

# Transformation

## Mid-Career Pivot

Cassandra Rowe, 2023

A group of people in a room. In the center, a man with dark hair wearing a teal polo shirt is looking down with his arms crossed. To his right, a woman with short dark hair wearing a white turtleneck sweater is looking forward. In the background, a man with glasses and a blue shirt is looking towards the camera. On the left, a woman with dark hair wearing a red top is partially visible. The background is a plain wall with a purple light source on the right.

**Good  
afternoon,  
people**

# Agenda

1. About Me
2. About Pinterest Research
3. Transformation
4. Learnings
5. Q&A

# About Me

**Hello!**



**Cassandra Rowe**

Head of Research &  
Design @ Pinterest

# My journey





**I'm a researcher**





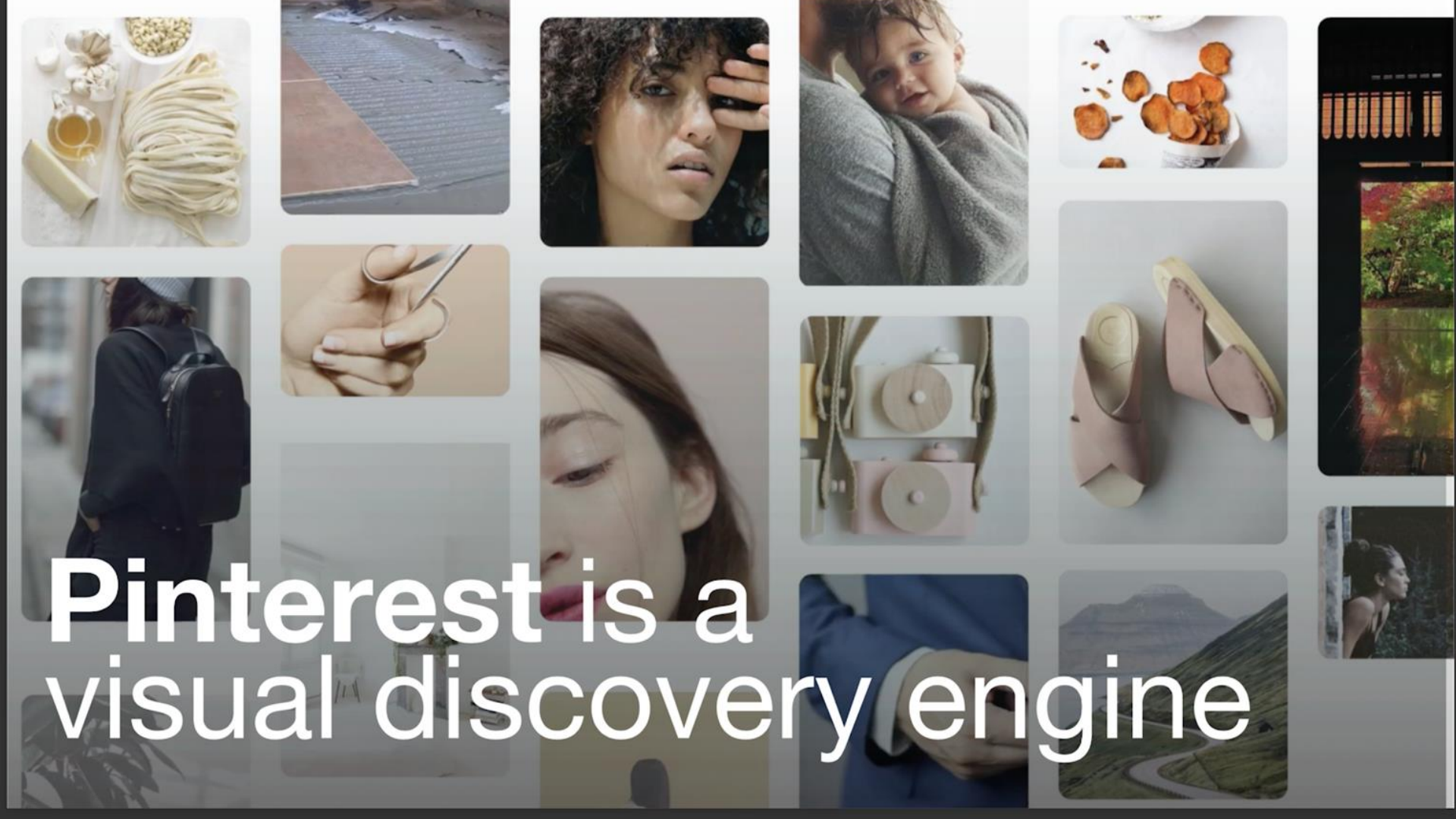
**I am a builder**





**I am a leader**

**About Pinterest:**



**Pinterest is a  
visual discovery engine**

**Pinterest mission**

**Bring everyone  
inspiration to create  
a life they love.**






Essie Over The Knee ₺ 2.2k

 **Alyssa Worley**  
Beauty Shtuff



wavy half up-do ₺ 2.8k

 **Alyssa Worley**  
Beauty Shtuff




long bob + red lip ₺ 2.3k

 **Alyssa Worley**  
Beauty Shtuff



12 Manis That Will Make You Want Squov... ₺ 8.5k ✓ 1

Brit + Co  
 **Alyssa Worley**  
Beauty Shtuff



# Alyssa

**A safe and positive  
product to get  
inspired and build a  
life to love.**



**53% of Pinners consider  
their time *well spent*  
on Pinterest**



**450m+ MAUs**  
**240b+ pins saved**  
**2200+ employees**

# Research @ Pinterest



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The voice of the user

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**We study people as individuals**



## Culture of Hobbyists & Interest-based Communities

*Germany is a strong culture of hobbyists and collectors, and there is a very strong precedence of interest and hobby-based clubs and organized country.*

Germany has a strong culture of hobbyists and collectors.

There is a long tradition in Germany of joining a club ("Verein") for a hobby - people tend to be members of a variety of 91,000 sports clubs in Germany, with ~26 million members, Gastarbeiterclubs (60,000 active choirs in Germany), 1 national breeding club and collectors' clubs for anything from stamps to vintage cars, etc.

• Guild behavior ("Many of them also join clubs and other interest-based groups in their local communities, and on a larger organizational level.")

### Digital Platform Examples:

• **Who-Knows-Whom** was amongst Germany's largest social network. "Over 3.6 million users, more than any other social network in Germany, and a great messaging system!" The site announced its closure this June due to declining engagement and lack of funds in Germany for age 35+.

### Why Should We Care:

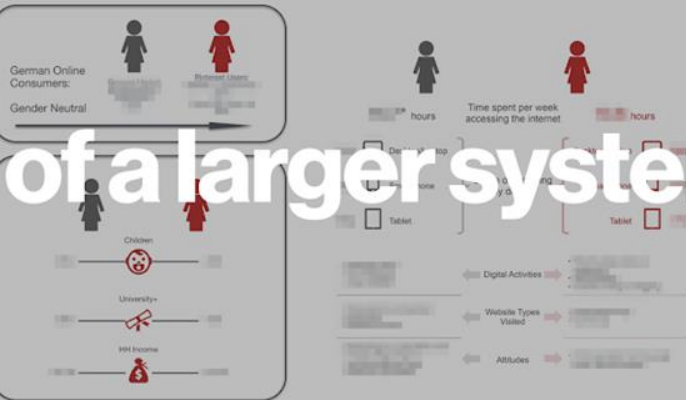
• We strive to be the best place to find the things you love, collect and organize them, and do them. This value proposition notion of **Who-Knows-Whom** even adds a social context to peoples' hobbies and passions that can inform our definition of **Sociable**.

## Competitive Landscape

*Insight: The typical German consumer is more likely to use people graph sites like FB and StayFriends, while the Pinterest consumer is more likely to use similar like sites: Instagram and Dawanda. The Pinterest sample of users is also members of more sites on average than the general German consumer.*



## Pinterest User



We study people as part of a larger system

```
graph LR; A((Research & strategize)) --> B((Discover & ideate)); B --> C((Design)); C --> D((Build)); D --> E((Launch & iterate));
```

Research  
&  
strategize

Discover  
& ideate

Design

Build

Launch &  
iterate



A black and white photograph of a person from behind, sitting at a desk and looking at a wall covered in numerous sticky notes. The person is wearing a dark t-shirt. On the desk to the right, there is a container labeled 'Sharpie' and some papers. The sticky notes are arranged in various patterns, some in columns and some in clusters, covering most of the wall. The text 'We try to make sense of it all, and derive meaning' is overlaid in white on the image.

**We try to make sense of it all, and derive meaning**

**Transformation:**

## Definition

# trans\*for\*ma\*tion

*noun*

- a thorough or dramatic change
- metamorphosis
- deep structural change
- pivot

Similar to:

change

motification

alteration

variation

# My journey



How **we**  
define  
ourselves



*Classifiers*

How **others** define us

Knowledge

Skills

Opinions

Values

Qualities

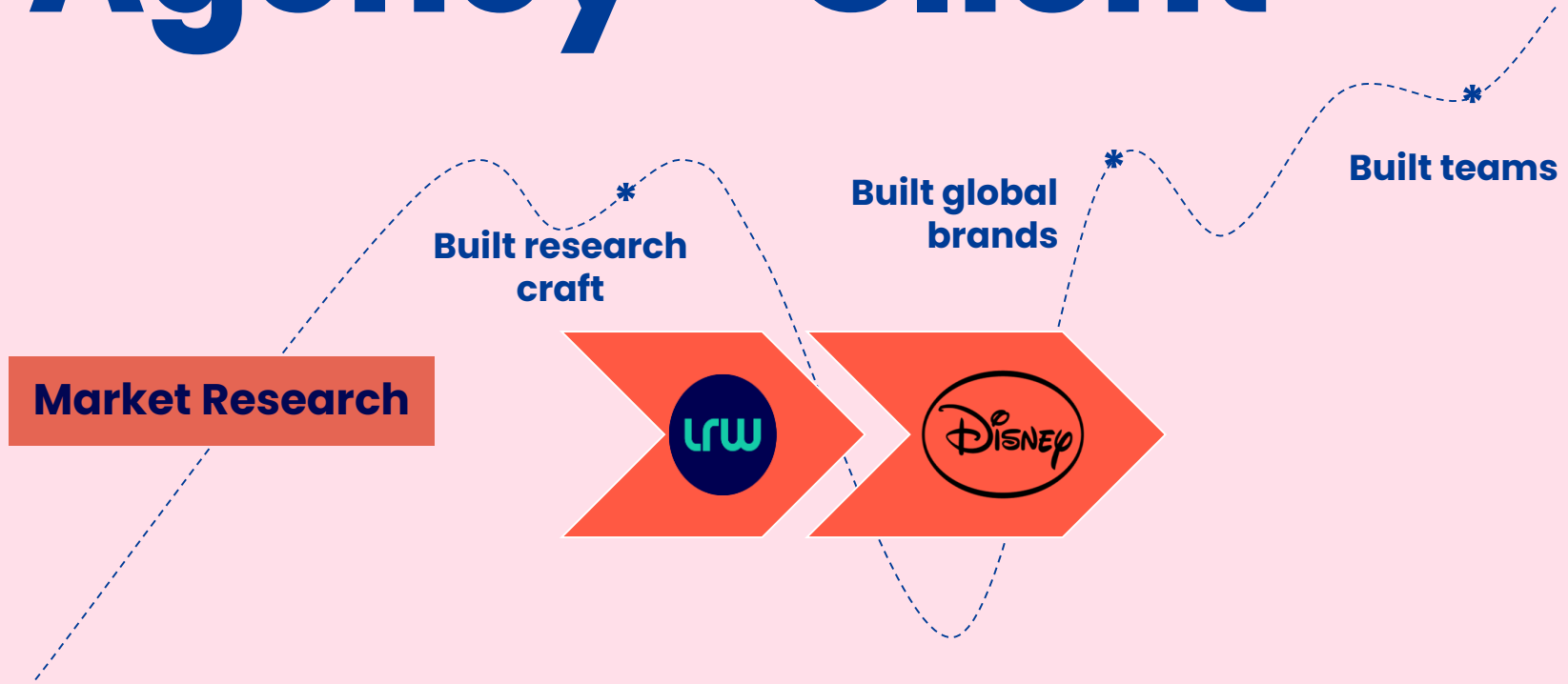
Drivers

## My transformations

**Student › Professional**  
**Research Agency › Client Side**  
**Market Research › UX**  
**Quant › Qual**  
**IC › People Manager**  
**Research Leader › Design Leader**



# Agency > Client



## Classification

**Junior**

**Quantitative**

**Market Research**

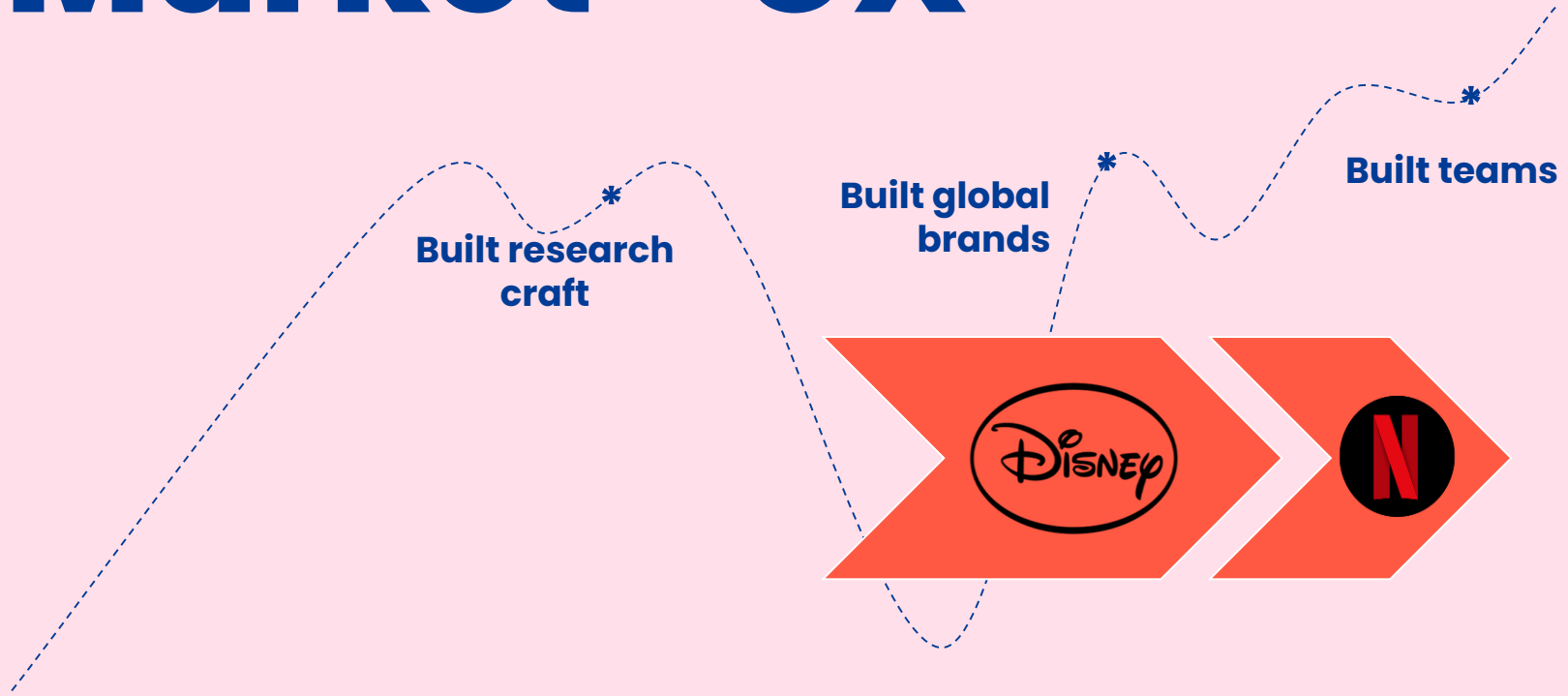
**Agency Researcher**

**Entertainment, Retail, Manufacturing**

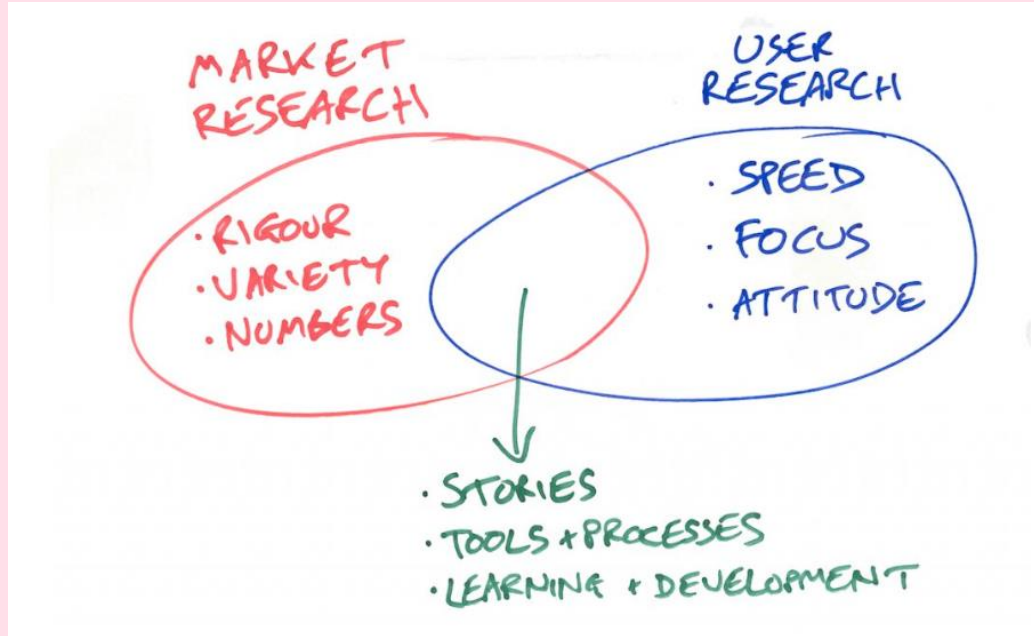
## Vs. Learning Into Skills Learned



# Market > UX



## Classifiers vs Intersecting Skills



# IC > Manager



# Map your strengths

## IC Researcher

## Skills

## People Manager

x

Empathy

x

x

Problem Solving

x

x

Narrative Development

x

x

Creative Methodologies

Securing Resources

x


Hiring, Performance & Exits

x





MANAGER



SUPER  
SENIOR  
INDIVIDUAL  
CONTRIBUTOR



SENIOR

# Top Learnings

How **we**  
define  
ourselves



*Classifiers*

How **others** define us

Knowledge

Skills

Opinions

Values

Qualities

Drivers

## My top five learnings

# Be ready for change

Constantly be building your craft / skills and the tools you use to  
be successful at your job!

## My top five learnings

**Be *your* biggest  
cheerleader**

Share / celebrate your contributions and impact

**Increase your  
influence**

Have a point of view and share it!

## My top five learnings

# Build relationships

Foster strong, authentic relationships with both research and non-research peers at work and through industry events





**Thanks**



q&a