

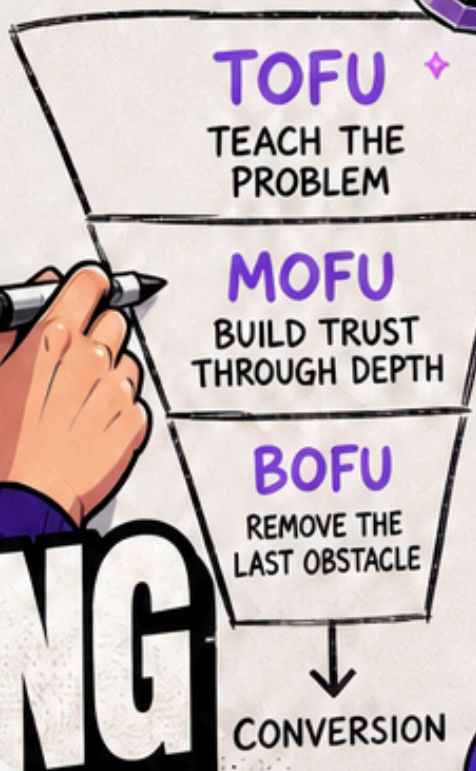


THE MARKETING FUNNEL

FOR ENGINEERS:

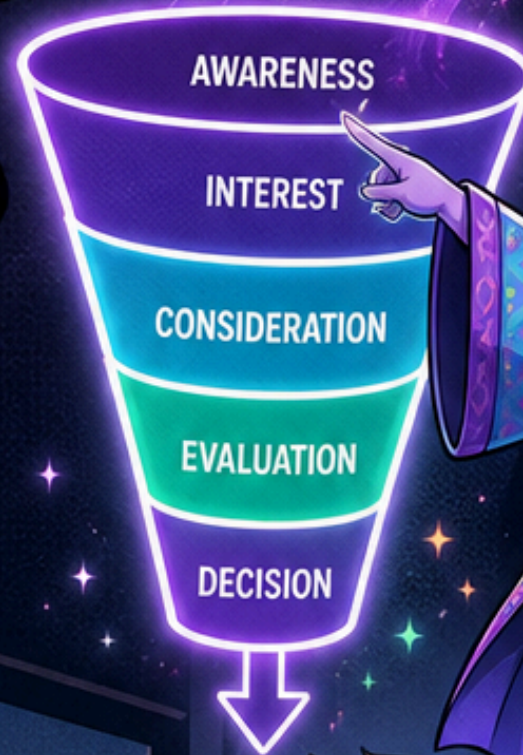
WHY STAGE MISMATCH KILLS GTM

KILLS GTM



YOU BUILT THE PRODUCT. NOBODY'S BUYING. HERE'S THE REAL PROBLEM.

IT'S NOT YOUR PRODUCT.
IT'S YOUR **FUNNEL STAGE.**



YOU SHIPPED.

The product works. You've got a GitHub repo that would make a senior engineer nod with respect.



YOU WROTE THE README, set up the landing page, maybe even posted on LinkedIn.



AND THEN: SILENCE.



THIS ISN'T A PRODUCT PROBLEM.

It's a funnel stage mismatch. And it's the most common GTM failure among technical founders, particularly those stepping out of engineering roles or building their first venture.



THE FIX ISN'T BETTER FEATURES OR LOUDER PROMOTION.

It's understanding that your audience lives at a completely different place in their buying journey than your messaging assumes.



WHAT THE FUNNEL ACTUALLY MEASURES (IT'S NOT TACTICS)

The terms top, middle, and bottom of funnel get thrown around as if they describe content formats: blog posts at the top, webinars in the middle, demos at the bottom. That's not quite right, and conflating the two is where most technical founders go wrong.

The funnel maps **buyer awareness stages**. Full stop.

Each stage describes what your buyer understands, what questions they're asking, and what kind of help they actually need right now. The tactics are just how you reach them at each stage. Getting the stage right is the prerequisite. Getting the tactic wrong is a rounding error by comparison.

Here's the mental model:

- **Top of funnel (TOFU):**
The buyer doesn't yet know they have a problem worth solving, or hasn't put a name to it.
- **Middle of funnel (MOFU):**
The buyer knows the problem exists and is evaluating possible approaches.
- **Bottom of funnel (BOFU):**
The buyer is ready to choose a specific solution and commit.

The implication is uncomfortable for engineers: the vast majority of your potential market is sitting at the top. They've never searched for your product. They might not even know the problem you solve is a solvable problem at all.

And you're sending them benchmarks.



TOP OF FUNNEL: TEACHING THE PROBLEM

TOFU buyers are at the **awareness** stage. They notice something is off, something is slow, something is costing them money or time, but they haven't connected those symptoms to a specific category of solution. They're **Googling symptoms**, not products.

NAME THE PROBLEM

Consider a developer who built a data pipeline tool. Their TOFU audience might be searching "**why does my ETL job fail silently**" rather than "ETL monitoring software." That gap is the entire ballgame.

Top-of-funnel content's job is to name the problem, frame it clearly, and make the buyer feel understood. It **teaches**. It **reframes**. It **gives language** to a pain the reader already feels but couldn't articulate.



WHAT TOFU CONTENT ACTUALLY DOES

- ✔ Names the problem
- ✔ Builds awareness
- ✔ Creates trust
- ✔ Educates the market
- ✔ Makes the invisible visible



TOFU CHALLENGES

- Broad, undefined audience
- Hard to measure impact
- Longer time to see results
- Easy to get ignored
- Not plenty of quick wins



TOFU DOS

- ✔ Focus on real symptoms
- ✔ Educate, don't sell
- ✔ Use clear, simple language
- ✔ Tell stories & examples
- ✔ Help buyers feel understood



TOFU DON'TS

- Don't pitch your product
- Don't get too technical
- Don't assume prior knowledge
- Don't talk about features
- Don't ignore search intent

TEACH FIRST. BUILD TRUST.
★ SOLVE LATER. //

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Ship
Solve
Scale

What TOFU content actually does



It's the article that explains why a pattern the reader keeps experiencing is actually a **systemic issue**, not a one-off annoyance.



It's the explainer that says "here's what this problem **is costing you**" before it ever mentions a product.



It's the mental model piece that makes someone think: "oh, so there's **a name for that.**"

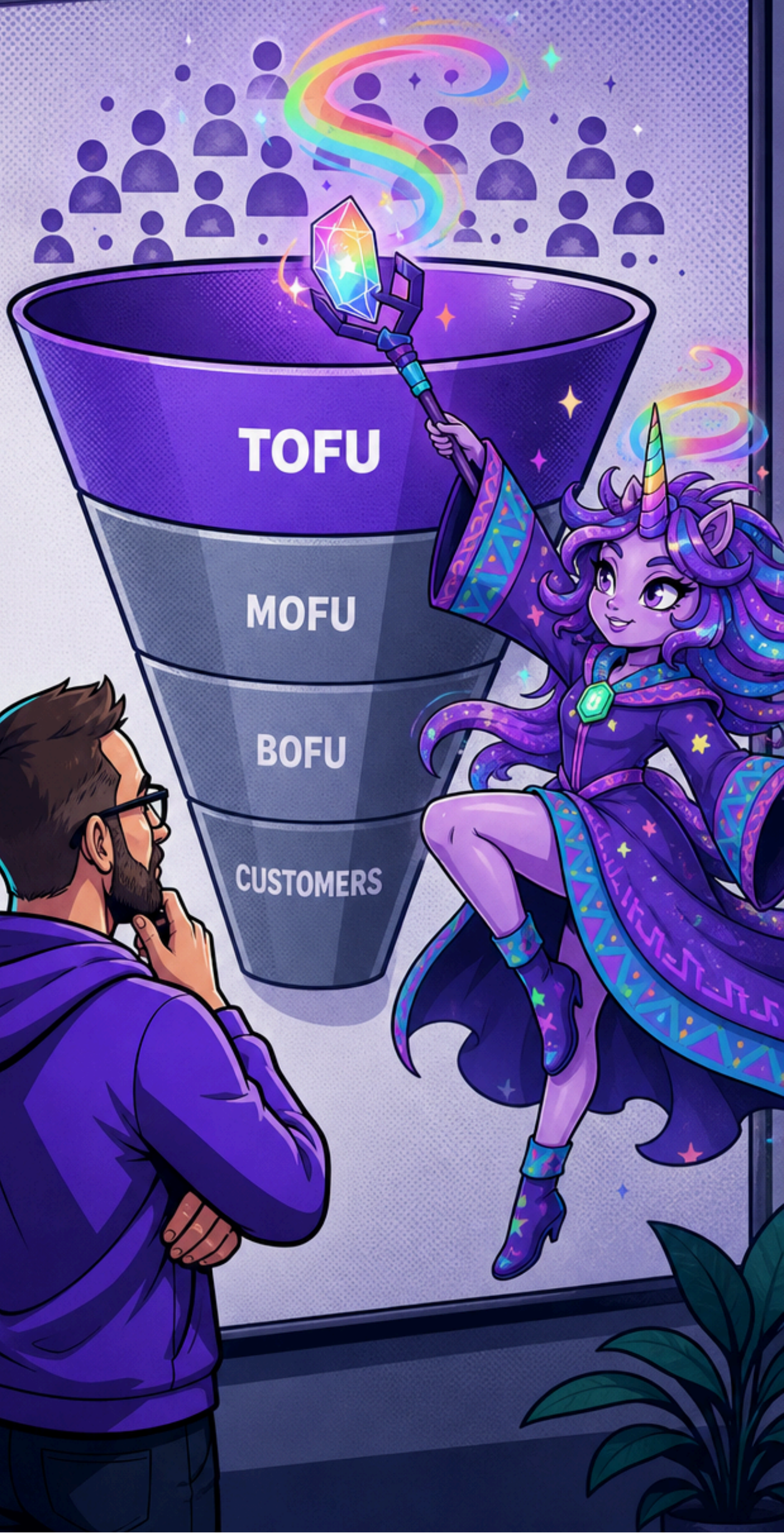


Think of it this way: until the buyer **understands the problem** at a conceptual level, your solution means nothing to them. You can't sell a cure to someone who doesn't believe they're sick.



TOFU

CHALLENGES



The reach is **wide** but the intent is **loose**. You're fishing in a **big pond**.



The audience at this stage might include your perfect buyer, or someone who will never convert. That's okay, because volume here is what **seeds the rest of the funnel**.



The risk is **wasting budget** on paid acquisition before your organic TOFU content proves the problem resonates.



For founders building in public or bootstrapping, the temptation is to skip TOFU entirely because it feels indirect.



You're **not selling** anything.



You're just... **educating**.



But without it, your funnel has no top. Nobody enters.

TOFU dos

- ✓ WRITE ABOUT **THE PROBLEM** IN THE LANGUAGE YOUR BUYER USES, NOT THE LANGUAGE OF YOUR SOLUTION.
- ✓ USE **REAL SCENARIOS**.
- "YOU'VE PROBABLY NOTICED THAT YOUR ONBOARDING EMAILS GET GREAT OPEN RATES BUT NOBODY BOOKS A CALL". BEATS "EMAIL CONVERSION OPTIMIZATION" EVERY TIME.
- ✓ AIM FOR **90% EDUCATION, 10% SOFT BRAND SIGNAL**. PUSH THE PITCH AND THE AUDIENCE BOUNCES.
- ✓ OPTIMIZE FOR HOW PEOPLE ACTUALLY DESCRIBE **THEIR PAIN** IN SEARCH: QUESTIONS, SYMPTOMS, FRUSTRATIONS.

"YOU'VE PROBABLY NOTICED THAT YOUR ONBOARDING EMAILS GET GREAT OPEN RATES BUT NOBODY BOOKS A CALL."

WHY ISN'T THIS WORKING?!

TOO COMPLICATED 😞

I SPEND HOURS ON THIS AND GET NOWHERE ✨

NOT SEEING THE RESULTS WE EXPECTED ✨ ✨ ✨

WHERE'S THE ROI? ?

IT'S MISSING WHAT WE ACTUALLY NEED ✨ ✨ ✨

OUR TEAM HATES USING IT

WE TRIED IT AND GAVE UP

SUPPORT TAKES TOO LONG TO RESPOND 😞

DOESN'T INTEGRATE WITH THE TOOLS WE ALREADY USE

PRICING IS CONFUSING ~~~~~

NOT BUILT FOR COMPANIES LIKE OURS ?



TOFU don'ts

✘ Don't lead with your product name, your pricing, or your feature list. That's bottom-funnel content dropped into the wrong room.

✘ Don't assume the reader knows why the problem matters. Show the downstream cost of ignoring it.


✘ Don't make TOFU content a thinly veiled product brochure. Readers can smell it, and they leave.



**MEGA
PRODUKT**

All-in-One Platform
for Maximum Growth

\$99/mo



Features

- ✓
- ✓
- ✓



MIDDLE OF FUNNEL:

BUILDING TRUST THROUGH DEPTH

MOFU buyers know the problem exists. They're now asking: "what kind of solution fits my situation?" They're comparing categories, approaches, and vendors. They're trying to figure out who understands them well enough to trust.

This is where trust is built or broken. And it's where technical content earns its keep.

Unlike TOFU, where you're speaking to a broad curious audience, MOFU readers have already self-selected. They've acknowledged the problem. Now they want depth. They want to see that you understand the tradeoffs, the edge cases, and the reason one approach beats another in their specific context.



	APPROACH A	APPROACH B	APPROACH C
Scalability	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆
Implementation Complexity	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆
Time to Market	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆
Flexibility	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆
Total Cost (3 years)	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆
Best For	Mid-Large Teams	Early Stage Startups	Enterprise Needs

WHAT MOFU CONTENT ACTUALLY DOES

- Deepens understanding
- Builds credibility
- Narrows the field
- Validates your approach
- Moves buyers closer to decision

MOFU CHALLENGES

- Buyers are comparing everyone
- High expectations for depth and nuance
- Complex topics can confuse or overwhelm
- Hard to stand out without real expertise

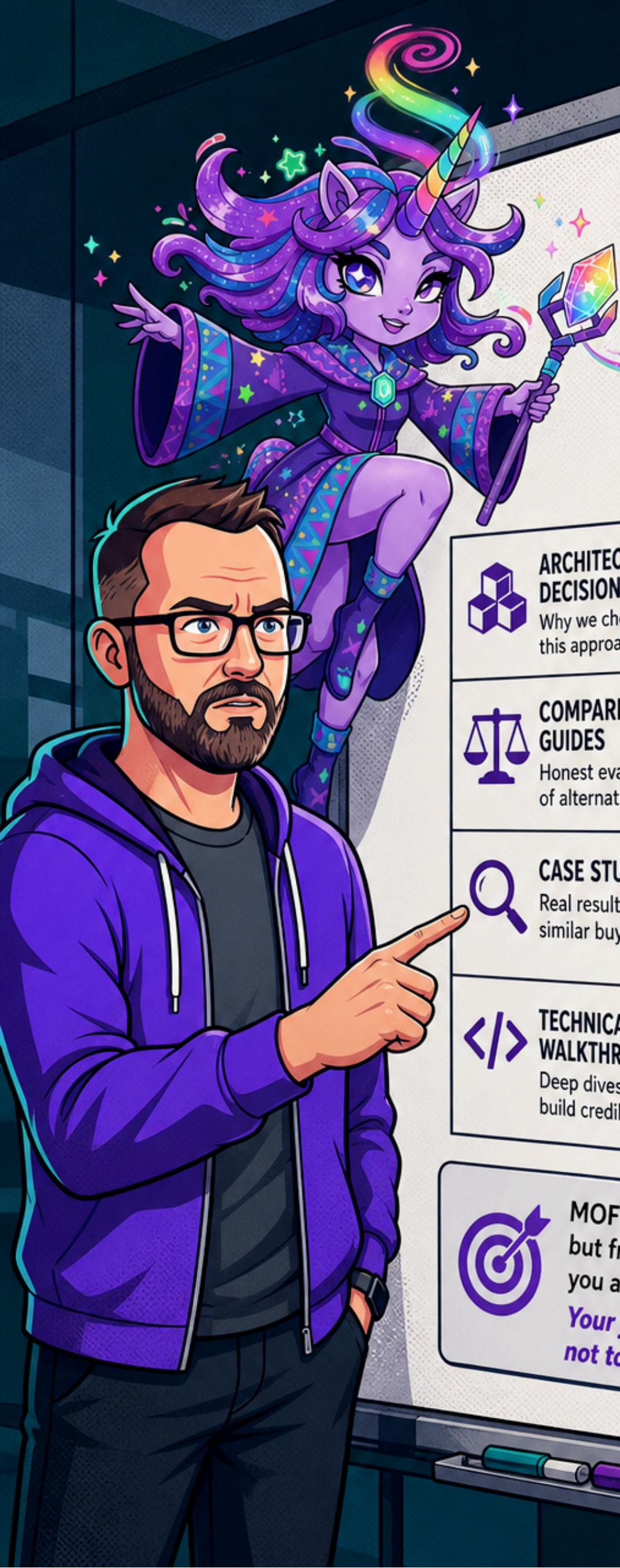
MOFU DOS









- Go deep on the "how" and the "why"
- Show comparisons and tradeoffs
- Use real examples and case studies
- Anticipate objections
- Speak to the buyer's specific context


MOFU DON'TS

- Don't be generic
- Don't oversimplify complexity
- Don't hide tradeoffs or limitations
- Don't sell—educate
- Don't ignore technical details that matter

WHAT MOFU CONTENT ACTUALLY DOES



	YOU (OUR SOLUTION)	THEM (ALTERNATIVE)	ANOTHER (OPTION)
 ARCHITECTURE DECISIONS Why we chose this approach	 Event-driven microservices	Monolithic architecture	Modular monolith
 COMPARISON GUIDES Honest evaluation of alternatives	 Transparent pros & cons	— Light on trade-offs	— Limited comparison
 CASE STUDIES Real results from similar buyers	 E-commerce scale-up: 3.2x ROI	Generic industry example	Outdated or limited data
 TECHNICAL WALKTHROUGHS Deep dives that build credibility	 Detailed implementation guide	Surface-level overview	High-level marketing content


 MOFU is where “we versus them” narratives live, but framed with honesty. The reader is evaluating you alongside alternatives.
Your job is to help them make the right decision, not to pressure them into yours.

MOFU challenges



This stage requires the most intellectual effort. You have to genuinely understand your buyer's world well enough to help them compare intelligently.

Founders often shortcut here by writing product documentation dressed up as a case study.

Real MOFU content is uncomfortable to write because it acknowledges that your product isn't right for everyone.

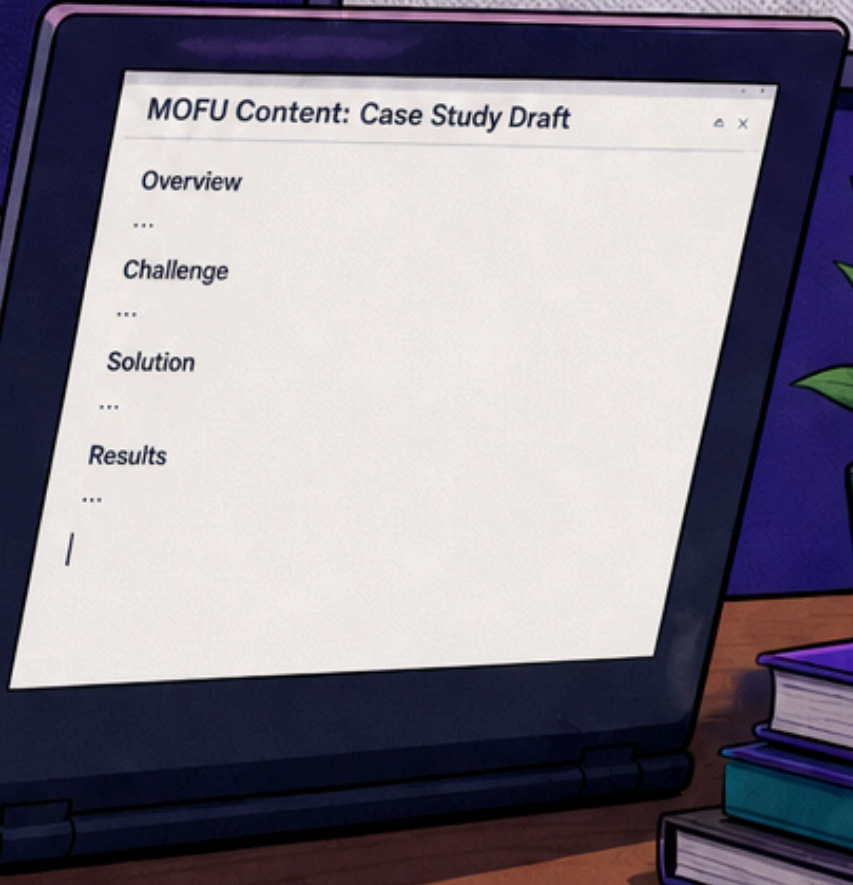


Another challenge: MOFU content takes longer to pay off.

The reader isn't converting today.

They're filing you away as credible.

They'll come back when they're ready.



MOFU dos

WHEN TO USE US

- ✓ You need to ship faster
- ✓ Proven patterns & best practices
- ✓ Limited internal bandwidth
- ✓ Need integrated analytics & automation
- ✓ Want to iterate & scale quickly

WHEN TO BUILD CUSTOM

- Highly unique workflows
- Deep legacy system dependencies
- Extreme compliance or data residency requirements
- Long-term IP moat is the core strategy
- Unlimited time & budget

4 weeks
→
3 days.

REAL OUTCOME

Reduced pipeline setup time from 4 weeks to 3 days.

OBJECTIONS WE HEAR

- 🗨️ What about compliance?
- 🗨️ Can we customize it?
- 🗨️ Will we outgrow it?
- 🗨️ How do you handle data?

OUR ANSWERS

- ✓ SOC 2 Type II, GDPR-ready
- ✓ Configurable, not locked in
- ✓ Built to scale with you
- ✓ Data stays yours

HONEST
COMPARISONS
BUILD TRUST.
TRUST
CLOSES DEALS.



MOFU don'ts



Don't write case studies that read like press releases.

Real specifics: the problem, the friction, the outcome, the numbers.



Don't be dishonest about limitations.

Sophisticated buyers will find out, and you'll lose their trust entirely.



Don't gate everything.

Some MOFU content should be freely accessible. Forcing email capture on every deep piece reduces the trust you're trying to build.

BOTTOM OF FUNNEL: REMOVING THE LAST OBSTACLE

BOFU buyers have already done the research. They've shortlisted. **They're now deciding.** Their questions are practical: how does migration work, what does the contract look like, can I talk to someone who implemented this.

At this stage, **friction is the enemy.** The buyer is ready. Your job is to make it **easy to say yes.**

BOFU is where **features** matter. Where **pricing pages** need to be clear. Where **demos** convert, **trials** close, and **case studies** with specific **ROI numbers** seal deals. This is the territory where many engineers feel most comfortable, because it's specific, measurable, and technical.

Here's the catch: this stage has the **smallest audience** of the three.



BOFU CHALLENGES

- Last-mile objections can stall momentum.
- Slow responses create doubt.
- Complex contracts add unnecessary friction.
- Smaller audience means every opportunity counts.

BOFU DOS

- Make pricing crystal clear.
- Show exactly how migration works.
- Offer demos that solve real use cases.
- Use case studies with specific ROI numbers.
- Make it easy to talk to real customers.

BOFU DON'TS

- Hide pricing or make it hard to find.
- Overcomplicate the migration story.
- Lead with features instead of outcomes.
- Vague case studies without numbers.
- Make buyers chase answers or next steps.

BOFU challenges

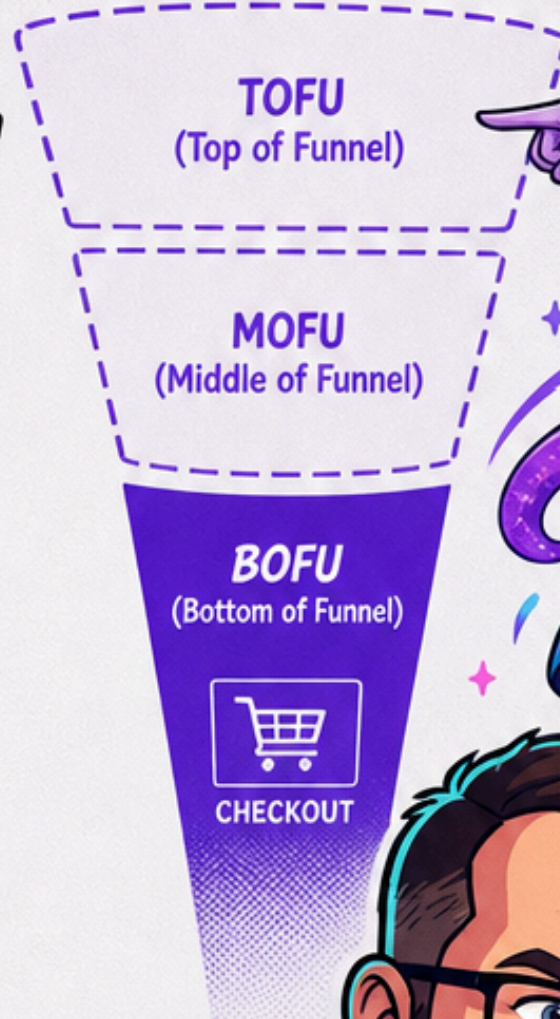
- ✓ Because BOFU feels **closest to revenue**, technical founders often over-invest here and neglect TOFU and MOFU entirely.

The result is a beautifully optimized checkout or demo flow with **nobody entering it**, because the funnel has **no top or middle**.

- ✓ Also, BOFU content without the earlier funnel stages tends to produce **lower-quality leads**, because you're catching buyers who haven't been properly educated.

- ✗ They churn faster.
- ✗ They need more hand-holding.
- ✗ They create support burden.

A PERFECT DEMO FLOW... BUT WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE?



BOFU dos

- ✓ Make pricing transparent and easy to understand. Ambiguity at this stage creates hesitation.
- ✓ Offer proof: testimonials, case studies with numbers, third-party reviews.
- ✓ Make the next step obvious and low-friction. One clear CTA beats three competing ones.
- ✓ Address final objections: migration, security, support, contract terms. Preempt the last-minute doubts.



supramono Features Pricing Resources About

Simple, transparent pricing

Everything you need. No hidden fees. Cancel anytime.

Starter	Most Popular Growth	Scale
\$29 /mo billed monthly	\$79 /mo billed monthly	\$149 /mo billed monthly
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Core features✓ Up to 5 users✓ Email support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ All Starter features✓ Up to 25 users✓ Priority support✓ Advanced analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ All Growth features✓ Unlimited users✓ Dedicated support✓ Custom integrations

★★★★★
"Supramono helped us ship faster and scale with confidence."
- CTO, Fintech Startup

+230%
Increase in user activation after 60 days

4.9/5
Rated on G2 from 120+ reviews

Trusted by teams at
Finspire
DataPeak
Nimblilio

Start Your Free Trial
No credit card required

BOFU

don'ts

✘ **Don't make the prospect do unnecessary work.**

Long forms, complicated signup flows, and hard-to-find pricing pages kill deals you already won.

✘ **Don't skip the human element for high-value buyers.**

Some decisions need a conversation, not another automated email.



THE ENGINEER'S DEFAULT PROBLEM: BOTTOM-FUNNEL BRAIN

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENS IN THE MIND OF A TECHNICAL FOUNDER BUILDING THEIR FIRST MARKETING STRATEGY.



TOFU

AWARENESS / PROBLEM UNRECOGNIZED

- They don't know what your product category is called.
- They might not even know their problem has a name.
- Frame the problem.
- Build awareness.
- Earn attention.

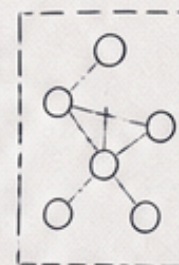


MOFU

CONSIDERATION / PROBLEM RECOGNIZED

- They know the problem.
- Exploring approaches.
- Evaluating options.

COMPARISON		
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	
✓		



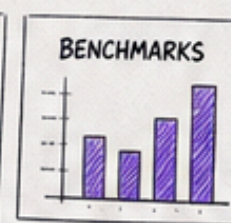
MOST CONTENT LIVES DOWN HERE.

BOFU

DECISION / READY TO BUY

- Comparing solutions.
- Validating choice.
- Justifying decision.

SPECS
p99 latency 0.8ms
Throughput 150k/s ✓



FEATURE COMPARISON		
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓

BUT FEW BUYERS START HERE.

WHY ENGINEERS DEFAULT TO BOTTOM-FUNNEL

1 TRAINED FOR PRECISION

Engineers communicate with specifics. Marketing with that precision becomes inaccessible to most.



2 PROJECTING OUR OWN BUYING PROCESS

We want the deep dive, so we assume buyers do too. They don't—not yet.



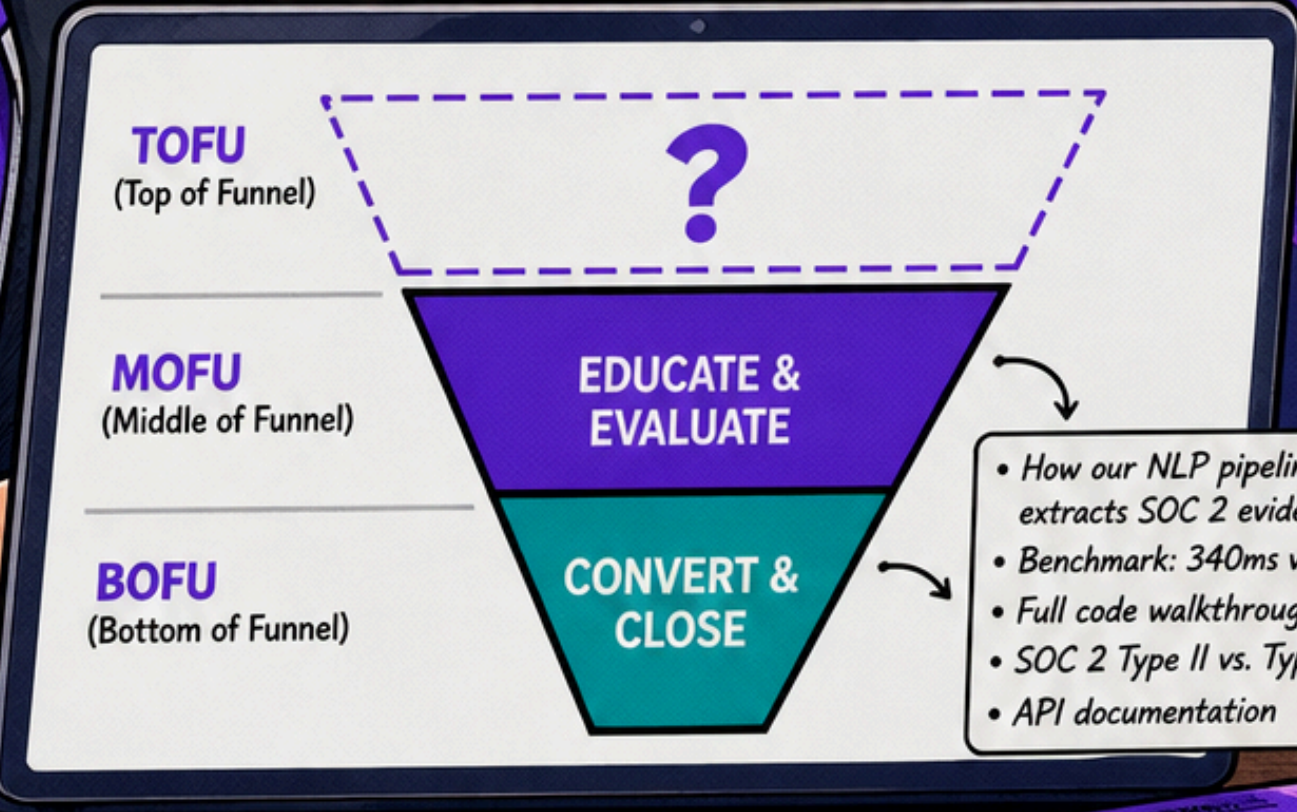
3 TOFU FEELS LIKE CLICKBAIT

It feels fake. But it's what gets the click. Whitepapers convert later.

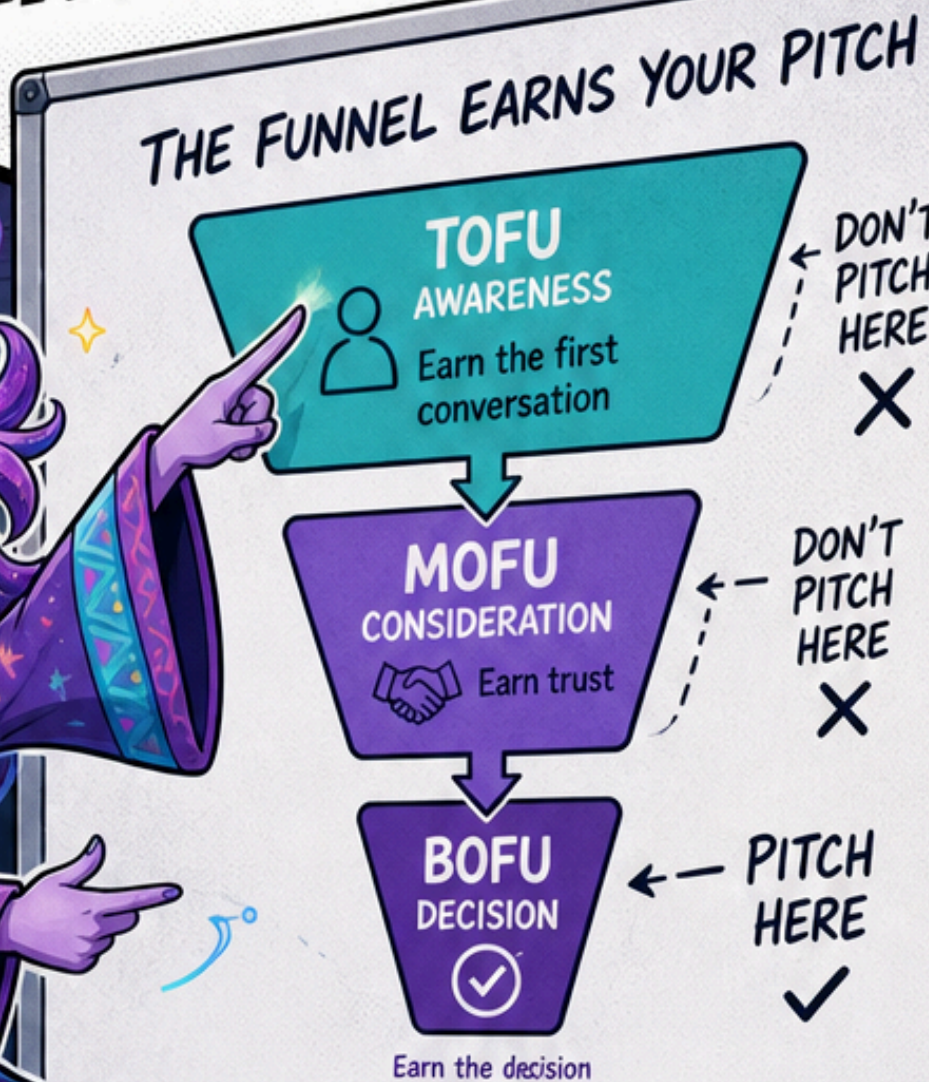


THIS ISN'T A FAILURE OF THEIR INTELLIGENCE.
IT'S A FAILURE OF FUNNEL STAGE MATCHING.

**THE PROBLEM:
YOUR CONTENT DOESN'T
MATCH YOUR BUYER'S
JOURNEY.**



STAGE MISMATCH IS A GTM FAILURE, NOT A CONTENT FAILURE



⚠️ SKIP THE FIRST TWO STAGES AND YOU'RE ALWAYS PITCHING INTO A ROOM THAT ISN'T READY TO HEAR YOU.

- FOUNDERS DIAGNOSE THIS AS A WRITING QUALITY PROBLEM. "OUR CONTENT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH."
- THEY HIRE A COPYWRITER, SHARPEN THE HEADLINES, IMPROVE THE SEO.
- AND STILL DON'T SEE TRACTION.
- THE CONTENT WAS FINE. THE STAGE WAS WRONG.

BOFU EMAIL CAMPAIGN

To: ❄️ COLD LEADS

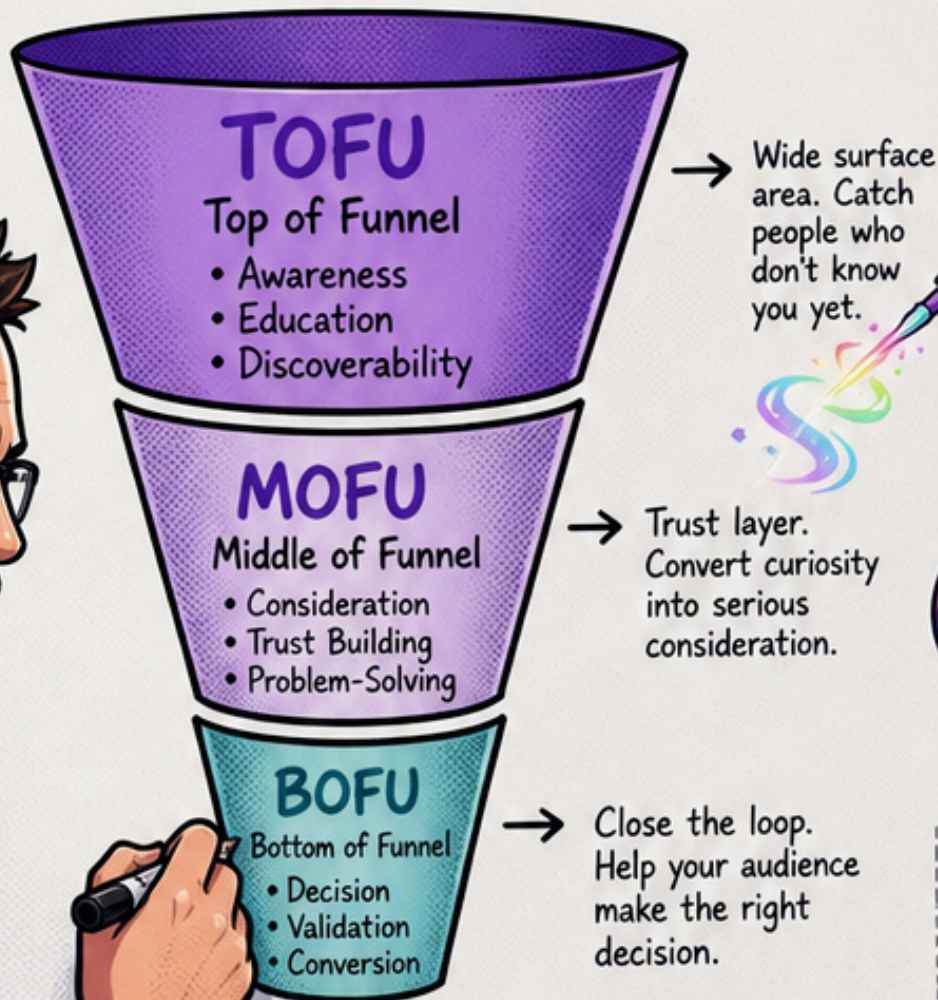
Which option works best for you?

⚠️ NO REPLIES

Day	Replies
DAY 1	0
DAY 3	0
DAY 7	0
DAY 14	0



BUILDING A FULL-FUNNEL CONTENT STRATEGY AS A SOLO FOUNDER



ALL THREE. TOGETHER.

Stronger structural foundation for consistent pipeline growth – not random traffic spikes.

SOLO FOUNDER STRATEGIES



Work with a content strategist



Build a freelancer network



Maintain a disciplined editorial calendar



Use AI-assisted tools as a force multiplier

THE STRATEGIC LAYER, YOU OWN.
THE EXECUTION LAYER, YOU LEVERAGE.



AI AGENTS

Content engine accelerates drafts and outlines at every stage.



HUMAN JUDGMENT

Strategic judgment, factual accuracy, brand voice.



The Short Version

(If You Read Nothing Else)



Engineers default to bottom-funnel because they know their product intimately and speak in the language of **decisions, not discovery.**



Most of their market hasn't arrived at **the decision stage yet.**



In our experience working with technical founders, one of the most frequently overlooked GTM failures isn't bad content — it's good content delivered at the **wrong awareness stage.**

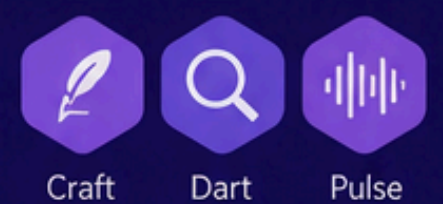


Fix the stage match before you optimize anything else.



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Supramono's AI agents — including **Craft** (content writer), **Dart** (researcher), and **Pulse** (social amplifier) — are designed to help produce stage-appropriate content across your full funnel, reducing the per-piece effort while you retain oversight of strategy, accuracy, and voice.



If you're a solo founder who wants a content engine that understands buyer awareness stages, not just content formats, **start with Supramono.**

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Discover. Build. Sell. One AI
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<https://supramono.com>

