

**ACT-NOW! THE INNOVATION JOURNEY**

*From Ideation to Market Saturation*

A rigorously prepared one-day workshop for groups of individuals ending with the on-stage performance of a 30-45 minute play presenting the “Innovation Journey” to a live audience.

Experience the look, feel, sound, smell and taste of the innovation experience as well as the emotions associated with these.

Deeply comprehend the complete journey of innovation from ideation to market saturation in order to accelerate that process in personal and professional contexts.

Suited for: Leadership away-days, leadership development, team-building, start-up clinics, and development of entrepreneurial skills.

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## Description

We continue to live in challenging times. Times when rapidly getting the most out of new ideas continues to grow in importance. Times when it is important to grow our understanding of not what we know we can do, but of what we are truly capable of doing. Times when new approaches to accelerating innovation deserve being explored. This is a challenge we need to take personally. A challenge we need to immerse ourselves in and become confident in being able to make a difference.

This workshop is provided by the Open European Network for Enterprise Innovation ([www.innovation-web.eu](http://www.innovation-web.eu)) in association with Entovation International ([www.entovation.com](http://www.entovation.com)) and gives participants and their audience the opportunity to experience the journey of innovation through creating and performing an immersive stage play that gives more confidence in being able to make a change truly work - in a day.

Supported by a stage script, participants create an original five-act stage-play over the course of a single day, personalizing the vision of the play and proceeding through the story boarding, development, rehearsals and, ultimately, an “opening night” performance before a live audience.

Besides experiencing the "Innovation Journey" and the principles of moving swiftly from ideation to market saturation, participants learn important team concepts including: valuing all team members' contributions, obtaining buy-in from all members toward a common vision, the importance of collaborative leadership, creating a strong team structure, and the value in generating extraordinarily high team goals and reaching them.

The central dramatic question addressed is what does the “true story” of innovation look, feel, sound, smell and taste like not only from the perspective of individual participants and roles, but as a whole. It is an experience of the five senses as well as the emotions associated by these. It is left open to the participants to decide whether their version of the story will be a tragedy, comedy, melodrama, tragicomedy, or mixture thereof. The script itself sets the story as a tragicomedy; it is non-judgmental and ends with no absolutes. It focuses on role relationships and shows the innovation journey in a state of continuous flux. There is a mix of comedy and tragedy side by side as the journey meanders from ideation to market saturation.

The workshop ends with an opening night “world premiere” performance and a wrap-up discussion (including the audience) to extract the key learnings of the program and translate these learnings to the individual's innovation world.

The workshop “The Innovation Journey Experience” is designed as a training event for organizations seeking to learn more about what it takes to implement change more rapidly – in any context – through highly condensed collaborative experience. The workshop can also be used as a teambuilding event at the beginning of collaboration efforts – participants bond exceptionally well through the shared experience of taking the innovation journey. The workshop is furthermore well suited for leadership “away-days” and can be tailored to specific “ideas” of “challenges” as needed. The “world premiere” opening night performance will be professionally video-taped and made available for wider circulation.

Topics that will be addressed throughout the experience include: self-management (time management, critical thinking), communication (presentation skills, rhetoric, verbal/ non-verbal, para- verbal communication), taking responsibility on decision making, knowledge about intellectual property, team work, multidisciplinary interaction and willingness to share knowledge, which leads to innovation. The creatively conveyed story highlights critical competences such as confidence, curiosity, creativity, resilience.

Innovation is the journey of an idea from being unique and unknown to being common and household knowledge. It is a journey that can take anything from hours (i.e. the concept of “fake news”) to hundreds of years (i.e. air and space travel). It is a journey begun by an individual and completed by the masses. The journey is also roller-coaster of emotions as the idea moves from its wellspring in all directions, up/down, left/right, forward/backward, and continuously varying speeds to finally become part of everyday life (in the context of relevance).

This play represents the experience of partaking in the innovation journey and is meant to give courage to innovators by allowing them to partake in that experience in a safe environment. This is important because it increases the familiarity of the (usually novice) innovator with the key elements of a longer lasting unknown (but presumed stressful) experience which in turn will increase the probability of not only the innovator completing that journey successfully, but also the probability of the value of the idea achieving its maximum reach. Since the play is co-created by the participants and based on a consciously simple script it allows the participants to engage deeply with the (emergent) dynamics of the innovation journey using all their senses and thus permits a significantly

more intensive and effective learning experience than more contemporary forms of knowledge creation such as lectures, game plays or web-based learning opportunities.

The audience of the play will not only serve as the “customer” of the performance, it will also represent various elements of the innovation journey as decided by the actors and thus allow the audience to both observe and partake in the innovation journey which permits for a much richer experience than “only” observing a performance on a stage.

In advance of the workshop participants receive the script and suggestions for making the most of the upcoming experience. Participants are encouraged to assume any number of roles and will be permitted to reference the script at all times up to and during the presentation itself. The presentation will ideally be held in association with a local theatre company and the audience solicited from hosting institutions and the general public via advance marketing using available communication channels. Typically the stage will be bare and only basic lighting techniques applied, although music, lights, and video solutions will be available for use as desired by participants. No specific costumes will be required, although participants will be provided with the opportunity to utilize such as desired. Media will be invited to the event and encouraged to publish reviews. The workshop ends with a dinner celebration on-stage.

The “Innovation Journey” script is the foundation for the work of the participants to create their own interpretation and present it in the form of a stage play. The script sets the scene of an “idea” (which the participants may wish to specify) that appears and then travels through the diffusion of innovation path to market saturation. The characters are presented as “roles” and participants may assume any number of roles during the performance. Participants are encouraged to bring their own characters into the interpretation of the roles in the performance. The basic roles are: users, researchers, thought leaders, innovators, sellers, marketeers and investors; participants may add roles as they feel necessary. The starting “trigger” to the stage play is the rise of a challenge faced by users. The closing “incident” to the stage play is the investor receiving payback on the funding they provided to the user. This closing incident occurs temporally when a user classed as “late adopter” uses the innovation. Between starting trigger and closing incident, expectations and experiences of participants of all roles fluctuate. Excitement leads to disillusionment and disillusionment to growing enlightenment. “Chasms” of adoption are encountered and “leaps of faith” need to be encouraged. Not all ideas survive

the journey of innovation. No specific date, time, setting or exposition is provided.

In respect to the sequence of interactions between the roles the script provides a relevant description in a simple conversational format. Each role pursues specific objectives and achieves these through exchanges with other roles. Conflicts, challenges, values etc. of the roles are interpreted by the participants. The web of exchanges between all roles creates a network of relationships that pursues its own purpose (which is left open for discovery / interpretation by the participants).

### Context Setting

“A REALLY REALLY GOOD IDEA”

The “Innovation Journey” is dedicated in memory of Debra Mae Amidon and based on her “In Search of Innovation - A Book for Children and Leadership Executives” (2005). This story builds on her dream and exemplifies its spirit.

*“There was once a really clever white mouse called Wow. Wow often had good ideas. One morning he had a “really really” good idea! All excited he scurried to share it with his best friend Smile who said “This really is a “really really” good idea! I love it!” Wow became even more excited and scurried on to show the idea to his other best friend Blank. Blank said “You´have got to be kidding. I just do not get it. What a silly idea!” Tears rolled down the face of Wow and he thought about letting go of his idea.*

*But, deep in his heart, Wow knew it really was a “really really” good idea. He could almost see it grow and change the world. So Wow drew a picture of the idea and showed it to his family. He showed it to his WHOLE family – even the cousins twice removed who lived by the old apple tree in the backyard. Some cheered; some laughed. A few said “Huh?” They could not see how his idea shone the way he could. Wow wondered how he could help them see it shining too?*

*Wow knew he needed a better picture to show how the idea could work. So he spent one whole Saturday adding to his picture until it was a lot clearer and showed it to everyone again. But, as it turned out, it was only clear to those who could imagine using the idea themselves. But Wow wanted to draw his idea so that EVERYONE could love it the way he did. But how could he do that? His youngest sister Spots was willing to help. She said, “Red will get their attention;*

*but do not make it all red. Add some Green – it makes things grow. And blue - blue is deep, like the sky."*

*Now red, green and blue his picture looked better to some of his other friends. One said, "I wish I had made this idea." Another even tried to steal the idea, turn it into something different and keep it for himself. But Wow held on to his idea.*

*Wow showed the picture to his neighbour Antsy, the artist. Antsy said "Try adding yellow. No, add gold – yes, star-gold, it will warm the heart of people. Build a nest around it in shades of purple – violet to fuchsia so that people will know this idea is alive." the picture turned into a kaleidoscope of colours.*

*And so Wow took the idea – now wearing a rainbow of colours – to every mouse he knew and even mice he did not know. Now, when the other mice saw the idea they clapped and said "Yes, yes! This is a "really really" great idea. We love it!"*

*EVERYONE loved it... well, almost everyone. The three grey mice who lived behind the garbage cans groaned "Cute idea, but believe us, it is not really worth much. Cannot see any value in it." Wow felt "really really" sad again. Wow felt so sad that he thought "Maybe I need to let go of this idea. Maybe it is not a "really really" great idea after all." Wow let go of his idea.*

*But just as he let go, an amazing thing happened. Other mice started to notice the idea and talk of its possibilities. The idea began to grow into a sparkling picture that twinkled when the mice talked about it. The idea grew brighter whenever it was discussed. Wow realised that the idea had to grow in other people to truly shine.*

*Now the idea was ready to show to the world. And mice came from all around to see it sparkle. Some thought "Maybe it is a magnifying glass or a crystal..." Others asked "Can you make one for me?" "Me, too!" shouted one of the grey mice. Wow wondered "How could I make so many images of my idea? How could I truly share it with the world?"*

*Wow had another "really really" good idea. Wow invited everyone he knew and everyone he did not know to bring a mirror and capture the idea for them. When they gathered together the colours flashed back and forth and his idea became the idea of many. All the mice shouted "Now WE CAN innovate the world!" And Wow finally knew it was a "really really" good idea.*

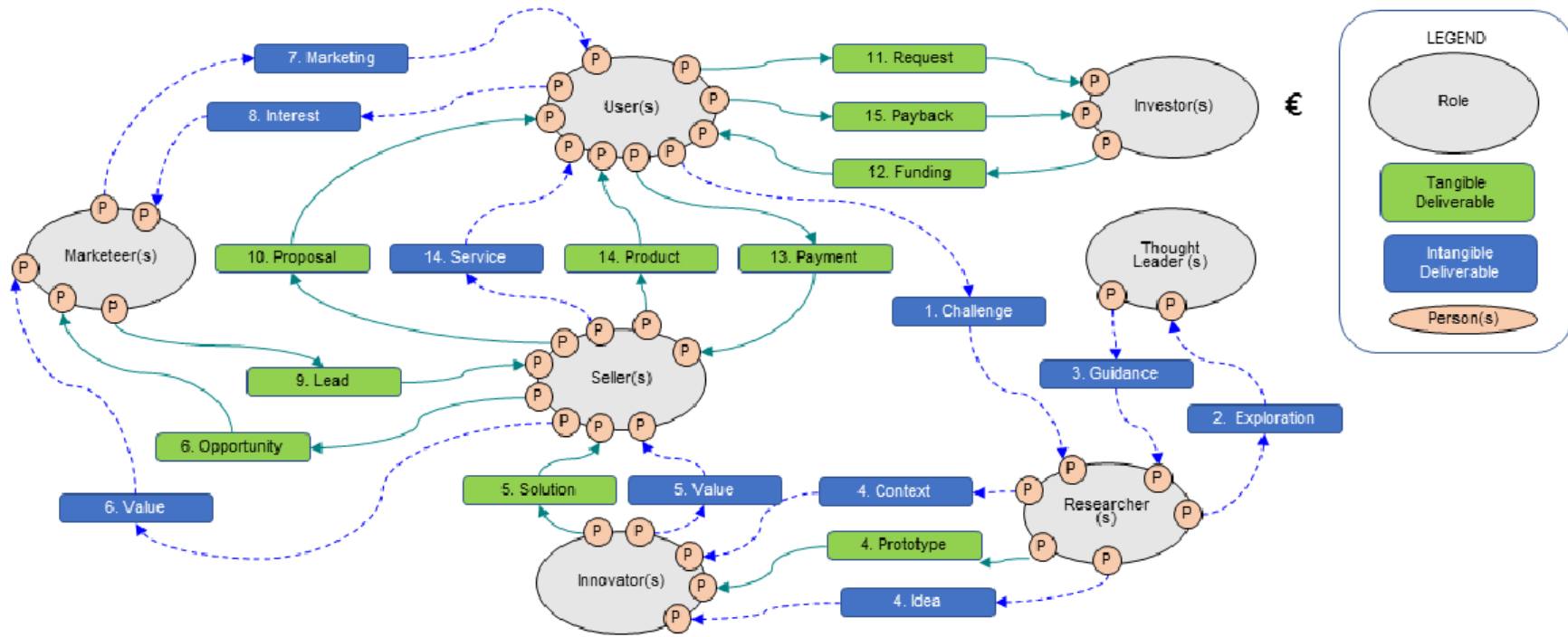
*What is YOUR "really really" good idea?"*

## Generic Narrative

The following figure represents a simple narrative of the innovation journey. The narrative can also be used as a choreography of movement on the stage. The narrative is applicable for all types of innovations and is distilled from a wide spectrum of research results and contemporary work-flow structures in industry. The narrative serves as a baseline for starting exploration on the nature and behaviour of diffusion of innovations to then provide the foundation for determining actionable interventions which can disruptively accelerate it. The narrative describes the key roles and exchanges involved from ideation through research triggered by a challenge from users to investment payback to the supporting investor. Roles are shown in grey shaded oval shapes. Tangible deliverables are shown in green shaded boxes. Intangible deliverables are shown in blue shaded boxes. Individuals transacting exchanges are shown in orange shaded ovals. Exchanges are shown by directed arrows leading from the person of origin to the person receiving the deliverable. Blue shaded boxes represent the starting sequence of the research methodology which will be adapted as research progresses. A video showing the sequential transactions is available here - <https://youtu.be/jGAgJGaht-I>. Note that the speed of the video can be adjusted in YouTube as desired.



# ACT-NOW! "The Innovation Journey"



The narrative starts with researchers receiving an intangible challenge from users. Users may be located in any phase of the diffusion of innovation curve. Receiving may hereby be the result of a purposeful interaction or simply the awareness of a challenge faced by users. Researchers will then typically explore the challenge in collaboration with a thought leader in the relevant space and, based upon guidance and knowledge received to develop an idea with corresponding context explanation and tangible prototype which is shared with innovators. Innovators transform the input from researchers into a potential tangible solution for the users accompanied by an intangible explanation of why and how this solution can generate value. The solution and the value proposition are transacted with sellers. The sellers shape the solution and value proposition into a tangible opportunity and specific opportunity related value proposition to then transact it with the marketeers. Marketeers are then responsible for marketing the solution and value proposition to the users in order to initially generate an intangible expression of interest which the marketeers convert into a tangible lead that is passed to the sellers. Based upon the lead received, the sellers will submit a tangible commercial proposal for purchasing the solution to the users. Upon receiving the proposal the users will request funding from the investors who (in the perfect case) respond by providing the needed funding to the users which is then used as payment to the solution to the sellers. Upon receiving payment the sellers provide the tangible product for the solution and the relevant intangible services to the users. Users then apply the product and service to resolving the challenge initially issued to the researchers and then provide payback to the investors in return for the funding provided.

## Guidelines

The “Innovation Journey” participants self-organize as follows:

1. A challenge to be resolved is (pre-) defined.
2. Every actor receives a set of (seven) role cards – one card for each role in the generic narrative. Each person can assume / switch to any role at any time.
3. The stage will have seven areas (one for each role). When actors assume a role they should move to and “start” from that area.
4. The aim of the play is to re-enact the generic narrative.
5. Each actor receives a stack of cards they can write their deliverables on. These deliverables will be physically passed from actor to actor.
6. The play ends when the investor receives the deliverable “payback”. In order for the investor to accept the deliverable “payback”, the actors must unanimously agree that the idea has reached late adopters in the market.
7. Once the play ends actors discuss their experience and recommend actions that would massively reduce the time from ideation (the creation of an idea by the researchers) and market saturation (the use of the idea by a late adopter).

## THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

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A “Play in a Day” Interactive Novice Actor Directed Play in  
Five Acts

by

Oliver Schwabe

In Loving Memory of Dr. Debra Mae Amidon (1946-2016+)

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## Synopsis

One or more individuals are faced by the urgent challenge of rapidly implementing a change to their context. In order to implement the change they require funding from an investor who requires a minimum payback within the shortest possible timeframe.

The behavioural characteristics of individuals participating in the living system are as unique as the participants themselves. Participants will self-select which roles they assume at what time and potentially with which partners.

The interactions take place in an empty space. Participants may add exhibits as they deem relevant.

## Cast of Characters

<u>User(s):</u>	One or more persons who need to implement an idea to resolve their challenge. Six types of users exist: innovative, early adopter, early majority, late majority, laggards and non-adopters.
<u>Researcher(s):</u>	One or more persons who accept a challenge and experiment to create a “really really” good idea.
<u>Thought Leader(s):</u>	One or more persons who guide the researchers on their journey of experimentation.
<u>Innovator(s):</u>	One or more persons who transform an idea into a product and / or service to then engage with sellers.
<u>Seller(s):</u>	One or more persons who interact with marketeers and users to achieve commercial transactions for the product and / or service.
<u>Marketeer(s):</u>	One or more persons who create awareness of the product and / or service with users in order to generate leads for the seller(s).
<u>Investor(s):</u>	One or more persons who provide the funding for purchasing the product and / or service which addressed the challenge.

## Scene

To be decided upon by the actors.

## Time

To be decided upon by the actors.

## Act and Scene Structure

Note: The generic narrative suggests the minimum roles involves in each Act / Scene. The Act and Scene structure is a guideline only.

ACT I: “The Infant Idea”.

Exchanges 1-4. Innovation with foresight of the complete diffusion journey occurs based on the challenge defined.

Scene 1: An idea is born.

Scene 2: A “really really” good idea emerges.

ACT II: “The Childish Idea”

Exchanges 5 & 6. An enthusiastic initial coalition of the willing forms and is confronted by reality.

Scene 1: Playful experimentation.

Scene 2: Disillusionment.

ACT III: “The Adolescent Idea”

Exchanges 7-10. Shared ownership of the idea emerges and it begins its own life plagued by the repeated need to adapt.

Scene 1: The heart beats.

Scene 2: The rebellion.

ACT IV: “The Game Changers”

Exchanges 11-14. The influence of the idea grows and it is used in surprising ways before adoption suddenly accelerates.

Scene 1: The adoption surprise.

Scene 2: Going viral.

ACT V: “Kaleidoscope of Colours”

Exchange 15. The idea matures to become a house-hold word and encourages new approaches to replace it.

Scene 1: The plateau.

Scene 2: Enabling the new.

ACT I: “The Infant Idea”.

Scene 1: An idea is born.

SETTING: Determined by actors.

AT RISE: Determined by actors.

USER(S)

(elated)

(Looking into the audience) Welcome everyone and wonderful that you are joining us on a small journey where you will see, hear, feel and perhaps even smell the path of an idea from inception to renewal. Everyone here on the stage has worked hard today to create this event yet we remain practitioners and not professional actors – so be kind to us please! During the next hour or so we will also be reaching out to you to take part in this journey. Maybe even on stage. Do not fear – we will be kind to you! And off we go.

(pause)

(worried)

We really need to change a lot faster. Not sure how to tackle this challenge!

(pause)

RESEARCHER(S)

(curious)

This is a really interesting challenge. What do the THOUGHT LEADERS have to say about this?

THOUGHT LEADER(S)

(empathetic)

Interesting challenge, but nothing special really. Lots of people in a similar situation. Here are some examples to think about.



RESEARCHER(S)

(excited)

We have an idea! A “really really good” idea! Let us see what the INNOVATOR(S) say about this. Let us create a prototype and share it.

INNOVATOR(S)

(reflective)

This idea and the prototype are interesting. Needs a lot of work to truly understand the value it can create for a USER and an INVESTOR – let us see what a real solution could look like!

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT I: “The Infant Idea”.**

**Scene 2: A “really really” good idea emerges.**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

INNOVATOR(S)

(enthusiastic)

This truly seems to be a “really really good idea”! How can we turn this into a robust value proposition and solution that we can transfer to a SELLER?

(pause)

Who do we need to involve to “package” this idea into a solution?

(END OF SCENE)

ACT II: “The Childish Idea”

Scene 1: Playful experimentation.

SETTING: Determined by actors.

AT RISE: Determined by actors.

INNOVATOR(S)

(enthusiastic)

Here is a “really really good idea”. Let us explore what the right solution might look like!

(pause)

INNOVATOR(S)

(enthusiastic)

Wonderful! We’ve worked with a lot of people to package this “really really good idea” into a solid value proposition and solution (To SELLER(S)) We think you could sell very successfully!

SELLER(S)

(reflective)

Sounds interesting. Let us see what the MARKETEEER(S) think!

MARKETEER(S)

(cautious)

Looks interesting! What have the USER(S) said? Do you have any case studies?

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT II: “The Childish Idea”**

**Scene 2: Disillusionment.**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

MARKETEER(S)

(upset)

We can't sell this to a USER! It needs more work!

(pause)

SELLER(S)

(upset)

(To INNOVATOR(S)) We can't sell this to a USER! It needs more work!

(pause)

INNOVATOR(S)

(upset)

Everyone told us this was a “really really good idea” – and now this. What do we do now? Maybe this isn't a “really really good idea”...

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT III: “The Adolescent Idea”**

**Scene 1: The heart beats.**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

AT RISE: Determined by actors.

MARKETEER(S)

(cautious)

(To USER(S)) You might be interested in this solution to resolve your challenge.

(pause)

USER(S)

(cautious)

(To MARKETEER(S)) This might resolve a challenge we have. Could you please explain more?

(pause)

MARKETEER(S)

(enthusiastic)

(To SELLER(S)) Here is someone who really wants to buy the solution!

(pause)

SELLER(S)

(enthusiastic)

(To USER(S)) Wonderful that you are interested in our solution! Here is a proposal for you to buy it!

(pause)

USER(S)

(cautious)

(To SELLER(S)) Thank you. The solution may need to be customized for our challenge though. In any case, I need to find the money and will get back to you!

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT III: “The Adolescent Idea”**

**Scene 2: The rebellion.**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

INNOVATOR(S)

(excited)

(To SELLER(S) We heard some USER(S) want to buy the solution?

SELLER(S)

(upset)

(To INNOVATOR(S)) We did submit some proposals to USER(S). We are waiting for an answer as usual. Not sure if it will work out though.

INNOVATOR(S)

(upset)

This happens every time. We make a proposal and then we wait, and wait, and wait and wait....

(pause)

(frustrated)

The SELLER(S) and the MARKETEEER(S) really don't know what they are doing. Let us get more involved! We can do this better!

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT IV: “The Game Changers”**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

AT RISE: Determined by actors.

**Scene 1: The adoption surprise.**

USER(S)

(cautious)

(To INVESTOR(S)) We have received an interesting offer that could help us resolve our challenge. This does need some funding and internal resource assignment though. Could you help us?

(pause)

INVESTOR(S)

(cautious)

(To USER(S)) You seem to have a good business case here and we trust that you can return the required payback to us quickly – maybe even in-year?

USER(S)

(doubtful)

That seems a tough request. But hey, let us leap with faith in the SELLER(S).

(To INVESTOR(S)) Yes of course we can!

(pause)

INVESTOR(S)

(cautious)



(To USER(S)) Ok. You are good to go. Please do set up a meeting in 9 months to demonstrate the payback?

USER(S)

(thankful)

Great. Thank you and will do.

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT IV: “The Game Changers”**

**Scene 2: Going viral.**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

USERS(S)

(energetic)

(To SELLER(S)) We were finally given funding approval. Realize your proposal is no longer valid, but happy to purchase under the same terms.

SELLER(S)

(excited)

(To USER(S)) Fantastic thank you. Here is the product and here is the service agreement. Let us know if you need any further support!

USERS(S)

(energetic)

We´ve got it the solution to our challenge! Now let us tell everyone about it!

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT V: “Kaleidoscope of Colours”**

**Scene 1: The plateau.**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

AT RISE: Determined by actors.

USERS(S)

(energetic)

This is working out really nicely! Almost everyone is finally using the solution!

(pause)

Well... most are using it.

(pause)

Well... to be honest... a few people are using it... but they are the important ones!

(pause)

Let us just ignore this payback thing?

(END OF SCENE)

**ACT V: “Kaleidoscope of Colours”**

**Scene 2: Enabling the new.**

SETTING: Determined by actors.

USERS(S)

(worried)

We really need to change a lot faster. Not sure how to tackle this challenge!