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THE GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT ON UK INNOVATION

GREAT
BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IN A START-UP

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Chris Moody

Chief Business Development Officer,
Transport Systems Catapult

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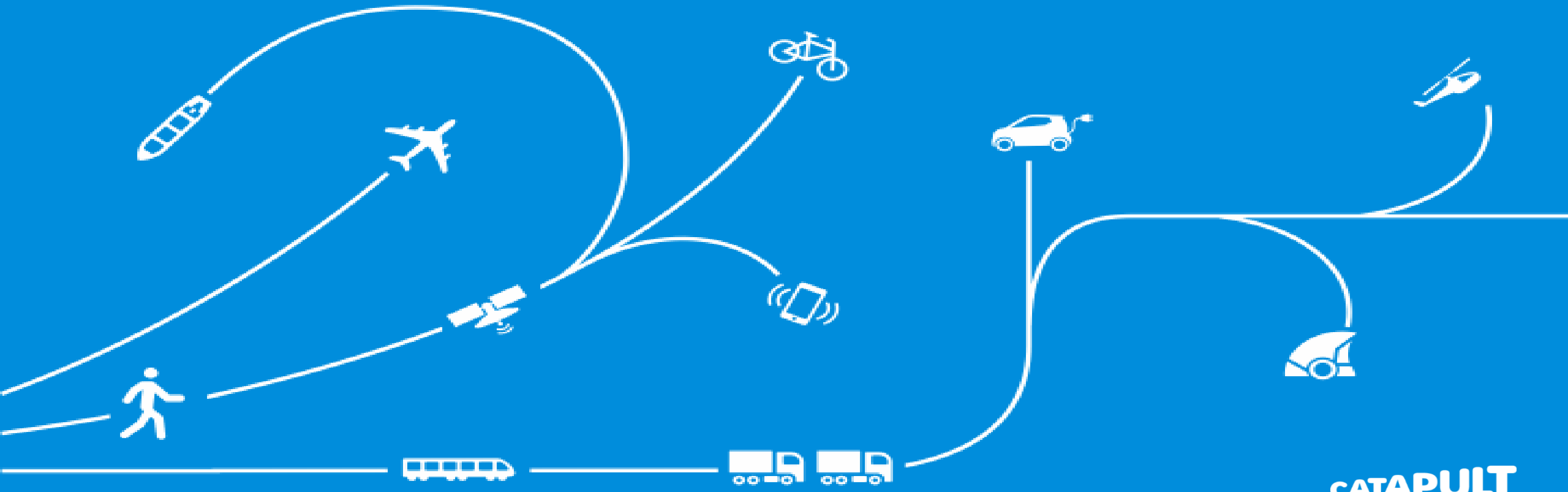
Transport Systems Catapult

Innovate UK 2014 – Building and Effective Leadership Structure in a Start-up

5 November 2014

Chris Moody, Chief Business Development Officer

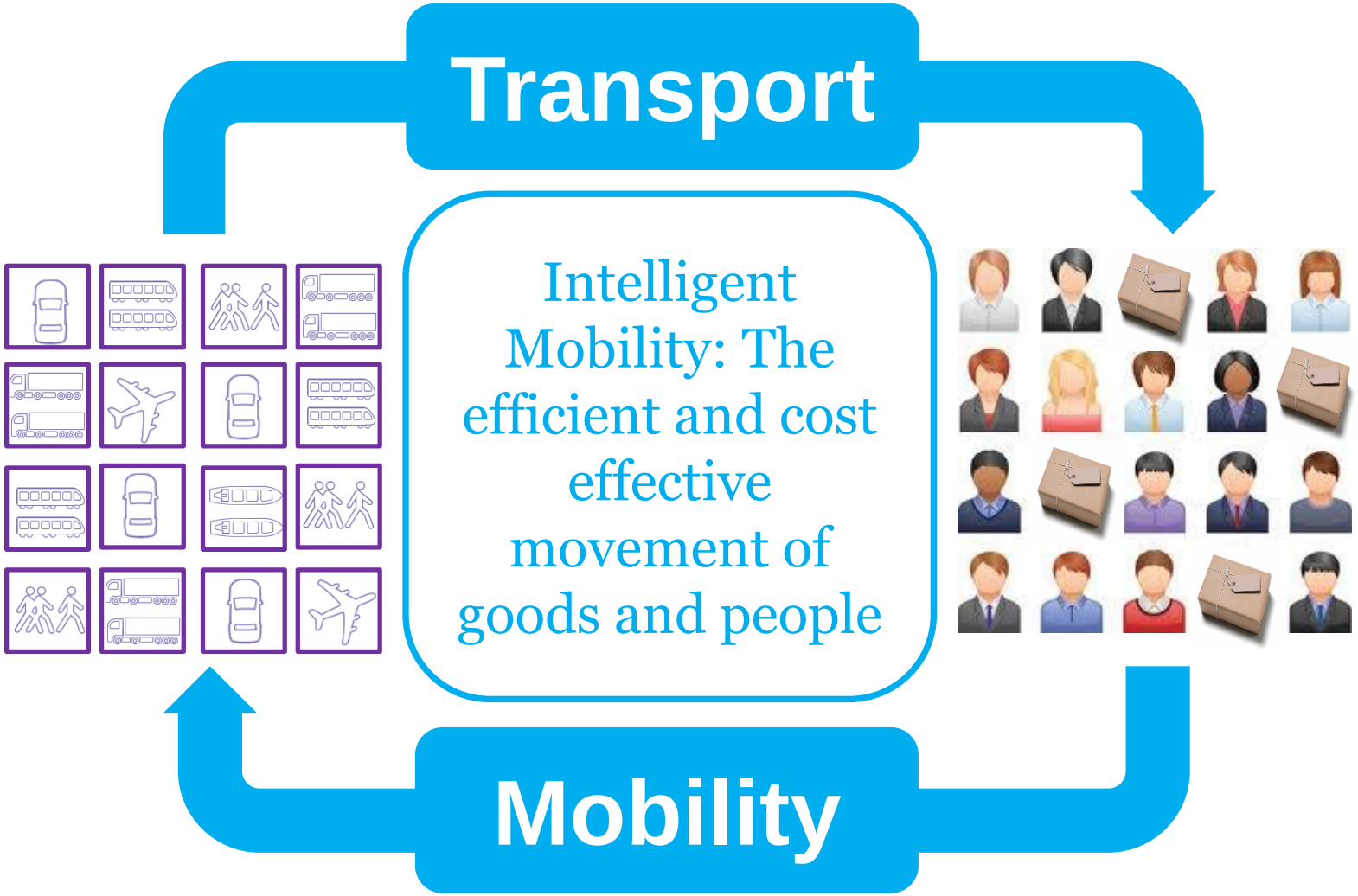


CATAPULT Transport Systems

A vision of the future - Intelligent Mobility

‘Drive UK global leadership in intelligent mobility promoting sustained economic growth and wellbeing through integrated, efficient and sustainable transport systems’

Transport vs Mobility

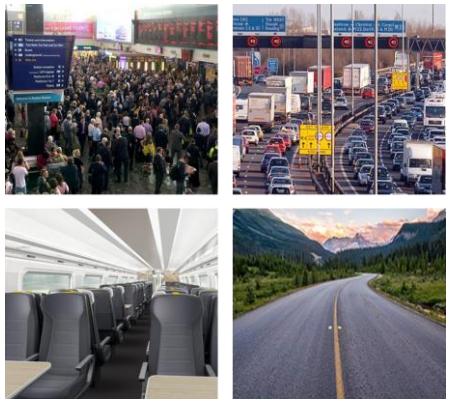


CATAPULT Transport Systems

TSC Capabilities

Automated Transport Systems

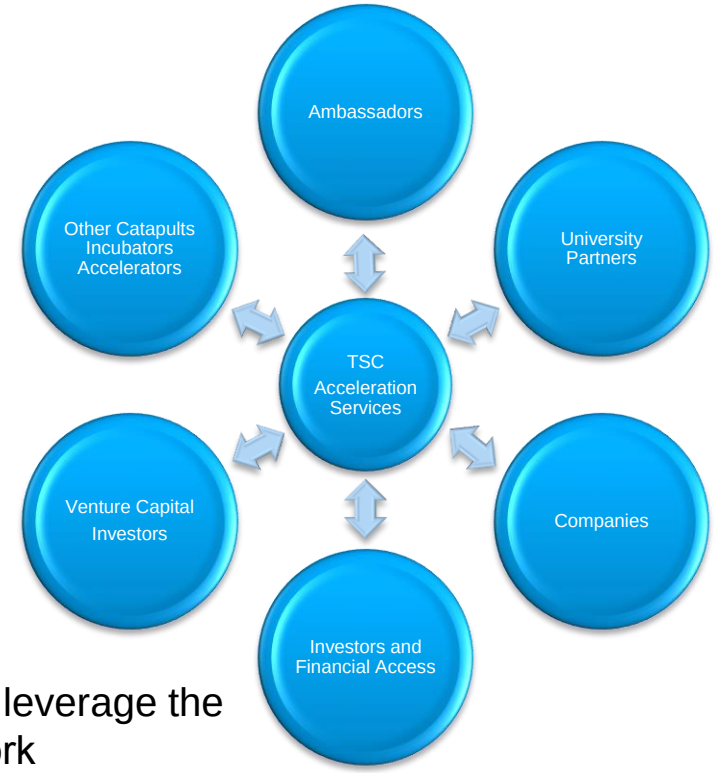
Customer Experience



Modelling & Visualisation

Information Exploitation

Business Acceleration and Growth Network



UK start-ups and SMEs can leverage the full scale of the TSC's network

CATAPULT
Transport Systems

Innovation Commercialisation Services

New Businesses

Intelligent Mobility New Business Accelerator

- This is a suite of new business creation services and tech transfer capability within the TSC to support commercialisation of innovations from:

Small and Medium Size Companies

Intelligent Mobility SME Accelerator

- Business innovation and acceleration support capability to support existing UK companies that:
  - Have an innovative commercial IM idea that they would like to develop into a new product or service
  - Have an IM service or product that they would like to grow faster or expand into a new territory or segment

Large Companies

IM Innovation Lab

- A secure lab where companies can explore and rapidly develop new IM ideas and products outside of their normal R&D structure.

CATAPULT Transport Systems

Start-up Leadership Challenges

- The hard and curious realities:
  - Most start-ups fail
  - For most of those that survive for more than 5 years, the business they are running is completely different from their start-up business plan
  - What does this tell us about the characteristics of those that succeed and the people that are running them?

Thank You

For More Information Contact:

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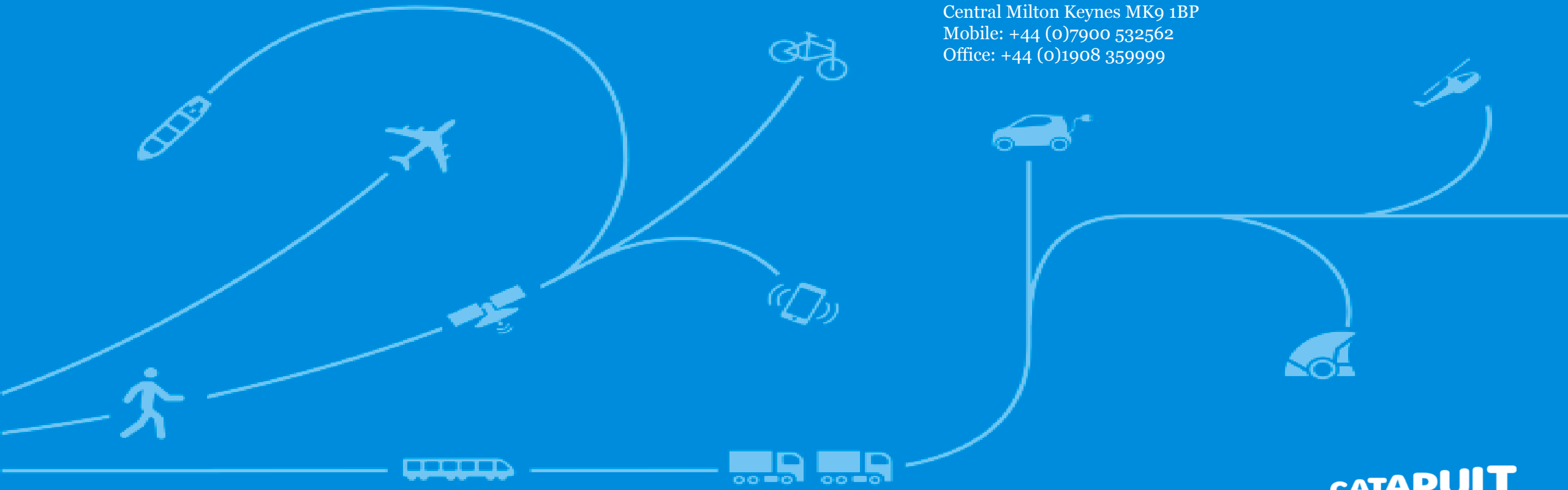

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BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IN A START-UP

Michael Davis

UK Commission for Employment and Skills

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BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IN A START-UP

Andrew Graham

Technical Director, OC Robotics

Craig Wilson

Managing Director, OC Robotics

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OUR STORY

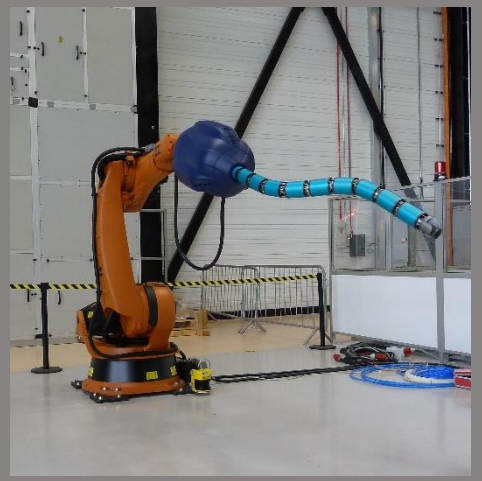
- OC Robotics started as two engineers, Rob and Andy, in a converted garage, providing consulting

- We had this great idea and took the plunge
  - We raised finance
  - Built the proof of concept
  - Massive effort
  - The proof of concept required substantial research
  - Grew to four people

- Our plan was that it was such a great idea people would be queuing to buy it……

OUR STORY

- Developing a new market is massively tough
- OC Robotics has tended to go from one large technical project to another
- It has been tough developing the core technology to a product level because each project has been so different
- Sales and marketing has followed rather than lead
- The recession made everything twice as tough – OC Robotics had to change……



OUR STORY

- With the support of an Innovate grant we set out to transform the company
- I appointed a lead designer – I had to change my role
- We tried to get the board functioning
- We appointed a commercial MD

OUR STORY

- For a business of 20 engineers it was a complex knot
- Organisation needed to be clarified
  - What are people's roles?
  - Letting go of the past – assumed flexibility is not always best
  - Describe the job, recruit for the job you want done
  - Develop a management structure – it can't all be about the two founders
- Managing change
  - People
  - Physical change
  - Culture

OUR STORY

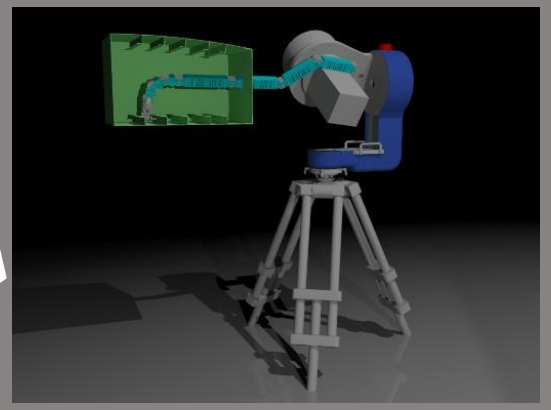
- Focus on the commercial
- Reduce development, put on hold all but essential research
- Drive for what customer wants
- Keep asking what the customer wants
- Develop a business team
  - New business
  - Organise
  - Managing existing business
  - Managing scarce resources
  - Being the internal customer

OUR STORY

- In the last 18 months what are the commercial outcomes?
  - OC Robotics has gone from a loss to a profit
  - Turnover almost doubled
  - Cash stable, but not yet growing

- Product outcomes….
  - Major technical issues overcome
  - Performance on all key metrics up by 100% or more
  - Usable life up by approx. 50x
  - Four systems being delivered in 2015

- Business development outcomes
  - Focused team of four
  - Hands on TD involvement
  - Business development is shaping the technical strategy
  - We have a future



OUR STORY

- What does the future hold?
- We still have to prove the business model
- But the 2015 order book is looking good >80% full
- 2016 is 25% there
- Can we deal with all the issues of “the valley of death” – time will tell. But business is about the people and, because of the work of the last 18 months, OC robotics is well placed
- Arriving at a viable, constructive leadership team, and demonstrating this to the business; “winning hearts and minds” has been a challenge
- Going into 2015 the team has energy, clear direction and the security of good leadership

OUR STORY

- Questions?

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