

THE ARCHITECTURE OF DISINFORMATION

Dan Brown

Information Architecture as an Academic Discipline

June 2026

A Frank Statement to Cigarette Smokers

RECENT REPORTS on experiments with mice have given wide publicity to a theory that cigarette smoking is in some way linked with lung cancer in human beings.

Although conducted by doctors of professional standing, these experiments are not regarded as conclusive in the field of cancer research. However, we do not believe that any serious medical research, even though its results are inconclusive should be disregarded or lightly dismissed.

At the same time, we feel it is in the public interest to call attention to the fact that eminent doctors and research scientists have publicly questioned the claimed significance of these experiments.

Distinguished authorities point out:

1. That medical research of recent years indicates many

For more than 300 years tobacco has given solace, relaxation, and enjoyment to mankind. At one time or another during those years critics have held it responsible for practically every disease of the human body. One by one these charges have been abandoned for lack of evidence.

Regardless of the record of the past, the fact that cigarette smoking today should even be suspected as a cause of a serious disease is a matter of deep concern to us.

Many people have asked us what we are doing to meet the public's concern aroused by the recent reports. Here is the answer:

1. We are pledging aid and assistance to the research effort into all phases of tobacco use and health. This joint financial aid

We believe the products we make are not injurious to health.

We always have and always will cooperate closely with those whose task it is to safeguard the public health.

its research activities.

This statement is being issued because we believe the people are entitled to know where we stand on this matter and what we intend to do about it.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

5400 EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, NEW YORK 1, N. Y.

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UNITED STATES TOBACCO COMPANY
J. W. Peterson, President



Manufacturing uncertainty

attention to the fact that eminent doctors and research scientists have publicly questioned the claimed significance of these experiments.

Distinguished authorities point out:

1. That medical research of recent years indicates many possible causes of lung cancer.

2. That there is no agreement among the authorities regarding what the cause is.

3. That there is no proof that cigarette smoking is one of the causes.

4. That statistics purporting to link cigarette smoking with the disease could apply with equal force to any one of many other aspects of modern life. Indeed the validity of the statistics

1. We are all part of the same human family and we must all contribute to the well-being of the whole.

2. For the common good we must all make sacrifices and give up our individual rights.

3. In character and in spirit we must all be the same and we must all be ready to die for our country.

False or misleading statements by Donald Trump

(first term)

1 language

Article

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For broader coverage of this topic, see [False or misleading statements by Donald Trump](#).

During [his first term](#) as [President of the United States](#), Donald Trump made tens of thousands of [false or misleading claims](#).

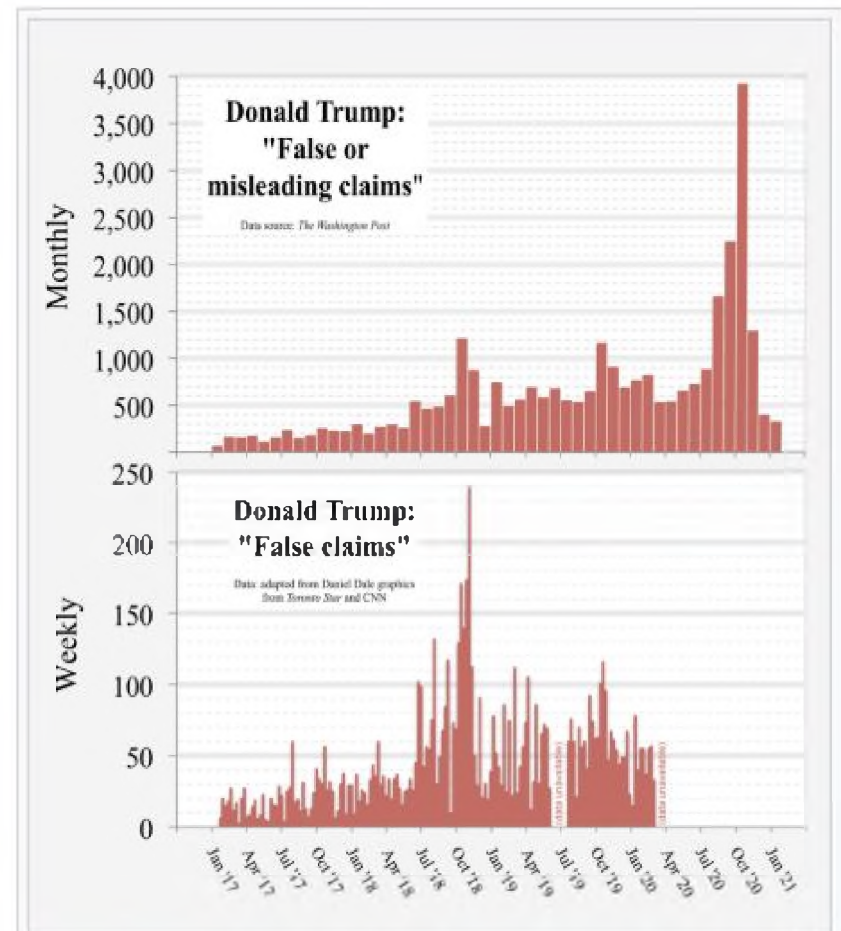
During the first two-and-a-half years (January 2017–June 2019), the *[Toronto Star](#)* tallied 5,276 false claims, an average of six per day.^[2]

Across all four years, [fact-checkers](#) at *[The Washington Post](#)* documented 30,573 false or misleading claims, an average of 21 per day.^[5]

Fact-checking Trump

Trump's statements as president engaged a host of [fact-checkers](#). [Tony Burman](#) wrote: "The falsehoods and distortions uttered by Trump and his senior officials have particularly inflamed journalists and have been challenged—resulting in a growing prominence of 'fact-checkers' and investigative reporting."^[6] The situation got worse, as described by [Pulitzer Prize-winning Ashley Parker](#): "President Trump seems to be saying more and more things that aren't true."^[7]

[Glenn Kessler](#) said in 2017 as a fact-checker for *The Washington Post* there was no comparison between Trump and other politicians. Kessler gave his worst rating to other politicians 20% of the time, but gave it to Trump 64% of the time.^[8] Kessler wrote that Trump was the most fact-challenged politician he had ever encountered and lamented that "the pace and volume of the president's misstatements means that we cannot possibly keep up".^[9] Kessler and others have described how Trump's lying has created an alternate reality.^{[10][11]} [David Zurawik](#) says we should "just assume Trump's always lying and fact check him backwards"^[12] because that's "how to cover a habitual liar".^[13]



Fact-checkers from *[The Washington Post](#)*^[1] (top, monthly), the *[Toronto Star](#)*^[2] and [CNN](#)^{[3][4]} (bottom, weekly) compiled data on "false or misleading claims" and "false claims", respectively. The peaks corresponded in late 2018 to [the midterm elections](#), in late 2019 to his [impeachment inquiry](#), and in late 2020 to the presidential election. The *Post* reported 30,573 false or misleading claims in four years,^[1] an average of more than 20.9 per day.



This article is part of a series about Donald Trump

False or misleading statements by Donald Trump (first term)

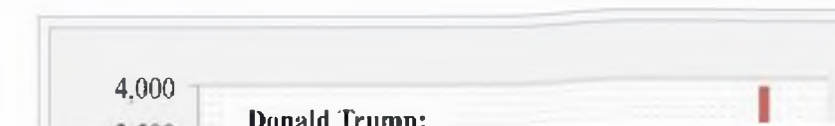
1 language

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For broader coverage of this topic, see *False or misleading statements by Donald Trump*.

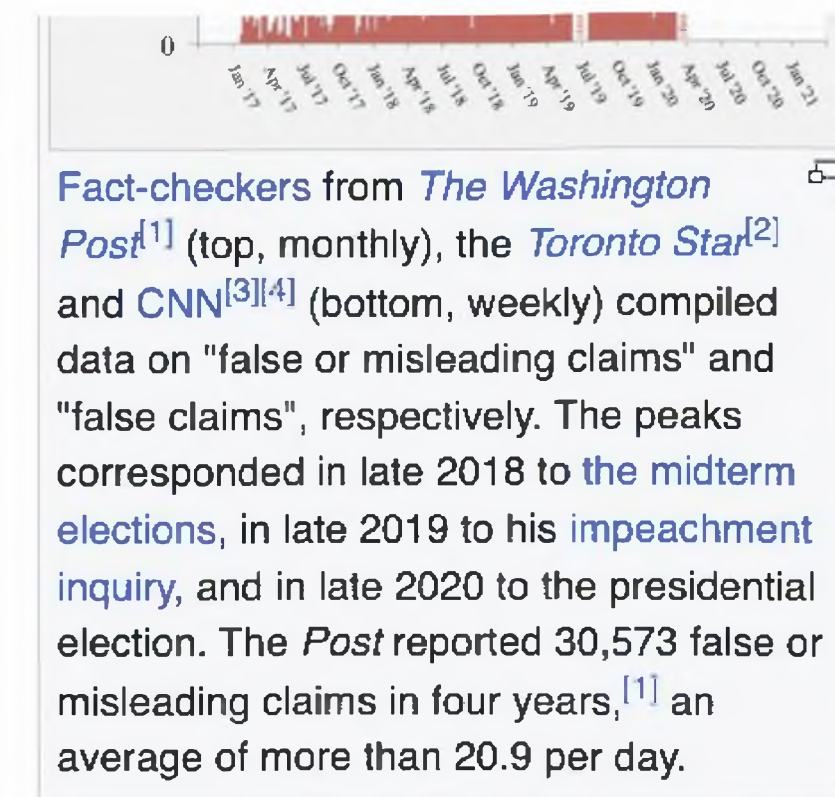
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30,573

false or misleading claims

in his first term





226
Kamala Harris
Democrat

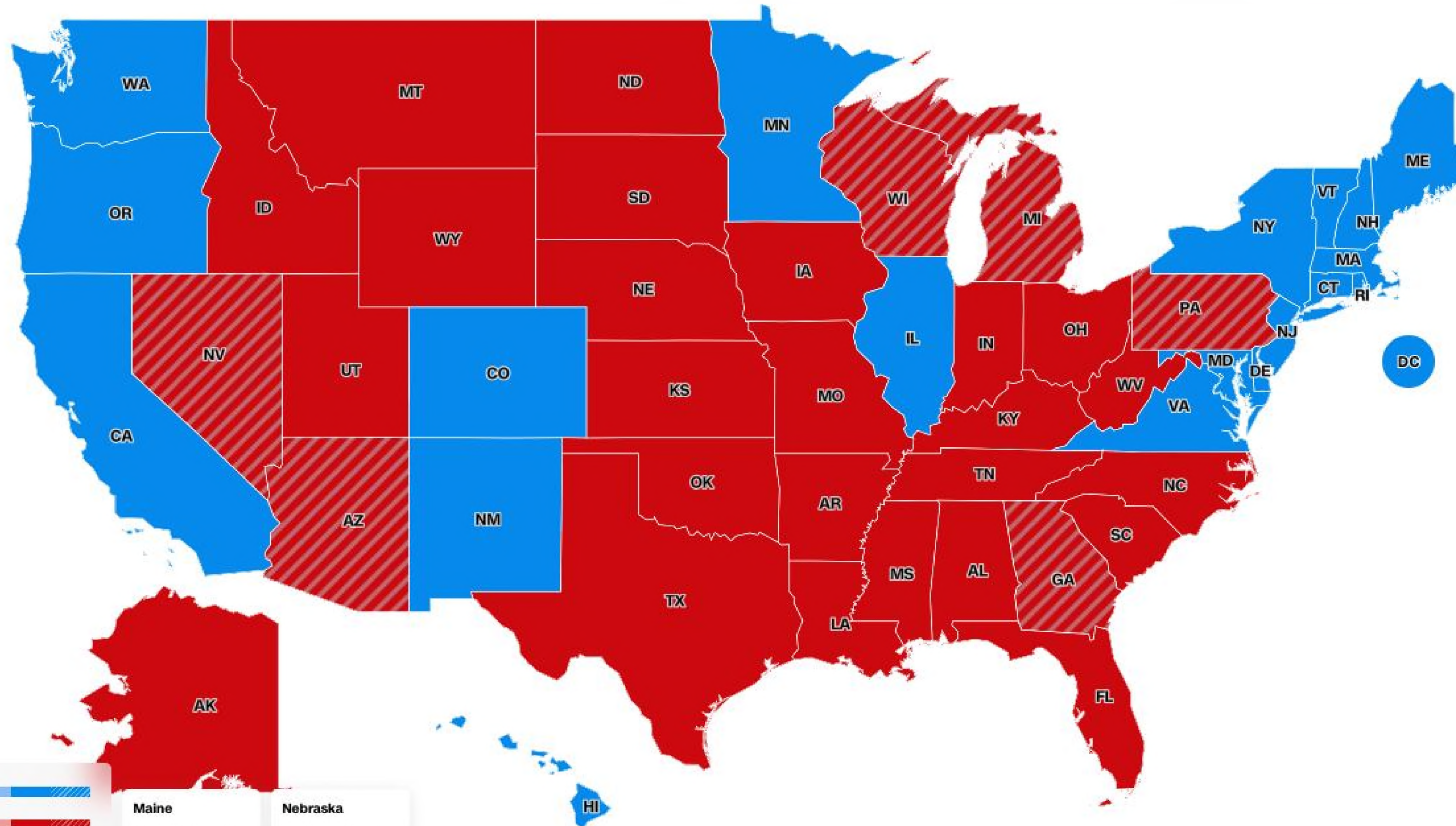


312
Donald Trump
Republican

270 to win

48.3% of popular vote
(75,017,613 votes)

49.8% of popular vote
(77,302,580 votes)



Harris
Trump
Lead Win Flip

Maine
4 Electoral Votes
Harris 3 Trump 1

Nebraska
5 Electoral Votes
Trump 4 Harris 1

POLITICS

Trump lashes out at Biden, DEI efforts after D.C. plane crash

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Kevin Breuninger
@KEVINWILLIAMS

WATCH LIVE

Runway 1

Runway

DAT25

Trump Blames D.E.I. and Biden for Crash Under His Watch

Trump launched air controller diversity program that he now decries

At news conference, Trump read a list of disabilities he calls disqualifying, but his administration started such hiring in 2019

Flight 5342

2,000 ft

Generative AI will cure cancer...
... and will wipe out humanity.



How can I help?



UNCHECKED

The architecture of
disinformation



Dan Brown
Rachel Price



Misinformation and disinformation thrive in today's technology landscape, and arguably present the greatest threat to modern society. Information...
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Episodes

🔍 Search episode title and guests



Episode 13: Disinformation and gun culture, with JJ Janflone

CONTENT WARNINGThis episode of Unchecked deals with the sensitive topic of gun violence.
SYNOPSISJJ Janflone, who works on culture change and narrative strategy at Brady: United Against Gun Violence, joins Rach...

May 02, 2026 • Season 1 • Episode 13 • 57:09



Episode 12: Disinformation and community moderation, with Karen McGrane

SynopsisKaren McGrane joins Rachel and Dan to explain Reddit from the perspective of a moderator. Reddit is the largest message board on the internet, with thousands of "sub-Reddits" – individual communities based on a topic. Kare...

March 31, 2026 • Season 1 • Episode 12 • 52:14



Episode 11: Disinformation and abortion, with Dr. Ushma Upadhyay

SYNOPSISSpeaking to Dr. Ushma Upadhyay, Rachel and Dan dig into misinformation about abortion – who gets them, why they get them, and how they get them. You may be surprised by some of the answers. Dr. Upadhyay describes her research aro...

February 14, 2026 • Season 1 • Episode 11 • 1:00:45



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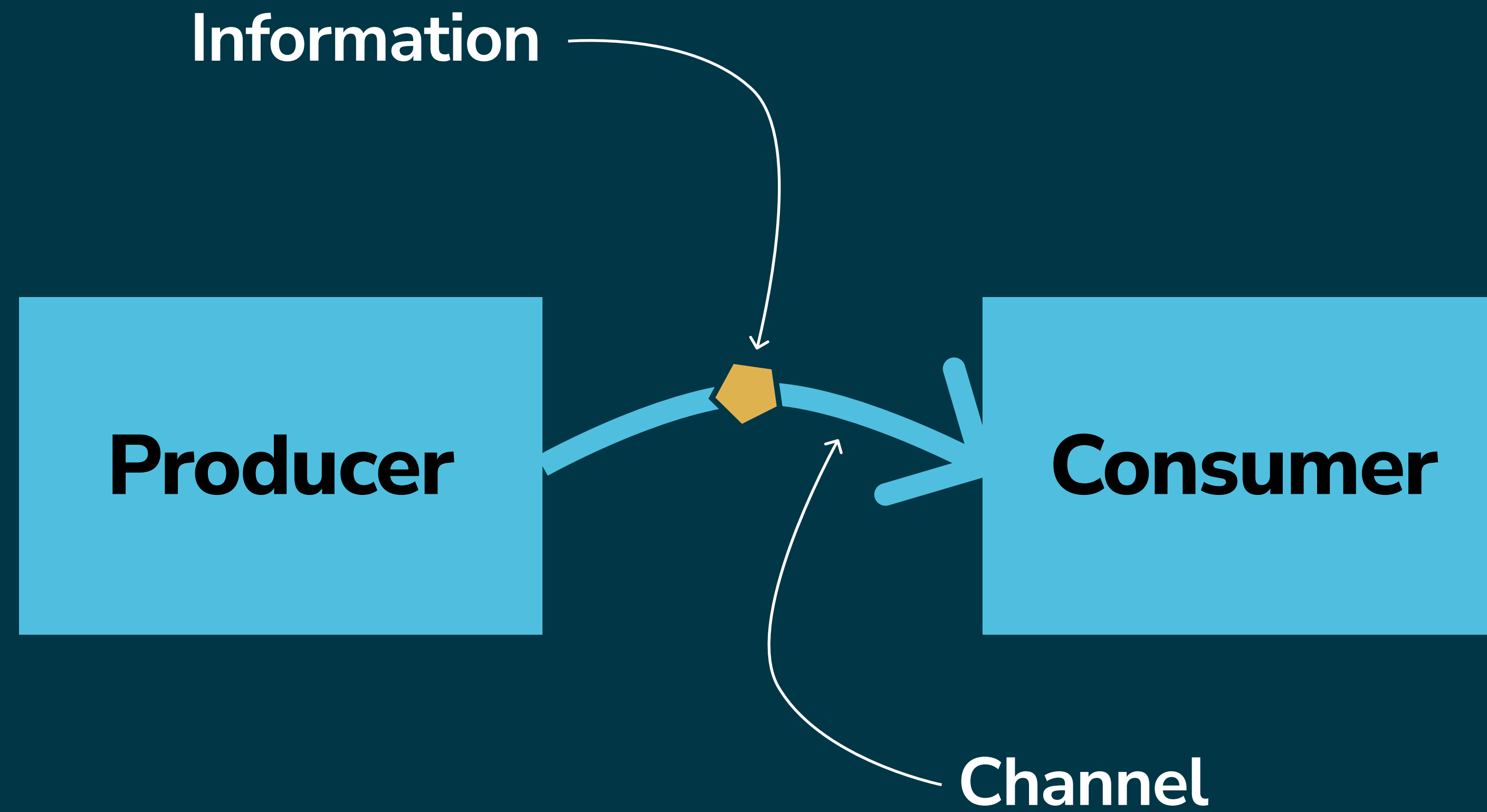
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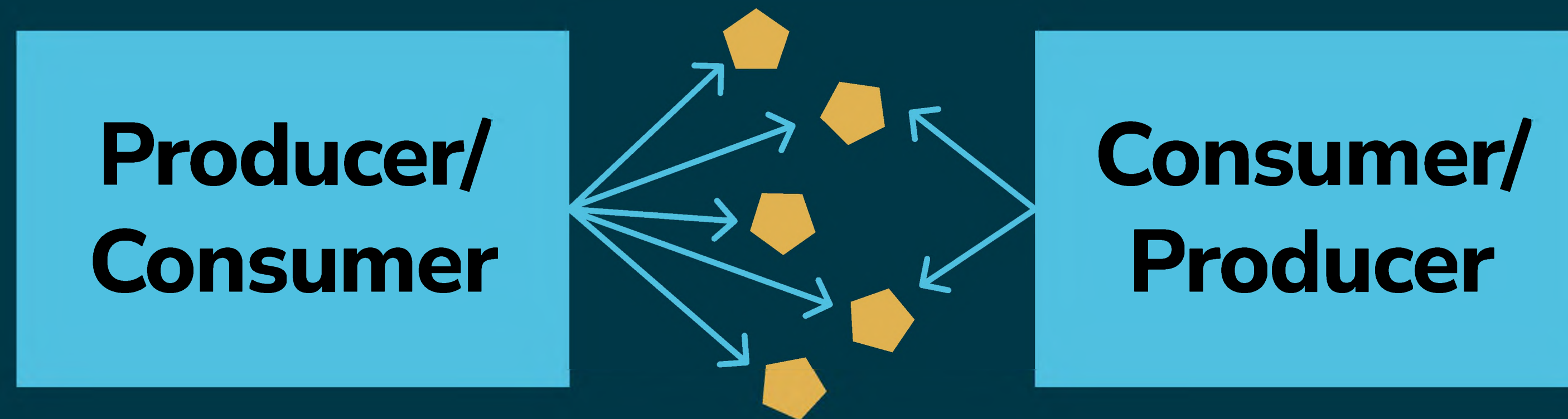


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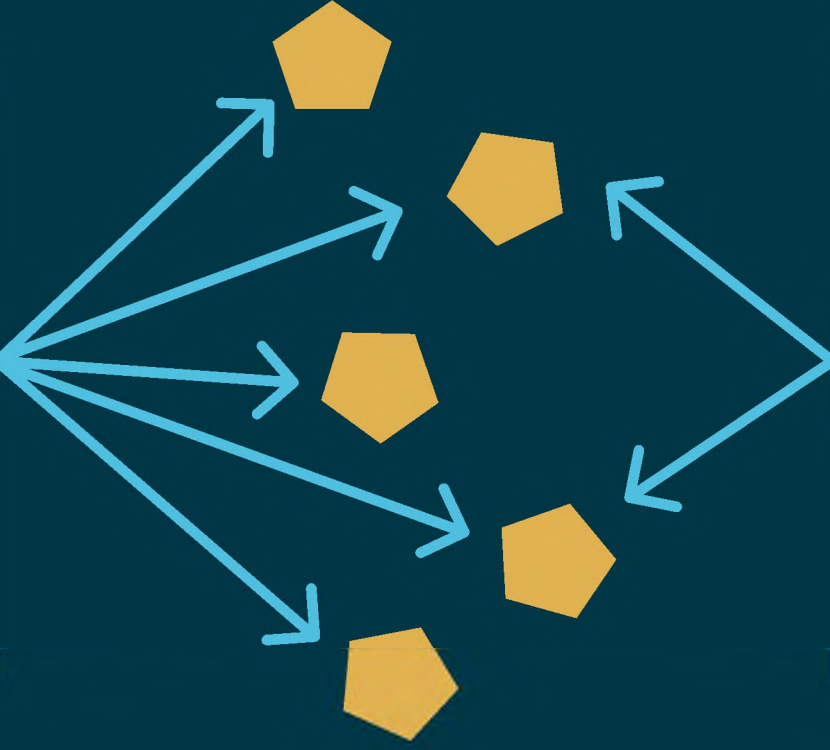


**Consumer/
Producer**

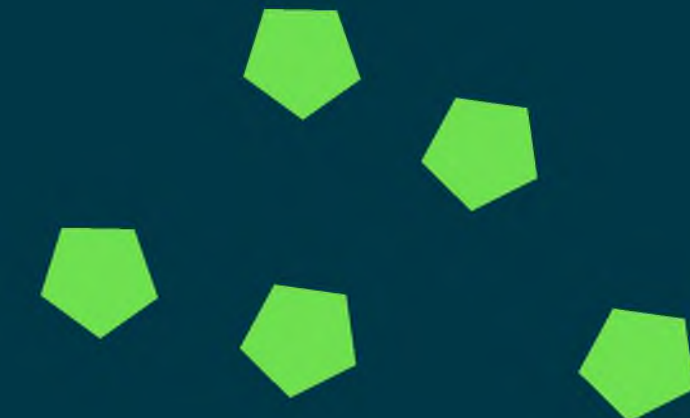




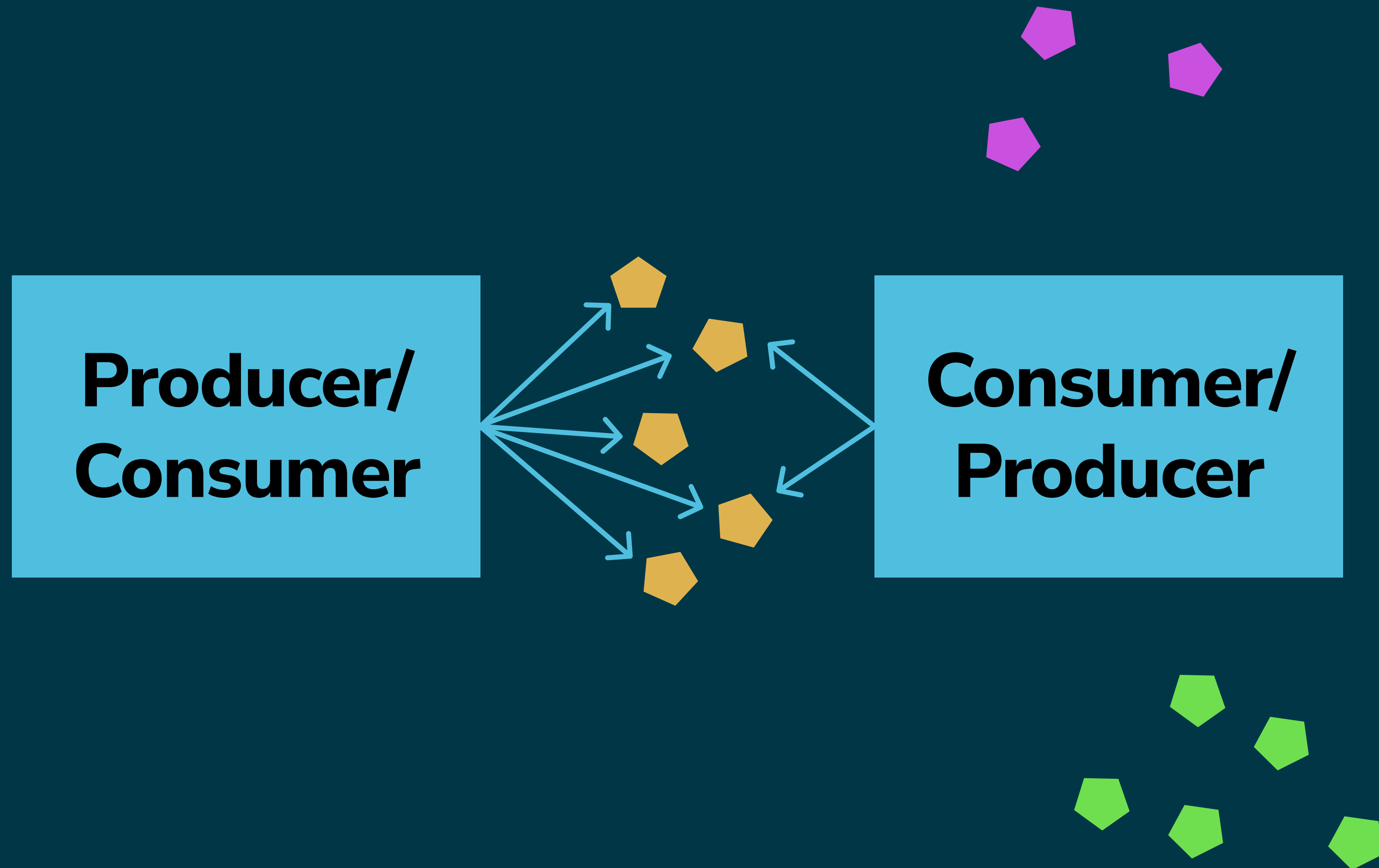
**Producer/
Consumer**



**Consumer/
Producer**



Ecosystem



misinformation (n.)

Falsehoods, lies, misunderstandings

disinformation (n.)

Intentional manipulation of information ecosystem to further agenda



Speculation Distraction Identity Framing Enragement

POLITICS

Trump lashes out at Biden, DEI efforts after D.C. plane crash

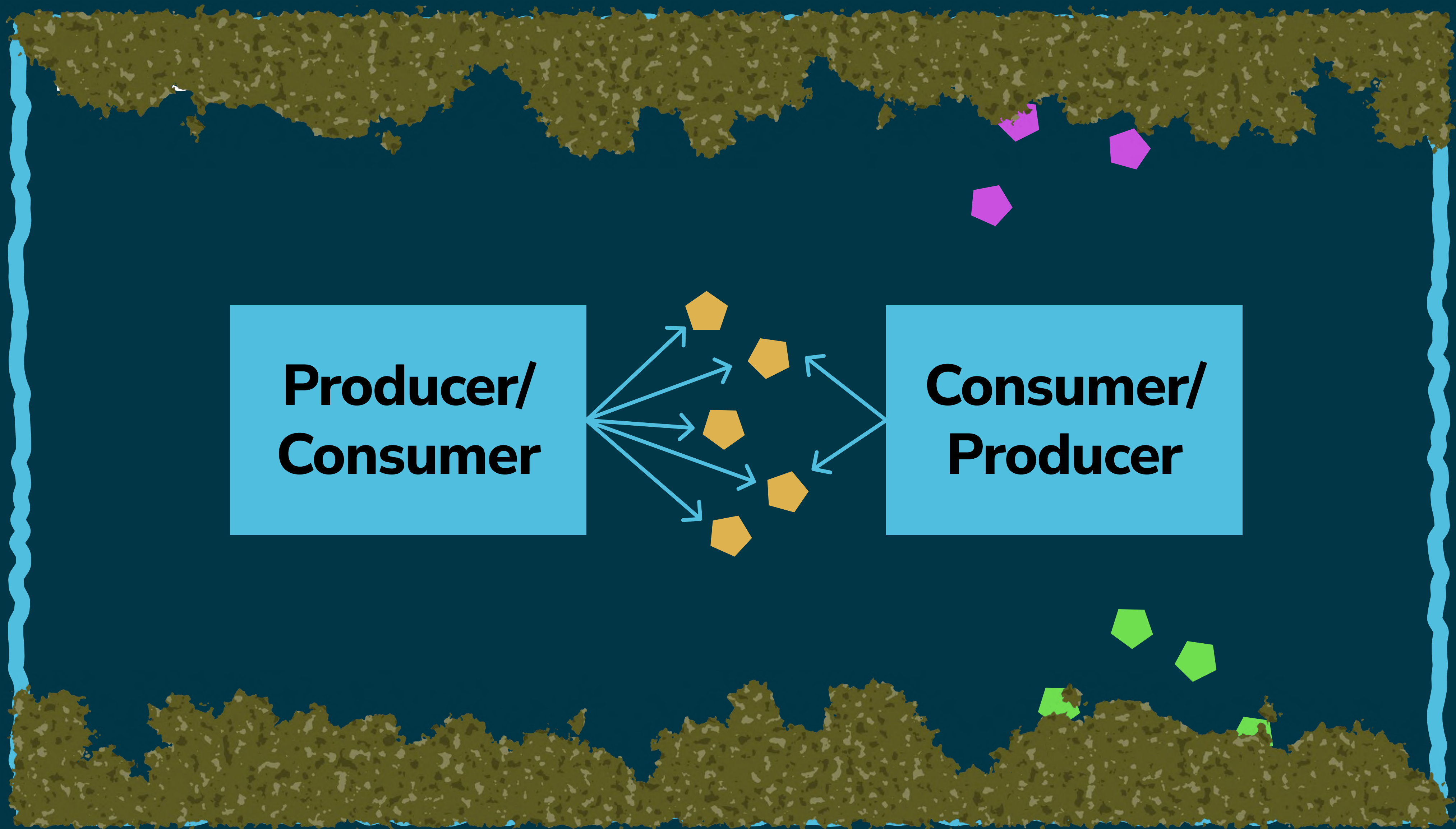
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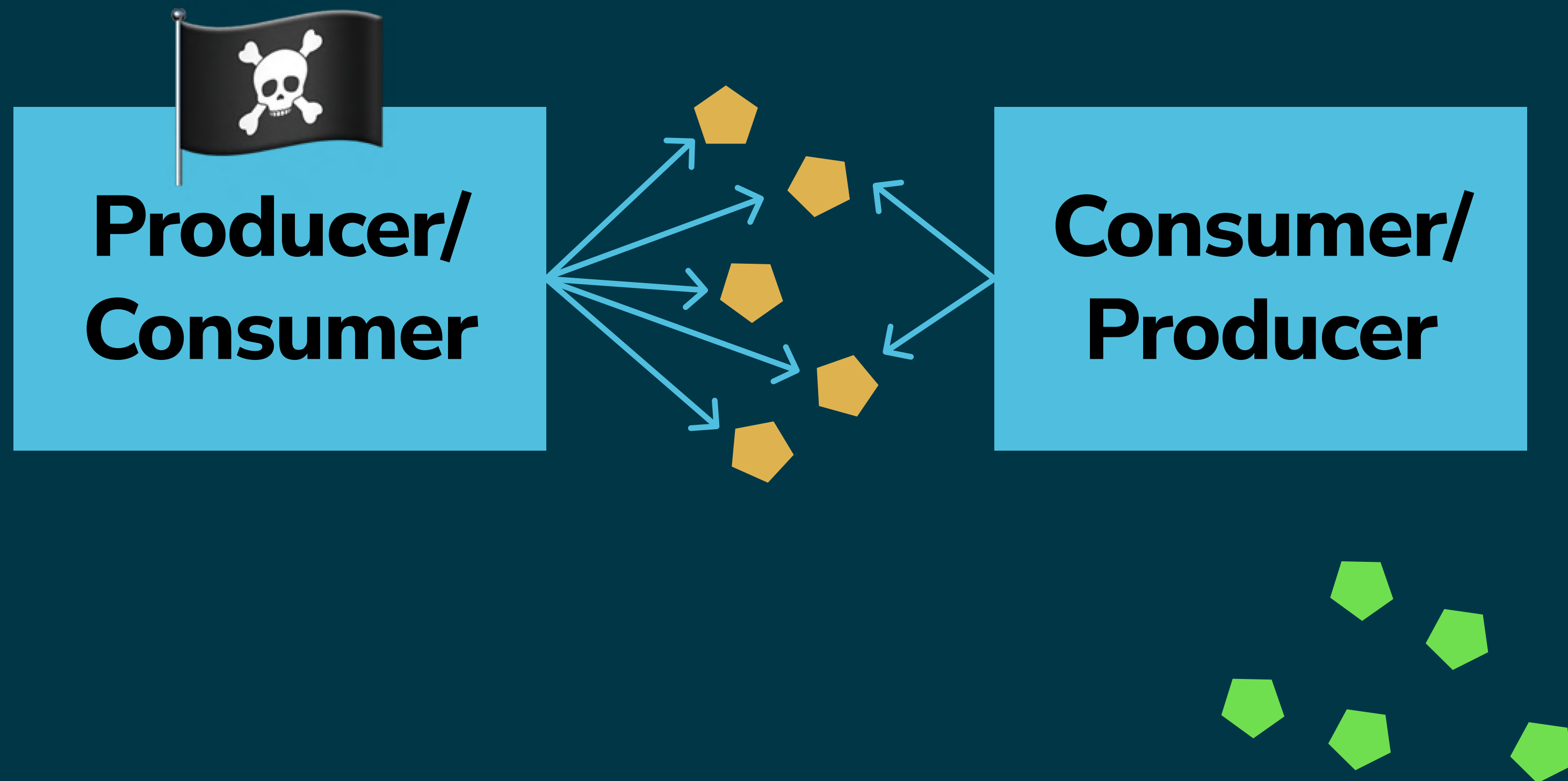
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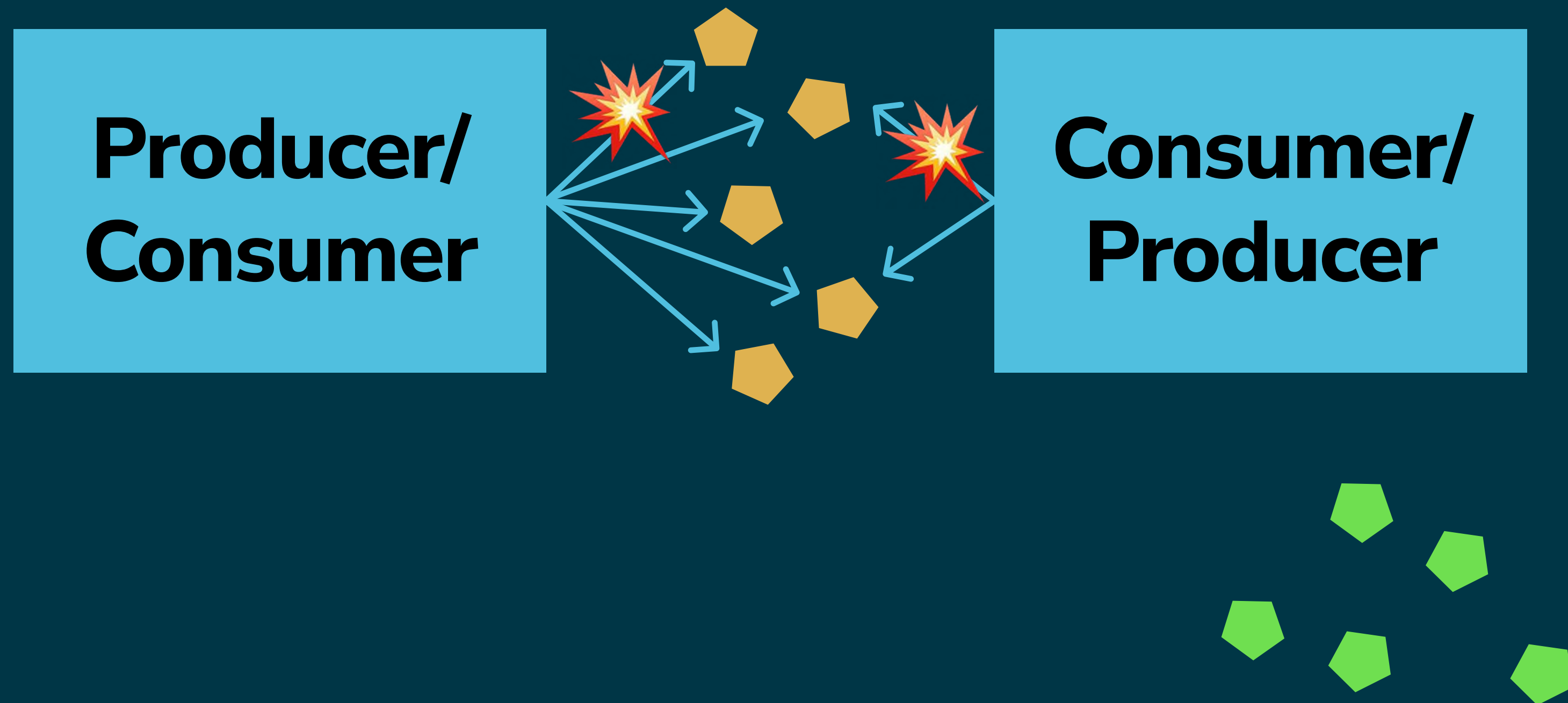




Ecosystem

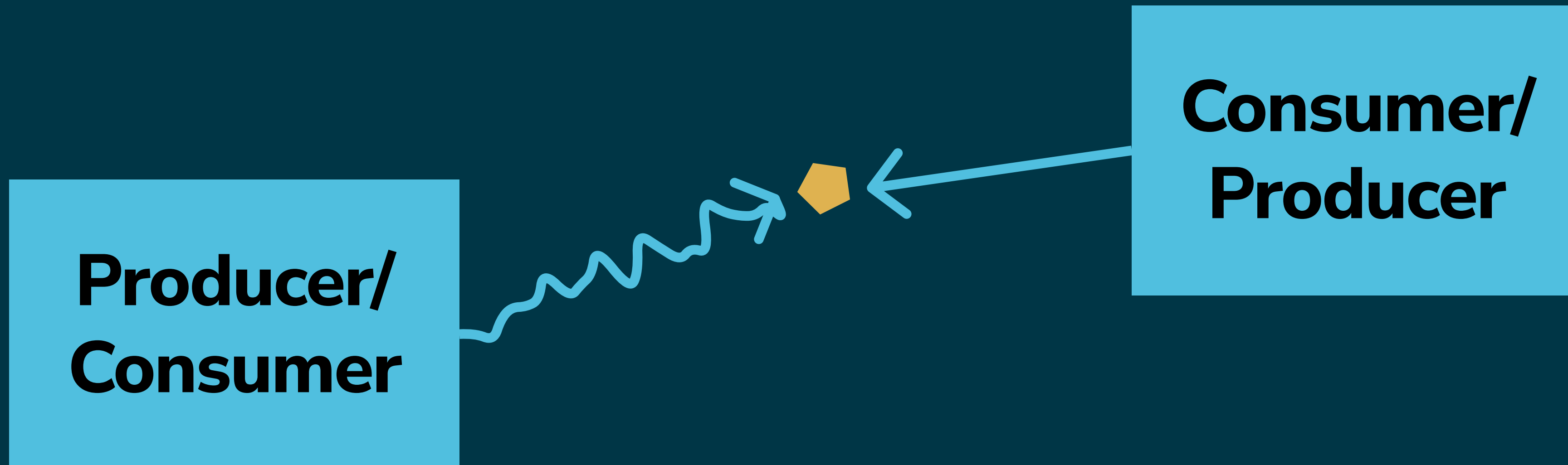


Ecosystem



Ecosystem

Lack of accountability



Section 230

Article [Talk](#)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

In the United States, **Section 230** is a section of the [Communications Act of 1934](#) that was enacted as part of the [Communications Decency Act of 1996](#), which is Title V of the [Telecommunications Act of 1996](#), and generally **provides immunity for online computer services with respect to third-party content generated by their users.**

At its core, Section 230(c)(1) provides immunity from liability for providers and users of an "interactive computer service" who publish information provided by third-party users:

No provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider.

— Section 230 of the [Communications Act of 1934](#) (47 U.S.C. § 230), as added [Pub. L. 104–104, title V, § 509](#)

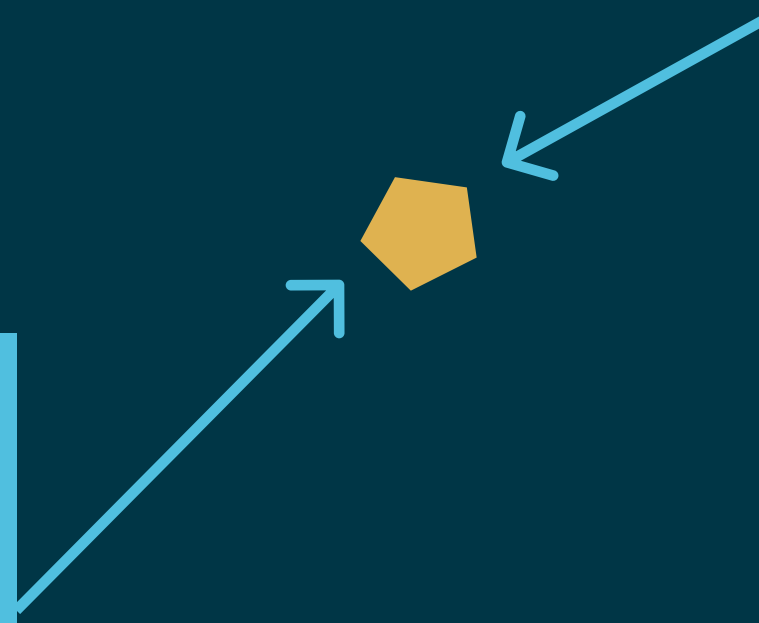
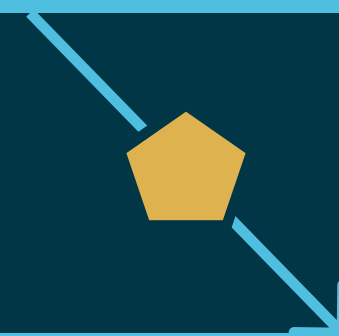
Ecosystem

Lack of accountability

Producer

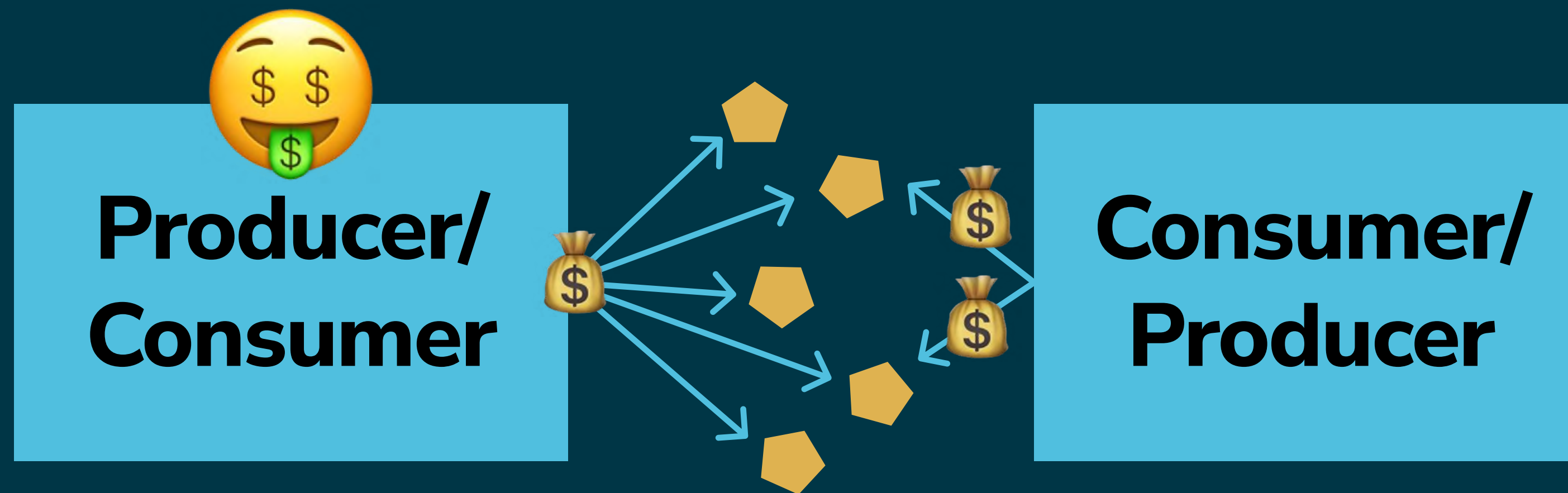
**Consumer/
Producer**

Algorithm



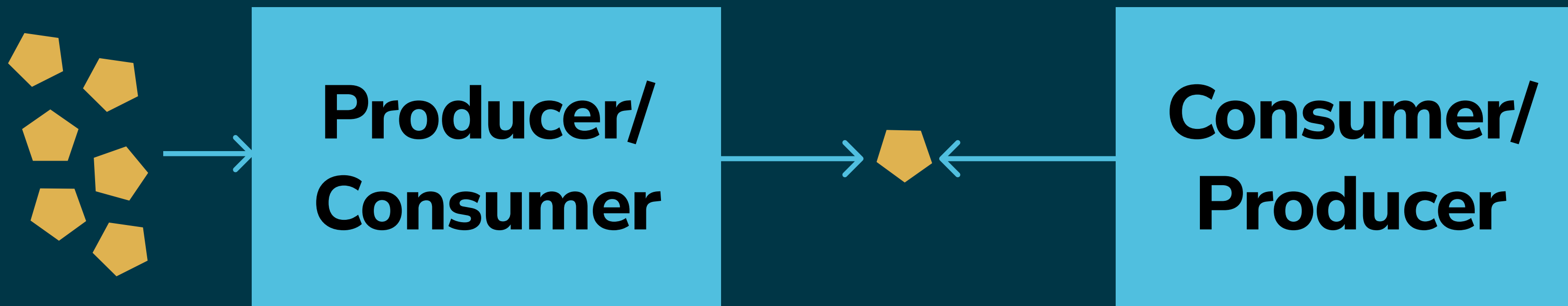
Ecosystem

Incorrect incentives



Ecosystem

Insufficient resources





ARTICLE SEP 10, 2024

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Must Be Adequately Funded To Preserve Economic Data and Improve Americans' Financial Security

Accurate U.S. Census Bureau data are essential to understanding how Americans are doing financially; a lack of proper investment puts it at risk.

AUTHORS



Kyle Ross



Sara Estep

[Building an Economy for All](#), [Biden Administration](#), [Census](#), [+3 More](#)



Stay informed on Economic Policy

Unfortunately, funding constraints at the BLS could soon require a cut to the sample size, reducing the accuracy of estimates made using these data and all other statistics that use the CPS. They could also hamper efforts to modernize the survey to address declining response rates, which have affected government surveys for years.

The reports delivered by CPS data are so influential they can cause swings in the stock market. To ensure that it can continue to accurately reflect key economic experiences of the American people and serve as a reliable resource to guide relevant policy decisions, particularly those surrounding the labor market and inflation, Congress must at least provide the BLS with enough funds to match the request totaling \$812 million for fiscal year (FY) 2025 made in a joint letter by two former BLS commissioners appointed by presidents of different parties.^{*} This level of funding should stave off cuts to the sample size and allow BLS to move forward with modernization plans for the CPS while improving data collection or gathering new cohorts for the agency's other surveys, including the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, Consumer Expenditure Survey, Enhanced Unemployment Insurance Records, and the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

READ THE FULL ANALYSIS

Stay informed on Economic Policy

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READ THE FULL ANALYSIS

Email Address

SUBMIT

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Ecosystem

Hyperobjects

**Producer/
Consumer**



**Consumer/
Producer**



Ecosystem

Hyperobjects

**Producer/
Consumer**

**Consumer/
Producer**





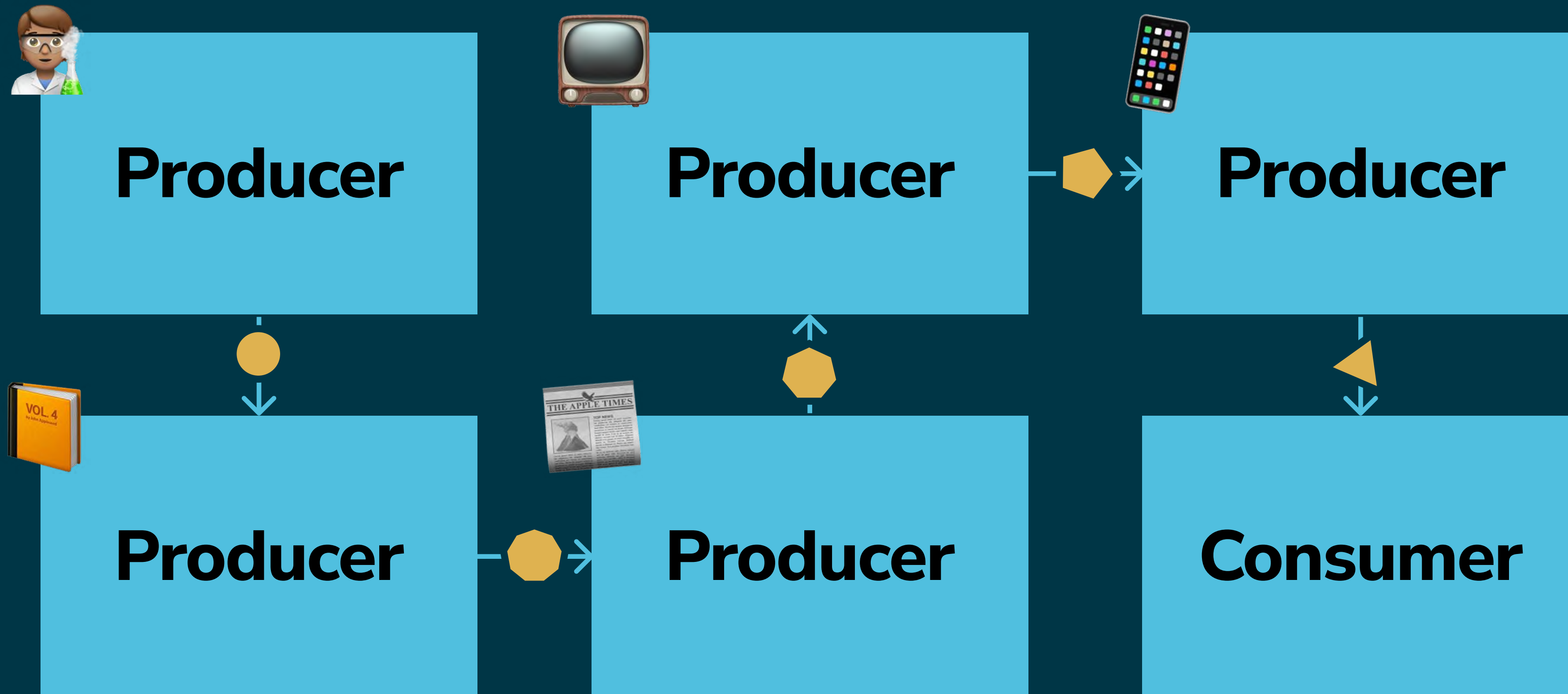






Ecosystem

Information supply chain





Science Journal



TikTok

Lack of accountability

Incorrect incentives

Insufficient resources

Hyperobjects

Information supply chain

Neutral taxonomies

Anthropomorphization

Urgency cues

Verification for sale

Gamification



Lack of accountability

Neutral taxonomies

Incorrect incentives

Anthropomorphization

Aren't these policy problems?

Insufficient resources

Urgency cues

Hyperobjects

Verification for sale

Information supply chain

Gamification



Policy

Structure

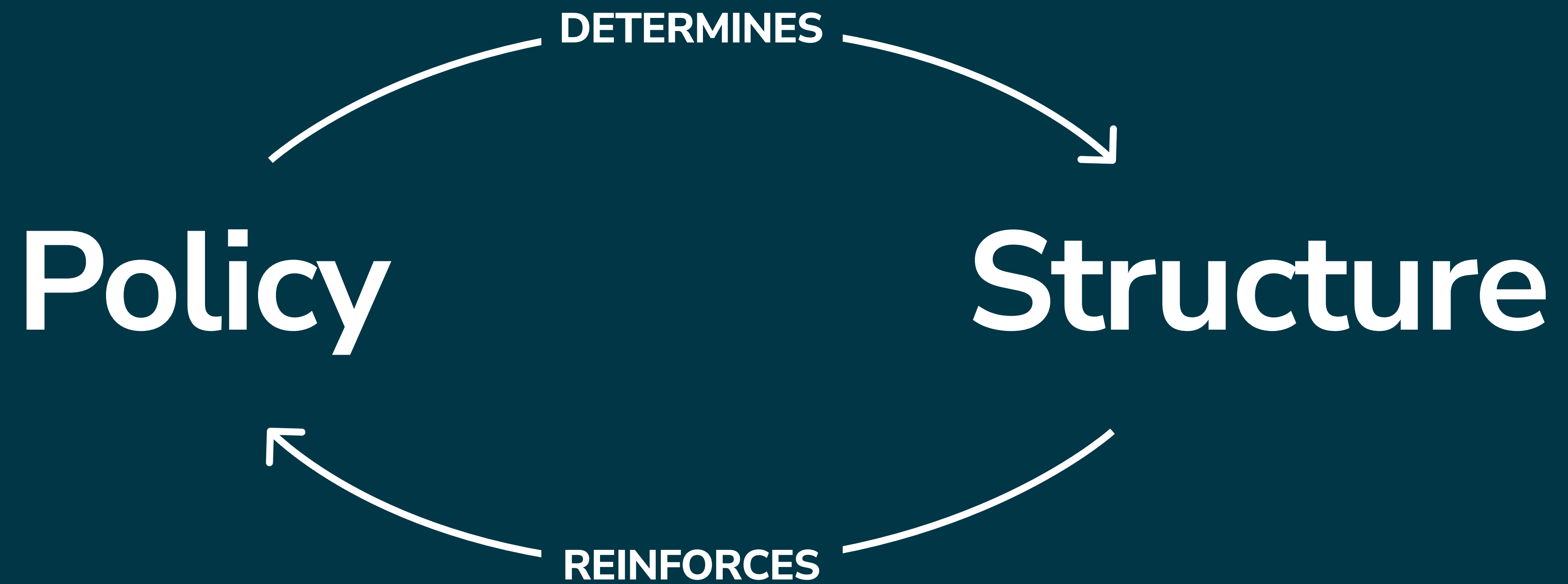


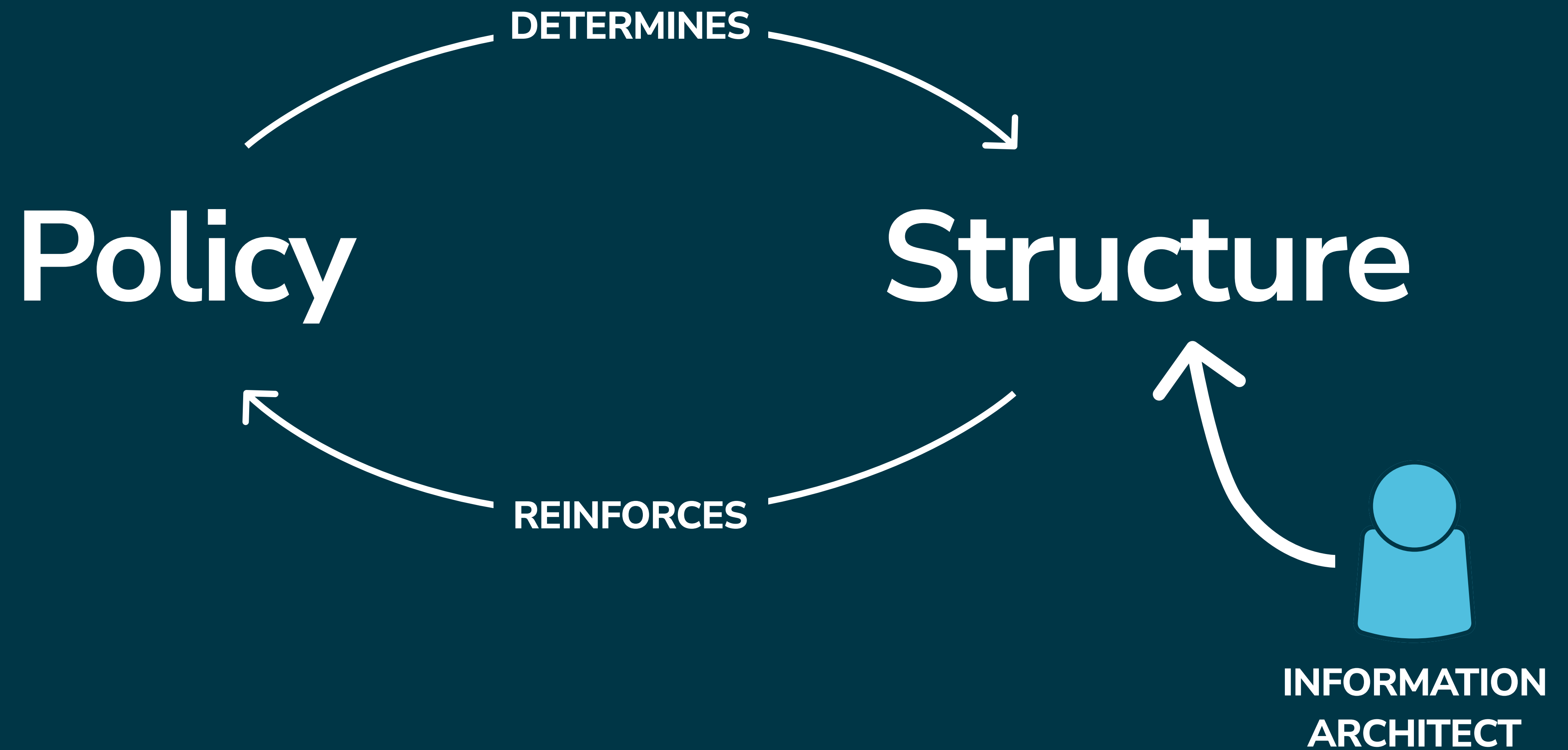
Policy

Structure

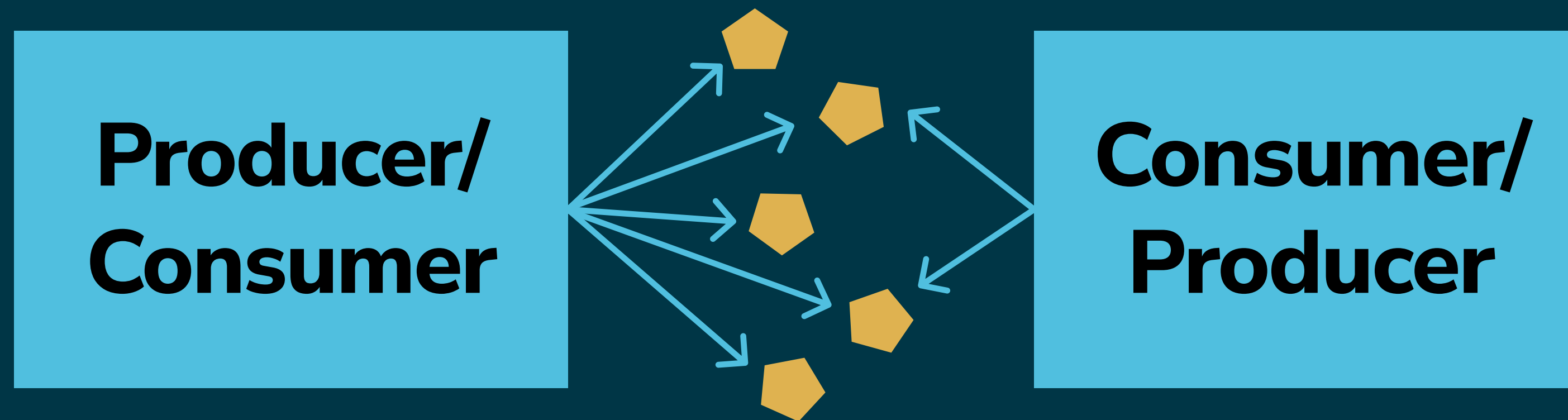






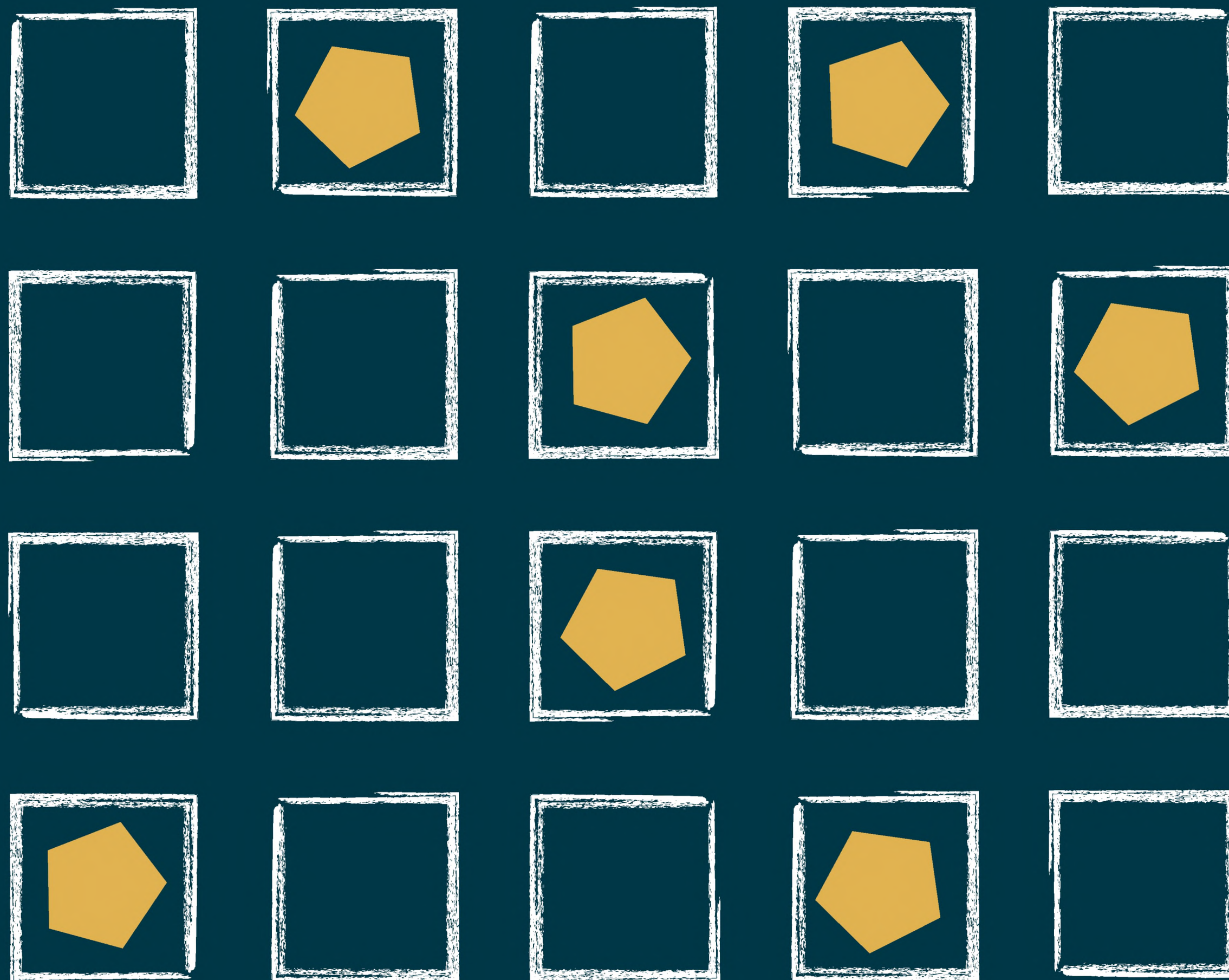


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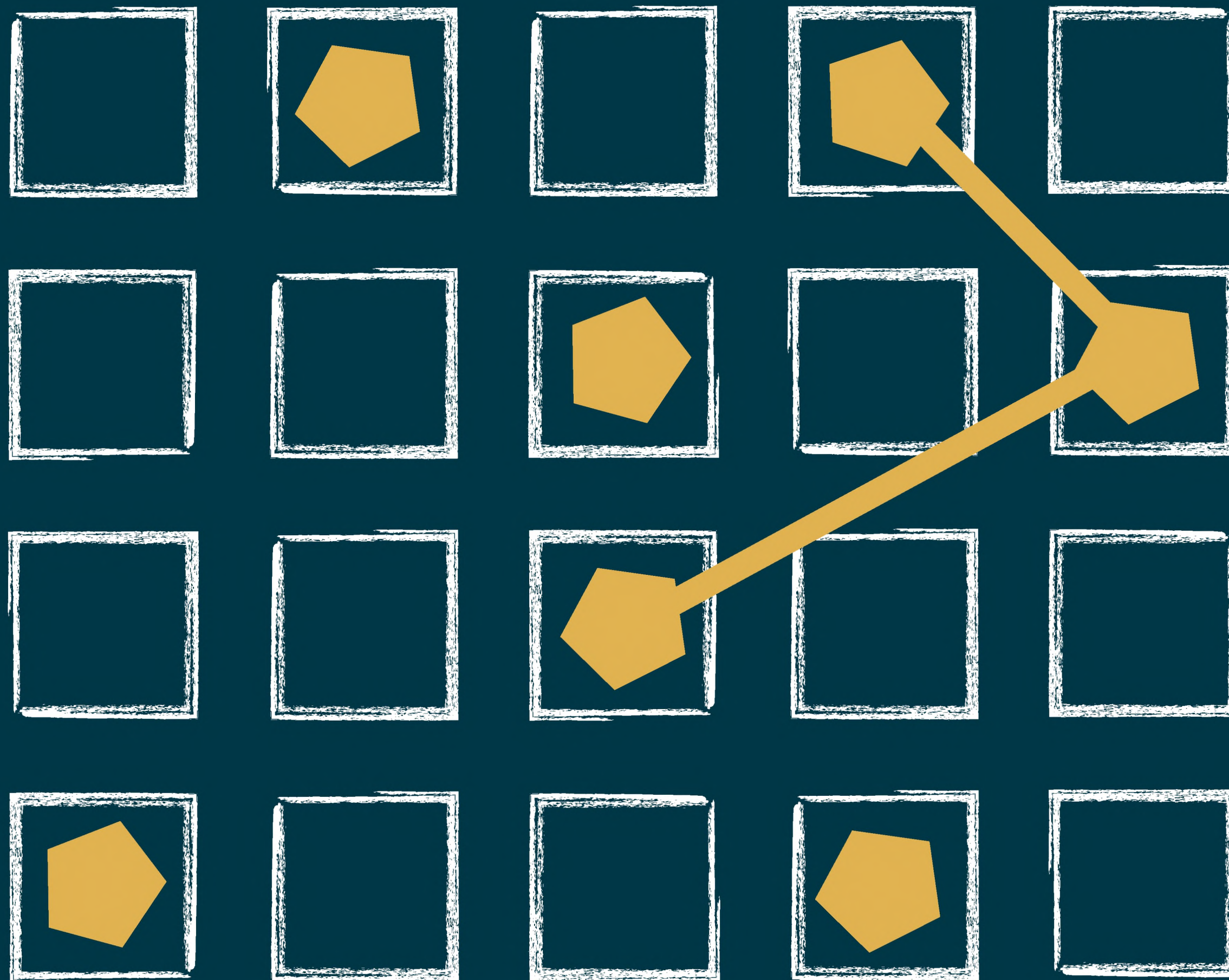


Ecosystem



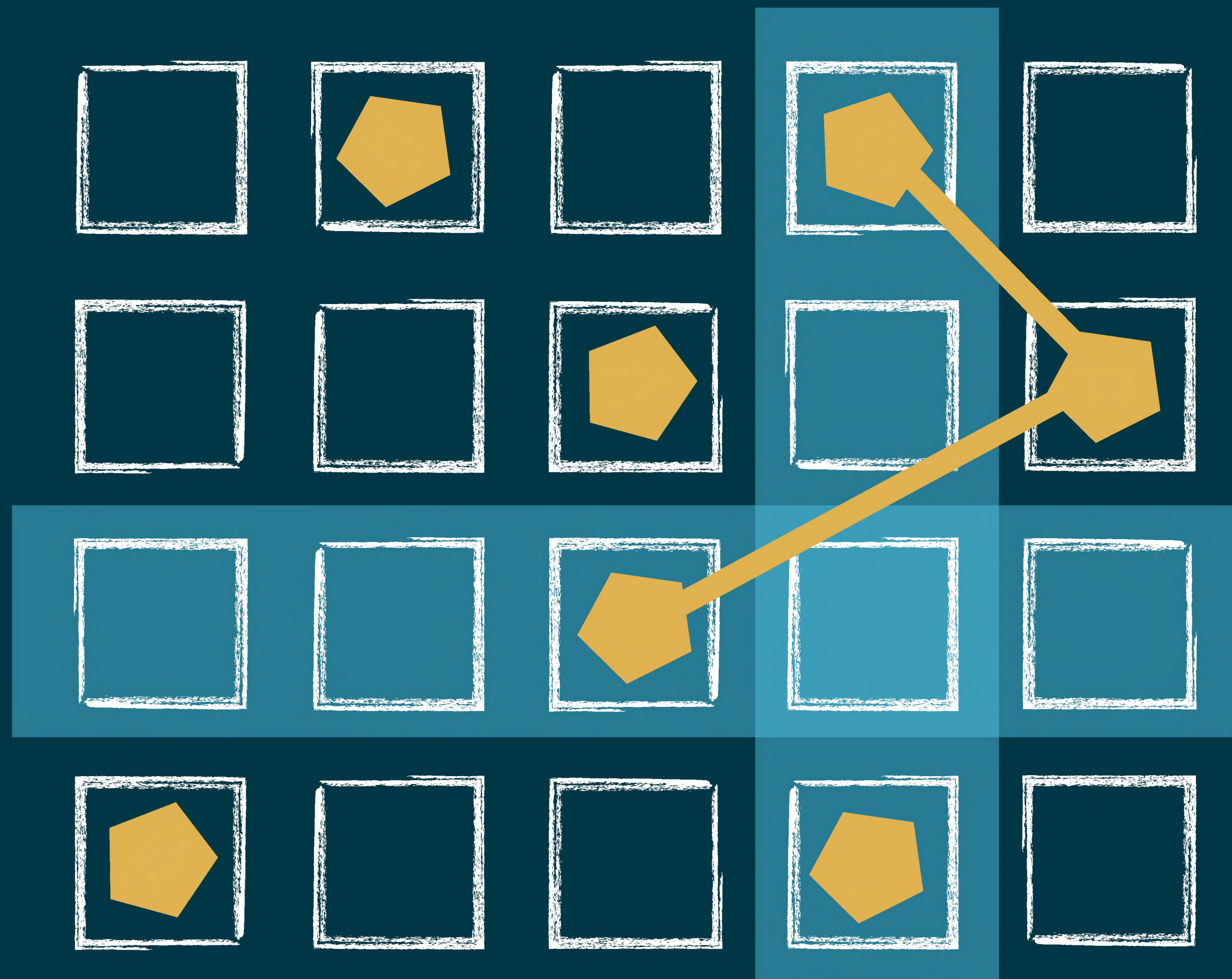


Spaces



Spaces

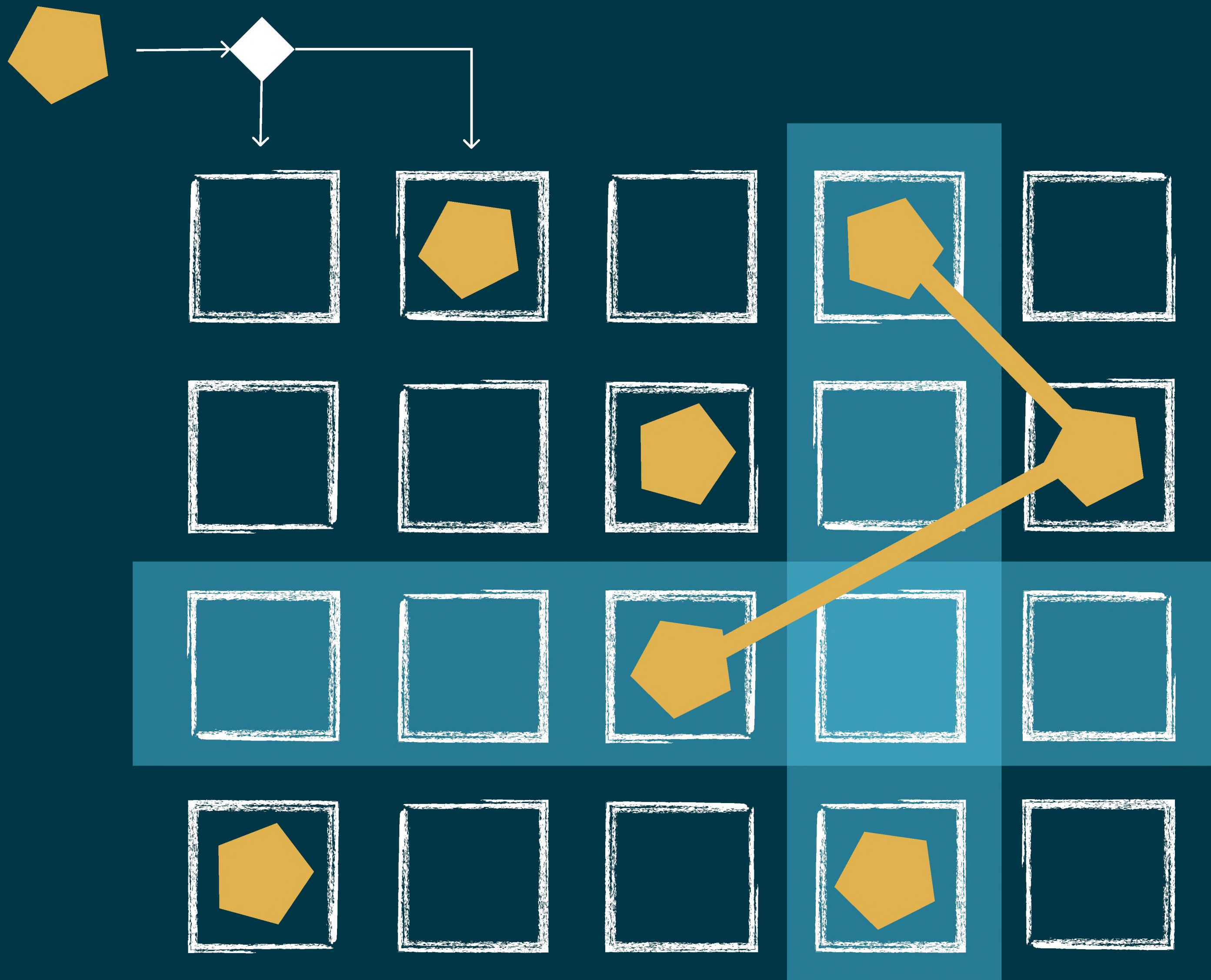
Connections



Spaces

Connections

Frames

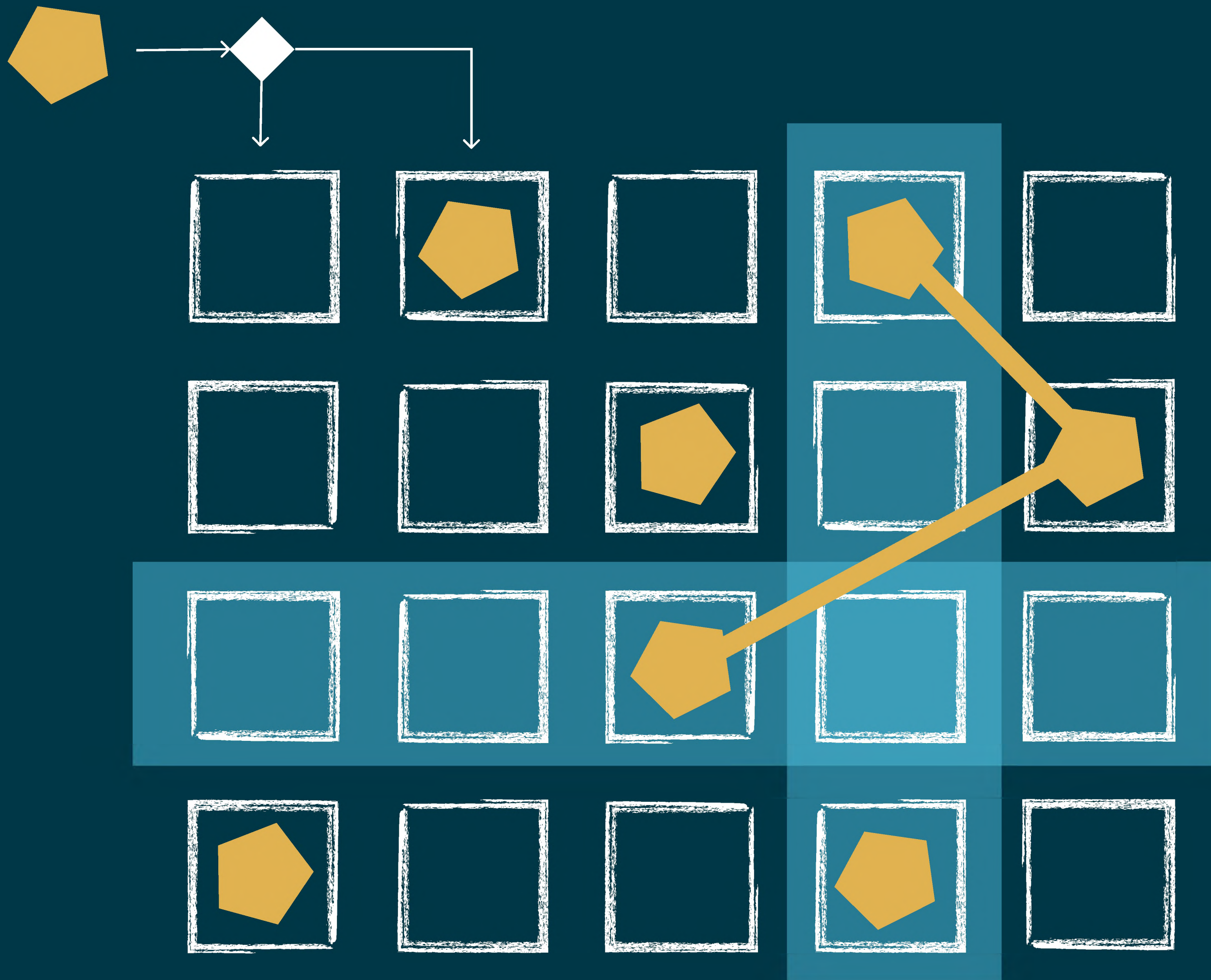


Spaces

Connections

Frames

Rules



Spaces

Connections

Frames

Rules

Names

Three ideas

Communities

Traceability

Friction



Communities



Traceability



Friction

✕

✓

➡

↺





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8 recommendations for countering



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Life Kit

To combat misinformation, start with connection, not correction

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 · 4:30 AM ET



FactCheck

HOME

ARTICLE

FACTCHECK POST

How to

By Eugene Kiely

Posted on April 2, 2025

being, and civic life

nt.

10 steps to protect yourself and others

Find out about ten practical steps to identify disinformation, protect those around you and strengthen democratic resilience against manipulation.

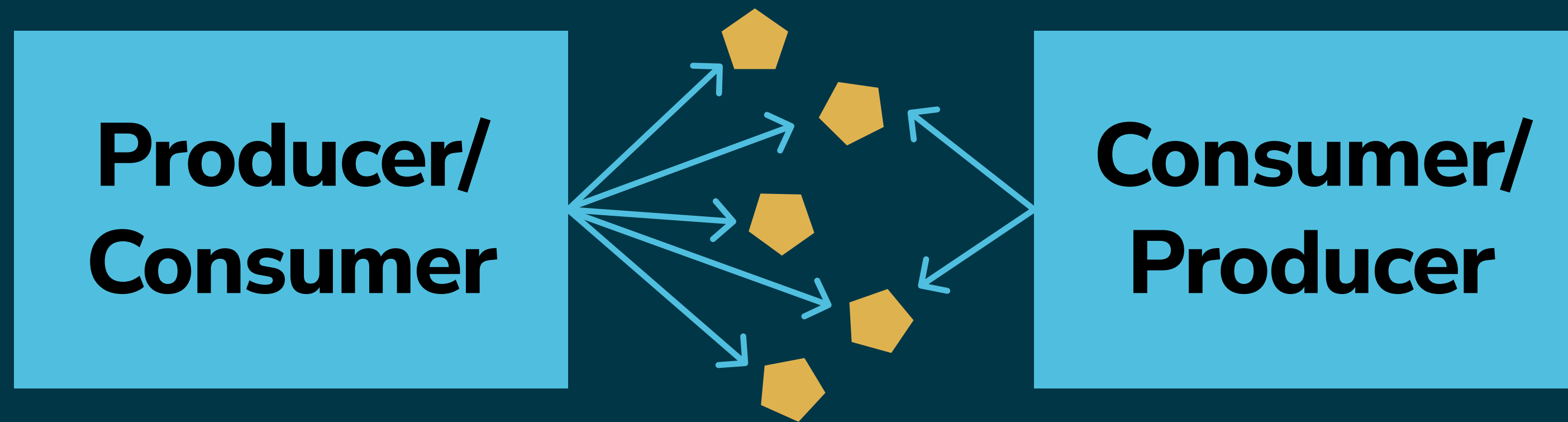
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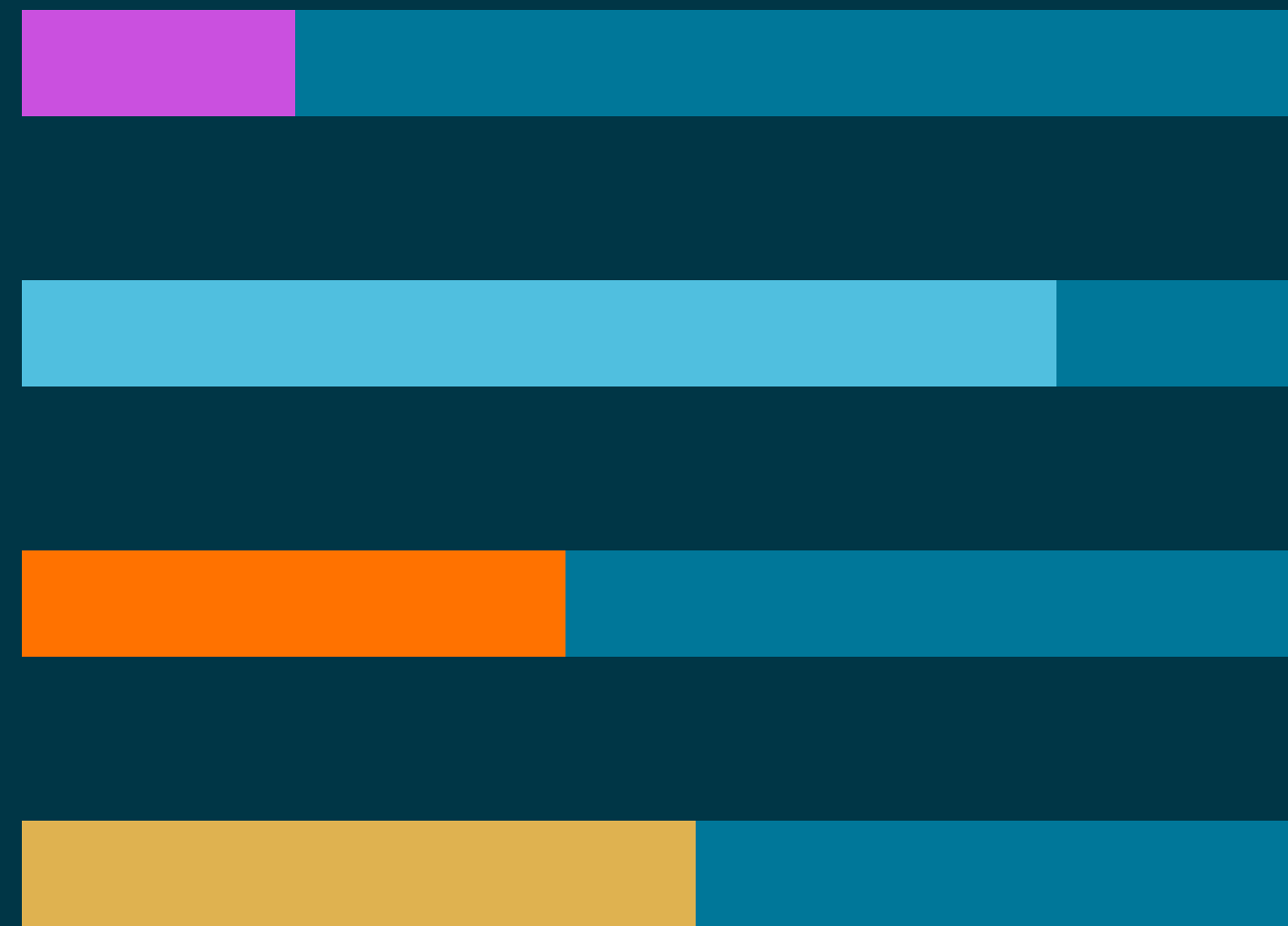
4 min read



Ecosystem



How might we assess the vulnerability of information ecosystems?



THANK YOU!

Dan Brown

www.curious-squid.com

linkedin.com/in/danmbrown/

Listen to Unchecked: The Architecture of Information

