

Validating Product Ideas

Avoiding the "Just Build It" Trap



Make sure you have unmuted your sound and set your volume level

Support@TheScrumMaster.co.uk

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00:30

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Webinar Guidelines

- 1 This is a 30-minute webinar.
- 2 Your microphones will be muted throughout.
- 3 Use the question button to type questions at any time
- 4 We will answer as many questions as possible at the end.
- 5 The video and slides will be available for download tomorrow.





SIMON KNEAFSEY

About Simon Kneafsey

- Founder of TheScrumMaster.co.uk.
- Scrum.org Professional Scrum Trainer.
- On a mission to simplify Scrum & Agile.
- I have taught 25,000 people.
- Clients include Google, NASA, the United Nations, Amazon, Toyota and Microsoft.

The Metro Squirrel

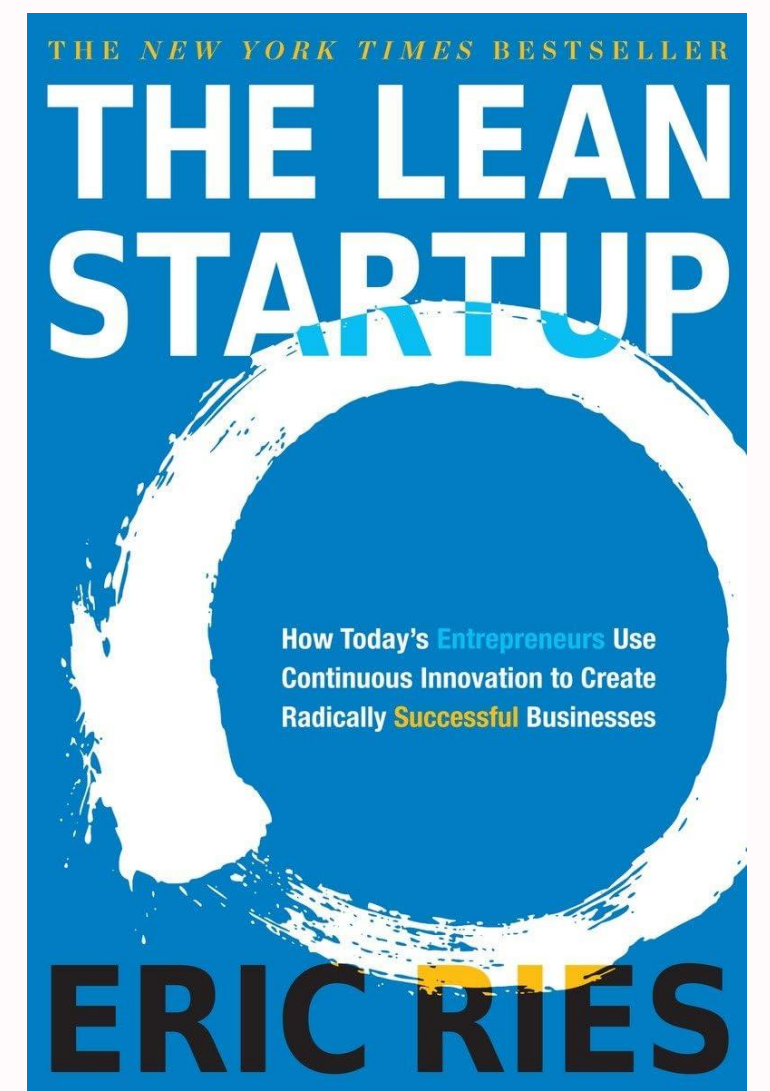


Questions For You

- Have you been involved in creating a product or feature that did not get the anticipated usage? (Be honest 😊)
 - Add "Yes" or "No" to the chat.
- Who decided to build that product or feature?
 - Add an anonymised answer in the chat.
E.g. me, my boss, a Product Manager, a customer ...

“All ideas are hypotheses until customers validate them by ... using the resulting products or services.”

- Eric Reis. The Lean Startup.



UK Online Safety Act 2023

- Regulates online content to protect users.
- Applies to all online businesses with UK users.
- Mandates risk assessments and age verification.
- Penalties for non-compliance of up to £18M



UK
Parliament

Parliamentary Bills

[UK Parliament](#) > [Business](#) > [Legislation](#) > [Parliamentary Bills](#) > Online Safety Act 2023

Online Safety Act 2023

Government Bill

Originated in the House of Commons, Sessions 2021-22, 2022-23



The Problem



- Small businesses face challenges in gaining and maintaining compliance.
- Risk assessments required immediately.
- Compliance is time-consuming.
- Mistakes could lead to investigations and fines.



The Solution



“The UK Online Safety Act introduces legal responsibilities for online businesses. Organisations failing to meet these duties can face fines of up to £18 million or 10% of their annual turnover. To prevent such penalties, all businesses supplying online services to UK users must conduct a risk assessment.

OnlineSafetyAct.uk will remove this risk for your small business. We will carry out the risk assessment, advise on any required actions, and document the result to ensure you fully comply with the legislation.”



The Product OnlineSafetyAct.uk

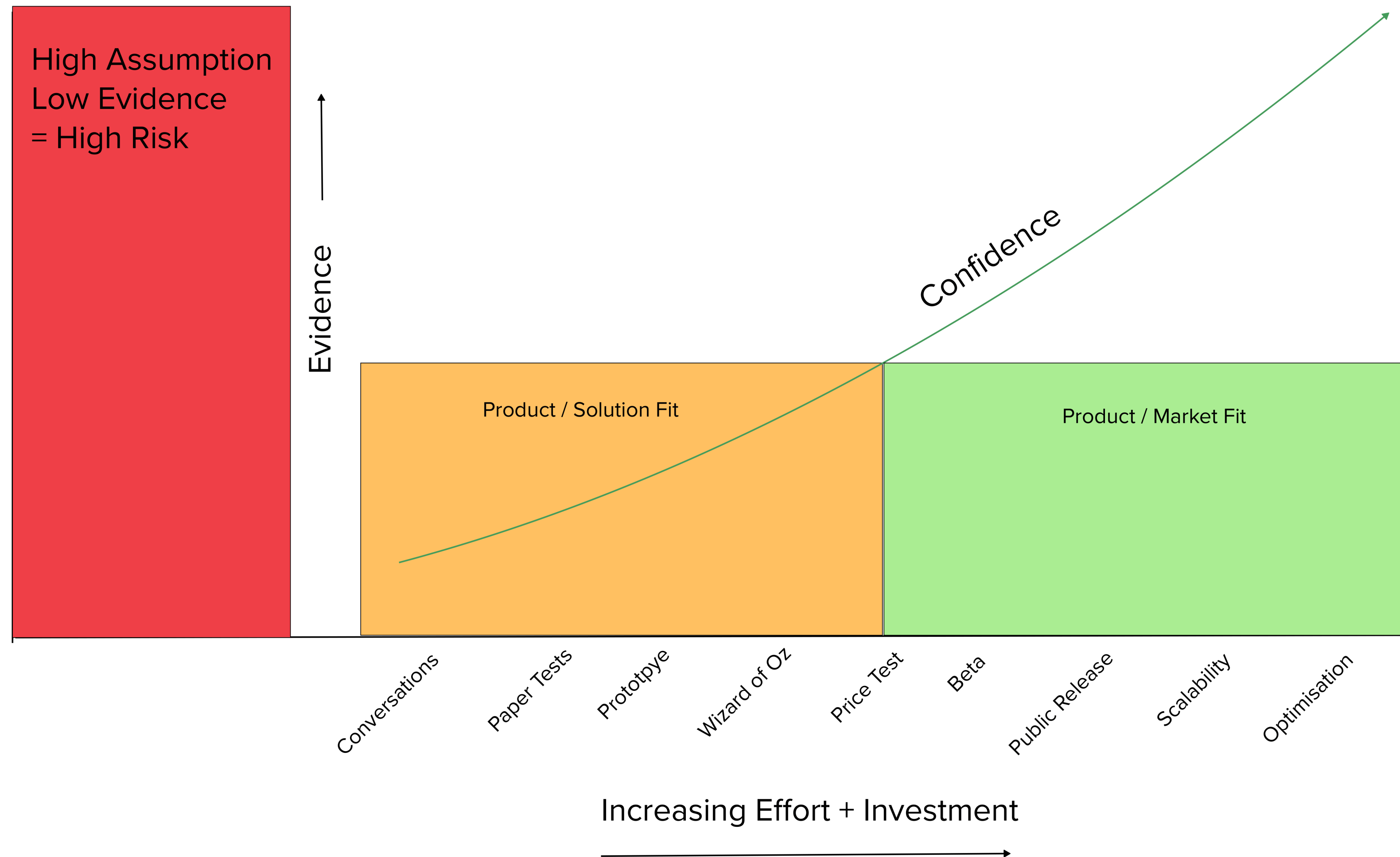
- Four weeks work to create a beta product.
- Build a PHP website to collect data via a form plugin.
- Write a Python script to assess compliance and generate reports.

- **RISK – Do others share the problem, and will they pay for a solution?**
- Use the **Truth Curve** to validate assumptions.

```
1 # checking response.status_code (if you get 502, try rerunning the code)
2 if response.status_code != 200:
3     print(f"Status: {response.status_code} - Try rerunning the code")
4 else:
5     print(f"Status: {response.status_code}\n")
6
7 # using BeautifulSoup to parse the response object
8 soup = BeautifulSoup(response.content, "html.parser")
9
10 # finding Post images in the soup
11 images = soup.find_all("img", attrs={"alt": "Post image"})
12
13 # downloading images
14 for i, image in enumerate(images):
15     # download from the website
```

The Truth Curve

The Truth Curve

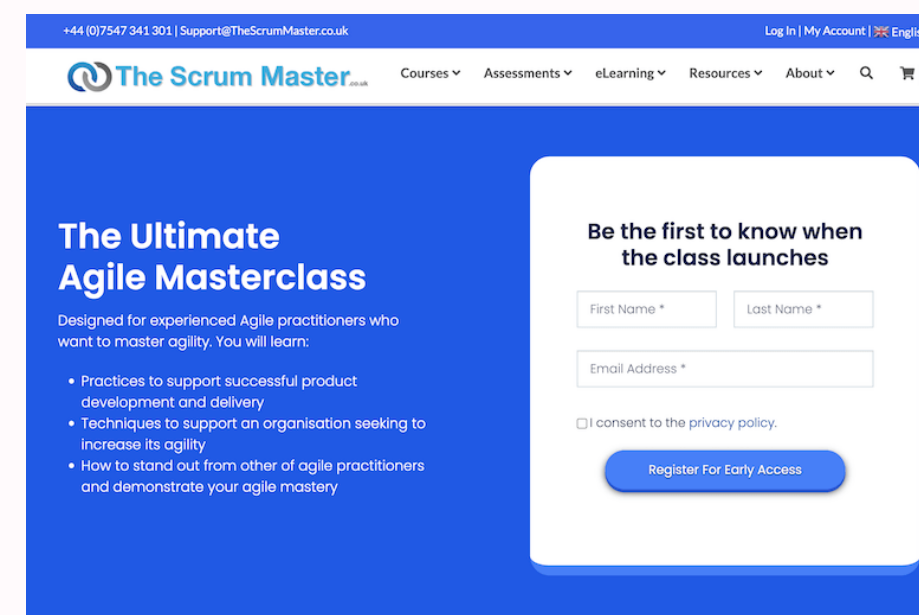


The Truth Curve, detailed by Giff Constable in his book Talking to Humans,



Experiment Types

- **Interviews** – Gather direct user insights
- **Pre-Order / Landing Pages** – Measure demand
- **Feature Fakes** – Validate feature demand
- **Concierge MVP** – Manually deliver a service
- **Wizard of Oz** – Simulate automation with human input



Hypothesis Prioritisation

Hypothesis Prioritization Canvas

Project Name:

Date:

Iteration:

Ship & Measure

The level of confidence is high about these hypotheses. Combined with a strong belief they will deliver customer and business value, we build, launch and measure them. Don't spend your discovery cycles here.



Low risk

Test

These hypotheses have the promise of a big return but also pose significant risks. These are the hypotheses you should focus your experimentation, learning and discovery activities on.



High risk

Don't test. Usually Don't Build

These hypotheses don't add significant value but are also low risk so don't require discovery efforts. However, sometimes ideas land here that are table stakes for the operation of the business. They won't differentiate you in the market but you need them to be in business (e.g., a payment system).



Discard

These hypotheses provide little value and pose a high level of risk to your business or product. Don't spend any more time on them.

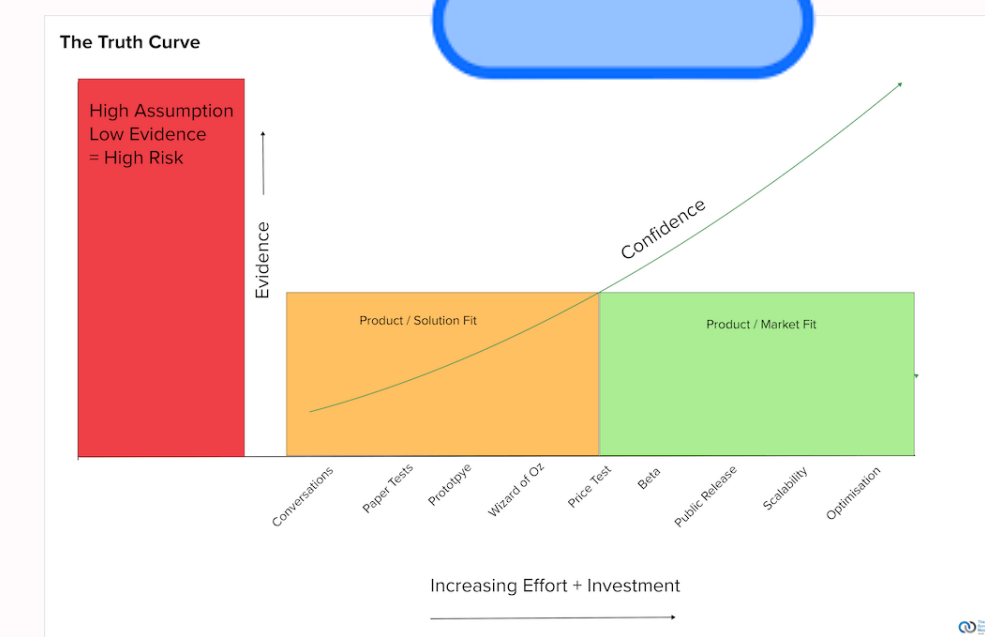


The Experiment



- Designed an experiment to validate the problem and market interest.
- Created a landing page explaining the problem and proposed solution.
- Offered incentive to collect email addresses from potential customers.
- Ran a Google Ads campaign with a 2-week budgeted test.

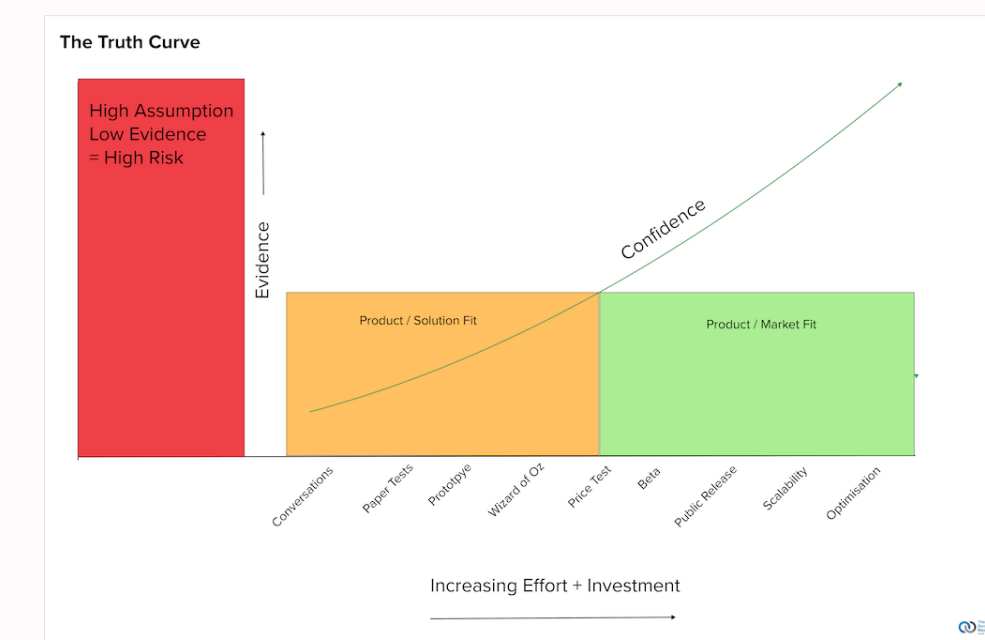
Hypothesis: “*We believe that our service will be desirable to UK small businesses. This will be demonstrated by more than 10 leads from more than 1000 landing page visits.*”



The Result

- Results were disappointing
- Result - 1 spam conversion.
- Conclusion - My great product idea was not so great!
- Avoided wasted effort by validating assumptions before building in full.

RESULTS



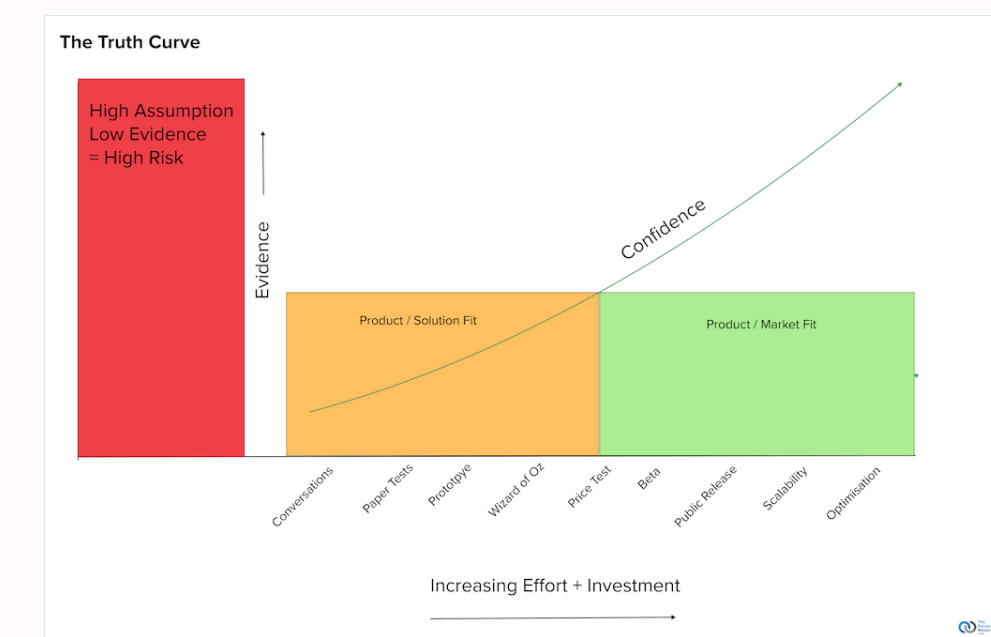


The Benefits

- Saved 4 weeks by not building the product, reducing opportunity cost.
- Used time wisely, adding webinar capability.
- Learned Google Ads, a useful skill for the future.
- Inspired to share lessons through a webinar and writing.

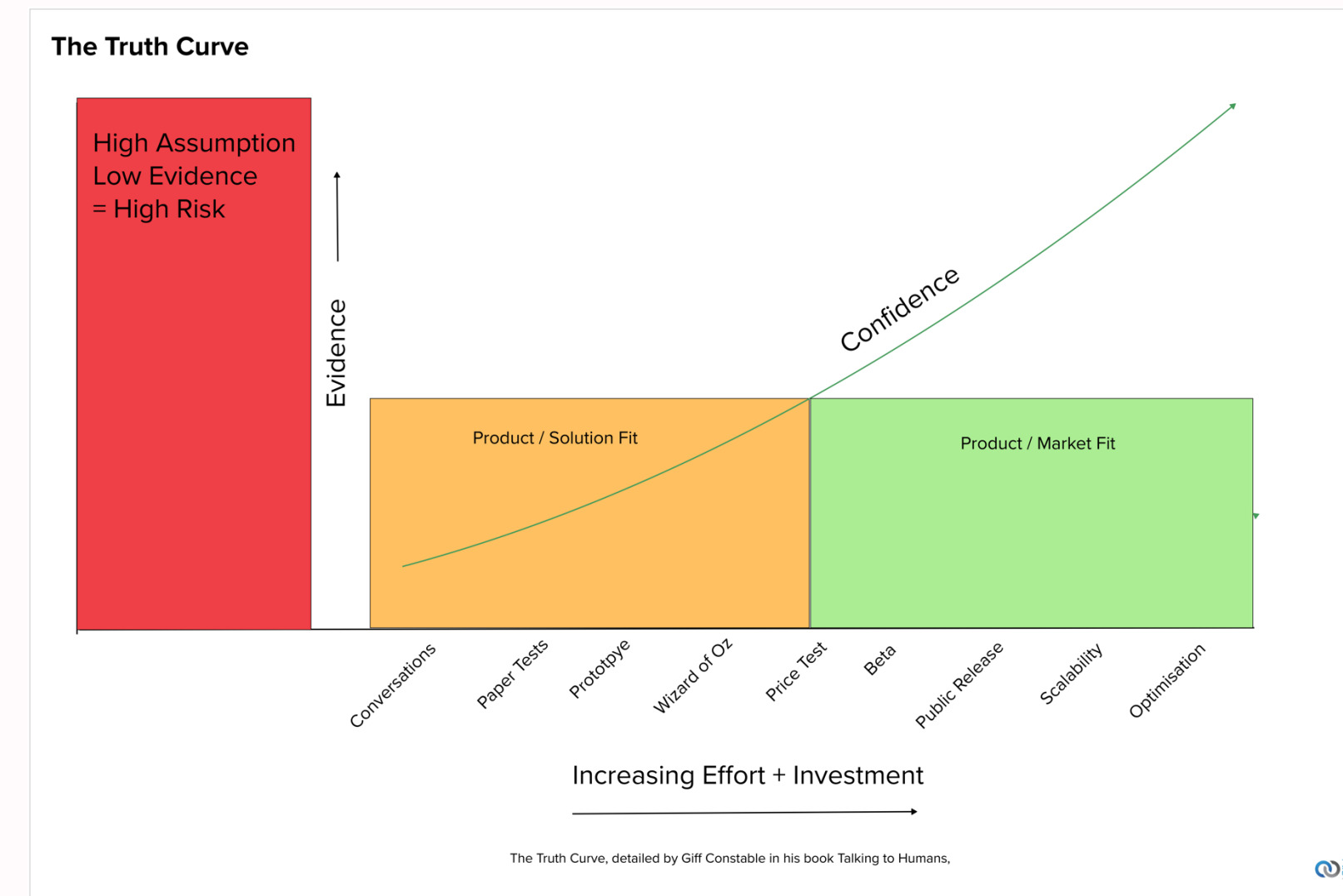
BENEFITS

RESULTS



“Simplicity--the art of maximizing the amount of work not done--is essential.”

- The Agile Manifesto



Q&A



Thank you

To get access to the recorded video, and slide deck, use the URL or QR code

<https://www.thescrummaster.co.uk/webinars>



COMING SOON

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