

Fjord San Francisco 18 June 2013

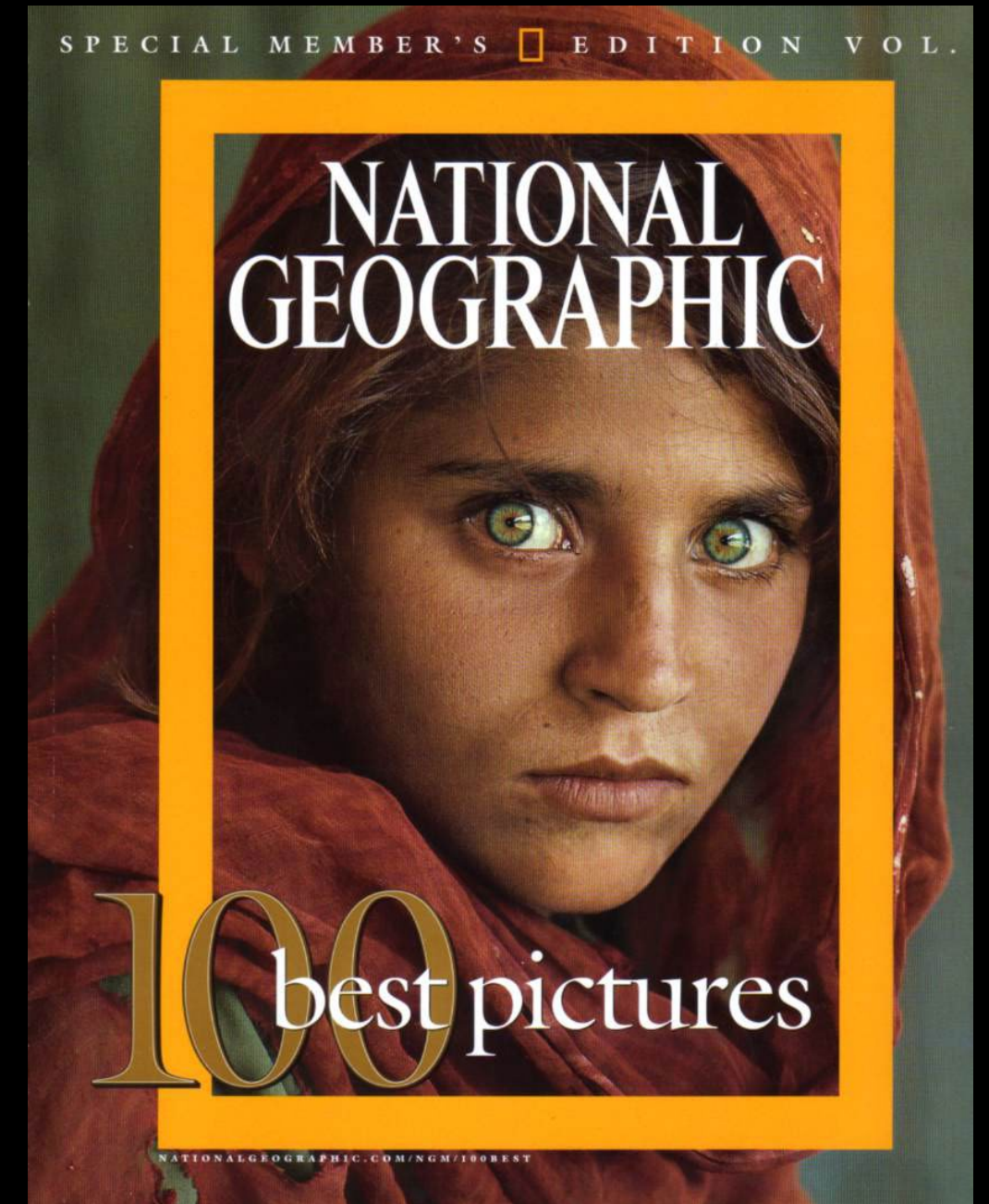
Engaging members to re-imagine National Geographic

Hugh Dubberly
Dubberly Design Office

**The National Geographic Society was founded 125 years ago,
along the lines of European research societies.**



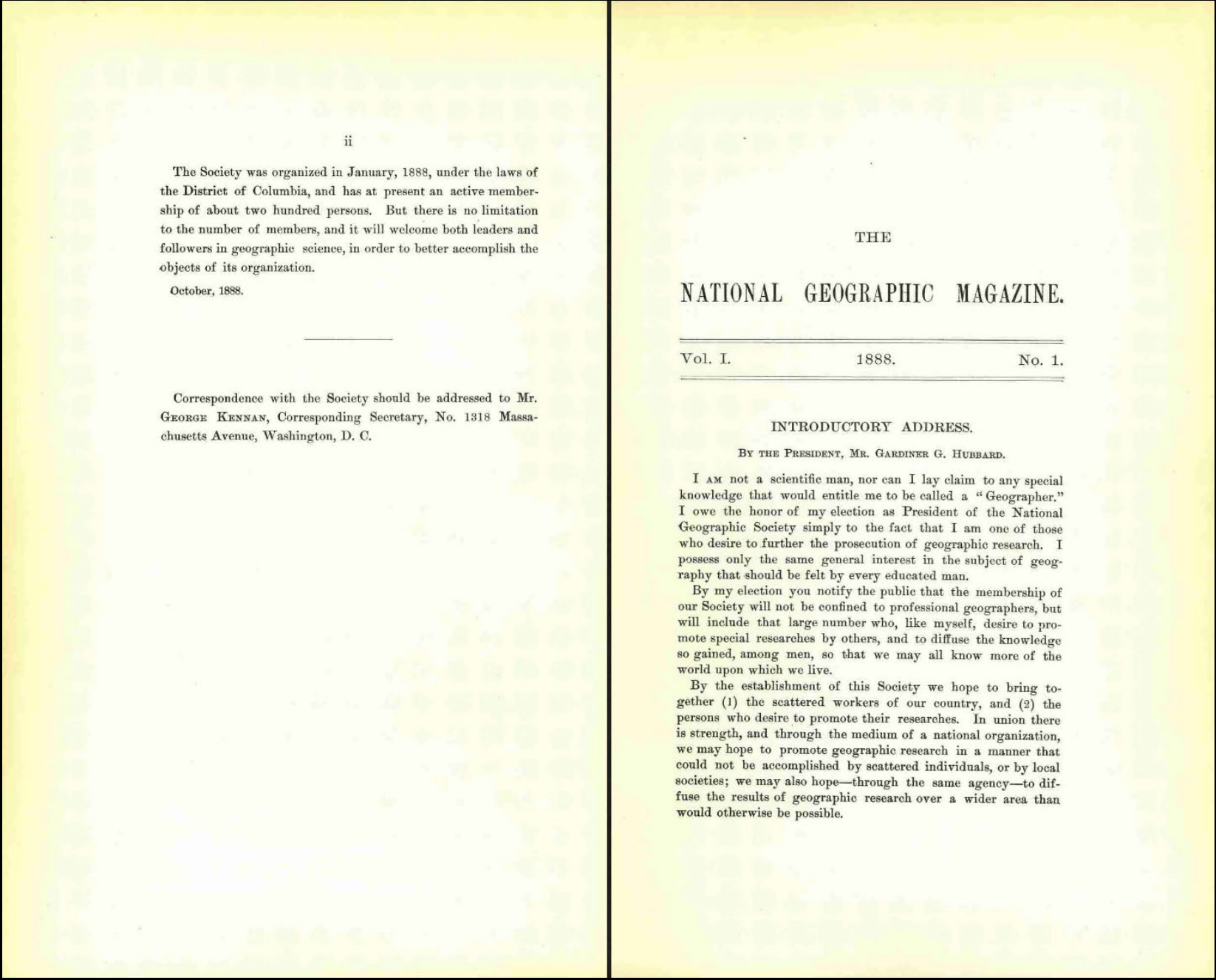
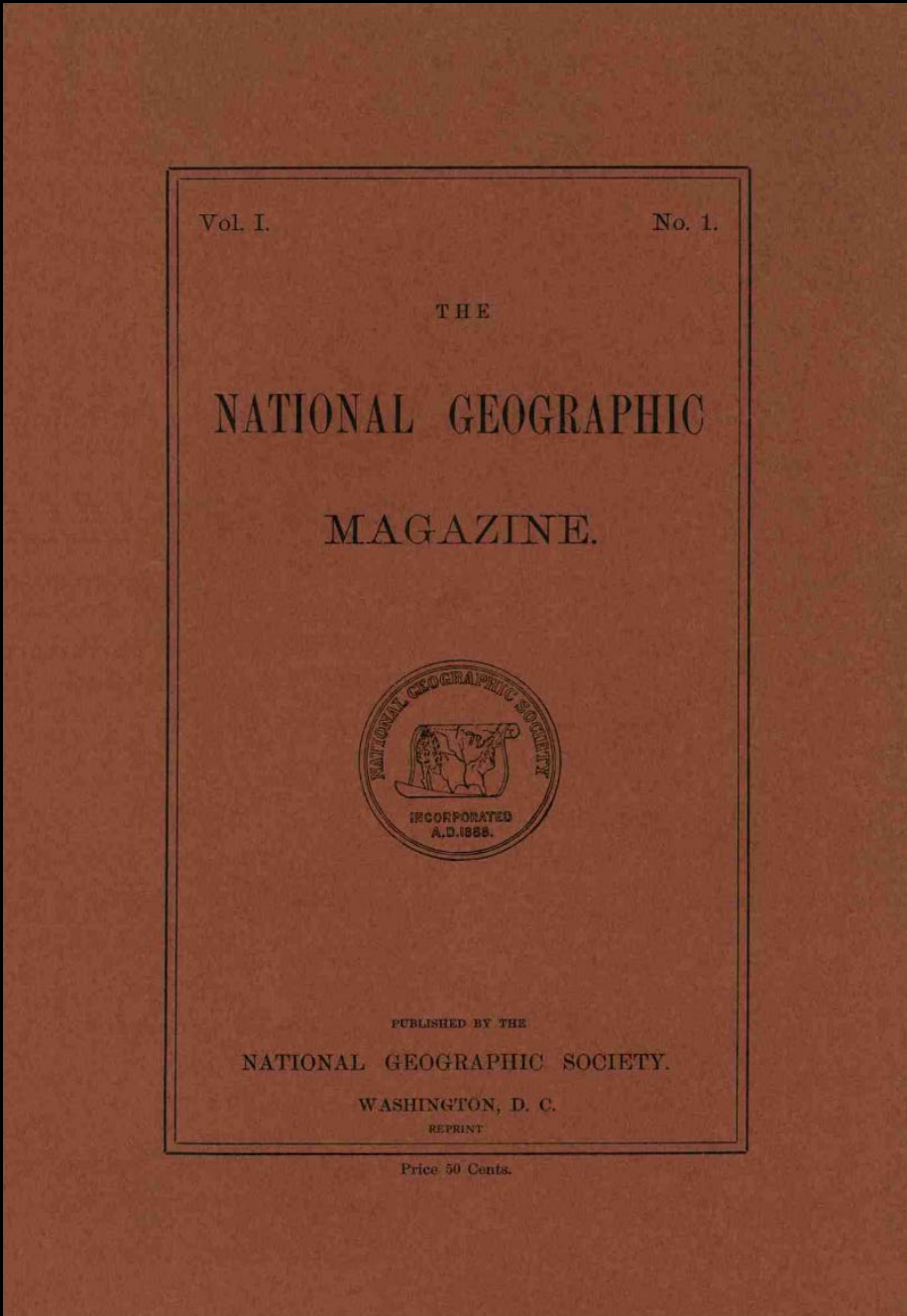
NGS was — and remains — a member-based, non-profit, providing both education and entertainment.



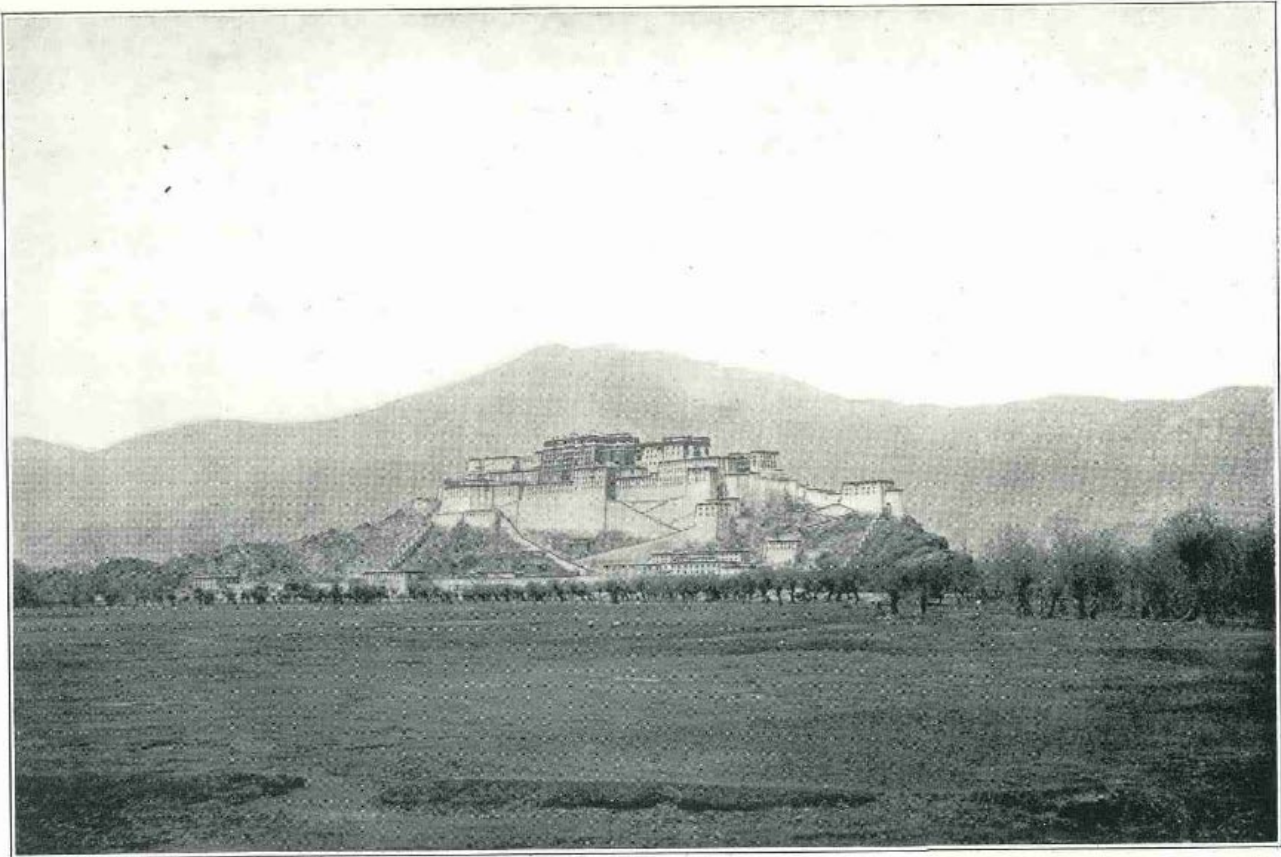
Originally, NGS members pooled resources to fund exploration. Explorers went into the world, collected data, and returned to share their experiences directly with members at NGS meetings in Washington.



In 1888, the same year NGS was founded, it began publishing a journal to record its research — The National Geographic Magazine.



In 1911, the magazine published a series of photos of Lhasa, Tibet, causing a sensation and selling out.

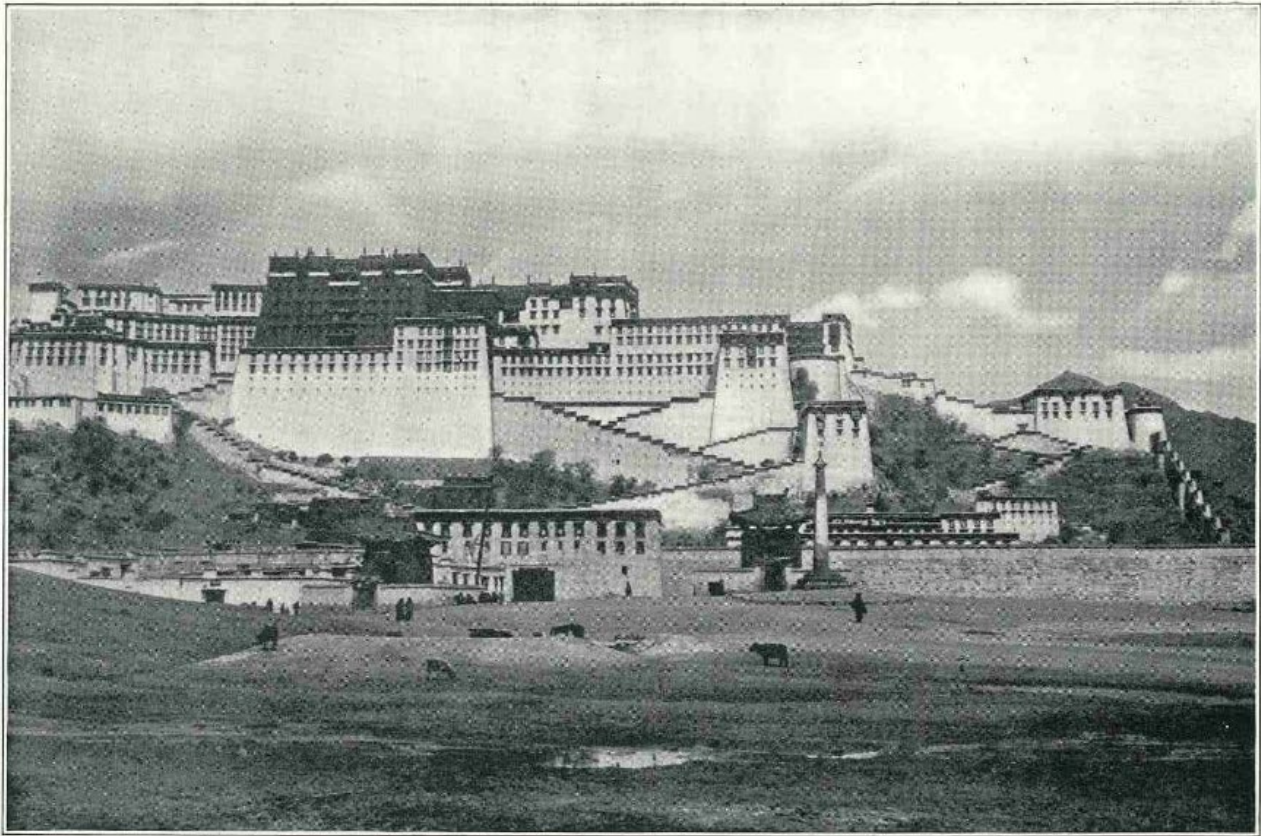


The Palace of the Dalai-Lama at Lhasa

The palace of the Dalai-Lama, Potala, is about two-thirds of a mile west of the city, and built upon a rocky height. The foundation of the palace, tradition says, was laid by Srongzang Khan during the seventh century. The main central portion, called the "red palace," was added some time later. The palace and additions were planned to serve as a means of defense

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THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE



Another View of the Palace of the Dalai Lama

The palace is about 1,400 feet long and about 70 feet high in front. In the construction of this palace the Tibetans displayed their highest architectural skill. Here are found the most precious treasures of Tibet, including the golden sepulchre of the fifth Dalai-Lama, which is about 28 feet high. The treasures and apartments of the Dalai-Lama are in the central portion of the temple palace. The remainder of the building serves as quarters for various attendants or followers of the Dalai-Lama, including a community of 500 monks, whose duty it is to pray for the welfare and long life of the Dalai-Lama

VIEWS OF LHASA

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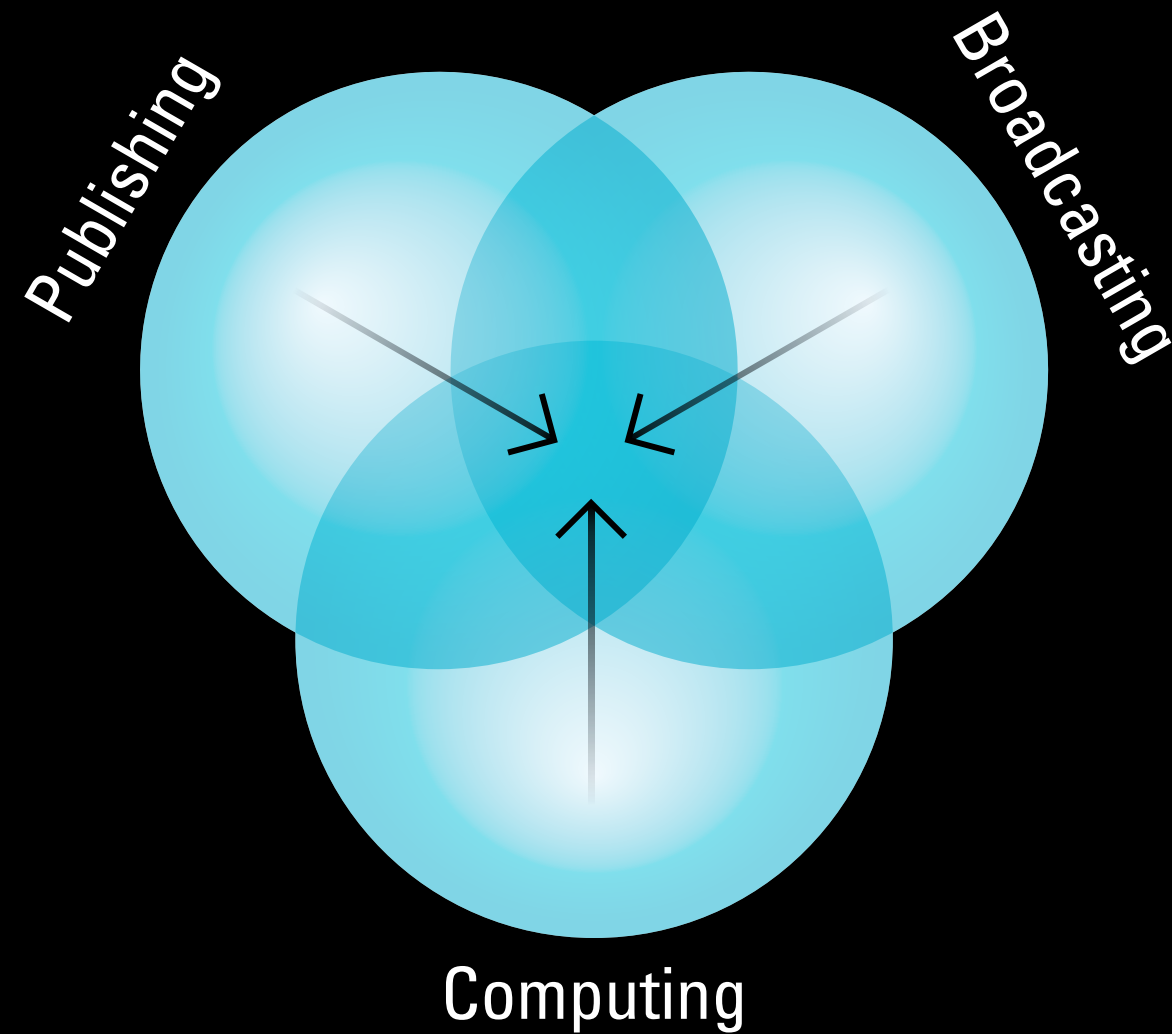
What began as a happy accident grew into a new type of magazine and then into a publishing empire, changing the relationship between the society and its members.



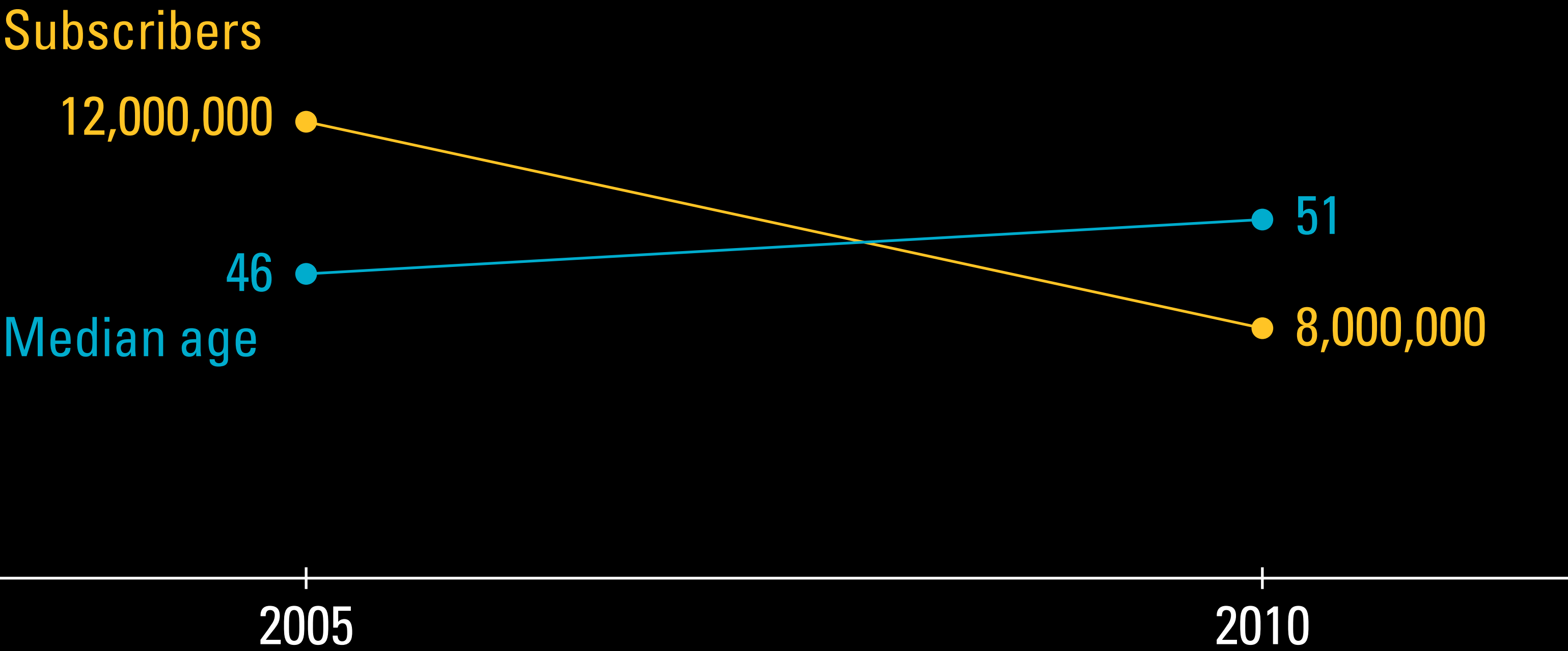
**The brand has deep roots in US culture
and has spread around the world.**



**Now, NGS faces the challenges of “digital convergence” —
an existential threat to all traditional media organizations.**



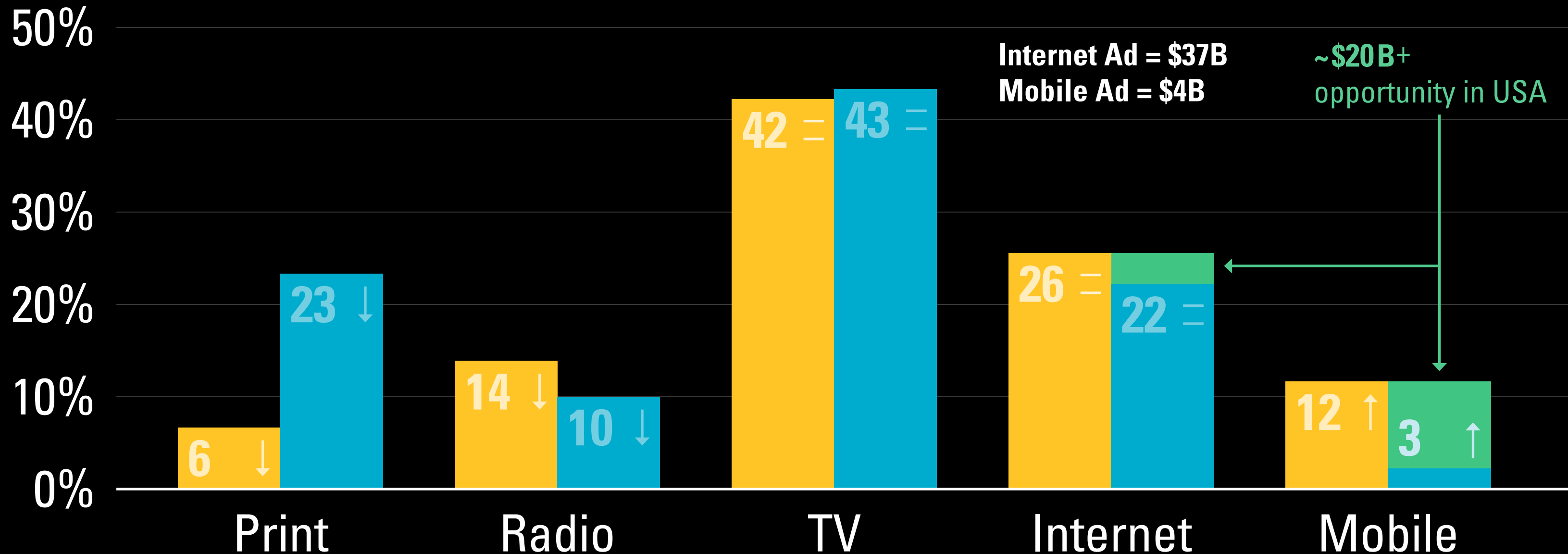
Subscriptions and ad revenue are dropping in the core print business, and subscriber median age is rising.



NGS's cable business is healthy today, but for how long?

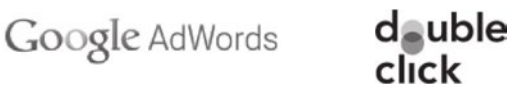
% of total media consumption time vs % of advertising spending

(USA 2012)



What's more, NGS faces disruptions across all its lines of business.

Advertising



Book Publishing



Channel (TV)



Commerce



Education



Events



Missions + Philanthropy



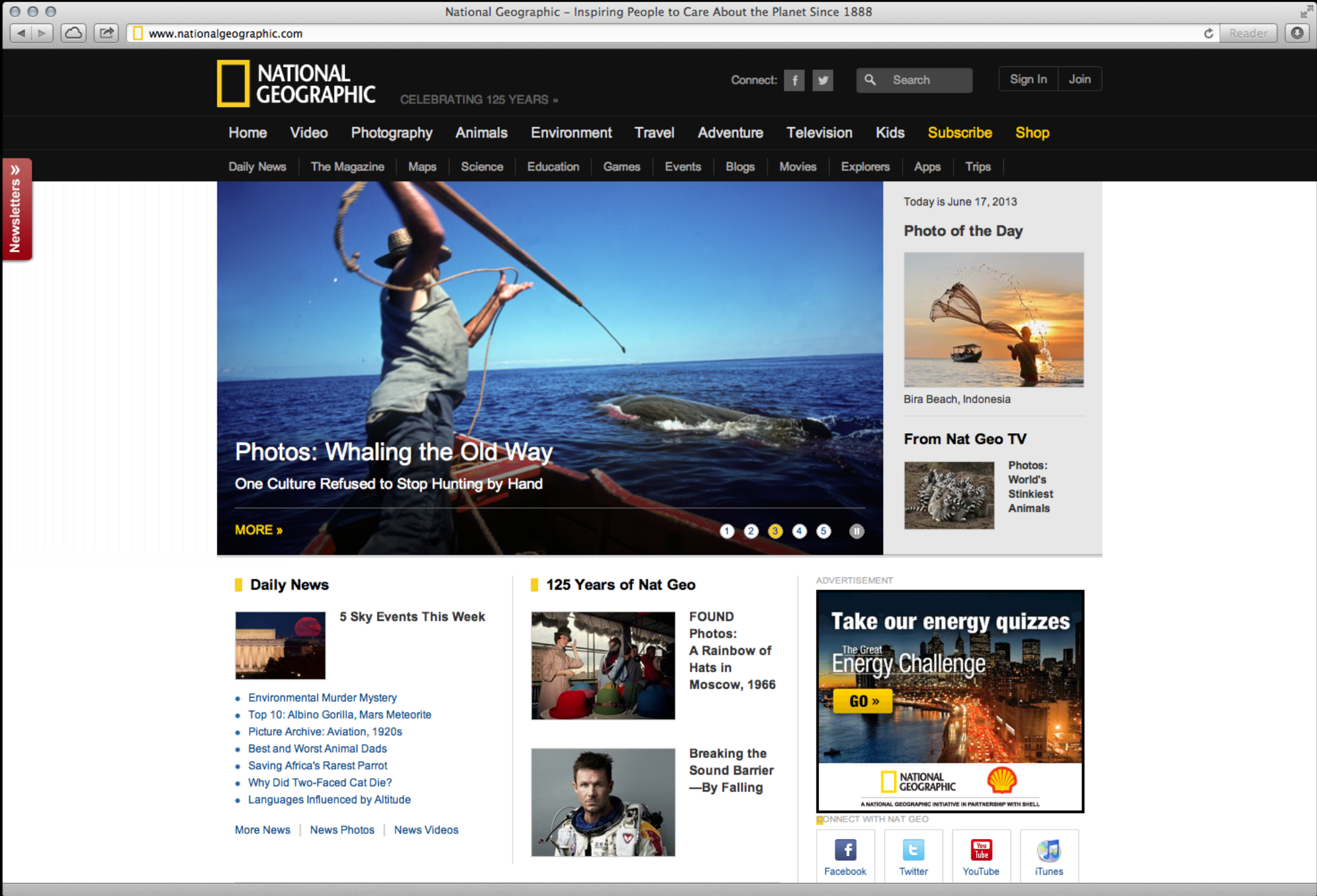
Print and digital publishing



Top-down Science



To its credit, NGS has undertaken several digital initiatives.



But most have been focused on “monetization” — e.g., building a pay wall.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "National Geographic magazine". The address bar displays the URL "https://secure.customersvc.com/servlet/Show?WESPAGE=OrderPages/ng/1209/order_15A". The page is divided into two main steps:

Step 1: Choose your subscription offer.

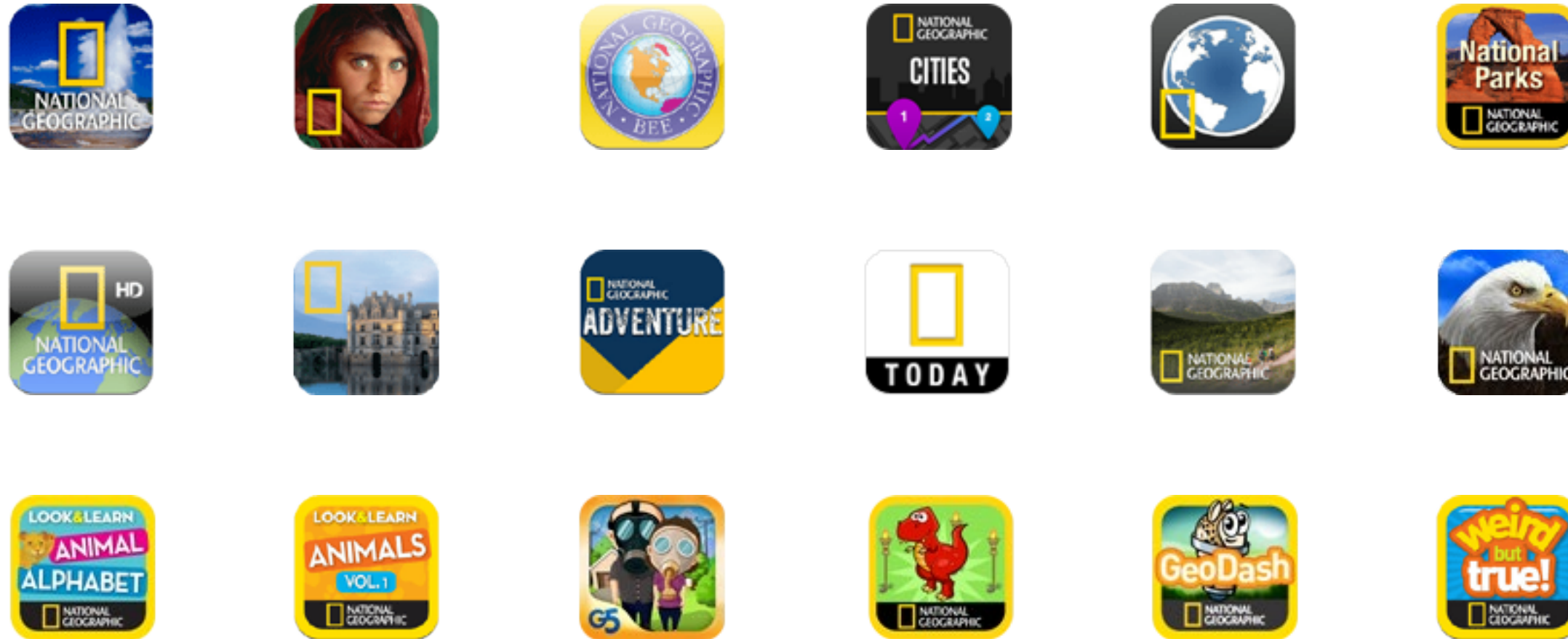
- ☐ **Digital:** Get a one-year subscription for \$15*
Includes Tablet edition for iPad®, iPhone® & Kindle Fire™ + Online Archive
- ☐ **Print:** Get a one-year subscription for \$15*
Includes Print edition only
- ☐ **All Access:** Get a one-year subscription for \$19.99*
Includes Print + Tablet edition for iPad®, iPhone® & Kindle Fire™ + Online Archive

Step 2: Fill in your order information.

The form fields for Step 2 are arranged in two columns:

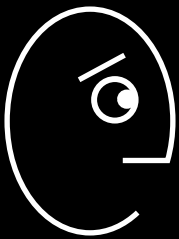
- First Name
- Last Name
- Address 1
- Address 2
- City
- Select a State/Province
- Zip / Postal Code

The problem is not simply converting from print to web or selling mobile apps.



In order to survive, NGS must fundamentally re-conceive its business.

**NGS must return to its roots,
re-imagining itself as a multi-local organization —
shifting from “customer transactions”
to a new form of “member participation”.**



Connecting members to ...

... other members

... explorers

... research

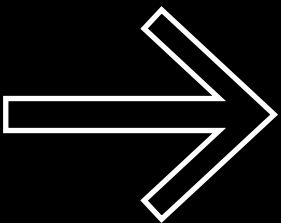
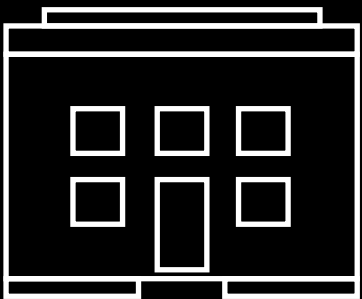
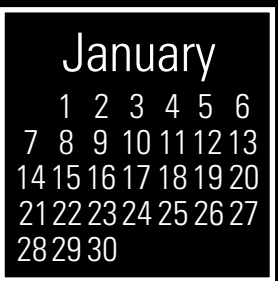
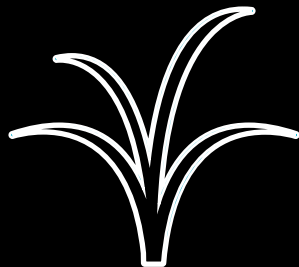
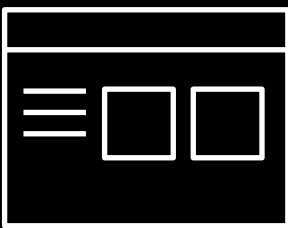
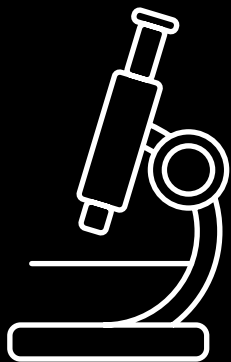
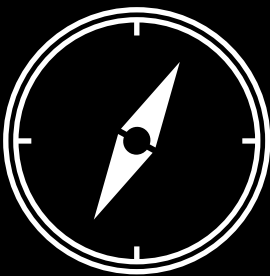
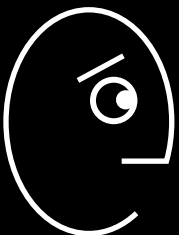
... content

... the diversity of life

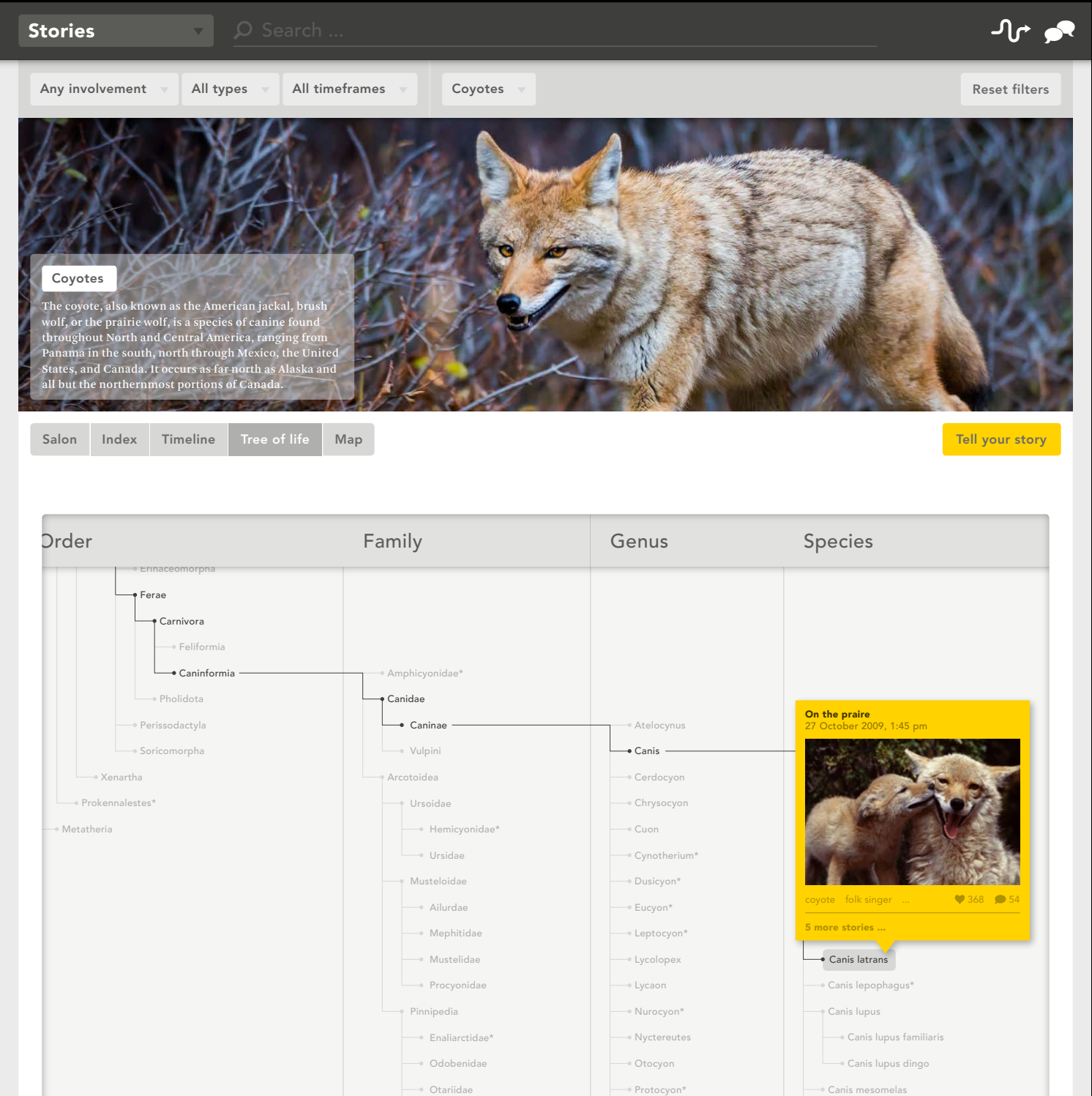
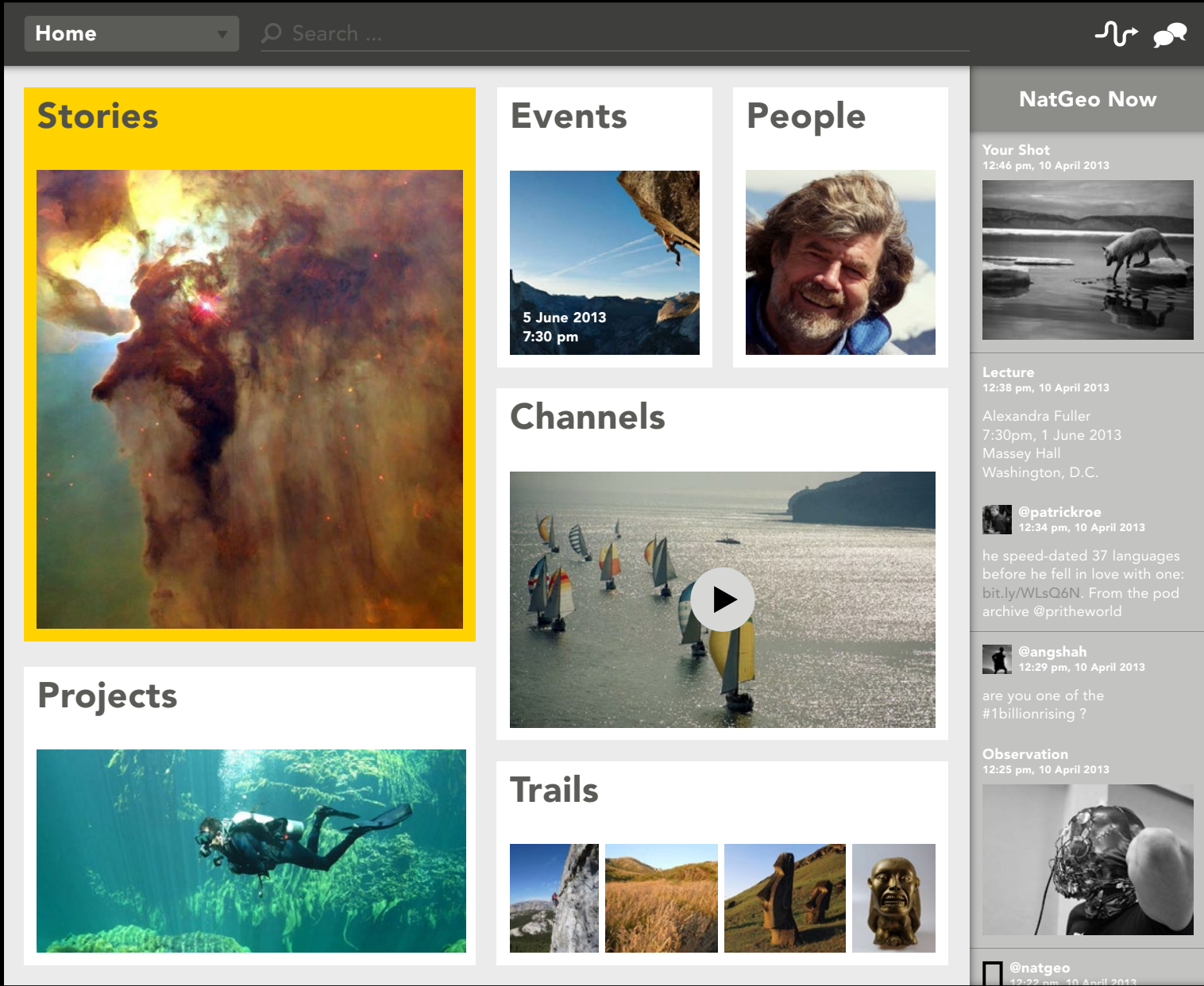
... events

... the society

... the future



We helped NGS think through these issues —
and we used prototyping to help imagine user experiences.



We then created a video to help NGS share the ideas internally.



... and we created a large-format print booklet to accompany the video.

Engaging Members to Re-imagine National Geographic

Four Stories about the Future

- "We're in disruptive times. And if we don't push out ahead and become the disruptors, we will be disrupted."

—Aaron Huey
- "There are people in your community that you could collaborate with who would be sort of this distributed network helping each other to make things happen."

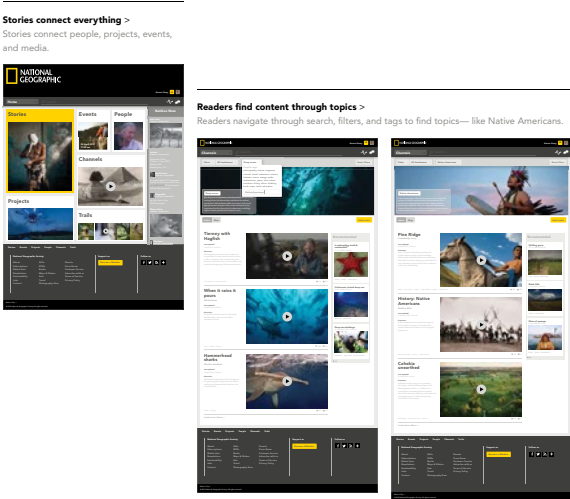
—Ariel Waldman
- "And you're trying to find people that bring out the best in you. We spend our lives trying to find our tribe."

—Tierney Thys
- "I would be loyal to anything that's a consistent, positive source of information, focused on whatever I'm interested in."

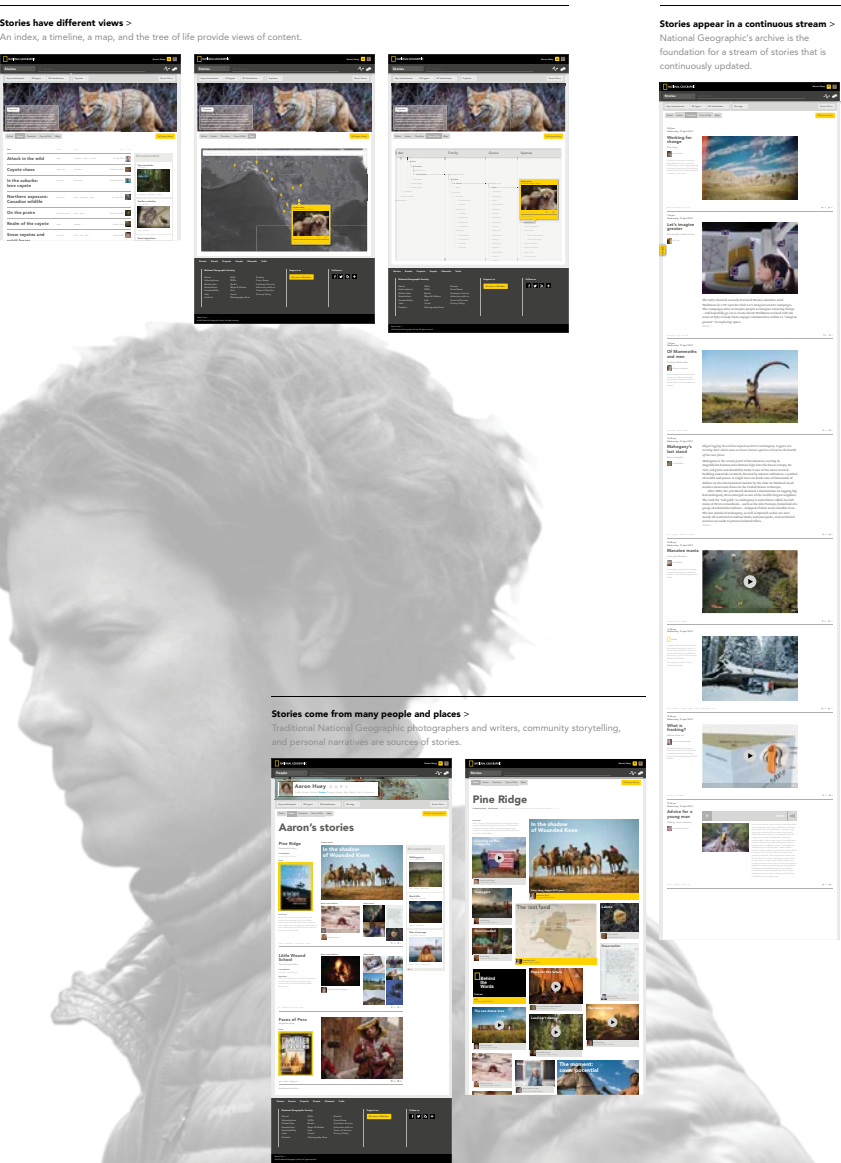
—Brian Keefe

What National Geographic can do:

- Expand authorship at National Geographic.**
National Geographic editors, writers, photographers, bloggers, and members all tell stories.
- Redefine story.**
Stories can be science blogs, photos of the day, traditional National Geographic magazine stories, story assignments through Your Shot, stories generated by research projects, and personal stories told by members—among others.
- Create a story stream.**
National Geographic hosts a collection of all stories ever published on the site—building on the National Geographic archive. The story stream is rich, real-time, and can be personalized.
- Re-design access.**
All stories are tagged and are navigable through search, filters, and tags.
- Provide curation tools.**
Readers curate stories as trails or lists, to be followed, shared, and read later.
- Enable connections.**
Stories connect people, events, channels, projects, and trails. Stories build community by connecting people through ideas to the site and to one another.



Imagine a storytelling platform—connecting members to the things they care about.



We also helped NGS build a Member Center ...

Tan Le

1

Log out

Member Center

Explore Members Like You

I am
Jane Goodall

London, United Kingdom

Member since 1965

National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Emeritus

f

t

g+

About Jane
[Your Shot Photo](#)

“Jane Goodall is a world-renowned pioneer of the study of chimpanzee behavior and prolific author of books and articles.

Born April 3, 1934, in London, Goodall has had a lifelong fascination with animals that began at an early age.

Jane Goodall with a young chimpanzee | Hugo Van Lawick, 2010

Jane's recent activity

Jane Goodallinst Disneyadventure and the Jane Goodall institute announce Conservation Program @Reuters ow.ly/aS2CC yesterday · reply · retweet · favorite

Joanna commented on Jason Martin's photo This photo is beautiful. Expressive. The lighting and angle... 2 days ago

Jane is following Jacob Robertson 2 days ago

Jane's Your Shot Photos

See all Janes's photos

500+ 500+

2 0

Tan Le

1

Log out

Member Center

Public Profile

Inbox

Settings

Tan Le,
Welcome to the
National Geographic Society

June 1 2012 | 18:32:12

National Geographic is one of the largest non-profit scientific and educational institutions in the world. Join in and continue to make a difference.

Explore Your Society

Morning in Mongolia
second line of text

Swimming with Jellyfish
in Tasmania

James Cameron and
his latest adventure

The deepsea challenge
at National Geographic
Explorer's Week

Trailblazing Haiti

Morning in Mongolia

News from Around the Globe

Gerlinde Kaltenbrunner:
2012 Explorer of the Year
Posted by Andrew Howley
Explorers Journal
June 15, 2012

More than 50 world-class explorers gathered last night to share stories about their adventures and teach others...

James Cameron presented
on the Deepsea Challenge
at National Geographic
Explorer's Week
June 20, 2012

National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence James Cameron succeeded in tackling his biggest challenge ever...

Field Expedition: Mongolia
Using Cutting-Edge Science to
Solve an Ancient Mystery
Posted by John Miles
June 28, 2012

Explorer Albert Lin and his team are conducting a survey in the region of the lost tomb of ruler Genghis Kahn...

Trailblazing Haiti: Scouting the
Country's First Pro Mountain
Biking Race—Part 2
Posted by Jayme Moya
June 15, 2012

This spring, a small team of Americans scouted

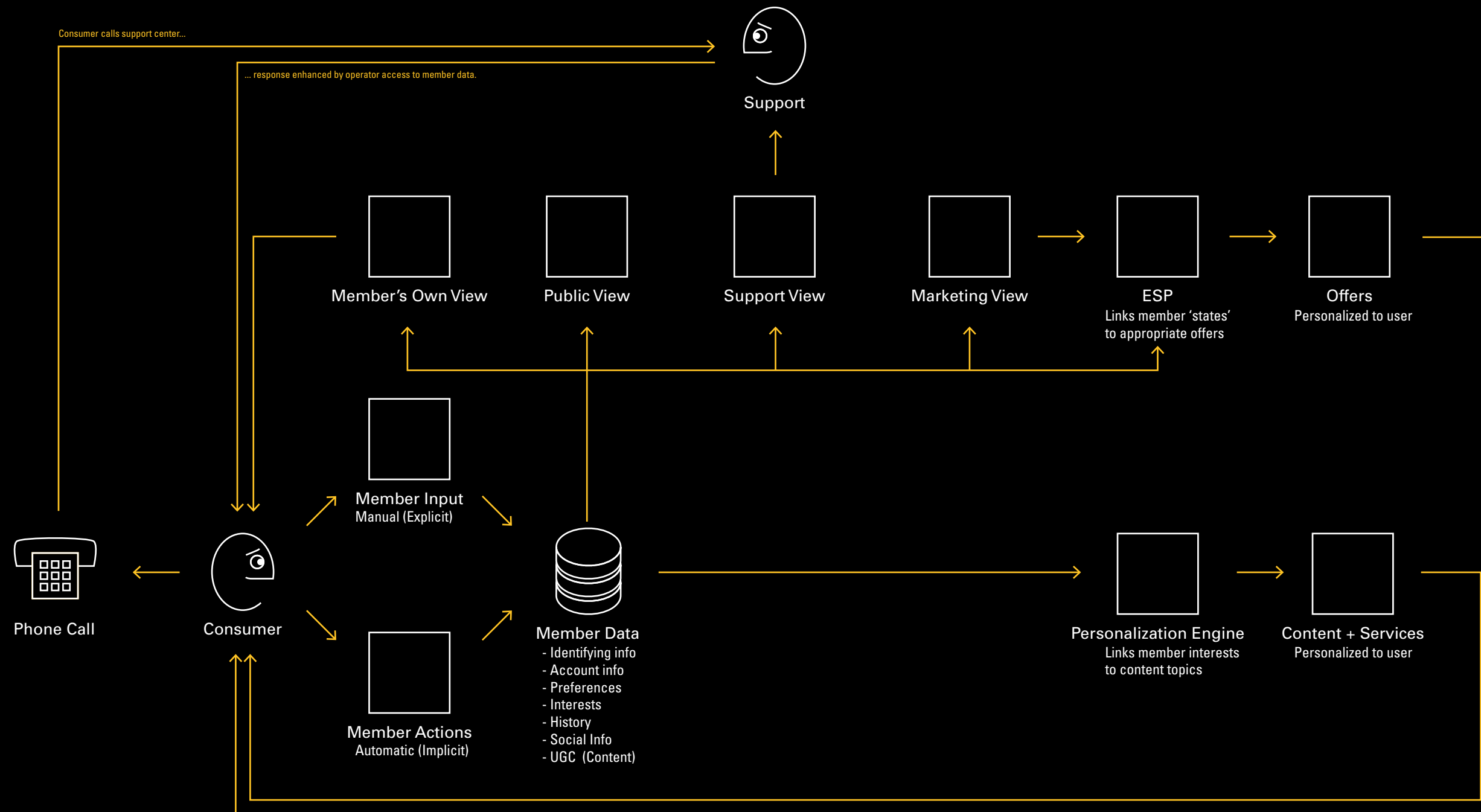
Urban Earth: London
By Daniel Ravel-Elisson
MyStreet Films
Explorers Journal
June 15, 2012

Urban Earth is a project to (re)present our habitat

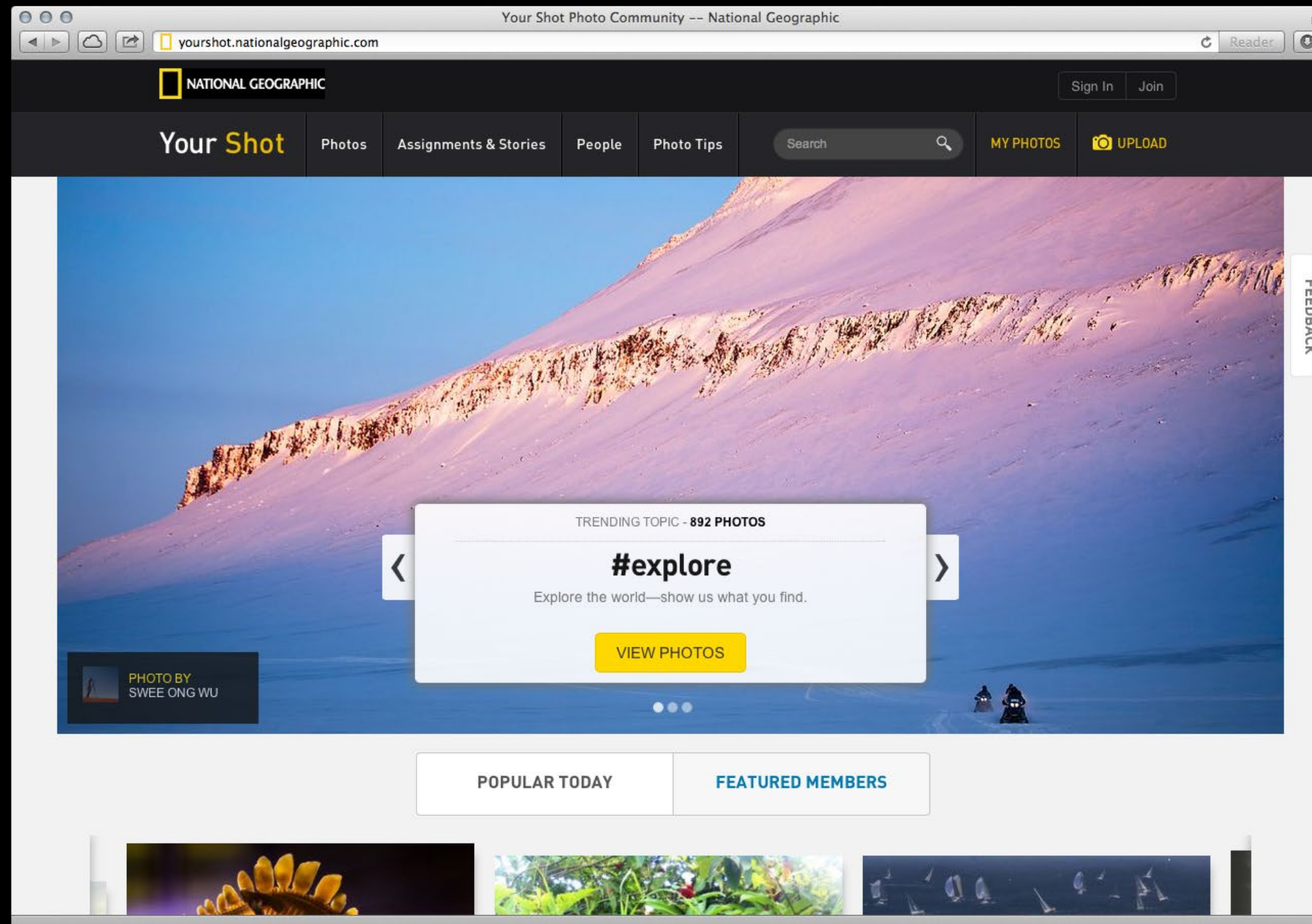
Urban Earth: London
By Daniel Ravel-Elisson
MyStreet Films
Posted by Angel Farris
June 15, 2012

Project Noah is a tool to explore and document

... and launch a real-time member database — a platform with APIs to support all NGS services.



Late this spring NGS launched “Your Shot” — the first NGS service to take advantage of the new member platform.



**The changes at NGS
exemplify several connected trends,
applicable to many other
organizations and industries.**

1 People want meaning.

**“Millennials don’t just want to buy your brand,
they want to be part of it.
They’re looking for ways to participate.”
— Barkley EVP Jeff Fromm**

1 People want meaning.

**“I envision a 21st century form of business
where the everyday consumer is helping shape the social contract ...
It’s a business world that is moving from value-based transactions
to values-based partnerships.”
— Unilver CEO Paul Polman**

1 People want meaning.

Traditional

Consumer / user

Buy stuff

Passively receive goods

Atomized transaction

Mass broadcast

Interruption-driven

Seller knows more

Emerging

Member / participant

Make meaning

Actively co-create experiences

On-going relationships

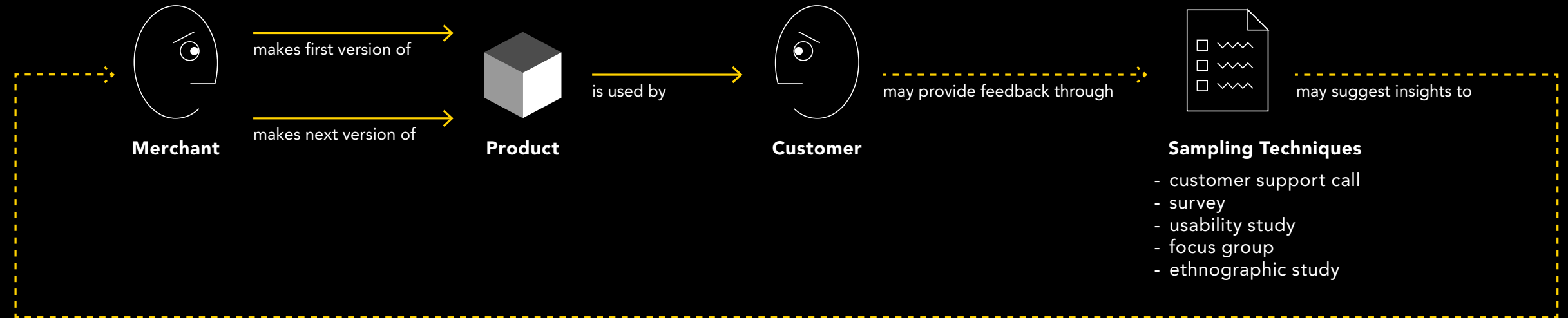
Personal conversations

Engagement-focused

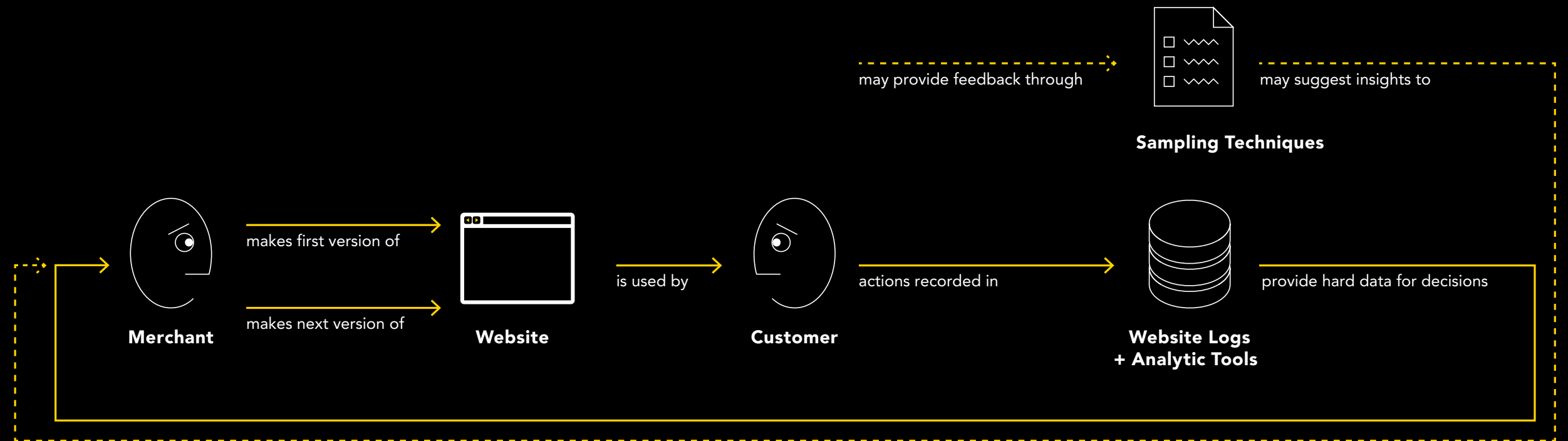
Information balance

2 All organizations have stories to tell, and products tell customer stories.

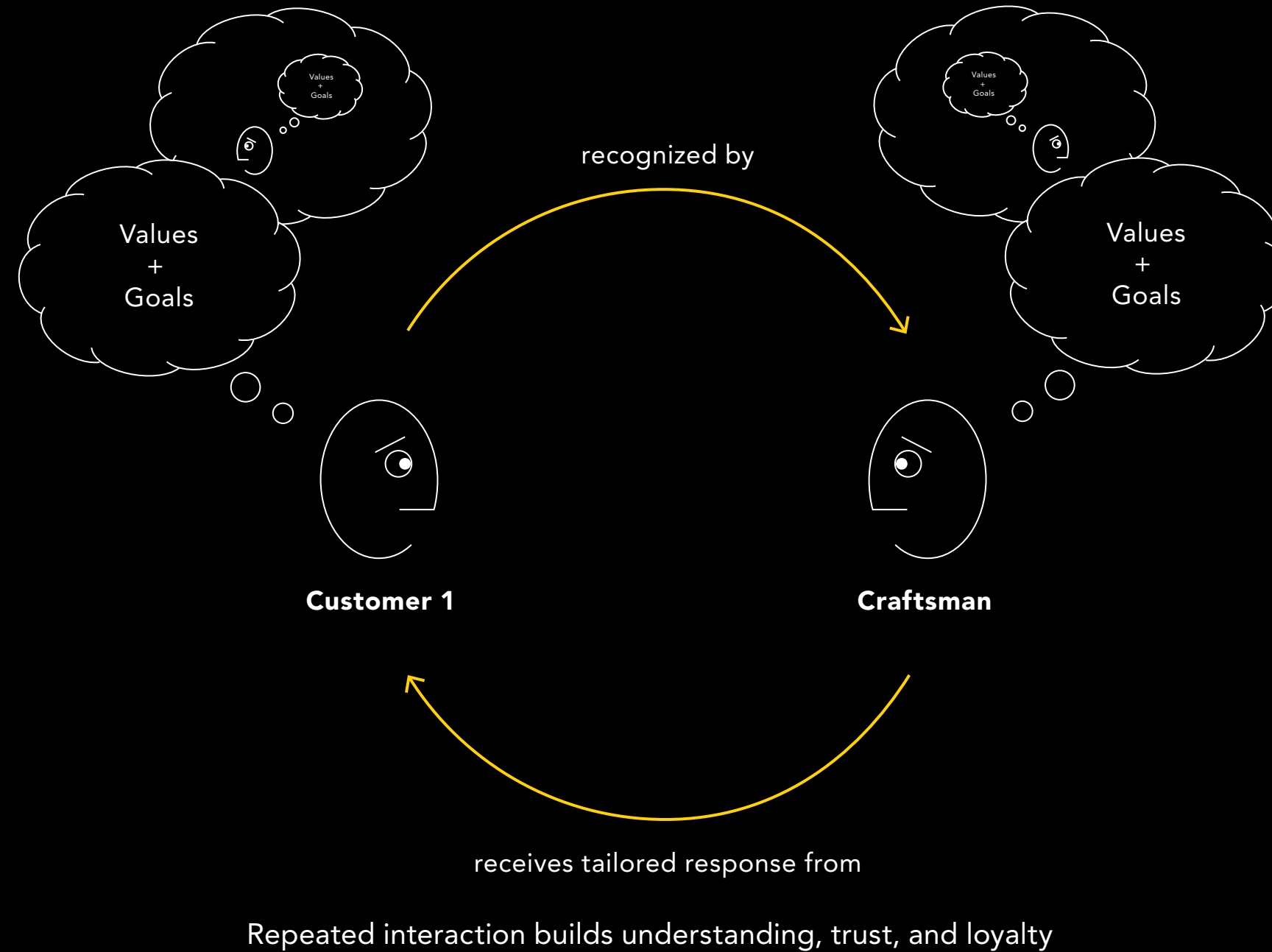
Traditional products



Web-based services



3 An organization's values matter more than ever.

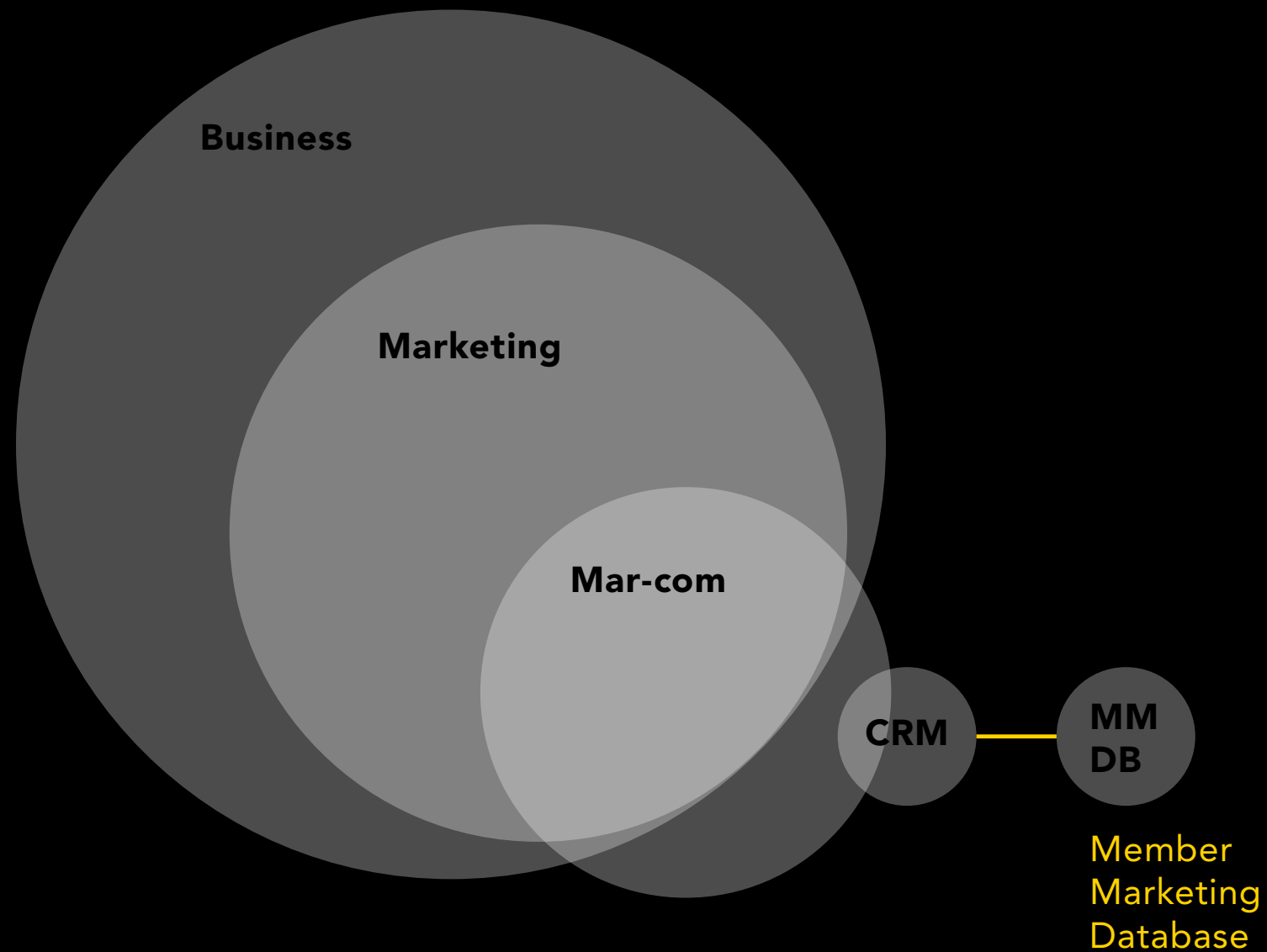


4 All organizations are social networks.

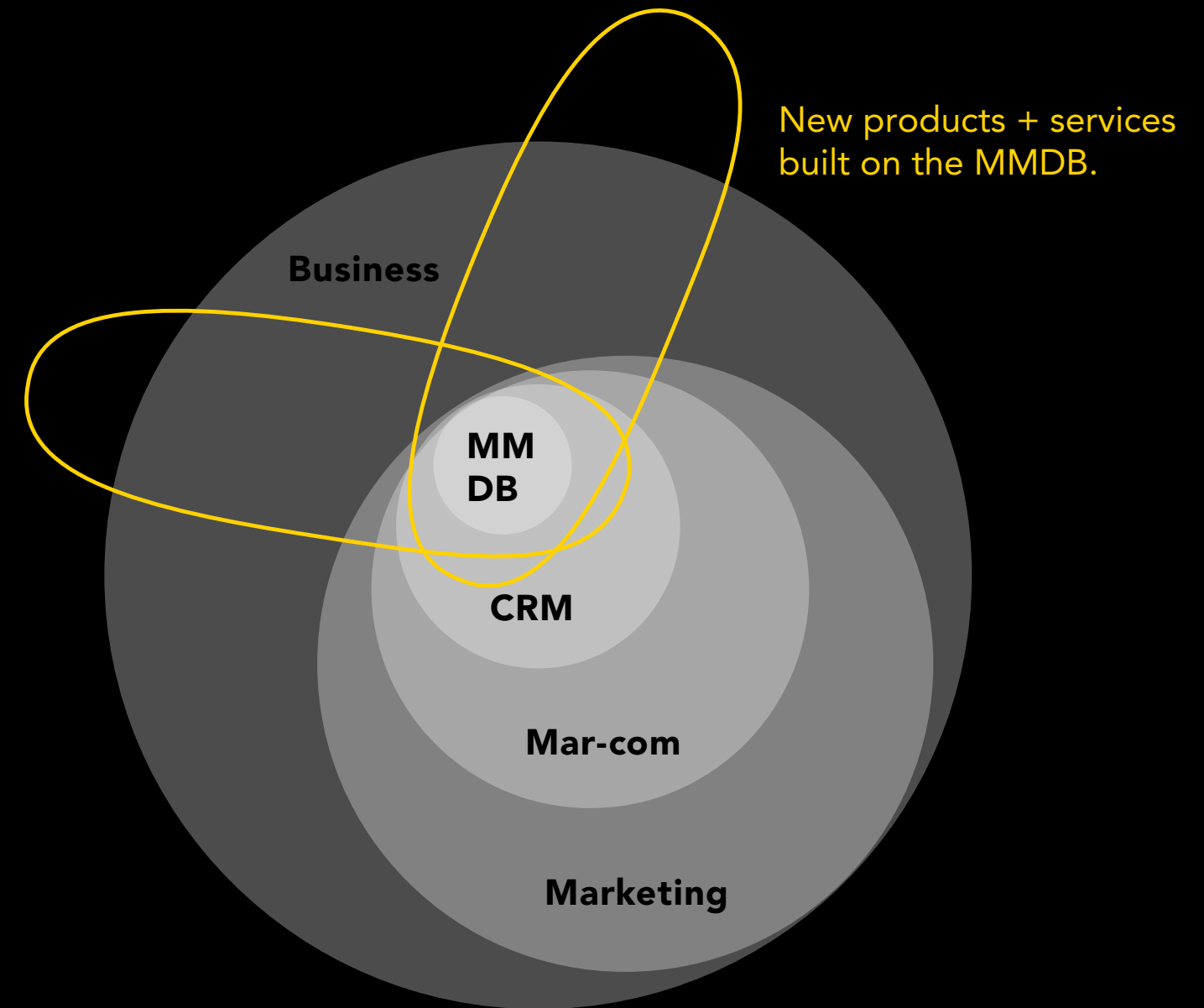
Social Network Services enable key activities that build traffic, loyalty, and affinity.

- Defining ourselves (curating identity)
- Collecting and sharing digital artifacts ————— Collect in order to remember
 - Remember to re-live
 - Re-live by sharing
 - Share in order to connect
 - Connect to be seen and appreciated
 - Be seen in order to participate
 - Participate to create new possibilities
- Communicating with friends and staying in touch
- Finding others with shared interests
- Following what others are thinking and doing
- Planning events (meeting in the physical world)
- Making common cause (organizing for change)
- Creating shared projects (for fun or profit)

5 CRM is now core — you have to know your customer.

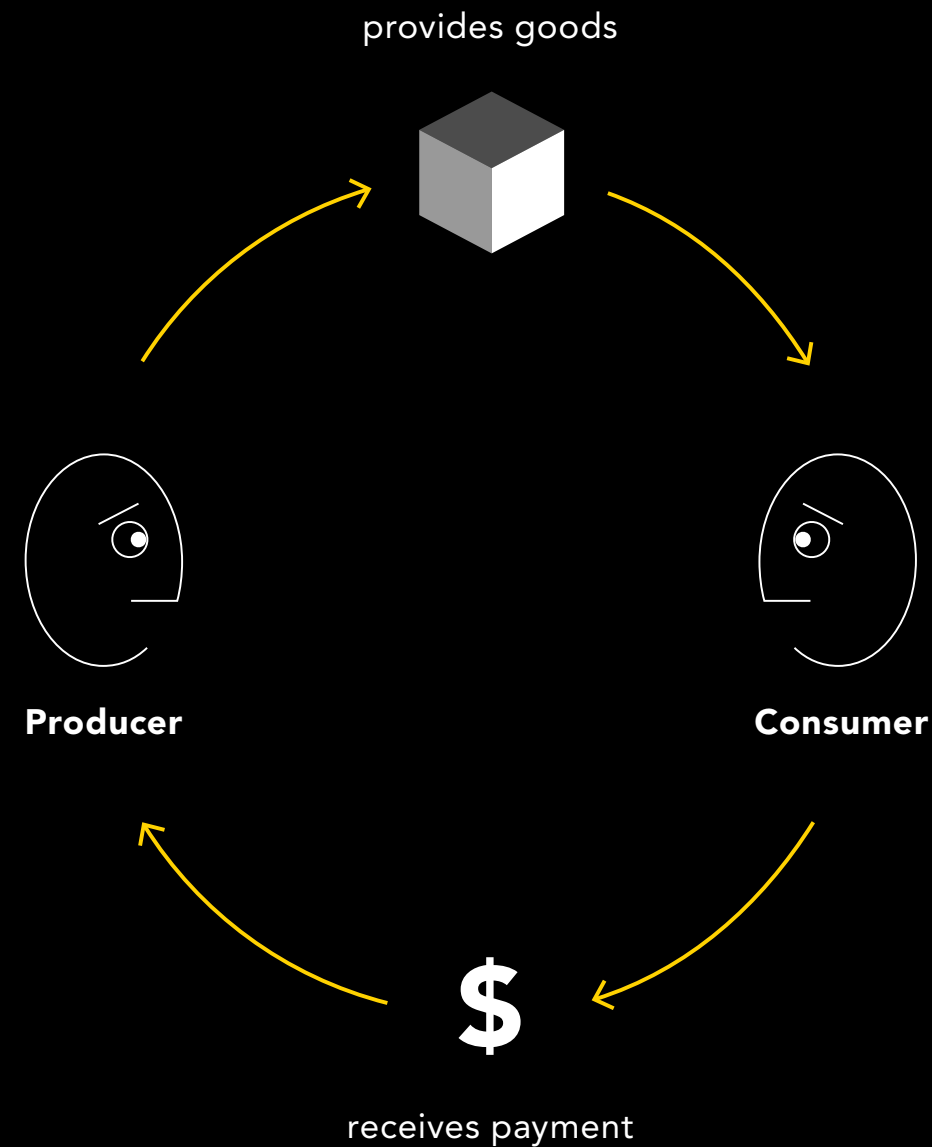


Existing model of CRM

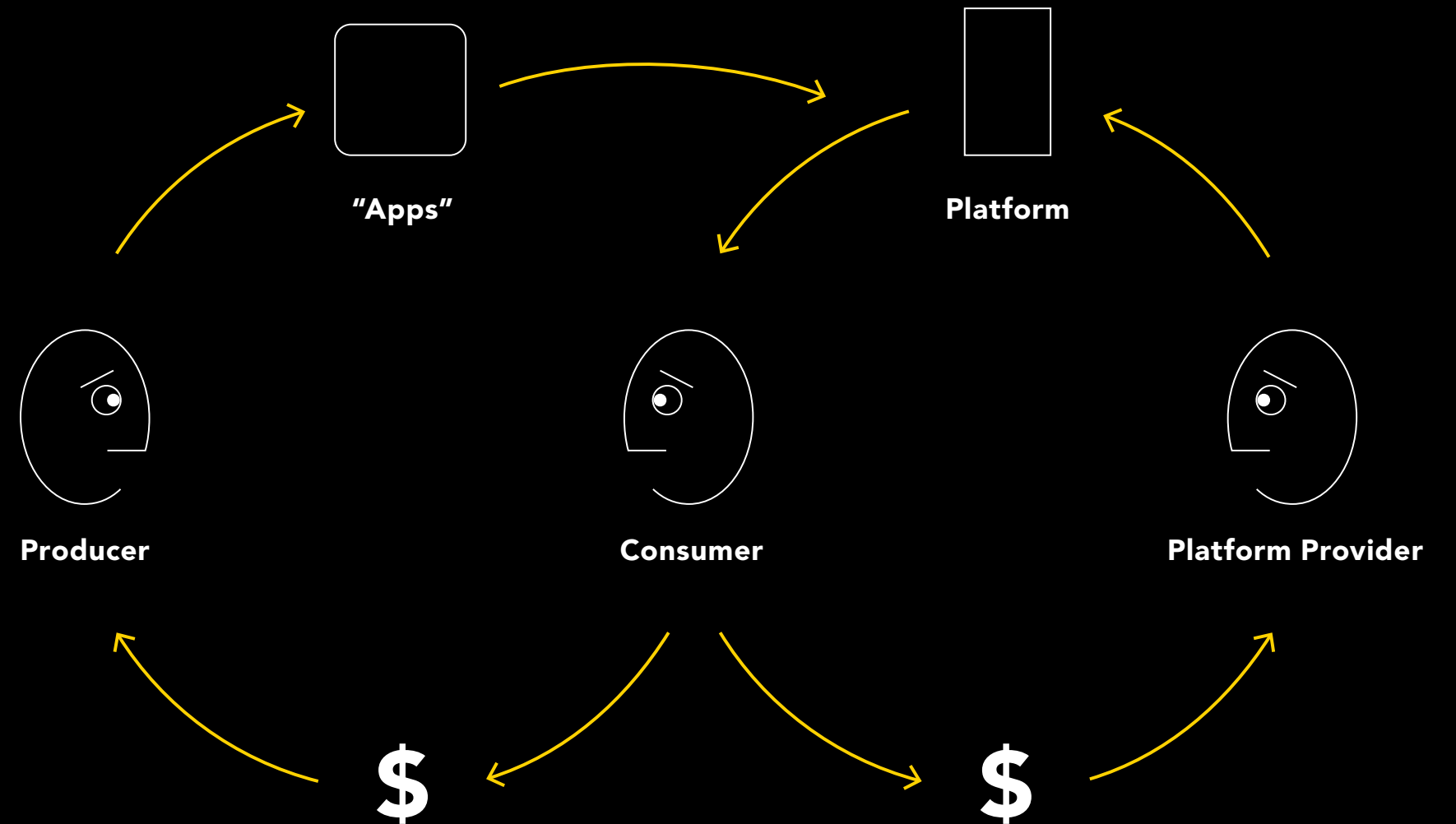


Emerging model of CRM

6 Businesses create value by enabling others to create value.



Traditional producers



Platform providers

Special thanks to
Robin Bahr
Shelley Evenson
Michael Gallagher
Paul Pangaro

hugh@dubberly.com

Presentation posted at
www.dubberly.com/presentations/Re-imagining_NatGeo.pdf