However, what If our pioneers weren't us but instead other companies? Could our settlers discover successful patterns in all that noise? The problem of course was where would we look? Like any product vendor we could perform some marketing survey to find out how people were using our components but this seemed slow and cumbersome. Fortunately, our online photo service gave us the answer.

Between 2003 to 2005, we had exposed parts of the photo service through URL requests and APIs to others. It wasn't much of a leap to realise that if we monitored consumption of our APIs then we could use this to identify in real-time what other companies were being successful without resorting to slow and expensive marketing surveys. This lead to the *innovate* — *leverage* — *commoditse* (ILC) model. Originally, I called this innovate — *transition* — commoditise and I owe Mark Thompson a thank you for persuading me to change *transition* to something more meaningful. The ILC model is described in figure 55 and we will go through its operation.

Figure 55 — ILC (innovate, leverage and commoditise)