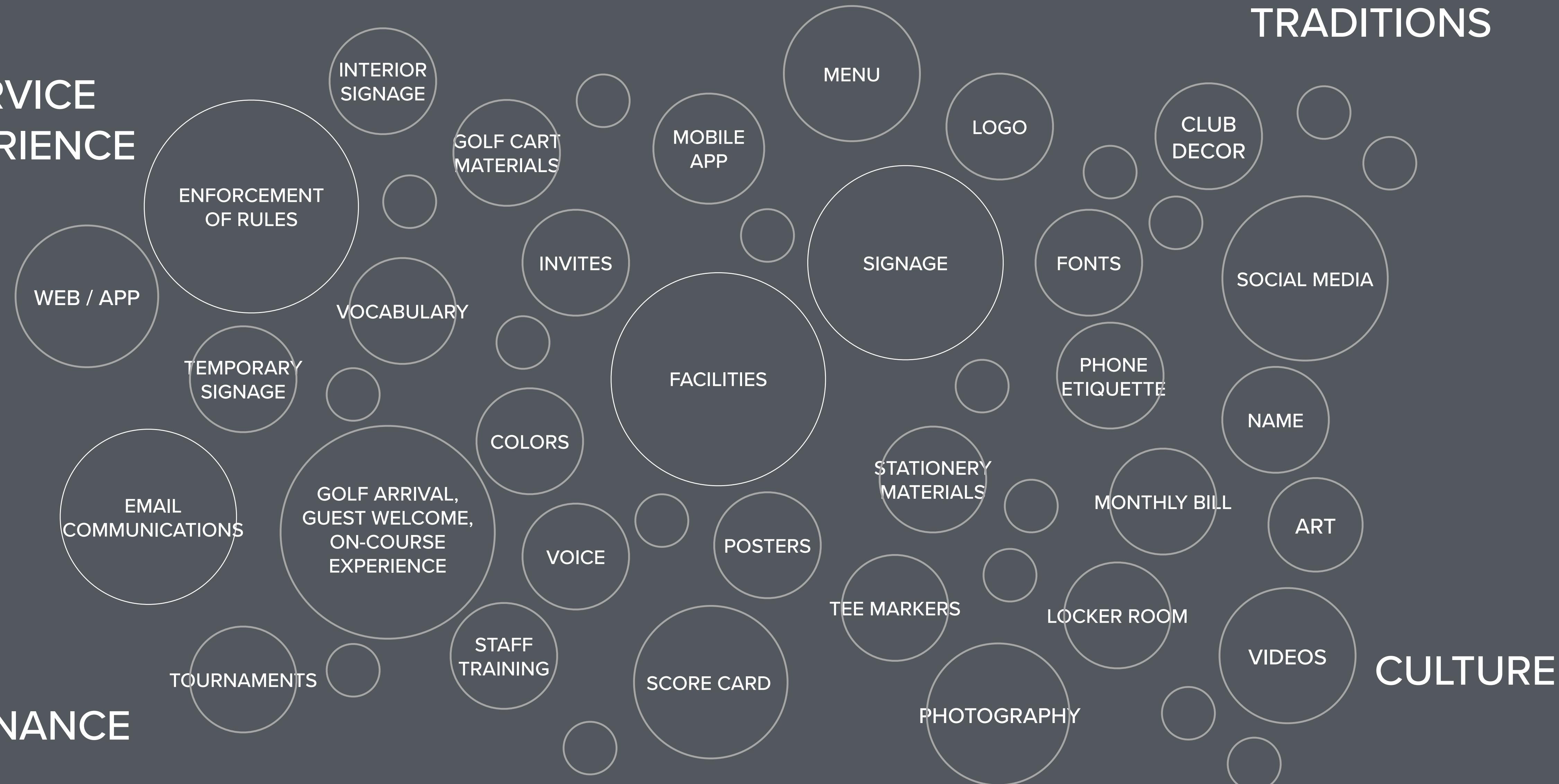


All Great Brand Experiences are Rooted in Identity

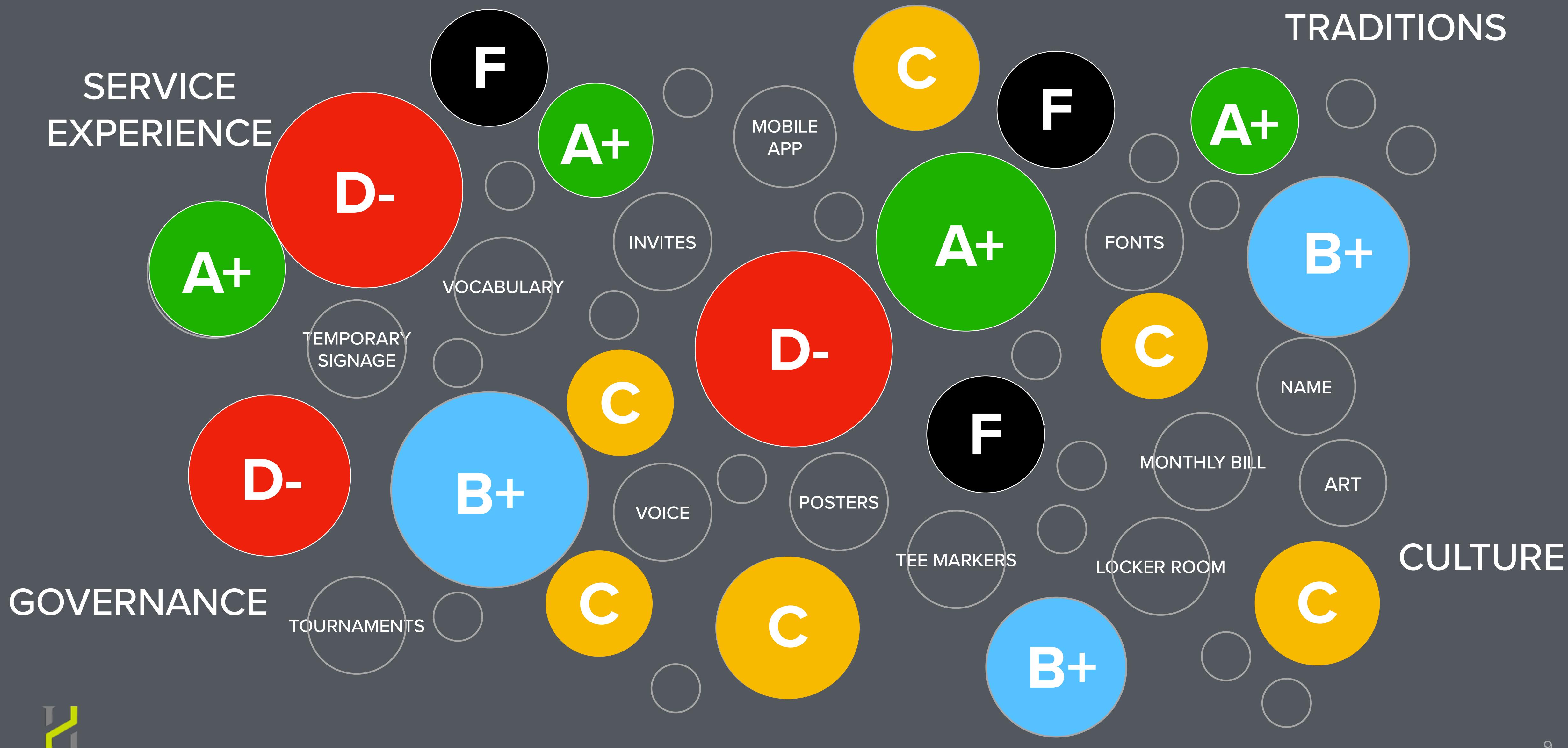


Your club's brand — *your identity* — is defined by a million touchpoints.

SERVICE EXPERIENCE



When your touchpoints are not aligned, your identity suffers.





Alignment starts at Identity

So, why is it so hard to create alignment at clubs?

Why is Alignment so Difficult?



Board turnover creates shifting priorities

For board members this is a pastime, for GMs this is your career



Generations have different expectations

For what they want and who they think should be in charge



Capital projects reveal deeper challenges

Money escalates emotions and reveals power dynamics

Identity Alignment is the deep keel below the waterline that helps you withstand choppy conditions that are inevitable and move quickly when wind is at your back



THE BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM



PART 1:

Identity Alignment

Clarity before decisions

PART 2:

Standards

Consistency Across
Club Touchpoints

Future Sessions

PART 3:

Execution

Bringing the brand to
life every day

Three Typical Scenarios:

A:

Board recognizes the need for alignment and has **empowered the GM** to lead it
(*this is ideal but rare*)

B:

GM and staff know there's a need but must convince the board it was their idea
(*this is the most common*)

C:

Cracks are just starting to show and a big project looms
(*iceberg ahead!*)



Interlachen Country Club

In 2016, the Board knew they faced challenges. This is their ten-year journey.



CLICK [HERE](#) TO WATCH A VIDEO
ABOUT SERVICE AT INTERLACHEN

**Over the past ten years, these are the steps Interlachen
took to revitalize their club**

#1

**Admit there's problem and
be willing to invest to fix it**





#2

Decide who gets to be in the room

#3

**Demonstrate misalignment
by uncovering assumptions**





#4

What is core?
What is fringe?
What is out of bounds?

#5

Directional feedback vs.
Specific feedback vs.
The Opinions Committee



ESTD. 1909  BUILT 2023

To enrich the lives of our members by
providing outstanding championship golf
and family experiences.

TRADITION • EXCELLENCE • STEWARDSHIP • INNOVATION • ENJOYMENT • COMMUNITY

FOREVER:

Measure
Refine
Reinforce
Reinforce again



Not all of us are Interlachen.

The challenge is that no single entity at clubs owns Identity Alignment.

Why Alignment Breaks Down:

Role Ambiguity

Is leadership expected to lead—or to execute?

Are committees advisory—or operational?

Does strategy guide decisions—or personalities?

Why Alignment Breaks Down:

Complexity exposes Gaps

Large capital projects

Overlapping committees

Increased financial risk

High visibility and emotions

Why Alignment Breaks Down:

GMs feel Responsible without the Authority

How do I move this forward without overstepping?

How do I align people who don't report to me?

How do I do this when education and attention are uneven?

Start by Assessing Your Situation

Which scenario am I in?

*Empowered
Aware but without support
Jointly concerned*

Is there a catalyst?

*Upcoming Project
New Board, Strategic Planning
or Visible Friction*

Do I have board allies?

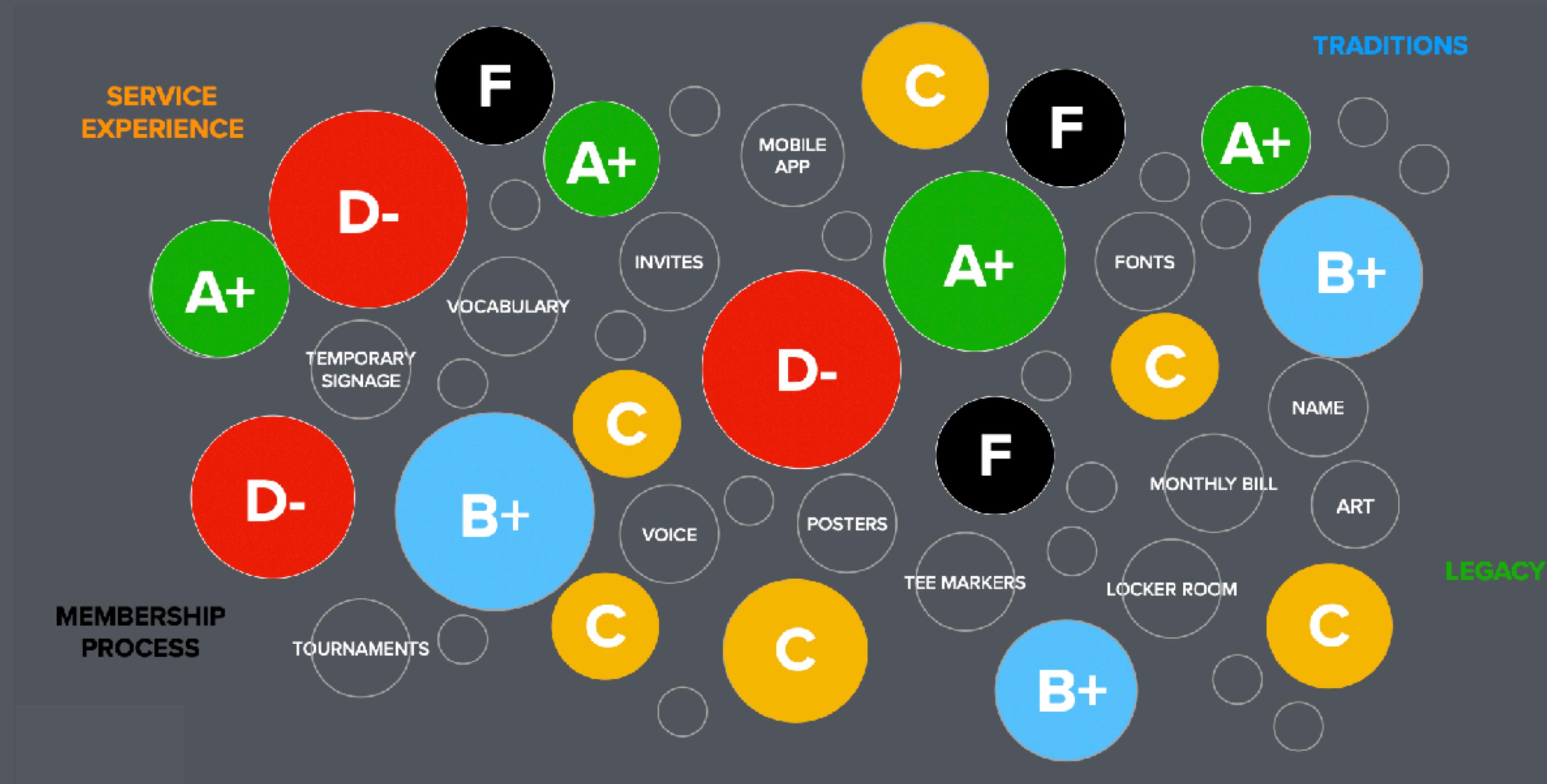
*Current, future or even past
board members who still have
influence*

1. **Find** early wins to build trust & relationships
2. **Leverage** wins proactively to show how alignment improves experience
3. **Look** for the right moment (capital project, strategic planning, board transition)
4. **Identify** future board leaders who “get it”
5. **Frame** everything in what members care about the most (gain or loss)
6. **Consult** with colleagues (like Joel) to understand their processes
7. **Share** examples of peer club successes with your board and members
8. **Visit** peer clubs with board and key members to open up their eyes
9. **Reinforce** Mission, Vision and Value constantly
10. **Be Patient** and know it requires time
11. **Partner** with an independent party to mitigate emotions (*who could that be?*)

We can help

1. **If you want to explore this yourself:** We have diagnostic tools and frameworks we're happy to share
2. **If you want to build the case internally:** We offer board education sessions and alignment assessments
3. **If you're interested in our approach:** We facilitate the full alignment process, from diagnosis through implementation.

This is what a Brand Operating System can do:



When your world looks
like this, everything
becomes difficult

Boards micromanage

Members blame staff

And capital projects
barely stand a chance

BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM

It all starts with alignment.



BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM

WHO WE ARE

WHY WE EXIST

WHAT WE VALUE

WHAT MAKES US
UNIQUE

HOW WE MAKE
DECISIONS



BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM

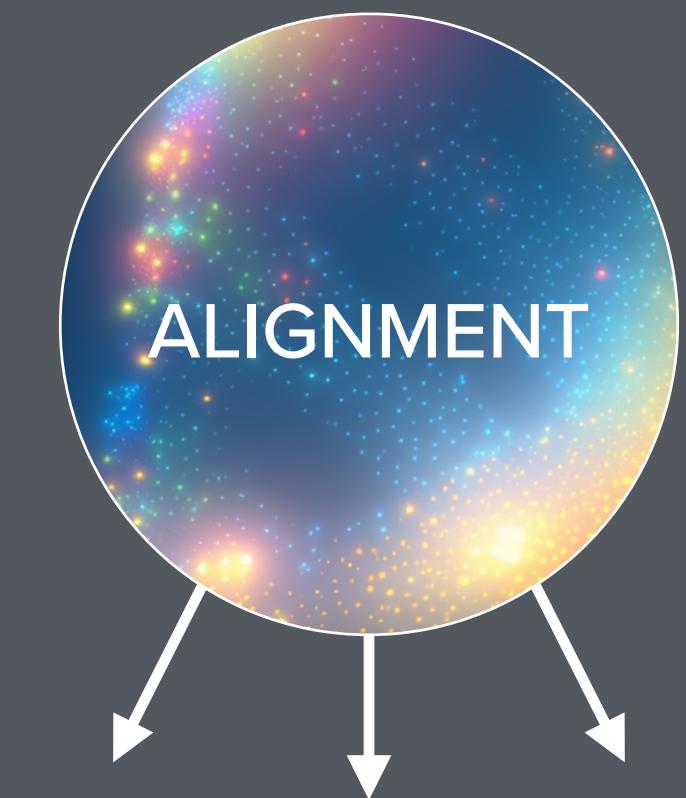
WHO WE ARE

WHY WE EXIST

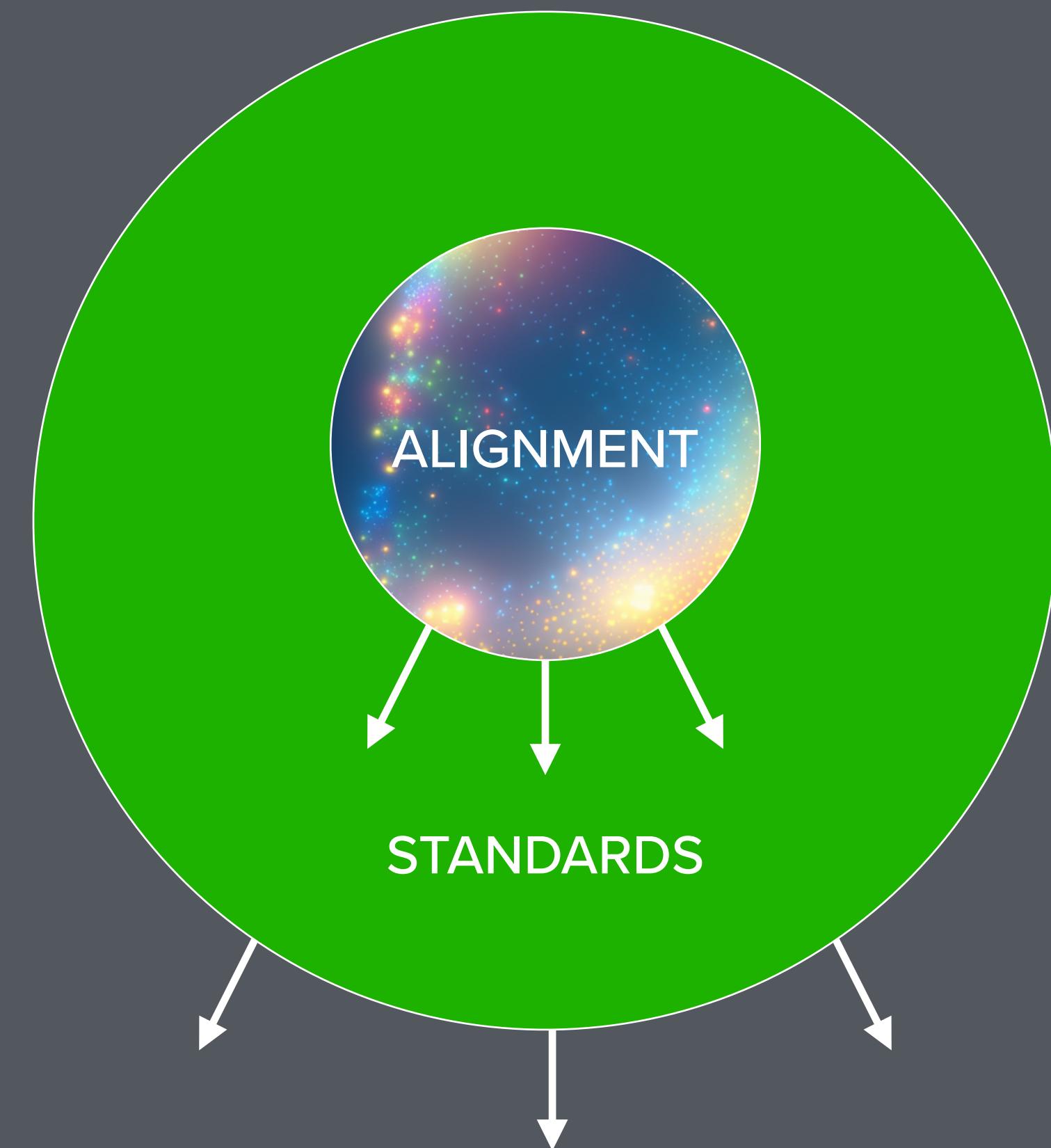
WHAT MAKES US
UNIQUE

WHAT WE VALUE

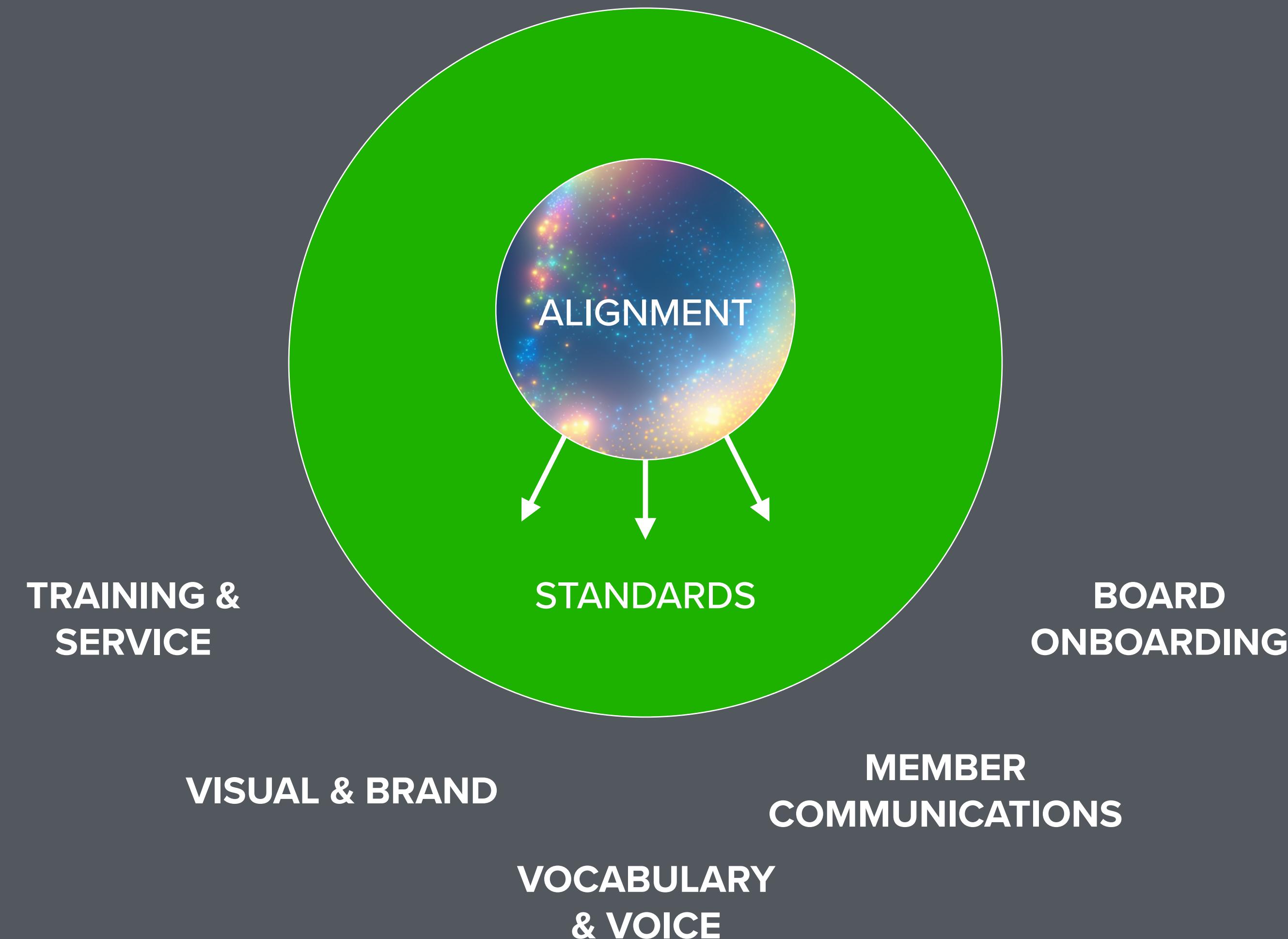
HOW WE MAKE
DECISIONS



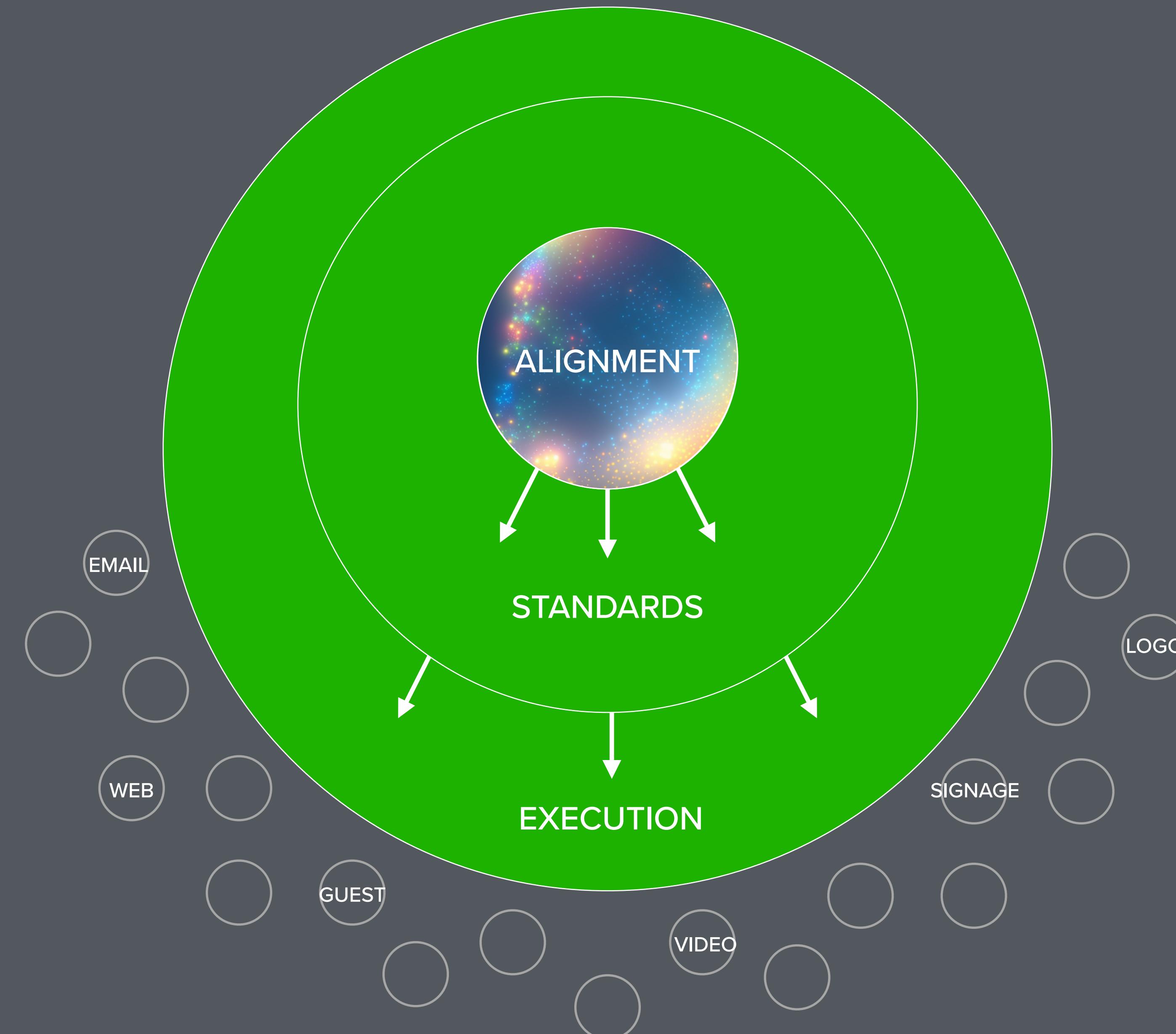
BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM



BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM



BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM



BRAND OPERATING SYSTEM



MISSION



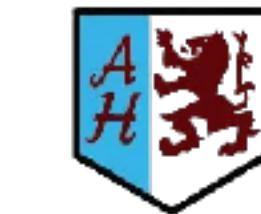
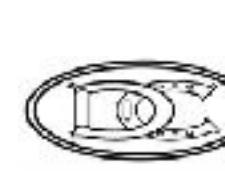
BRAND

CAN BE THE
CONNECTIVE
TISSUE



MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Thank you for joining us.



CMAA | Anaheim

February 17 - 20

Brett Posten

bp@highln.com
(805) 452-3780

Joel Livingood

jlivingood@interlachencc.org
(651) 964-8081