



Scaling Systems, Scaling Influence

Lessons from Distributed Architecture

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The Staff+ Shift: Beyond the Code

Influencing Decisions

Moving from technical expertise to guiding strategic outcomes required a completely new approach.

Gratification Reimagined

My success was no longer measured in merged PRs, but in the success of others and the evolution of strategy.

Long-Term Vision

Shifting from sprint-to-sprint execution to envisioning and shaping the future became paramount.



The Staff+ Shift: Beyond the Code

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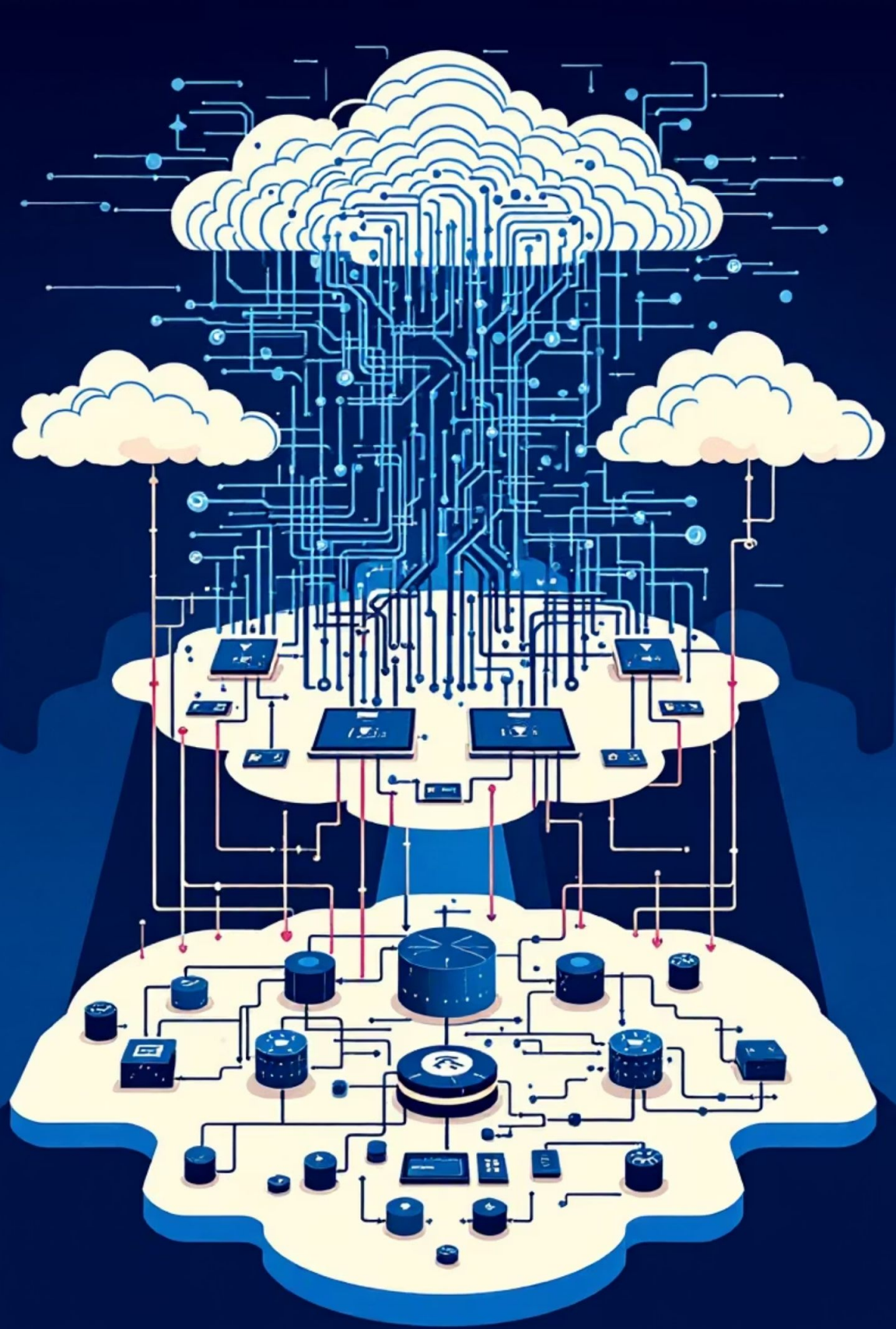
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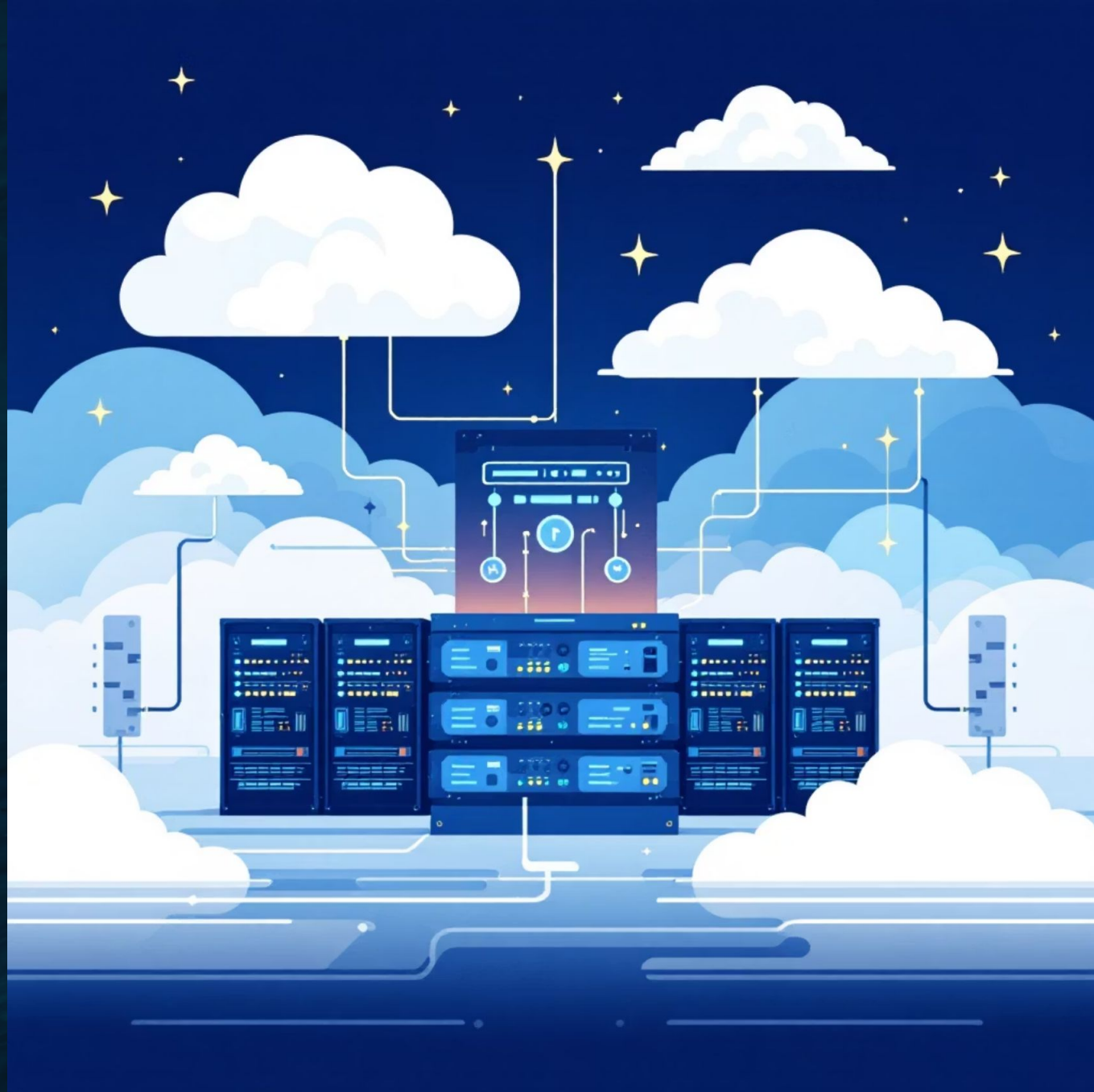
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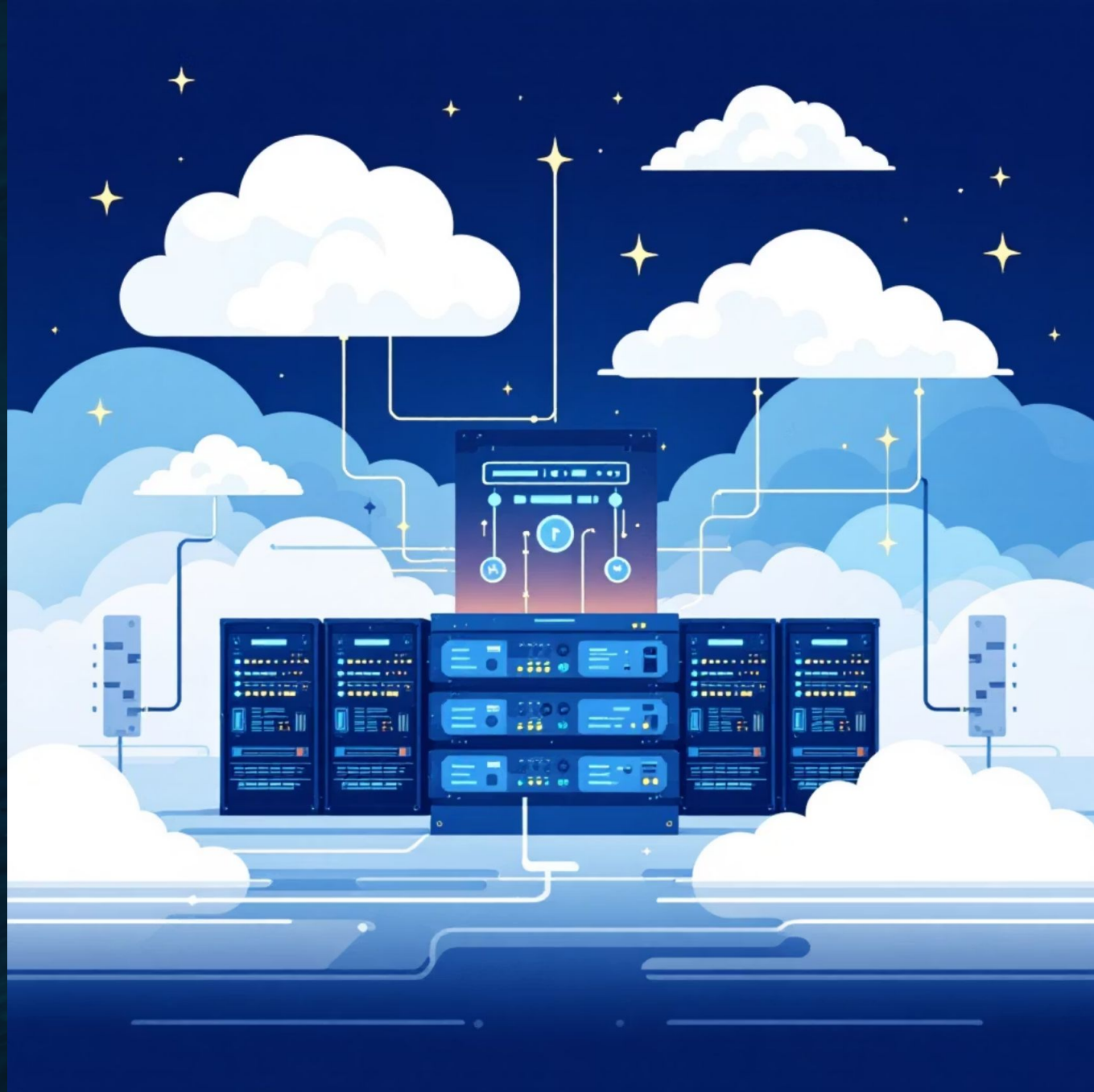


Why is scaling at Staff+ levels so hard?

Scaling Systems vs. Scaling Influence



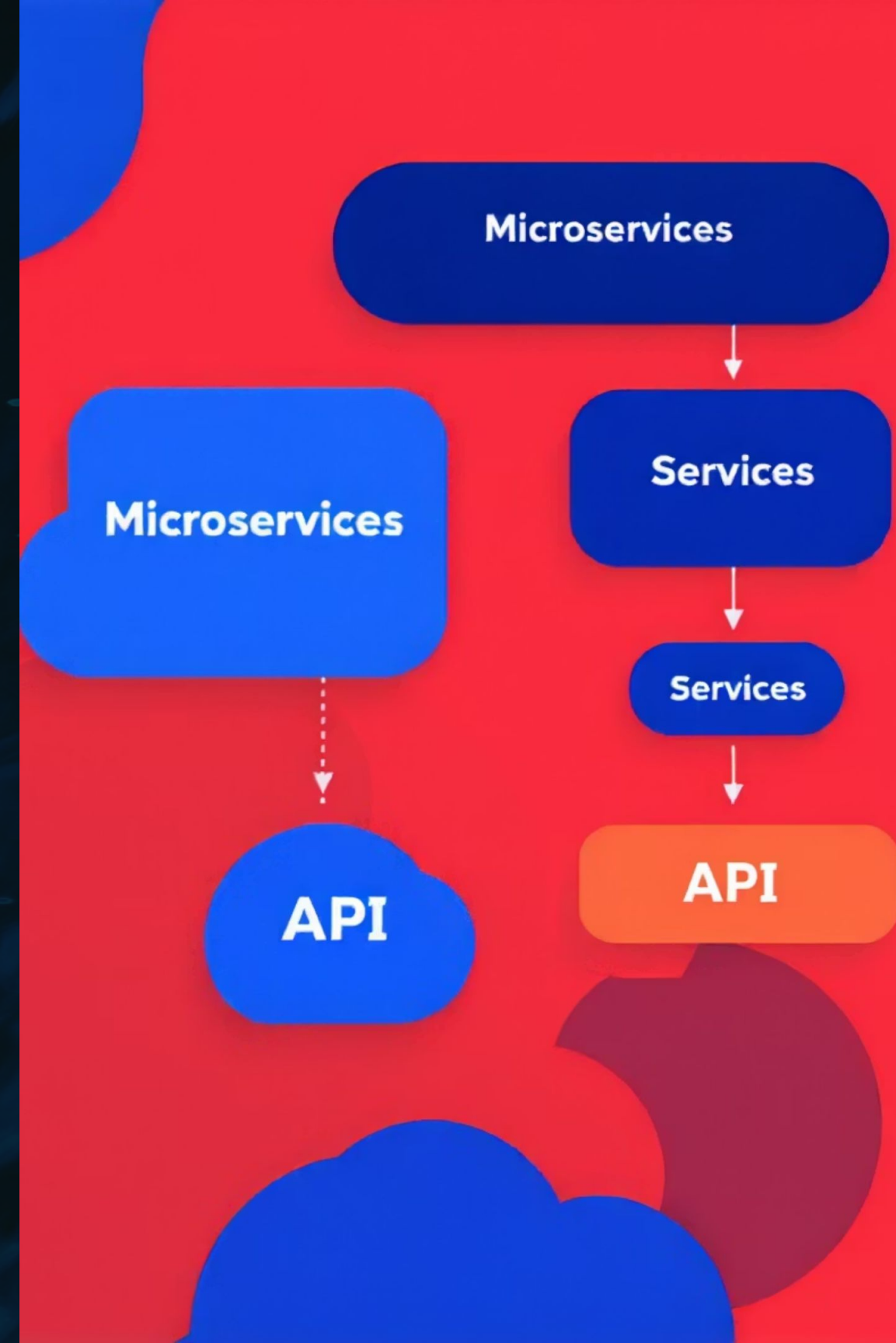
Scaling Systems vs. Scaling Influence



Autonomy Without Chaos



Guardrails + Interfaces >
Micromanagement



Designing Decision Protocols

Your job shifts from making decisions to designing the protocols that let others make good ones.

Clean Interfaces

Connect components
with clear contracts



Trust Boundaries

Establish secure,
auditable perimeters



Clear Contracts

Agree responsibilities
and expectations



Fault Tolerance for People



Build redundancy & graceful degradation in leadership



Building Organizational Fault Tolerance



Delegation: Replicate Leadership

Empower others, building redundancy in leadership.



Deprioritize: Create Capacity

Remove tasks to make space for others, shifting to collective capacity.



Redundancy: Code & Org Structure

Design resilient systems and structures for continuous performance.

Your success at scale is measured by how gracefully your systems and teams perform when you're not in the loop.

Eventual Consistency in Alignment

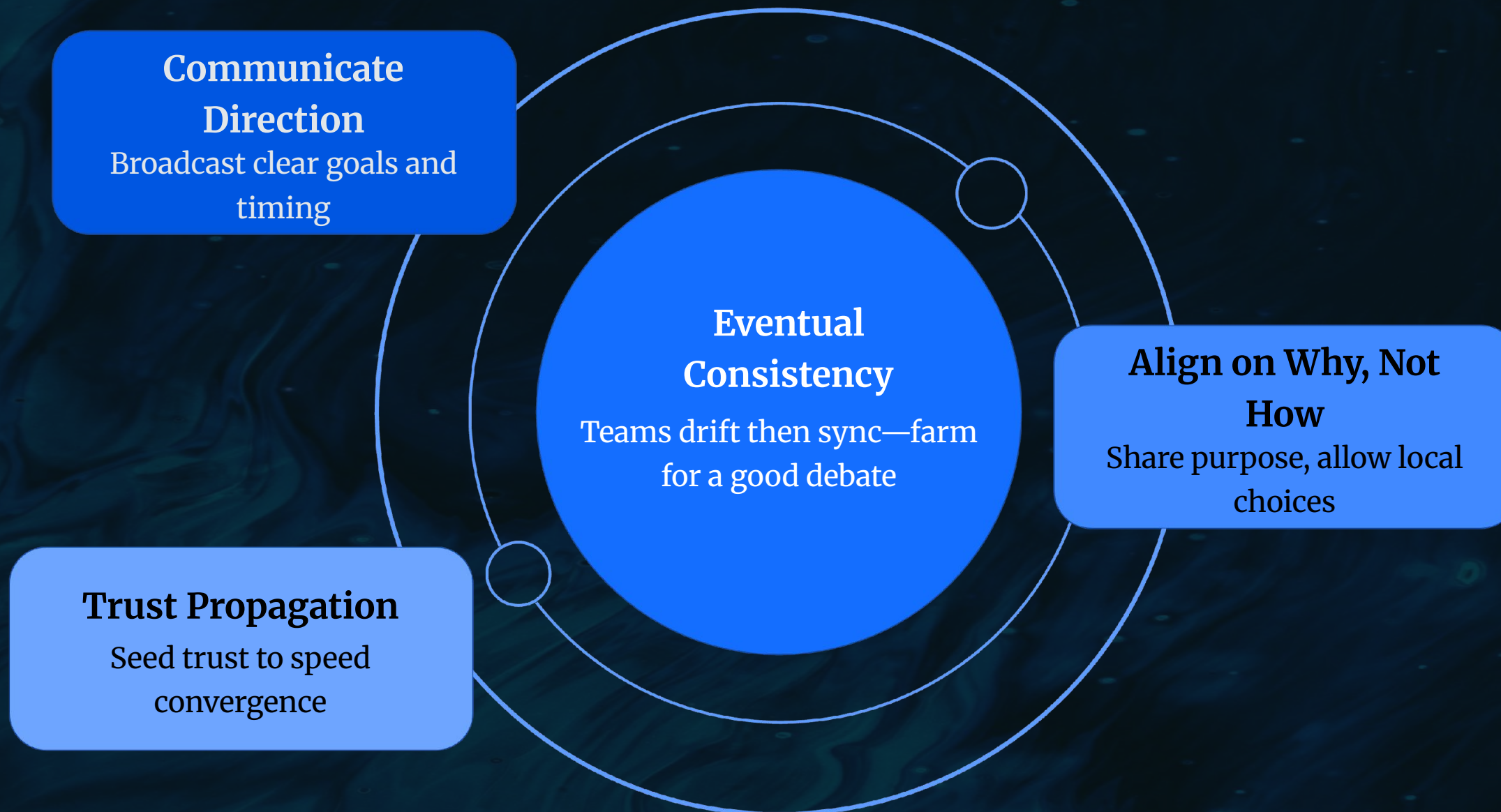


Don't block for instant consensus



Eventual Consistency in Organizations

"Silence doesn't always mean misalignment. Sometimes, it's just... network latency."



A Tale of Two Indexes: A Search Challenge

Tweet Index

- Massive scale, optimized for speed
- Trillions of tweets
- Sub-second latency

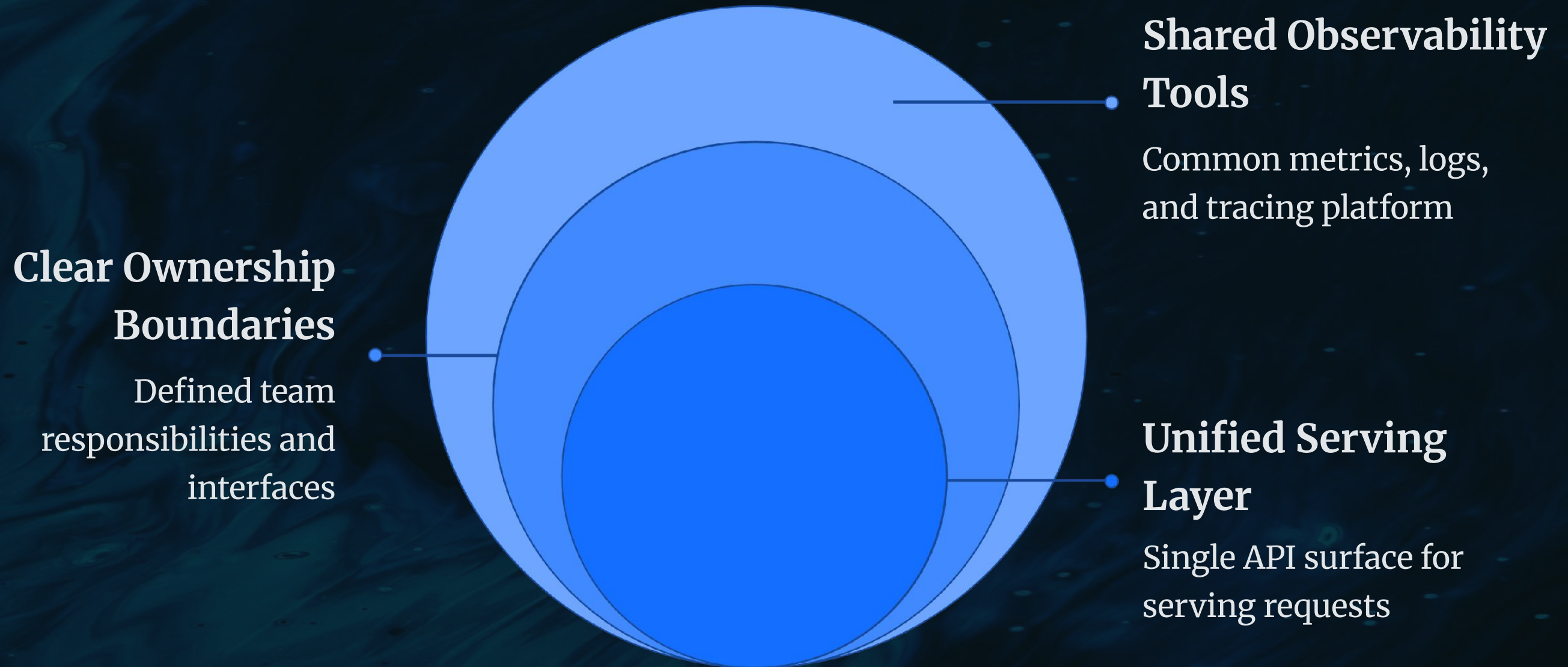
Flexible Index

- Smaller, flexible
- Media, profiles, events
- Adaptable content

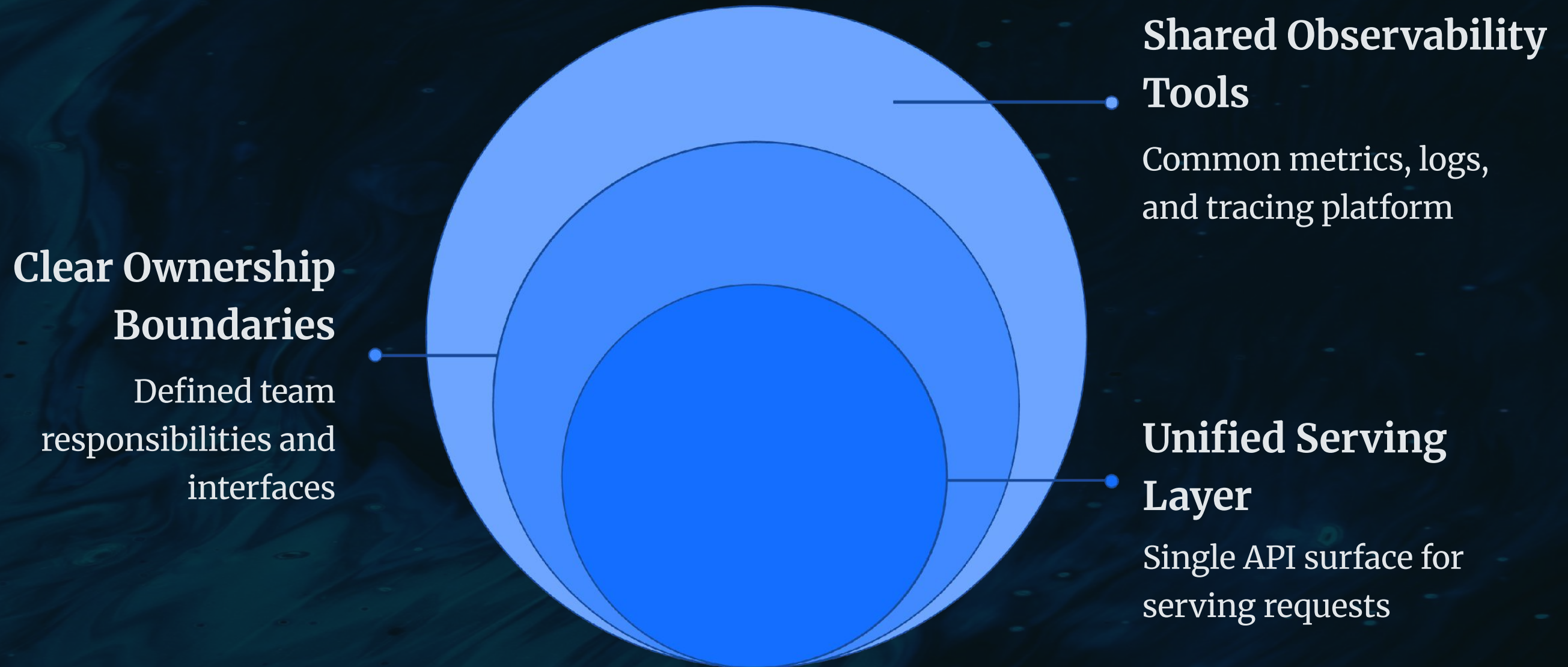
How do we unify speed and flexibility without compromising reliability?



Systems Thinking in Action: The Unified Solution



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Your Three Levers at Scale

Strategy

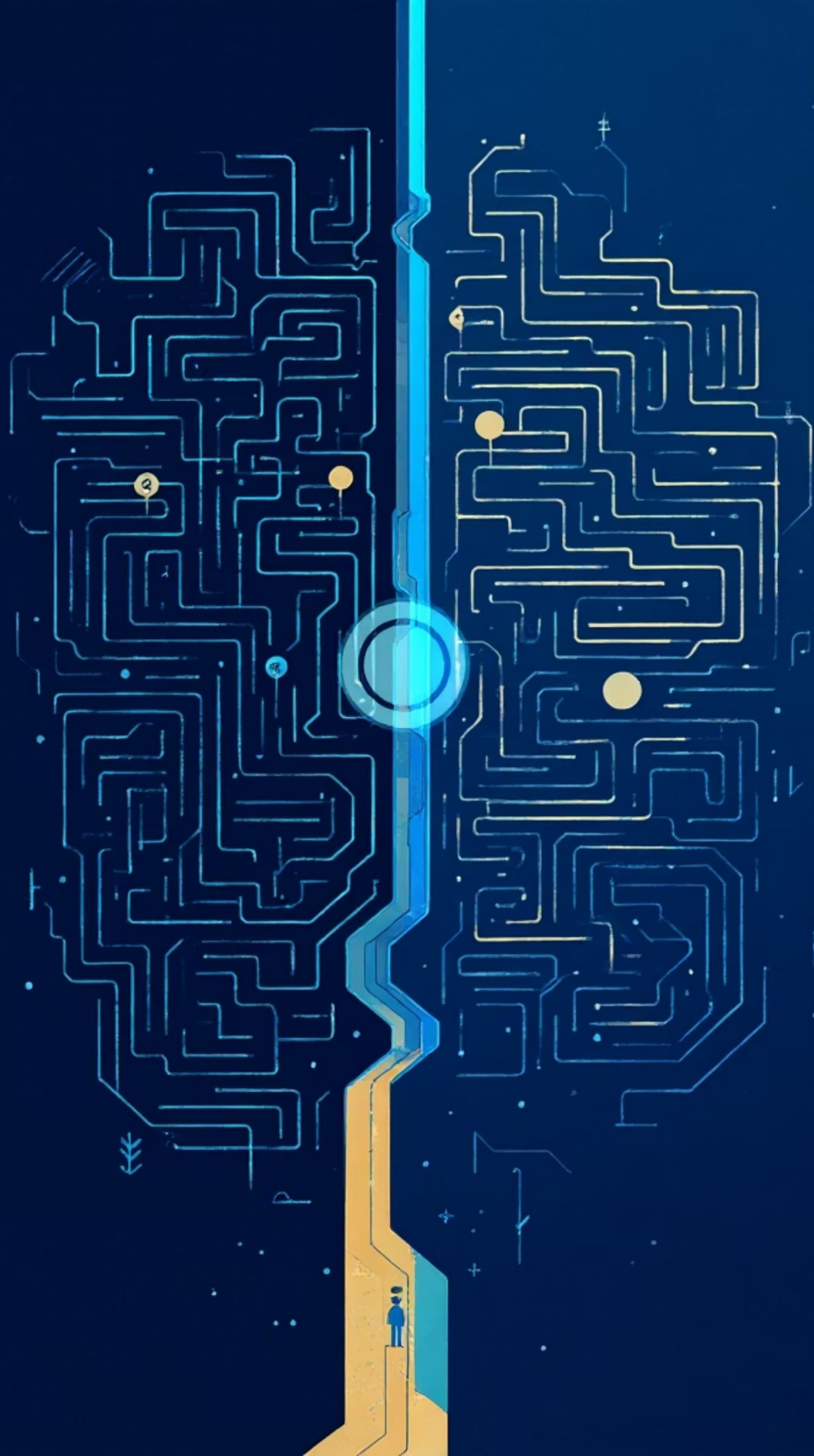
Pick the right bets and capabilities to build

Communication

Make your thinking legible so others can align

Partnerships

You can't scale alone; allies amplify your reach



From Complexity to Clarity

What system principle will you apply next week?

Thank You

Mallika Rao + [LinkedIn](#)

