

Wardley map: A practical tool for technology strategy

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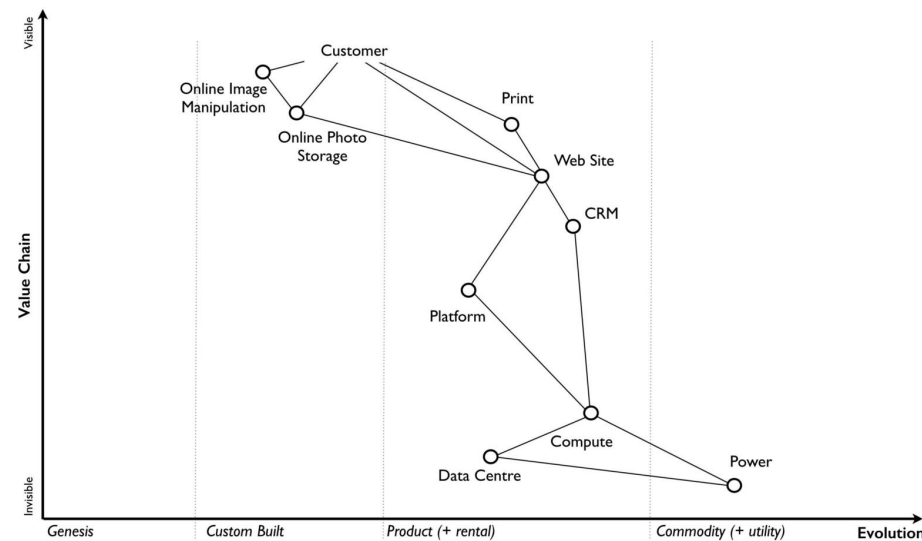
What do containers, USB-C and batteries have in common?



Progress

Commoditization + new value chains = progress.

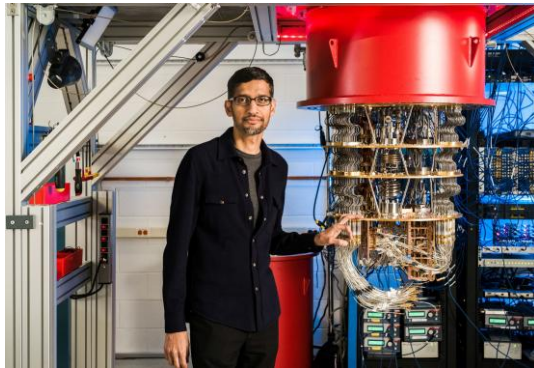
Wardley maps capture this.



Commoditization — the key force of progress



Commoditization — the key force of progress



Quantum Computer

Feature Set	Novelty
Delivery	Hand-built prototype
Market	None
Cost/Pricing	Very high per unit

Commoditization — the key force of progress



IBM 7950 Harvet

Custom Supercomputer

Feature Set	Tailor
Delivery	Bespoke implementation
Market	Niche customers
Cost/Pricing	Premium pricing

Commoditization — the key force of progress



Personal Computer

Feature Set

Standardized

Delivery

Repeatable packaged
delivery

Market

Mainstream buyers

Cost/Pricing

Scalable unit economics

Commoditization — the key force of progress



Commodity servers

Feature Set

Minimal differentiation

Delivery

Automated utility-like delivery

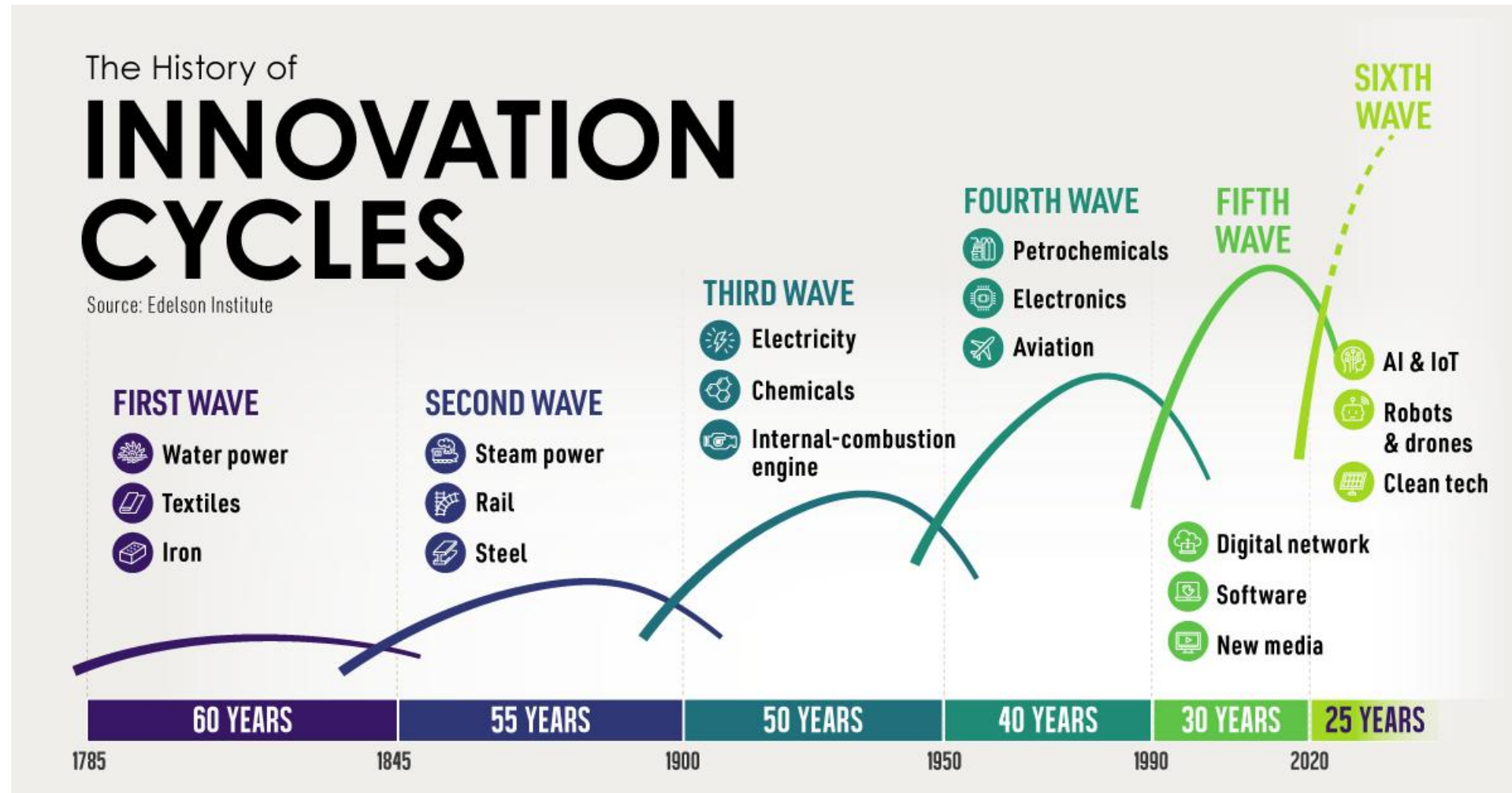
Market

Mass market

Cost/Pricing

Low-margin / price driven

Value creation and waves of innovation



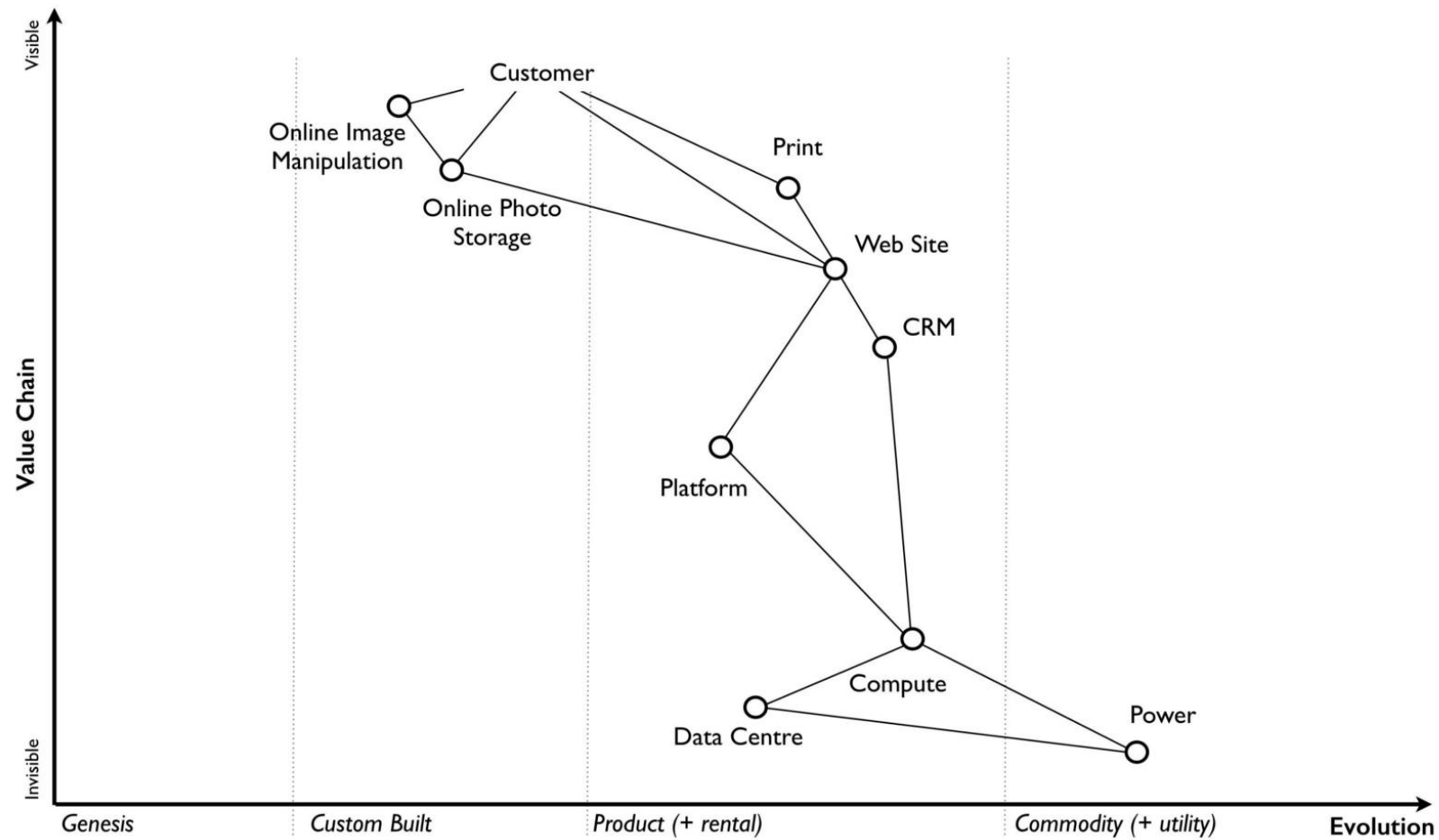
Commoditization is not always easy



Computer – Supply Chain

Level	Examples (laptop supply chain)
Raw material	Battery metals (lithium, cobalt), silicon ingots, copper, aluminum, glass sand, plastics feedstock
Subcomponent	Processed battery cells, diced semiconductor dies, glass panels, PCB laminates, injection-molded topcase
Component	Assembled battery pack (with BMS), populated motherboard (CPU, memory, power), display module, SSD, keyboard assembly
Final product	Fully assembled laptop (incl. OS) with charger and packaging

What is a Wardley map?



Why are wardley maps useful?

See the landscape clearly

Improve communication and alignment

Make better strategy decisions

Define evolution paths and migration plans

Guide organization design and capability allocation

Maps are for navigation



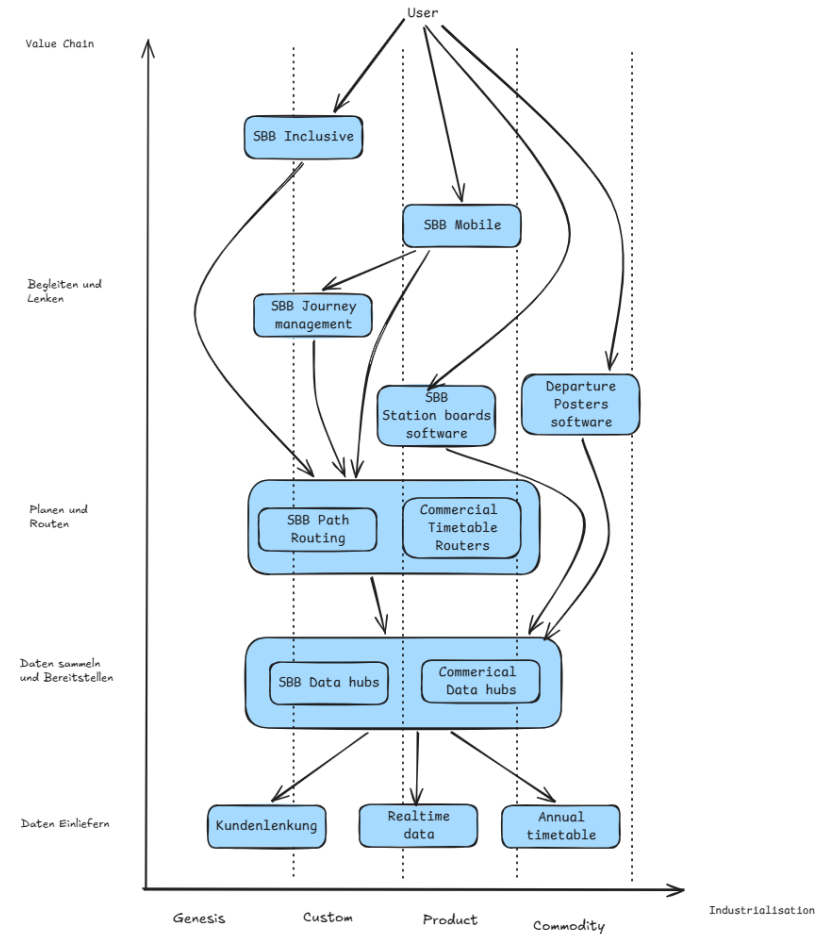
The map is not the territory

Mapping IT Systems

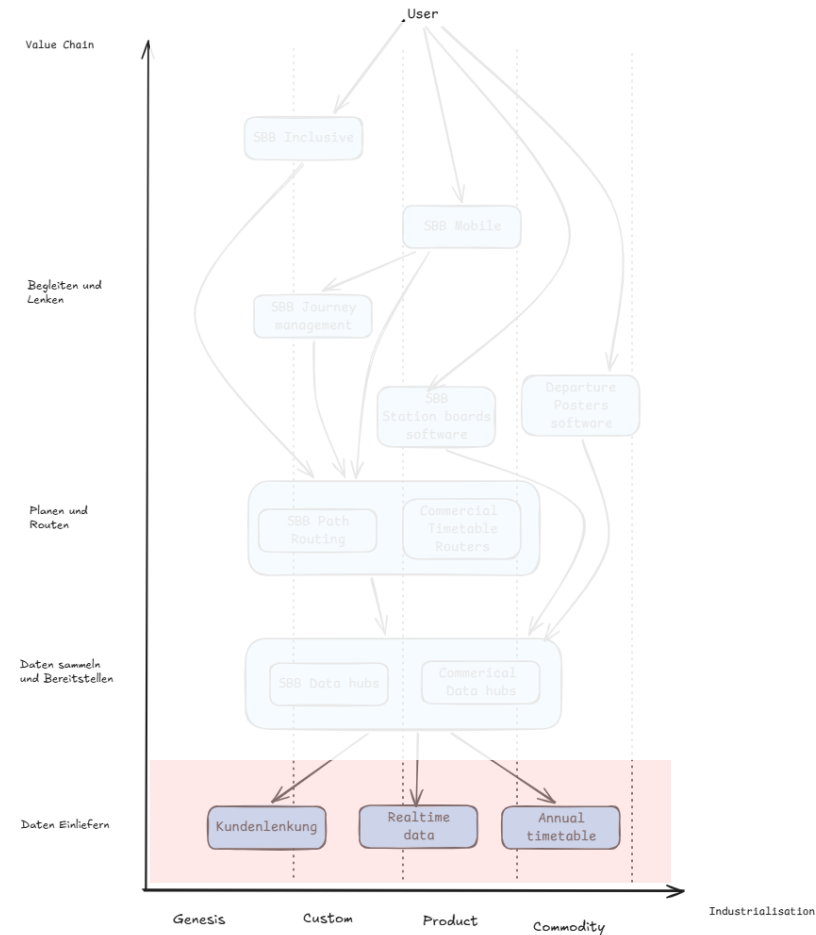
Evolution stage	Data	Platforms / Software
Genesis	Experimental, bespoke datasets (spreadsheets, prototypes).	Ad-hoc, changing integrations/APIs, often undocumented.
Custom	Team-specific data	System is custom for a specific context
Product	Mature data you can “sell” as product (e.g. Business API)	Stable, documented, versioned platform services or SaaS. (e.g. MongoDB)
Commodity	Utility-like data, focus on cost (e.g. Logs, Swagger, regulated data).	Utility-like platforms with standard API, focus on cost (e.g. Cloud container platform)

Don't think in terms of market, but ubiquity

Customer Information Systems



Customer Information Systems

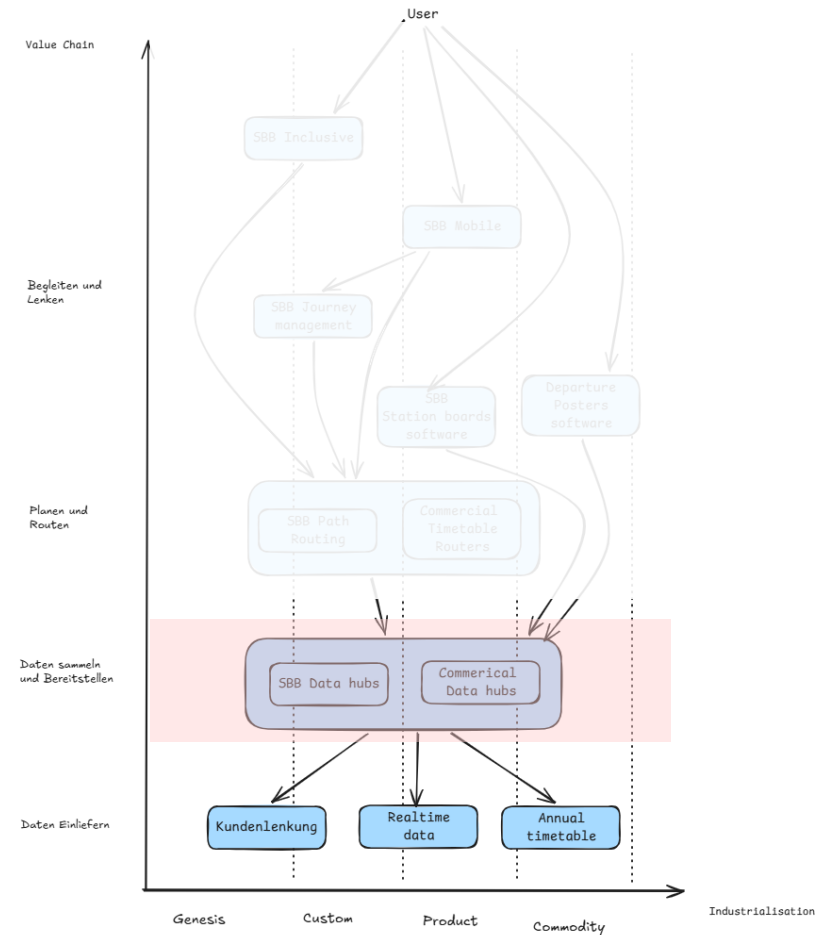


Realtime and annual data are standardized

Annual timetable is delivered for train, bus, tram. Realtime only for train.

Some data are proprietary

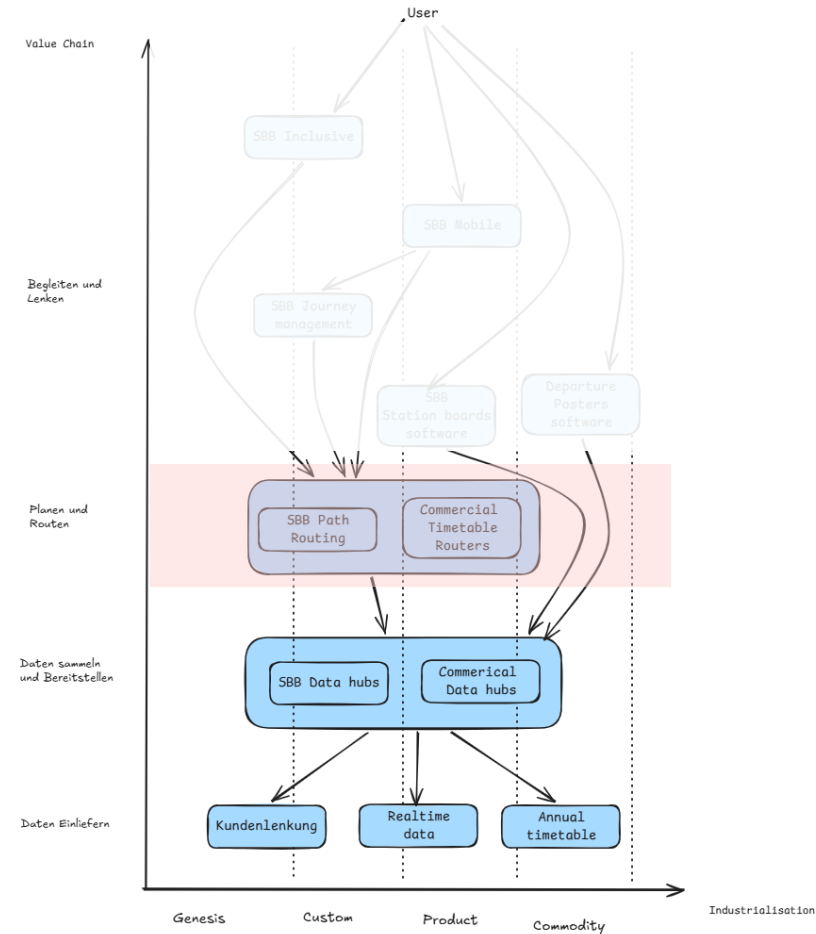
Customer Information Systems



There are commercial offering for data hubs based on standards

We have custom datas hub for advanced or proprietary features

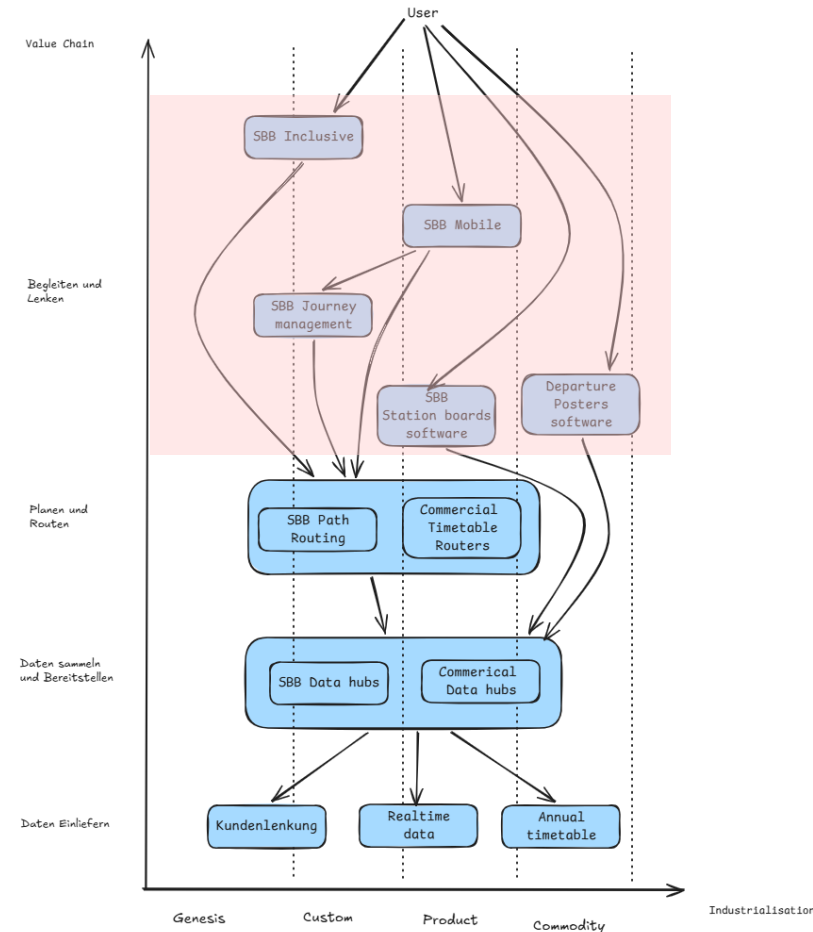
Customer Information Systems



There are commercial offering for timetable routing based on standards

We have custom solution for path geo-/ routing.

Customer Information Systems



Commercial software for departure posters cover all needs that are well understood

Station board software is a product for SBB & BLS.

Journey management is a differentiator in mobile strategy

SBB inclusive innovates in the field of accessibility for all

Is this wardley map useful?

See the landscape clearly – **Yes, compact visualization of our landscape**

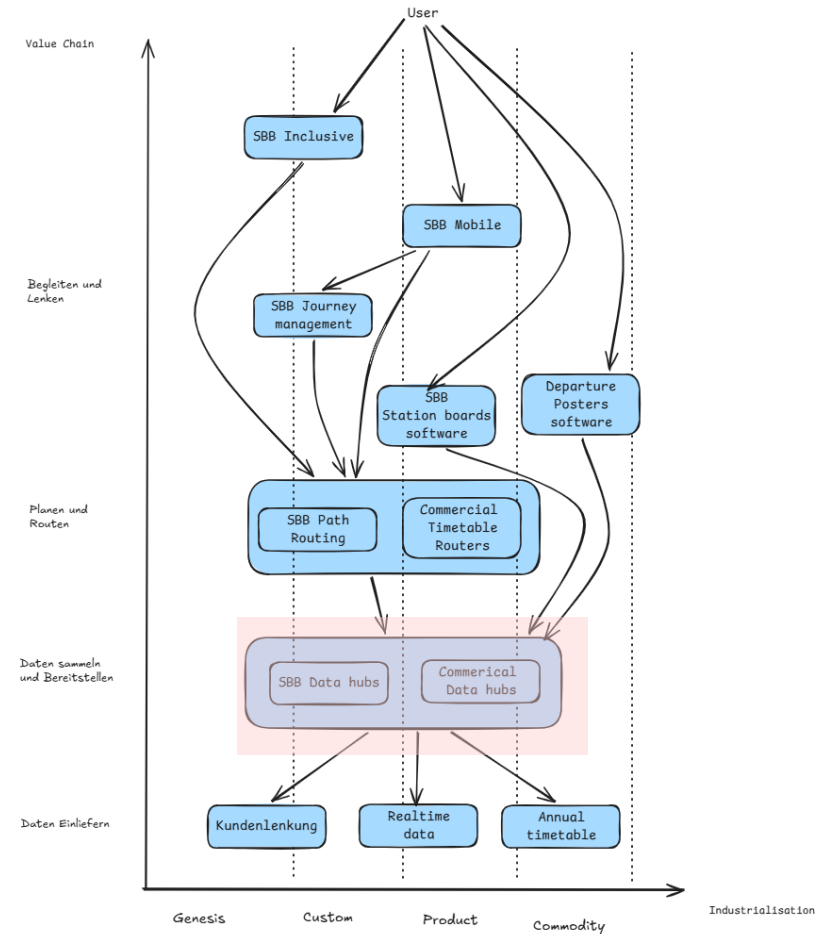
Improve communication and alignment – **Yes, align on understanding**

Make better strategy decisions – **Yes, “buy” vs “make”, where to standardize**

Define evolution paths and migration plans – **Yes, visualize evolution**

Guide organization design and capability allocation – **Yes, helps understand why we have some large teams**

Make better strategy decisions

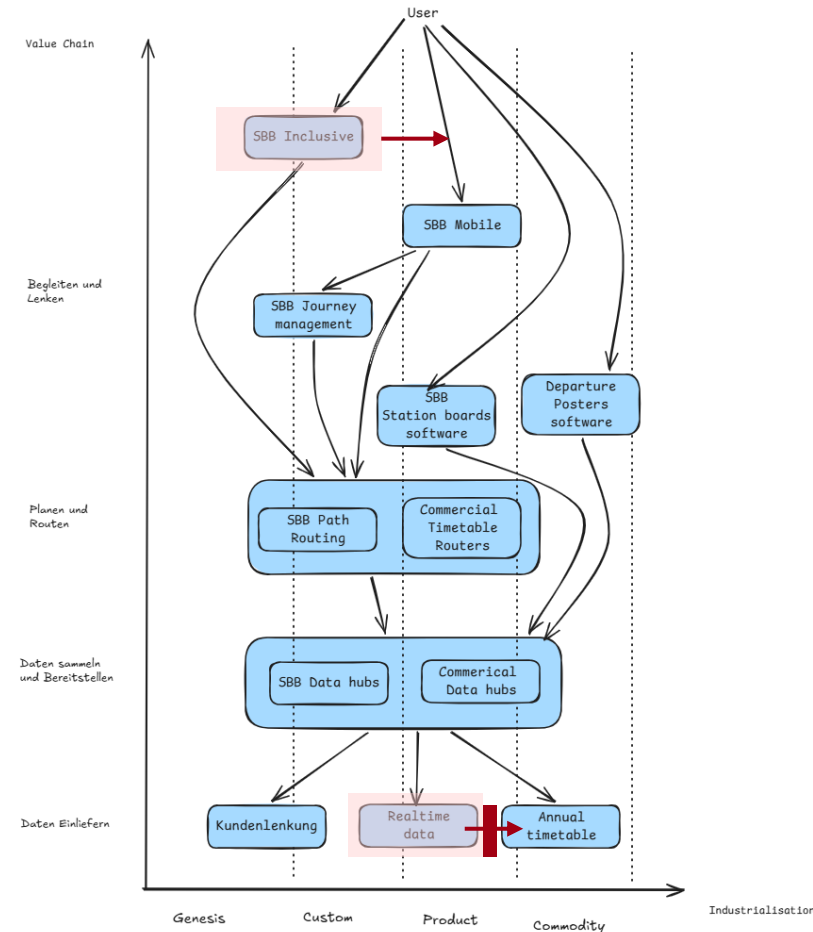


Which data hub to we buy and which one do we make?

Which standards are gaining tractions, which are losing market shares (e.g. RailML, NeTeX, VDV) ?

What will be the effort for customization ?

Define evolution path



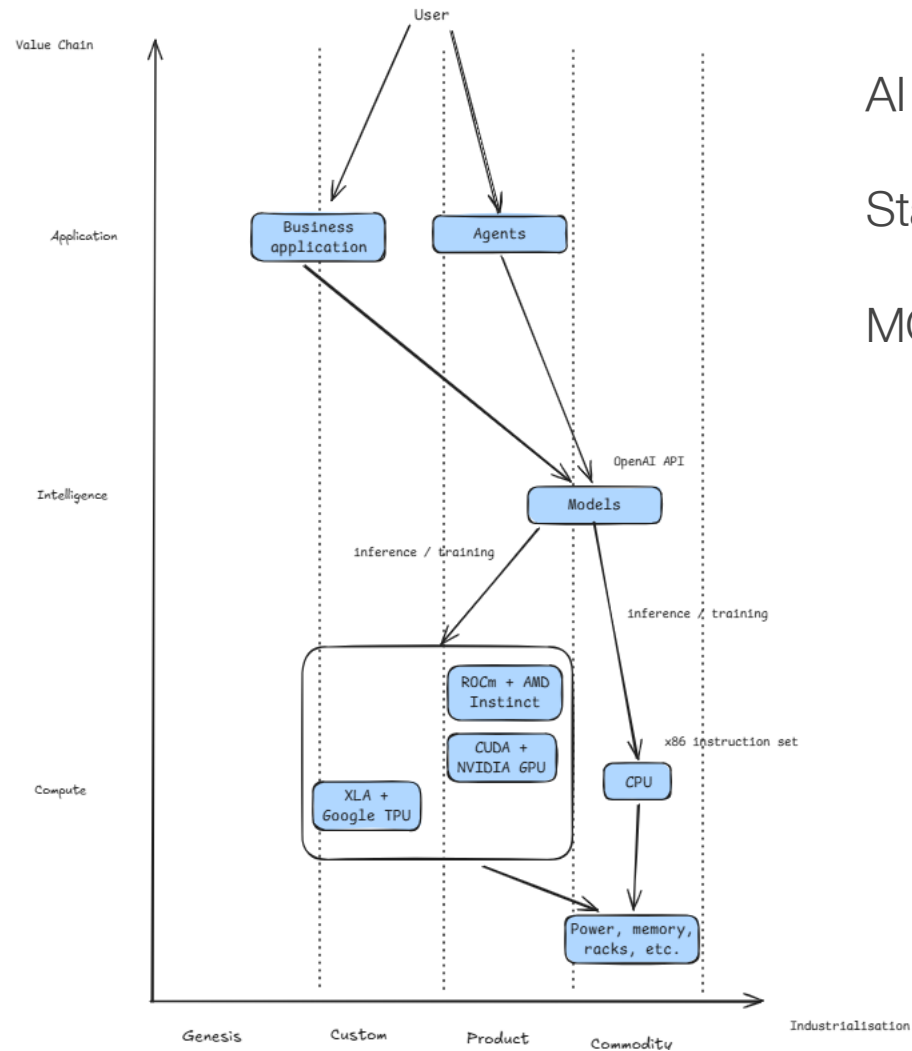
Should SBB Inclusive be a solution for all transport companies?

Rolling stock data with beacon not enough standardized at the moment

Needs more “commodization” of data for an industry solution

Map inertia (e.g. Technical debt) and barrier (e.g. Governance) that slow evolution

A simple Wardley map of AI

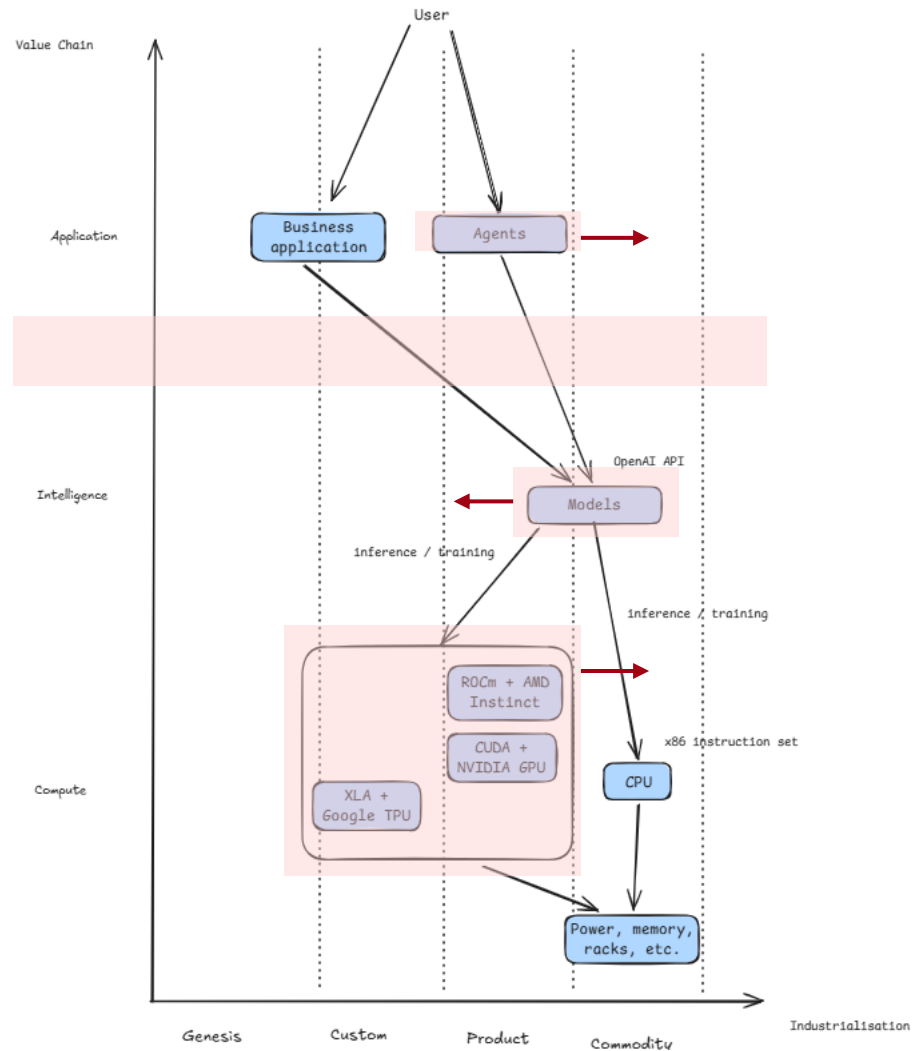


AI Compute Platform combines AI Chips + Software Abstraction

Standard API for Models (OpenAI) and CPU (x86).

MCP omitted from map

A simple Wardley map of AI



Will agents be more commoditized (e.g. A2A protocol) ?

Is the map missing a context layer (MCP, RAG, etc.) ?

Will models specialize more?

Will AI Compute Platforms be commoditized ?

Wardley maps as method

Wardley Map

Ziel und Zweck

Werkzeugkasten zur strukturierten Analyse von Kundenbedürfnissen und Produkten. Basierend auf der Dekomposition von Produkten und der Stand des Reifegrades der Komponenten sind differenzierte, situative Aussagen zur Positionierung von Produkten und Firmen im Markt möglich.

Simon Wardley entwickelte die Methode seit 2005 als CEO eines Startups für Online-Fotos. Sein Bedürfnis war die situative Analyse seiner Produkte und seiner Firma. Auf einer Karte sind technische Entwicklungen von Komponenten seiner Produkte sichtbar und strategische Diskussionen zur Positionierung im Markt einfach möglich.

Beschreibung / Lerninhalte

Grafisch Darstellung der Position der wesentlichen Komponenten (z.B. Services, Funktionen, Daten) von Produkten in Bezug auf:

- Nähe einer Komponente zum Kunden (Sichtbarkeit)
- Position der Partner und Konkurrenten
- Abhängigkeit der Komponenten in der Wertschöpfungskette
- Stand der Entwicklung von Komponenten bezüglich Maturität und Verbreitung

Elemente der Wardley Map

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Wardley Map

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	SimonW_Lascot_Oct2017.pdf	✕
	Vorstellung Wardley Map als Methode.pptx	✕
	Wardley Climate, Doctrine, Gameplay.xlsx	✕
	Wardley Map Book.docx	✕
	Wardley Map Book.pdf	✕
	Wardley Map Future.jpg	✕

Wardley Map

Explanation, Template, Links, etc.

Method - Climatic patterns

Predictable, external forces or trends that shape how the landscape will change over time.

Examples:

- Regulations - Think AI Safety
- Cost pressure – Token/\$
- Emergence of clones – Think Model Distillation
- Change of supply/demand – Think Agent vs Chat

Climate List

Method - Doctrine

Doctrine is a set of general, context-independent principles or rules you apply when operating within a landscape.

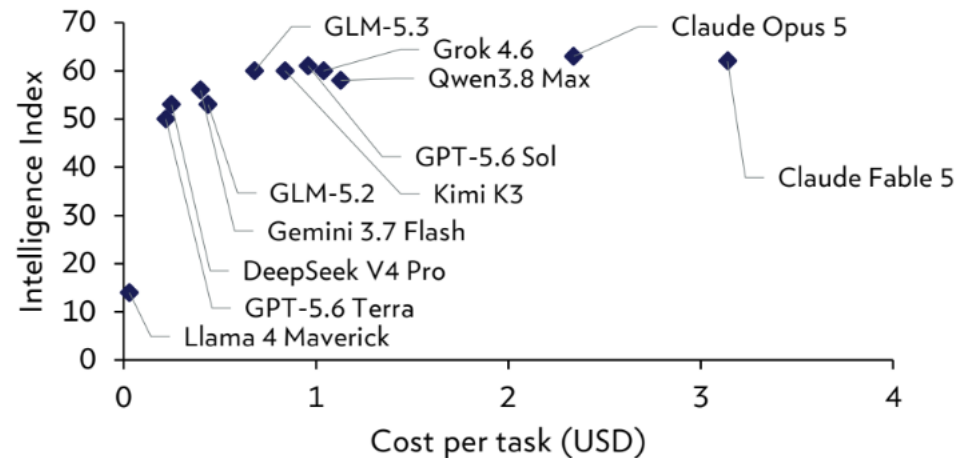
Think of

- “Focus on use need”, during Genesis
- “Set exceptional standard”, during Productification

Doctrine List

Exercise

“Why would you pay for a frontier model (OpenAI, Anthropic) if open source models exist that only lag 4 month behind?”



Take away – situational awareness

"Visionaries don't see the future. They see the present more clearly than others." — Jay Acunzo

Innovation Requires Seeing the Present (Not the Future) with Greater Clarity