

The Studio's “Special Sauce”



Who we are

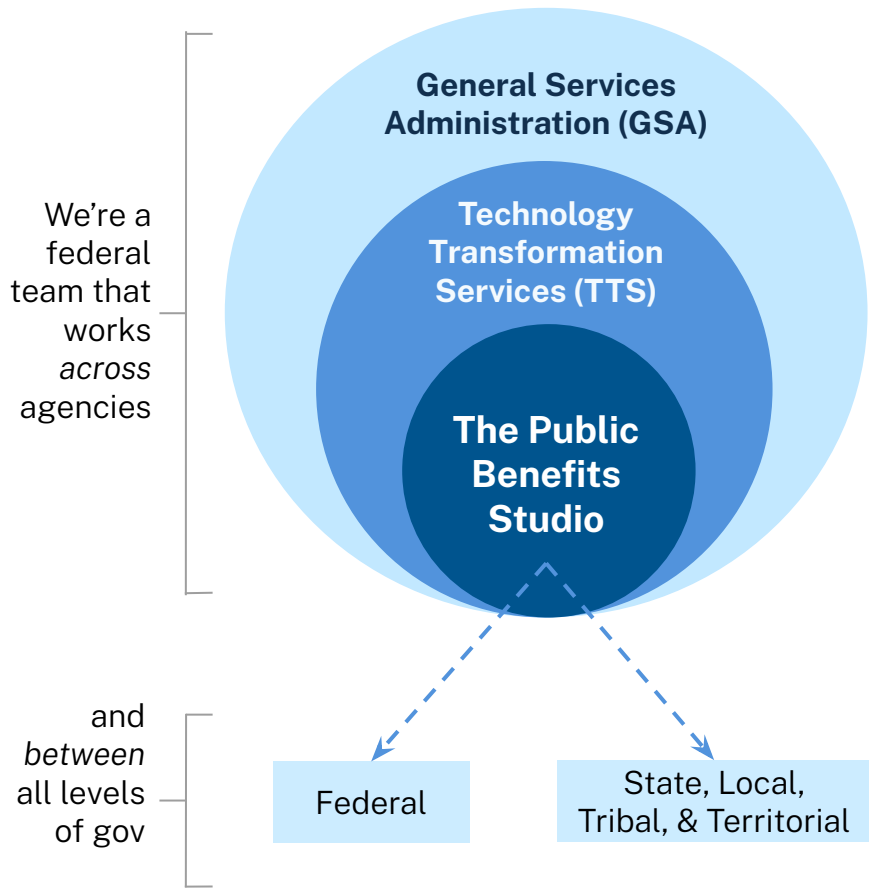


The Public Benefits Studio



The Public Benefits Studio is a **domain-focused product accelerator** inside the federal government.

We collaborate with delivery programs to **build and scale shared tools** that improve the efficiency of government programs and reduce burden for low-income individuals and families.



As a part of GSA's Technology Transformation Services (TTS), **the Studio is uniquely positioned to work *between* and *across* programs**, to make it easier and cheaper for people with the same challenges to use the same tools.

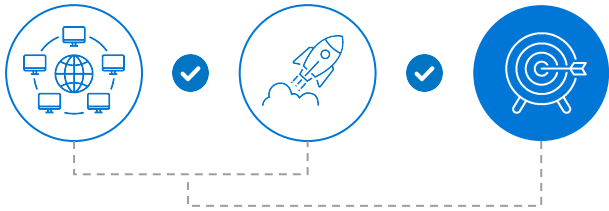
We focus on scaling solutions that make sense for TTS to own long term, and that can be made available across agencies and programs, as well as across *levels* of government (federal, state, and local).

Factor 1: our domain focus

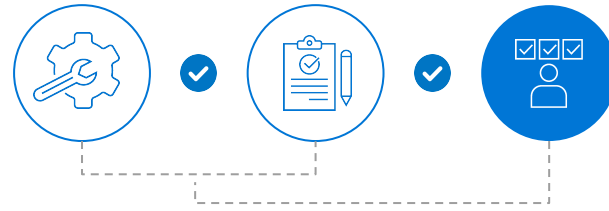


We focus on **public benefits as a domain** because:

- 1 **Our domain connections
& expertise speed our path
to delivery**



- 2 **Designing for extremes
pressure-tests our products
to work well for everyone**



Domain expertise & connections enable speed

Our team's **combined decades of experience working and delivering results in this space**

has earned us trust with agency leaders and other major players in the space.

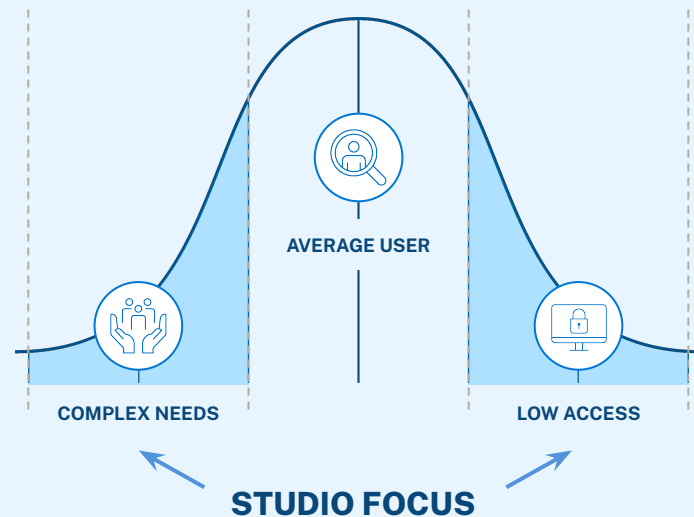
These trusted relationships enable us to:

- Source pre-vetted opportunities that are ripe for scaling, *with buy-in from the start* from the individuals and organizations whose support will be necessary to scale
- Rapidly identify research participants and early partners to speed early validation
- Lean on our partners to help us market our product to their own networks, speeding adoption and scale

Designing for extremes pressure-tests products early

We pressure-test our products by proving their operating model delivers impact even within the highly complex, federated environment of government benefits programs.

This borrows from Stanford & IDEO's concept of “designing for extremes”, where **solving problems for people who face the most complex challenges results in solutions that serve everyone else, too.**

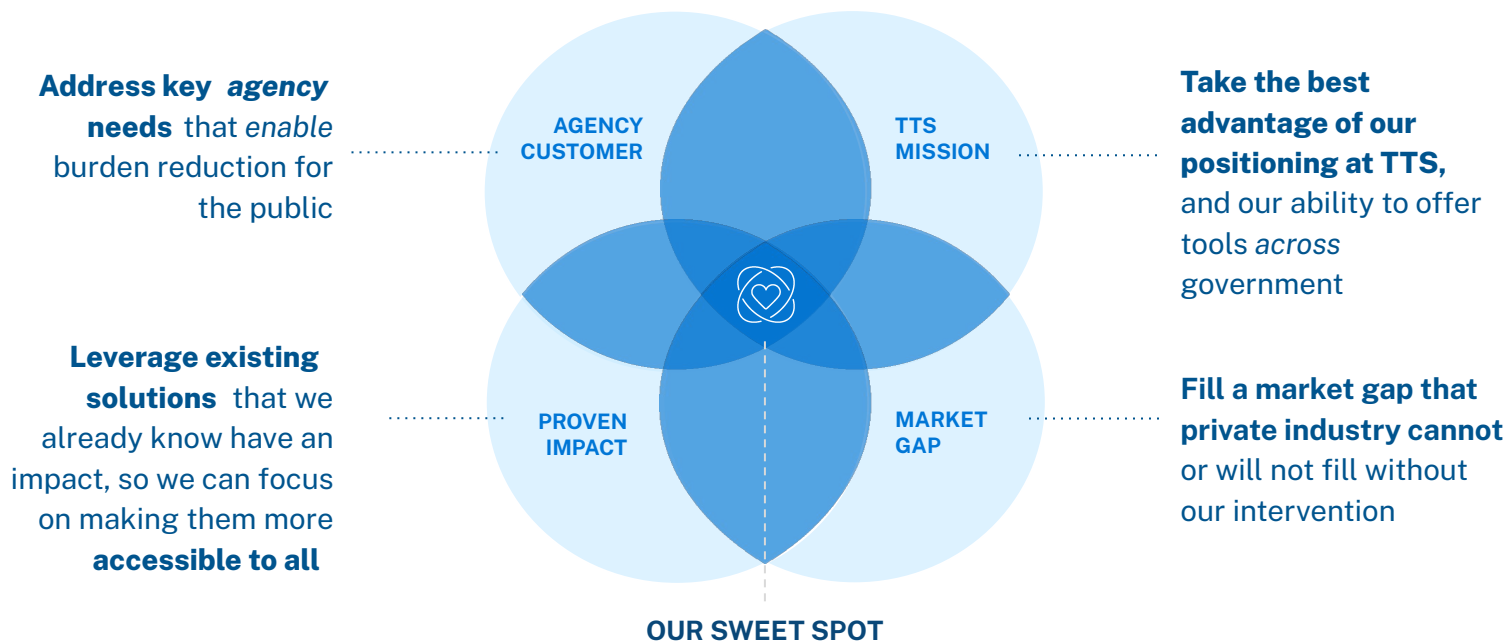


Factor 2: Highly selective opportunity intake



The Studio's intake criteria

We prioritize opportunities that...

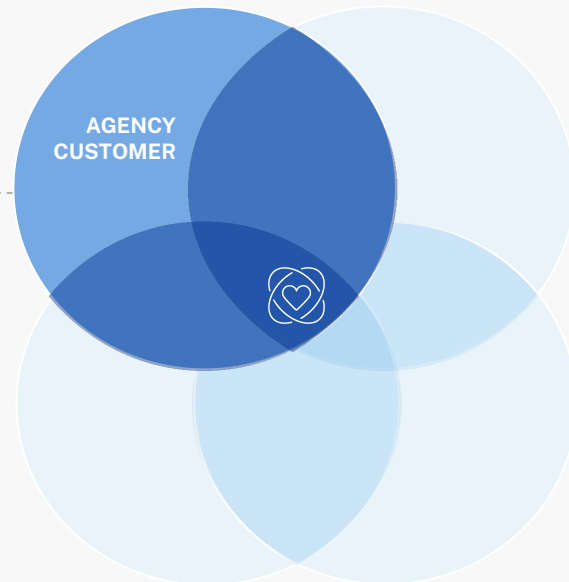


Focusing on agency issues at the root of public needs

Our work ultimately benefits *the public*, by means of reduced burden and improved customer experience for low-income individuals and families navigating public benefits.

However, **we focus on products whose primary customers will be *government agencies*** (across all levels) who administer federally-funded benefits programs.

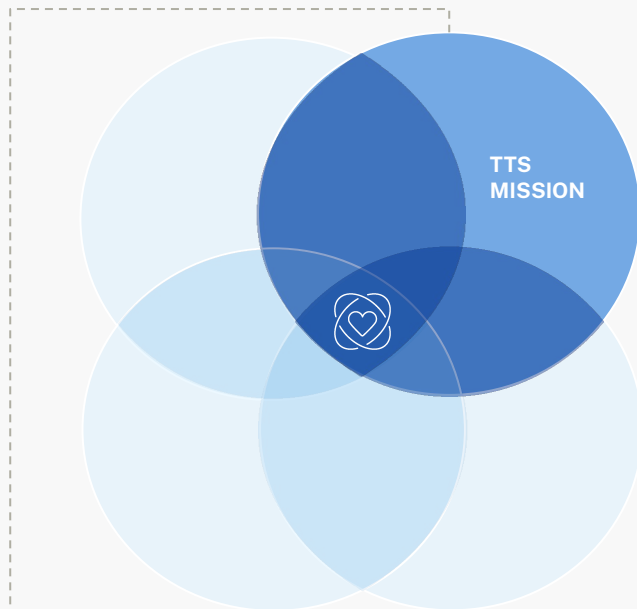
This is because most customer experience issues for the public trace back to service delivery challenges within the administering agencies themselves, and **we at TTS are uniquely positioned to address those root-cause agency challenges effectively.**



Leveraging our unique positioning in GSA

We focus on products that make sense for TTS to own and operate long term, since TTS is best positioned to own and operate government-wide shared services over an extended period of time.

As such, **opportunities we consider need to align with TTS's mission and GSA's existing authorities**. For example, we are not well-positioned to operate a government-wide glossary tool because we don't have the authority to determine other agencies' regulatory definitions.

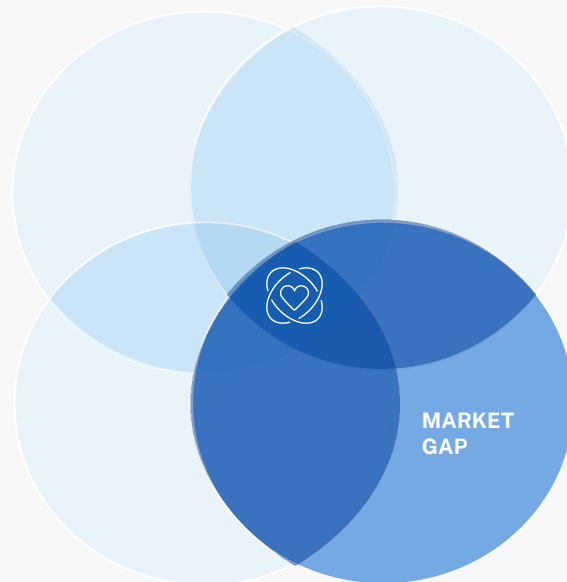


Addressing known market gaps

Often, technology solutions may exist in the private sector, but aren't easily accessible to government agencies, due to government-specific operating requirements, restrictions on purchase or payment options, or different customer needs.

As a federal technology provider, **TTS is uniquely positioned to bridge this gap, developing solutions that enable the adoption of technologies that have artificially low saturation in the government**, have insufficient competition for fair pricing, or insufficient customer protections.

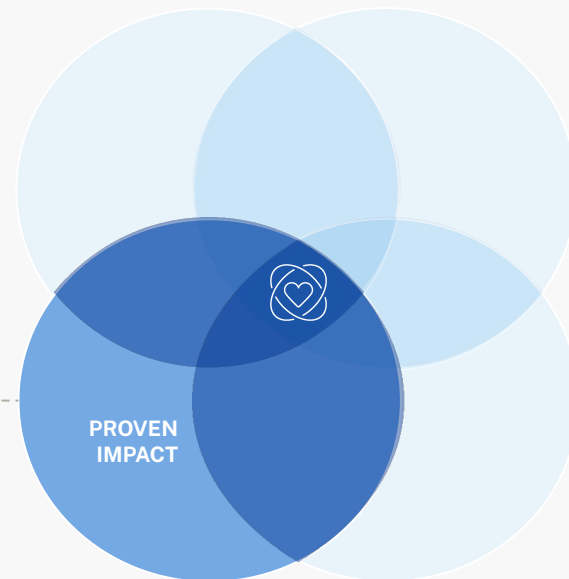
By developing and scaling these solutions, we pave a path for industry to follow to better meet public sector needs.



Leveraging existing solutions

Because of our domain expertise, we are able to **identify opportunities that have *already been tested and/or shown measurable impact*** in some aspect of the ecosystem, but need government intervention to *scale*.

This enables us to **feel confident enough to invest in carving out the funding and operational path forward from day one** for the products we explore, so that as the product's value is validated, the path to expand is laid in parallel.

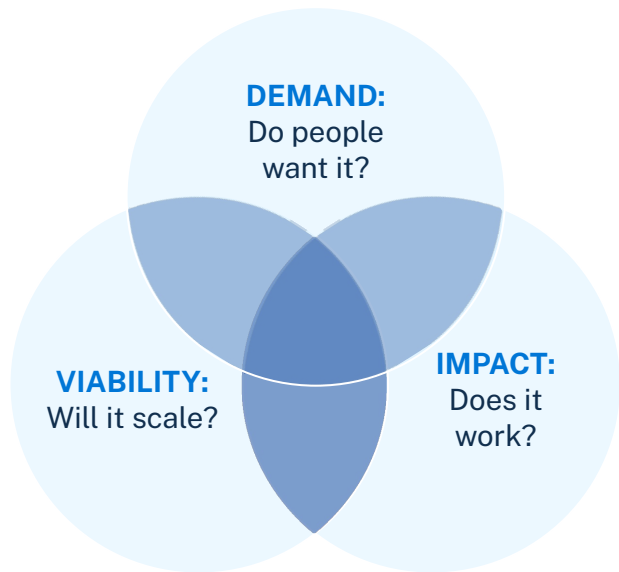


Factor 3: Prioritizing viability/ sustainability from the start



Continuously assessing opportunities against three core validation criteria

We follow a lean approach to product/market validation, always prioritizing testing whichever of these hypotheses is the highest risk at any given time.



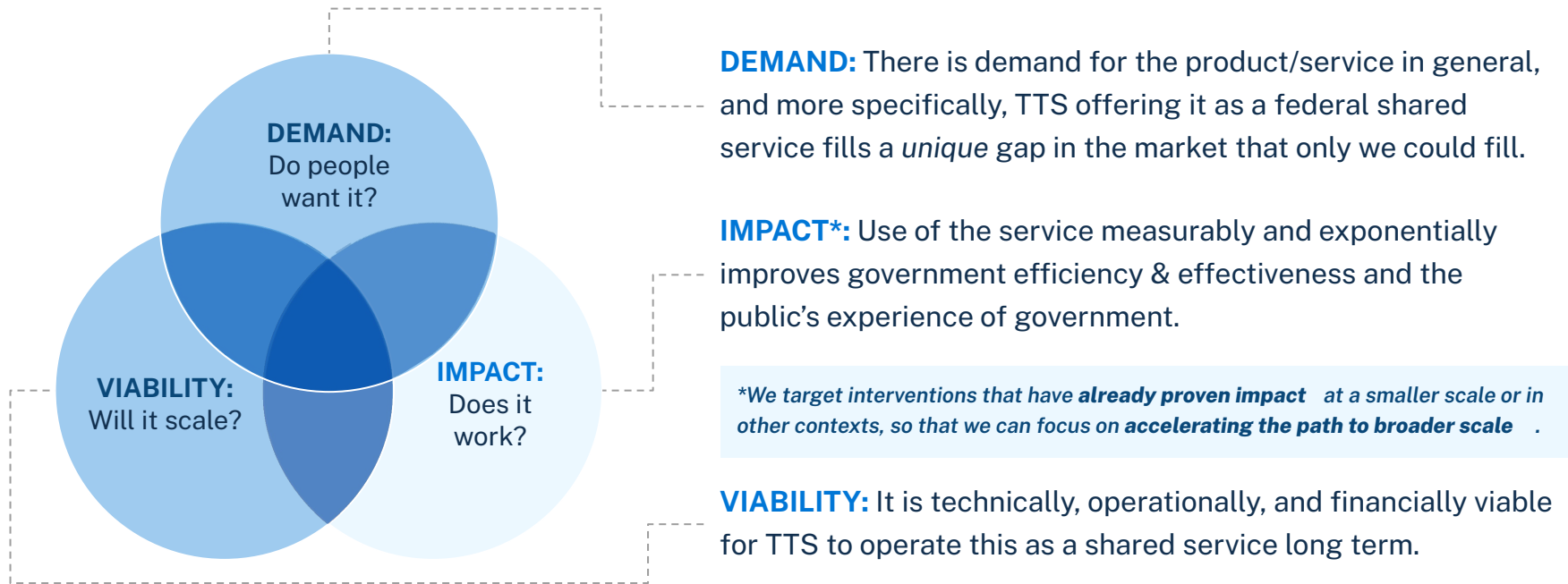
DEMAND: There is demand for the product/service in general, and more specifically, TTS offering it as a federal shared service fills a *unique* gap in the market that only we could fill.

IMPACT*: Use of the service measurably and exponentially improves government efficiency & effectiveness and the public's experience of government.

VIABILITY: It is technically, operationally, and financially viable for TTS to operate this as a shared service long term.

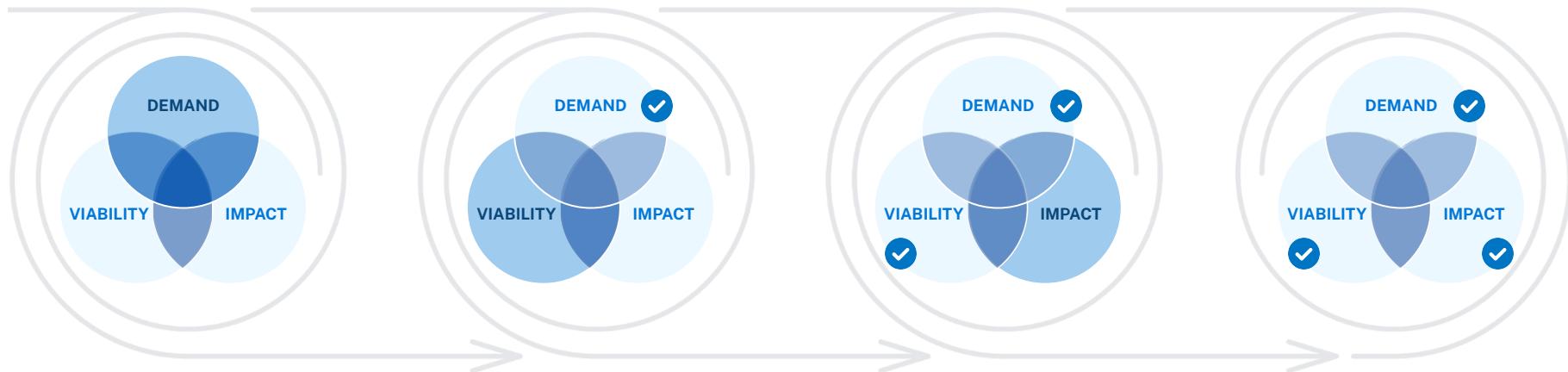
Continuously assessing opportunities against three core validation criteria

We follow a lean approach to product/market validation, always prioritizing testing whichever of these hypotheses is the highest risk at any given time.



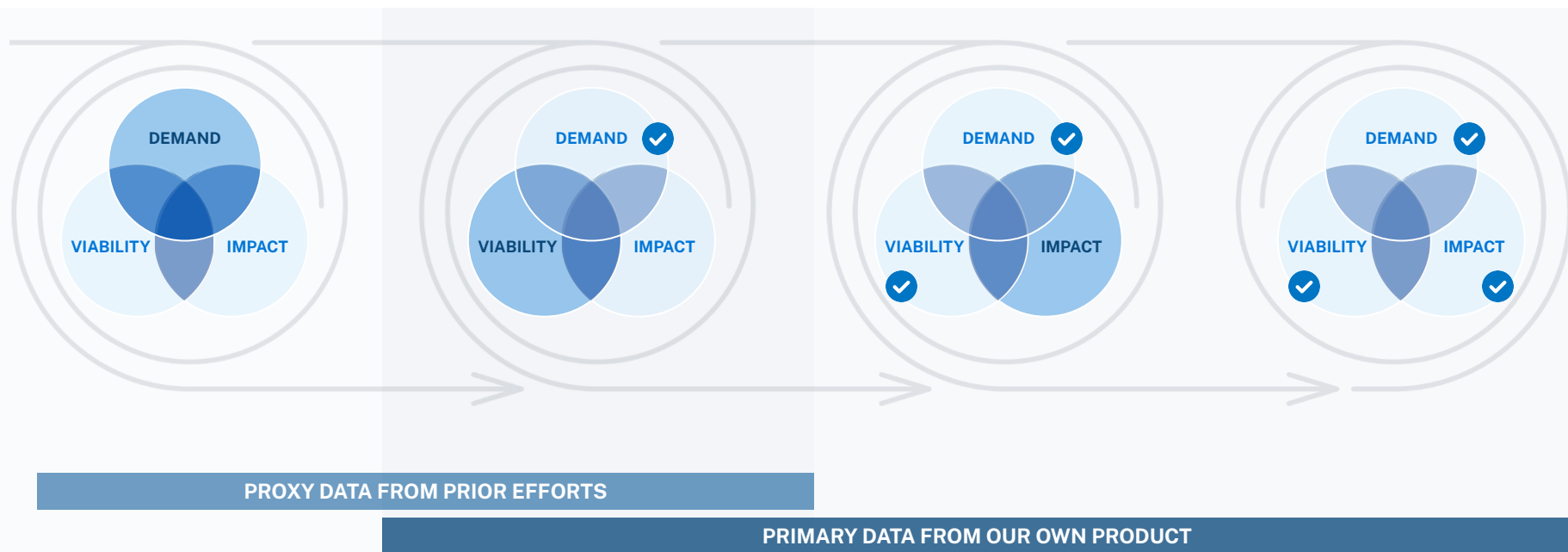
Continuously assessing opportunities against three core validation criteria

There is not one set path to follow because the risks and assumptions — as well as the level of information needed and amount of time it takes to sufficiently test each hypothesis — will be different for every product at every stage.



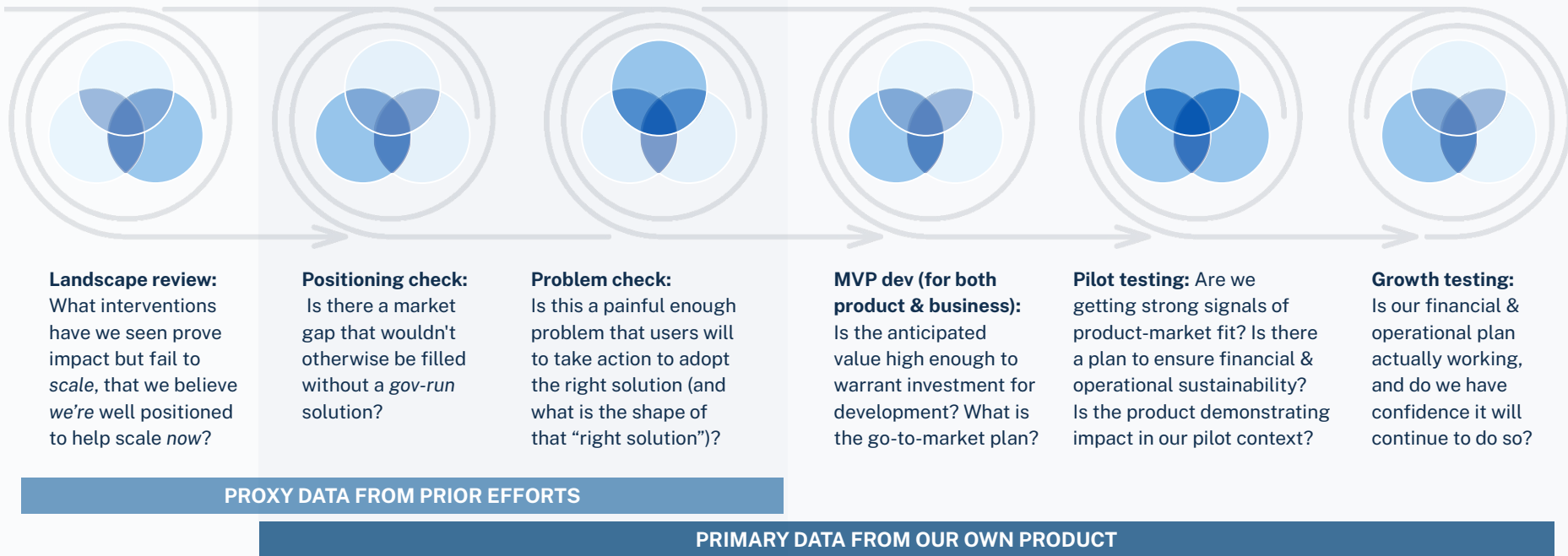
Continuously assessing opportunities against three core validation criteria

In early phases, we base our initial *hypotheses and assumptions* on existing/proxy data (e.g., data from prior, related efforts). As we progress, we collect our own primary data to form more confident *conclusions*.



An example flow of assessing against these criteria over time

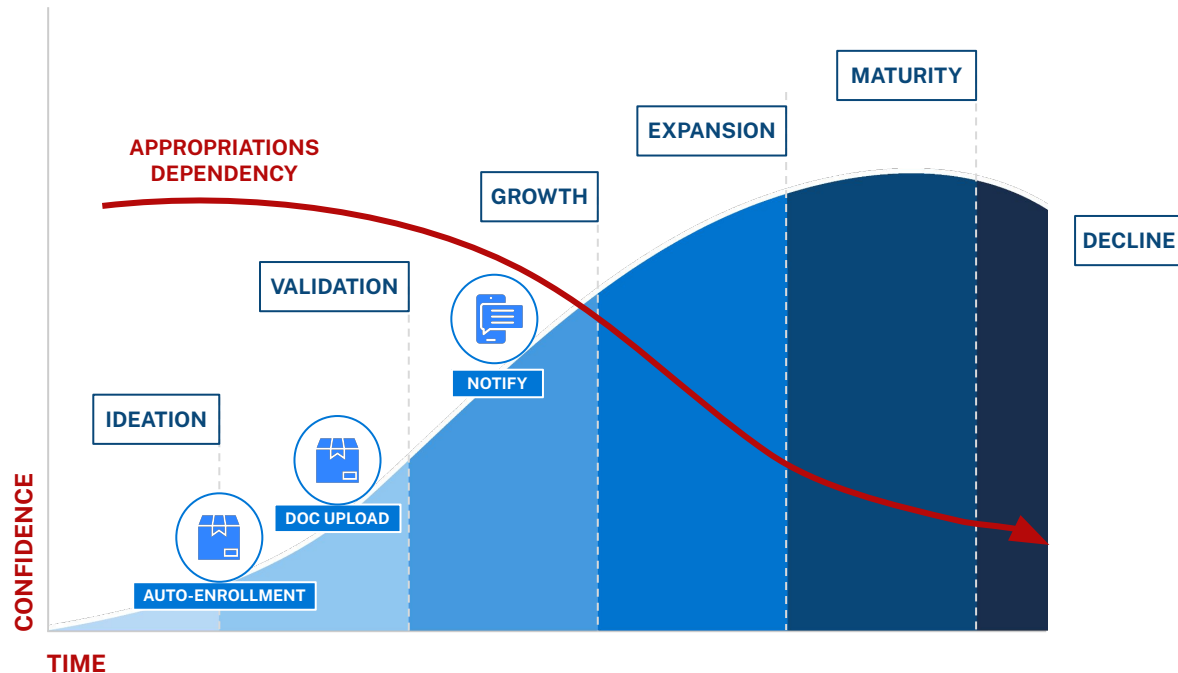
We will always be evaluating our three core hypotheses at each stage of development, but **the level of information needed and the type of question asked at each stage will be different.**



Measuring the Studio's success based upon the viability of our products

The adoption and long-term sustainability of service offerings that come out of the Studio is how we ultimately measure the Studio's success.

We measure progress along the way based on the **speed/efficiency of experimentation cycle** (i.e., how quickly and confidently we can make stop/pivot/continue decisions).



Example: Notify.gov

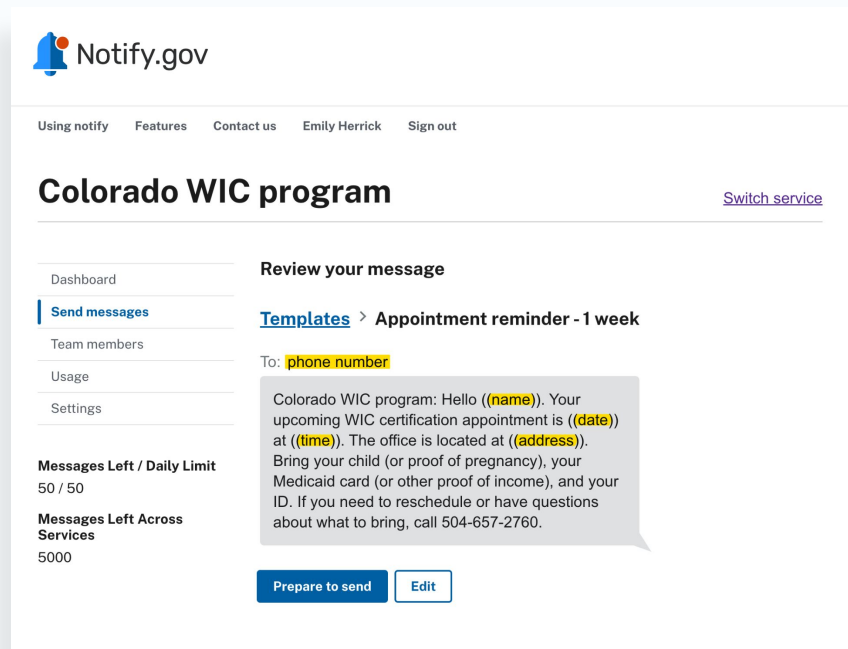


Our first investment: **Notify.gov**

Notify.gov is a text messaging service built by and for government, helping agencies more effectively communicate with the people they serve.

Notify.gov's **trustworthy, easy-to-use platform** enables federal and federally-funded programs to **send customized, bulk text messages** to:

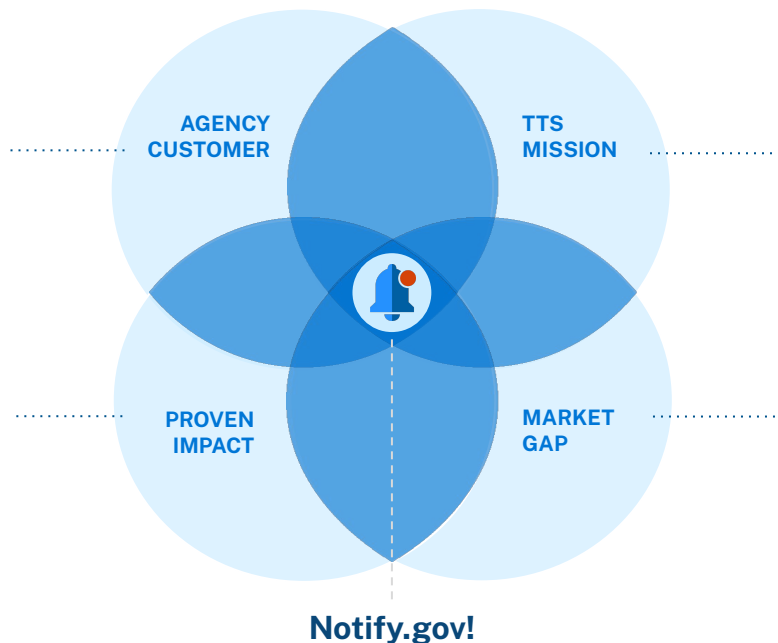
- reach people where they are
- improve program outcomes
- reduce administrative costs



Why notifications/Notify.gov?

Copious research has shown that timely notifications are **essential for beneficiaries** and **remain challenging** for gov agencies

U.S. texting pilots had **proven impact**; international equivalents had **demonstrated operational viability**; 10x was actively experimenting with an **open source prototype**



A texting service would **fit well within TTS's mission and history of offering shared services** across government

TTS is well positioned to address the technical & procurement barriers that have kept adoption of commercial texting tools amongst gov agencies artificially low

Assessing Notify's viability over time

