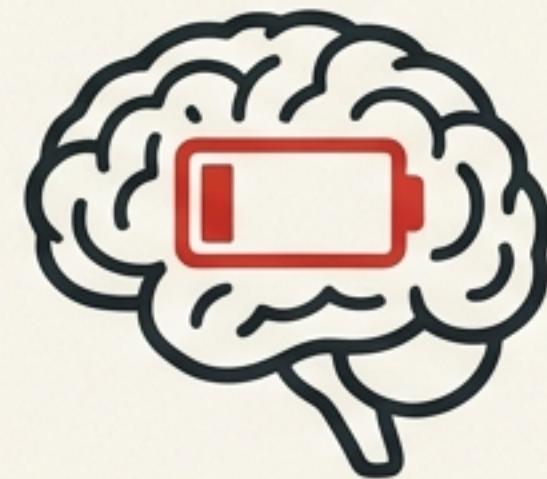


Fighting Cognitive Overload

The Case for Feed Control in the Age of Generative AI.

Every scroll carries a hidden tax. In an era where Generative AI floods our channels with infinite content, the human brain is struggling to filter signal from noise. This deck explores the mechanics of digital fatigue, the structural failures of current platforms, and why the future of social media belongs to radical user agency and human authenticity.

The Signal-to-Noise Paradox



1. The Biological Limit

Our brains have finite bandwidth. The constant “micro-decision-making” required to filter irrelevant content creates a cumulative cognitive load that leads to burnout.



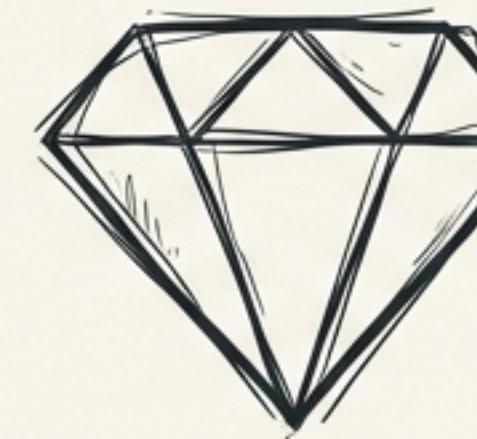
2. The Structural Flaw

Platforms like LinkedIn restrict user agency (e.g., blocking people but not companies), leaving users vulnerable to engagement farming.



3. The AI Accelerant

Generative AI has lowered the cost of spam to zero. This economic shift turns a trickle of bad content into a tsunami of “slop”.



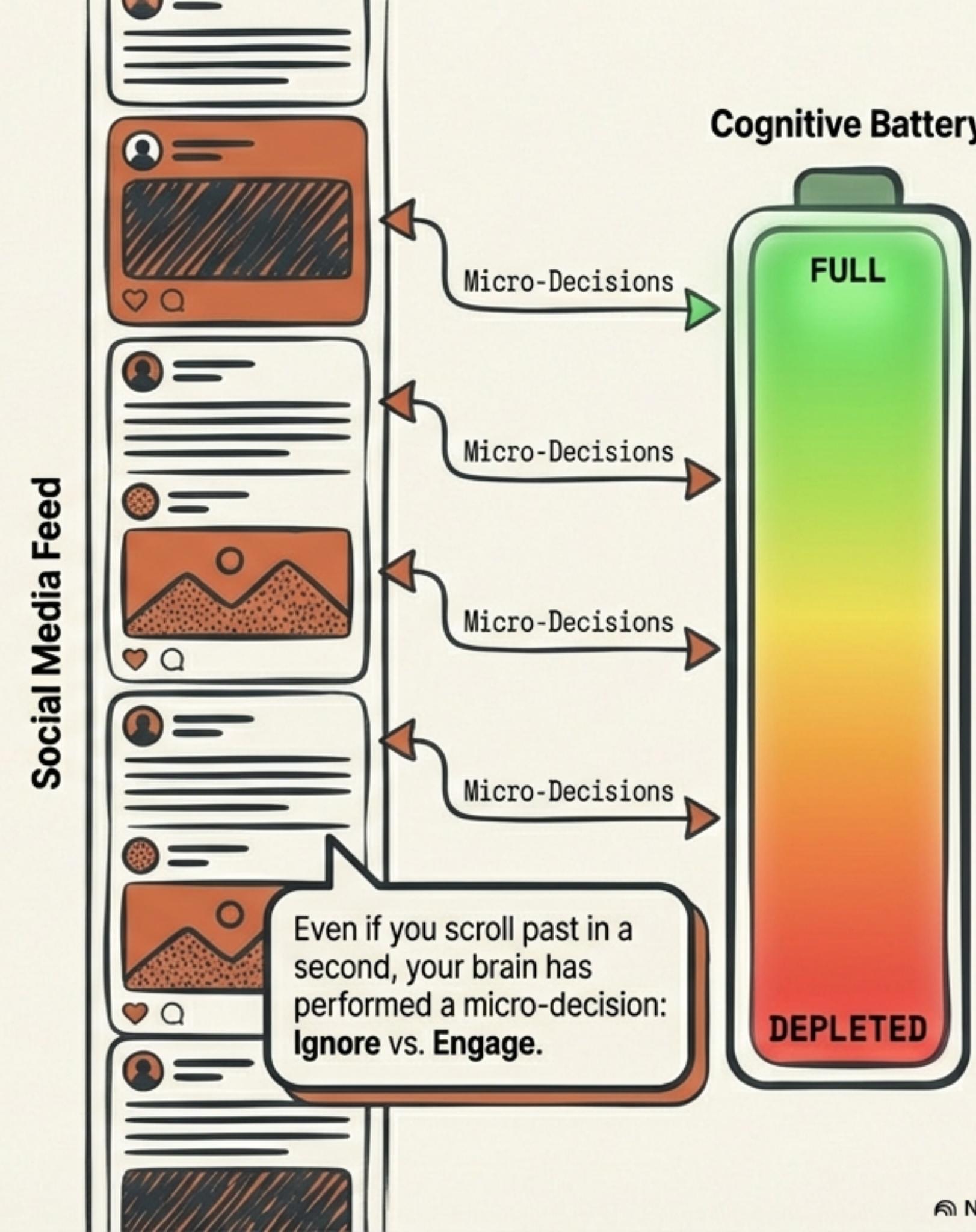
4. The Market Correction

As perfect, robotic content saturates the market, human imperfection becomes a luxury good. The future value proposition is “Authenticity”.

The Hidden Tax of the Feed

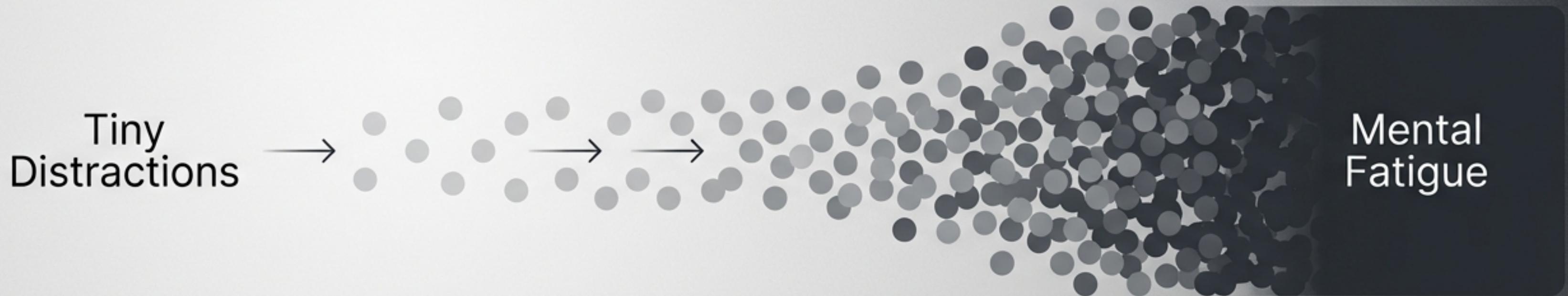
Research on digital overload confirms that the brain must parse every post, comment, and notification to decide if it is worth attention. This filtering process forces users to expend mental energy separating signal from noise.

The result is a persistent state of distraction, where an overstuffed feed actively diminishes the ability to concentrate on high-value tasks.



“The Micro-Interruption Economy” in Editorial New

“Unwanted content isn’t just harmless fluff – it actively detracts from user experience and well-being.”

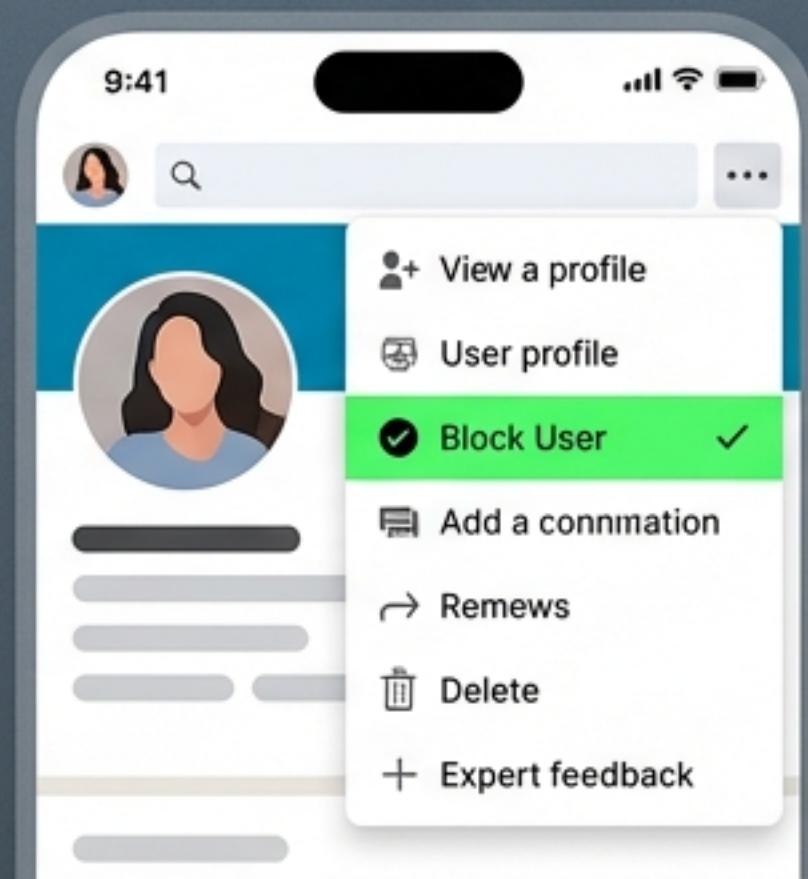


Each irrelevant post acts as a micro-interruption. Psychologists note that these accumulate into **decision overload**. **Controlling the feed** is a defensive measure for protecting mental clarity.

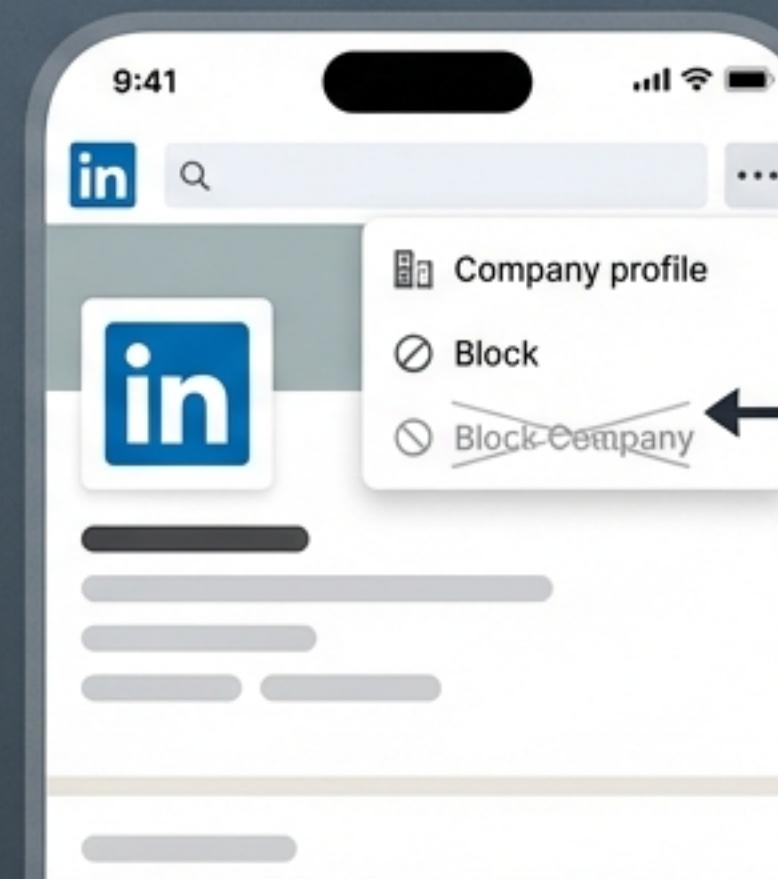
The Illusion of Control

Case Study: LinkedIn's Blocking Limitations

USER PROFILE



COMPANY PAGE

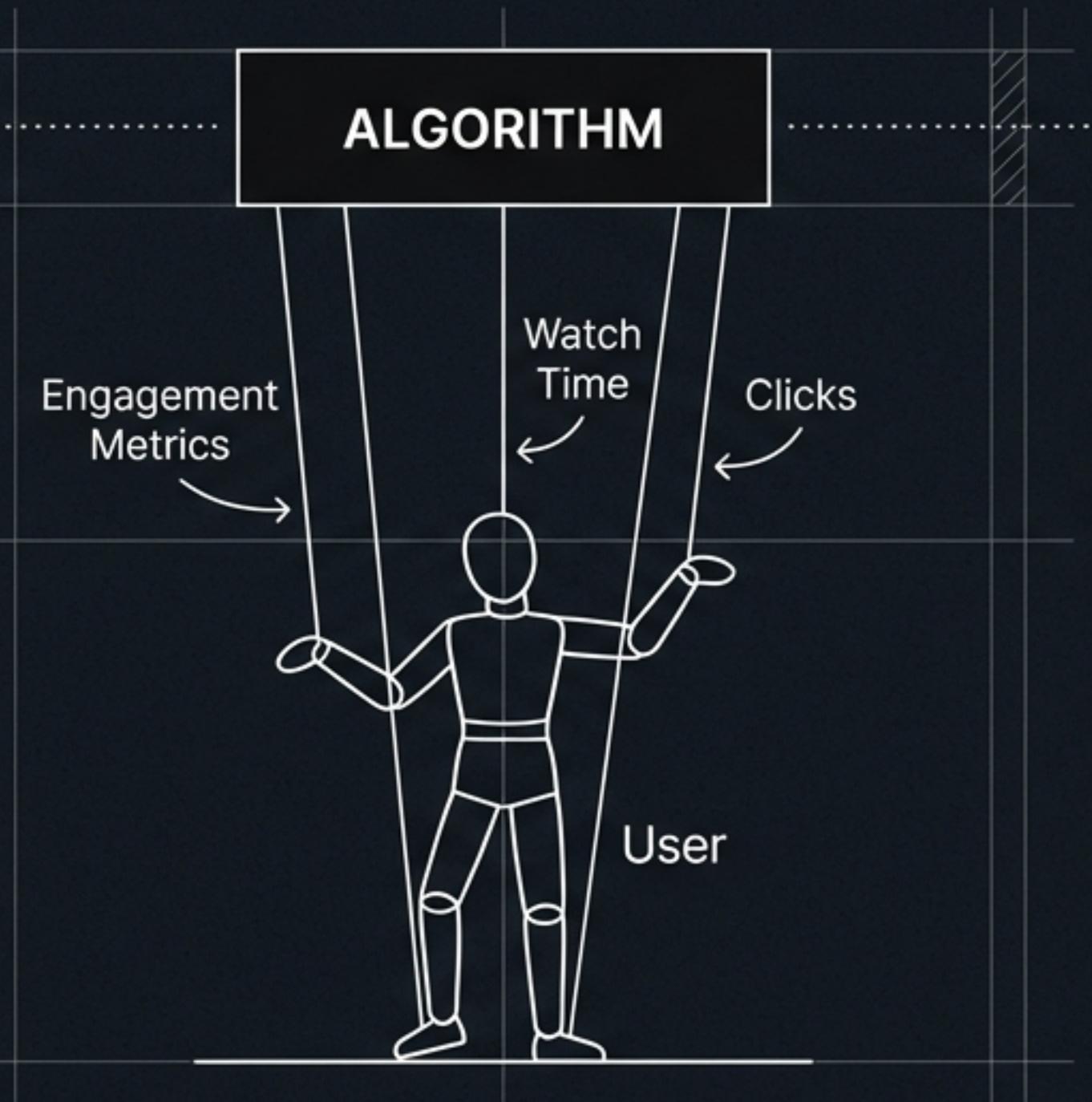


The Loophole: You can block people, but you cannot block Company Pages.

Expert Insight: UX expert Stéphanie Walter notes, "You can't block companies, only people." This design choice creates a "tyranny" where users are railroaded onto content pushed by corporate agendas. Spammers exploit this by flooding threads with AI-generated junk via company profiles.

The Tyranny of the Algorithm

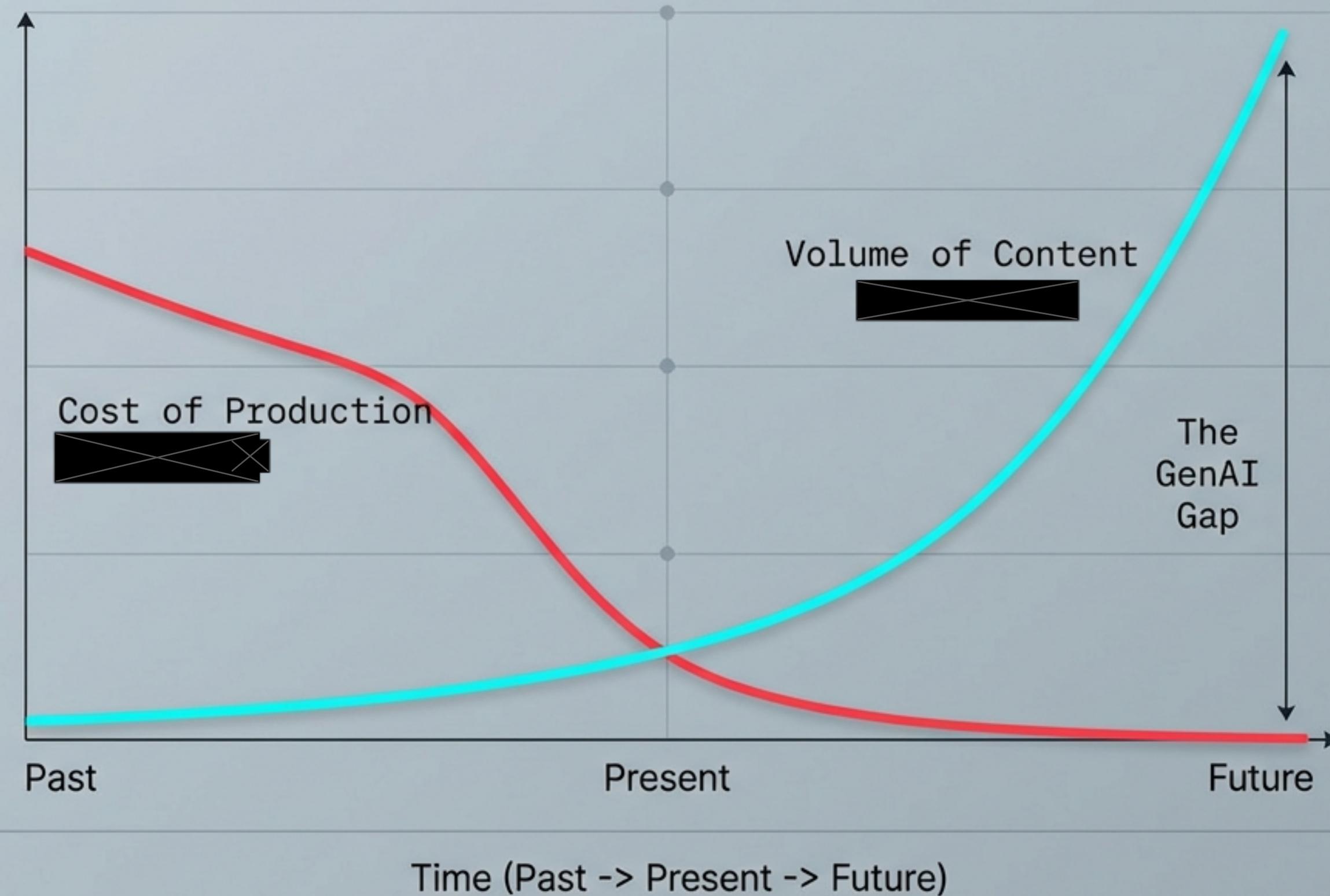
Personalised recommendation algorithms attempt to guess preferences but often fail, prioritising engagement metrics over user value.



Result: Without robust filtering tools, the user is at the mercy of the platform's agenda. The platform tolerates a degree of spam because 'bogus comments help to fool human users and advertisers into thinking activity is more effective than it really is'.

Lack of meaningful control reduces user agency and the ability to adapt feeds to personal needs.

When Spam Costs Zero



Historically, spam required human effort.

Generative AI has plummeted production costs to near-zero.

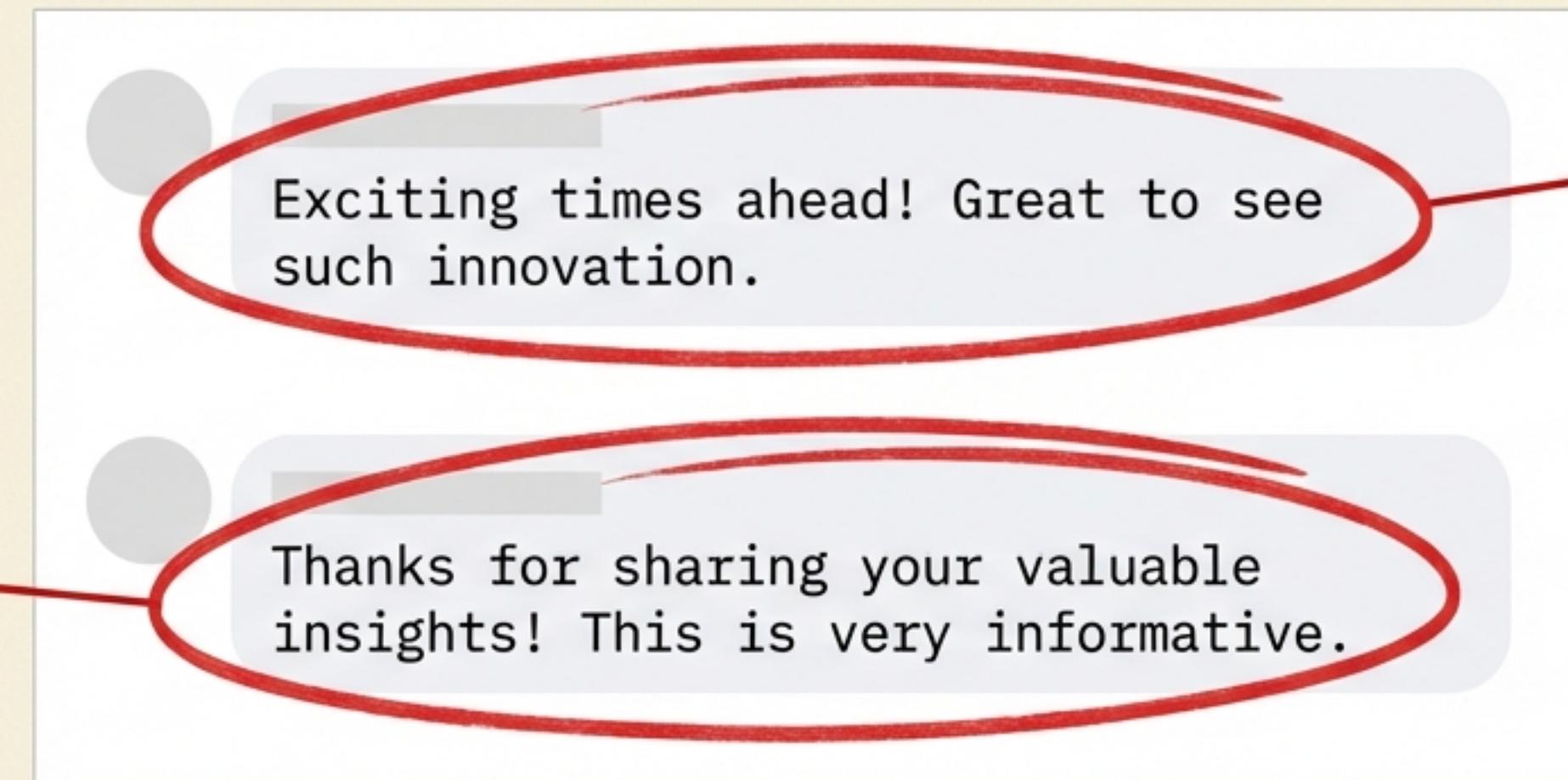
"If the cost of additional traffic is zero... it's worth pumping out unlimited amounts... even if each individual communication has only a very low chance of profit."

We have moved from a trickle to a tsunami.

The Rise of the 'Slop'

Anatomy of a Bot Comment

Generic Praise:
Zero specific reference to content.



Tone Mismatch:
Cheerful comment on a sombre layoff post.

These are the telltale signs of AI engagement farming. Profiles often belong to "automation marketers". Simple formulas (Positive Phrase + Reword Title) allow bots to pepper countless posts in minutes.

The Death of Discourse

“Your time and attention is taken. You receive the output of a machine that mimics meaning but does not understand or care about anything.”

– Eric Priezkalns, Commsrisk.

Real voices are drowned out. Interacting with a bot is a ‘net loss’ of time. It creates the appearance of engagement to game algorithms, but for the user, it is purely **parasitic**—stealing time while providing zero value.

The Backlash Has Begun

26%

Consumer preference for AI-created content (2026)

As of 2026, consumer preference for generative-AI-created content drops to roughly 26%, a sharp decline from 60% just a few years prior.

Users are tuning out. The ‘perfect’ robotic noise is losing its effectiveness. People are realising en masse that the flood of new content is ‘slop’—grammatically correct but lacking nuance.

Scarcity Creates Value



↑
The New Premium:
Human Imperfection

As AI generates infinite bland content, "messy," "imperfect," and "human" content becomes the rare commodity.

The oversaturation of AI forces audiences to find an "oasis from low-effort content." Social capital now accrues to the original and the genuinely engaging.

Trust in Imperfection

AI - Polished but Untrusted

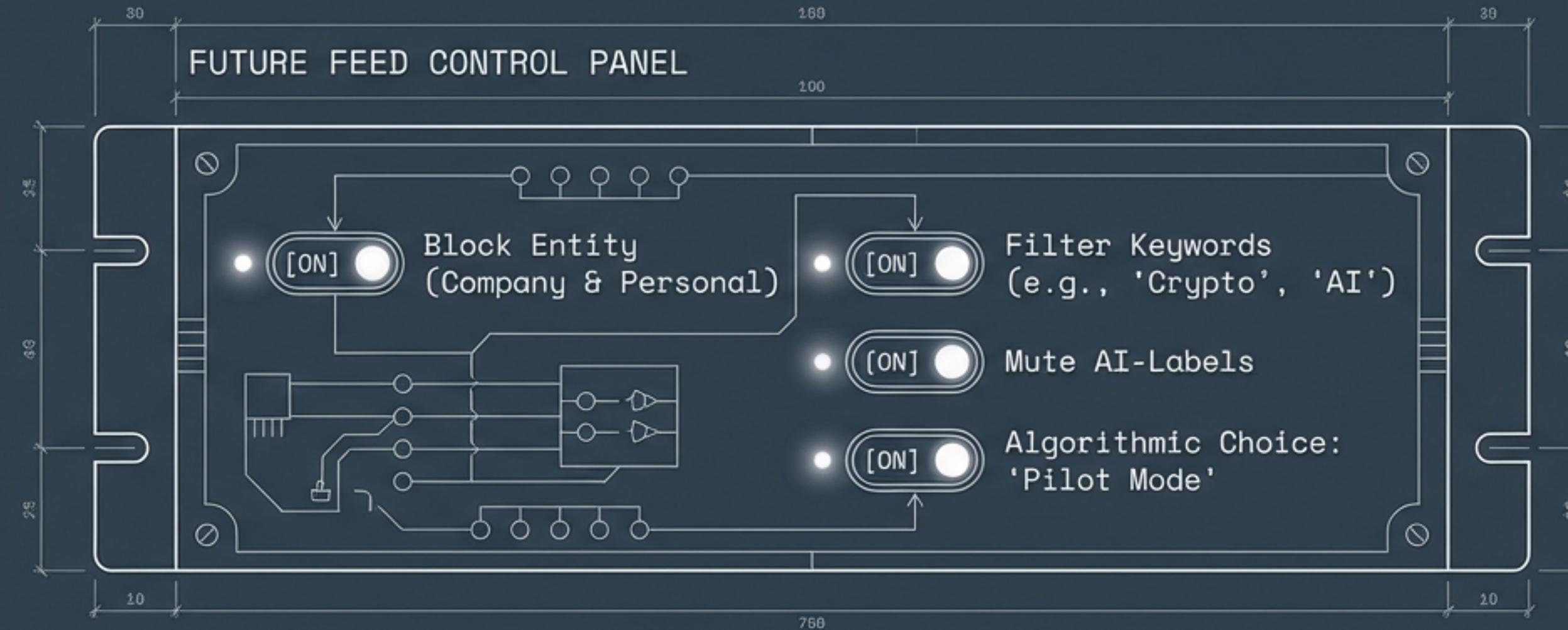
I am thrilled to announce
the optimization of our
synergy moving forward.
The future is bright.

Human - Messy but Trusted

I'm honestly kinda
scared but excited
about what's next.
Let's see how it goes.

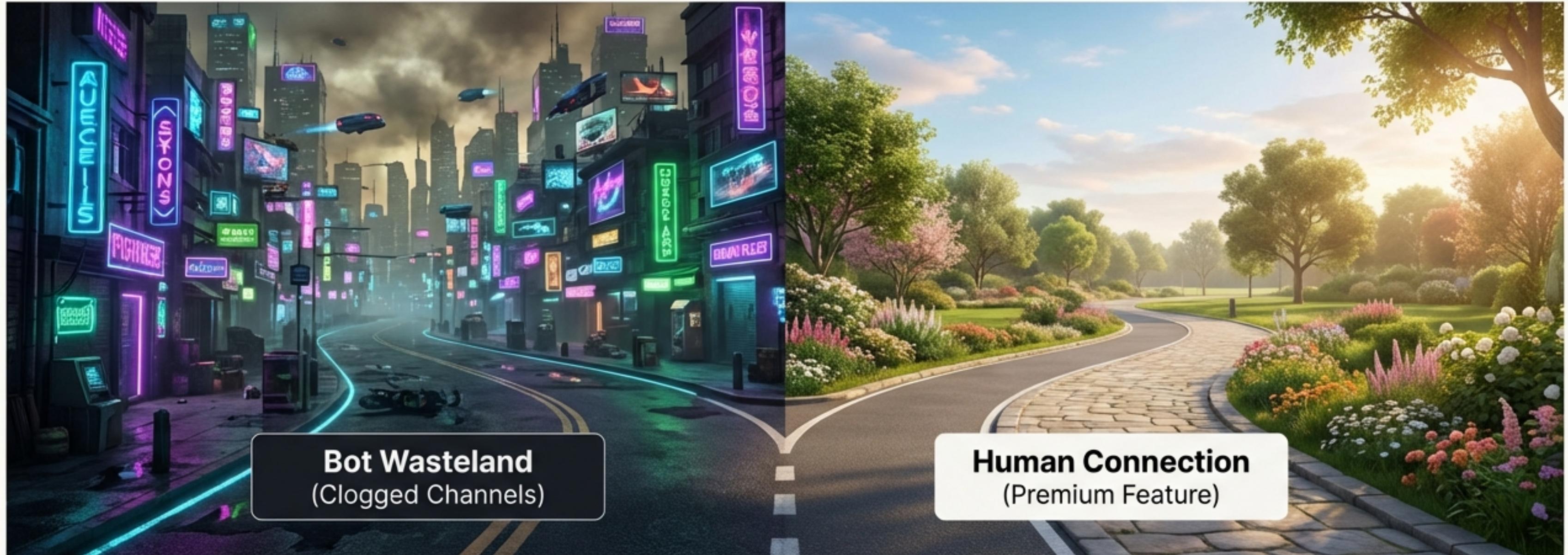
AI can't replicate the messiness of human creativity. We now trust typos, emotional nuance, and 'off' traits because they prove a human is behind the screen. Blind automation is a dead-end strategy for building community.

The Case for Radical User Agency



Platforms must implement granular blocking and allow muting of telltale spam phrases. Control must sit with the user, not the advertiser. Example: BlueSky's "Pilot" system allows installable algorithms that increased user satisfaction and critical thinking.

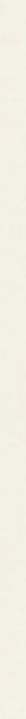
A Strategic Outlook (New) (2025-2026)



The Fork in the Road

Platforms that ignore these tools will become clogged channels where real communication dies.
Platforms that prioritise authenticity will market 'real human connection' as a premium feature.
2026 will be the year of the 'Authenticity Renaissance'.

Sanity is a Setting



The ability to shape one's own feed is no longer a nice-to-have feature; it is essential for maintaining cognitive health. The goal is a feed where *you* set the terms: no AI gibberish, no irrelevant corporate promos, just the updates that enrich you.

**Give power back to the user. Elevate authenticity.
Return social media to its original promise.**