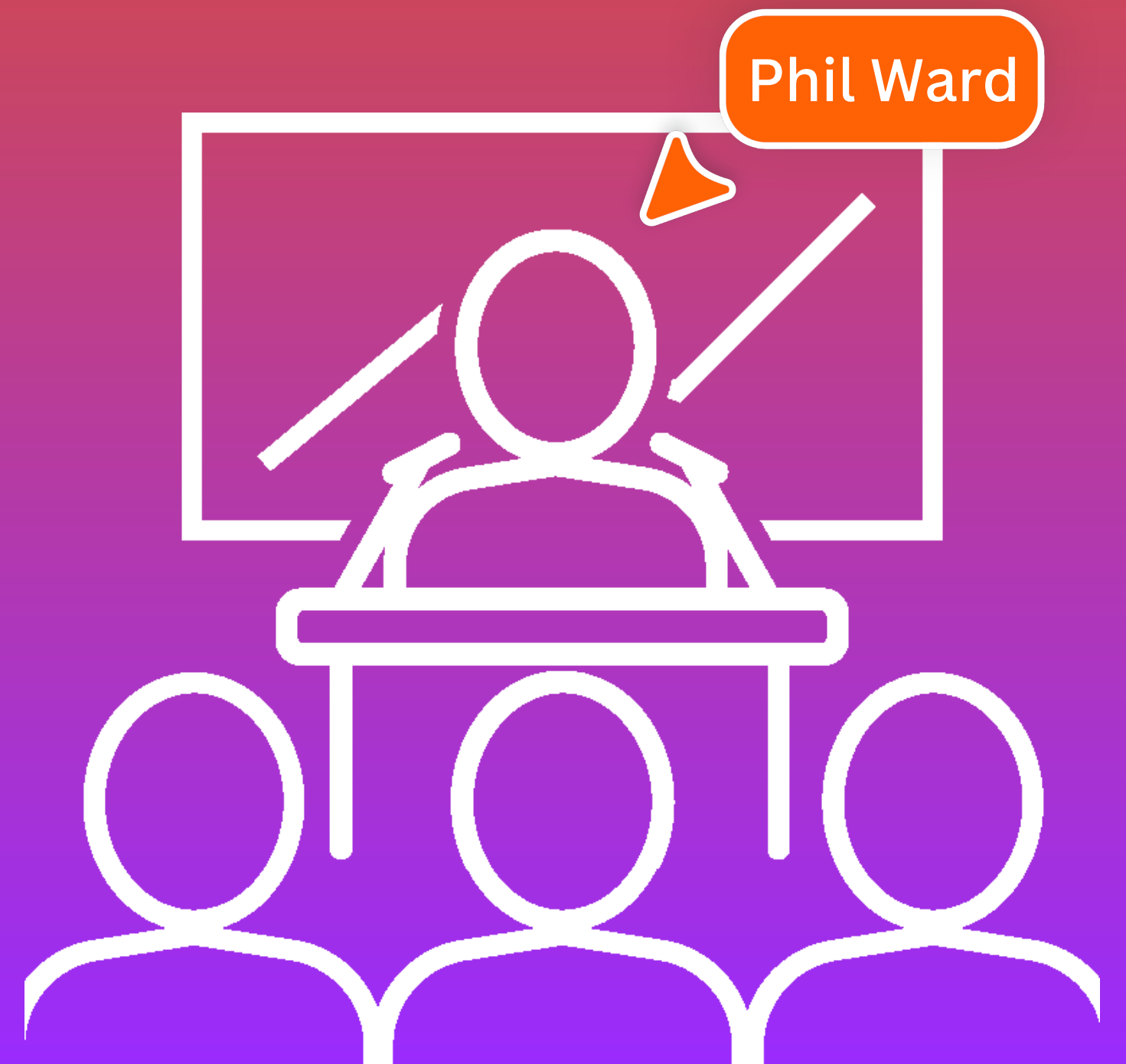


Canva

Data Retention

Simple, **auditable** and
maintainable

1st June 2026



Protecting Treasure

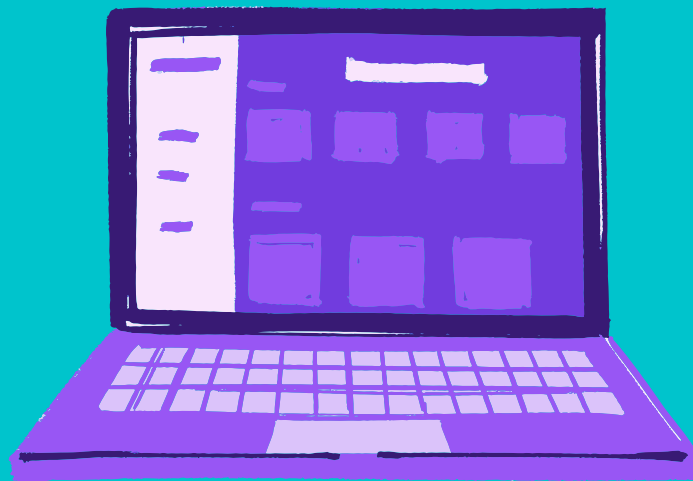


Throwing out Rubbish



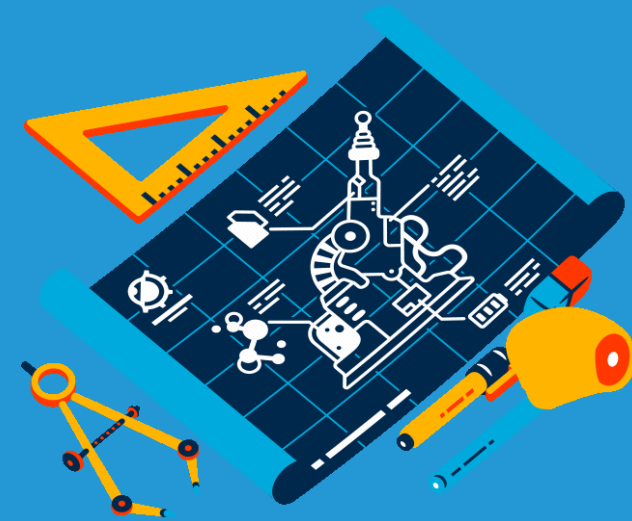
Today's agenda

01



What's Canva?

02



Execution Model

03



Auditing

04



Takeaways

1



What is Canva and who uses it?

Canva

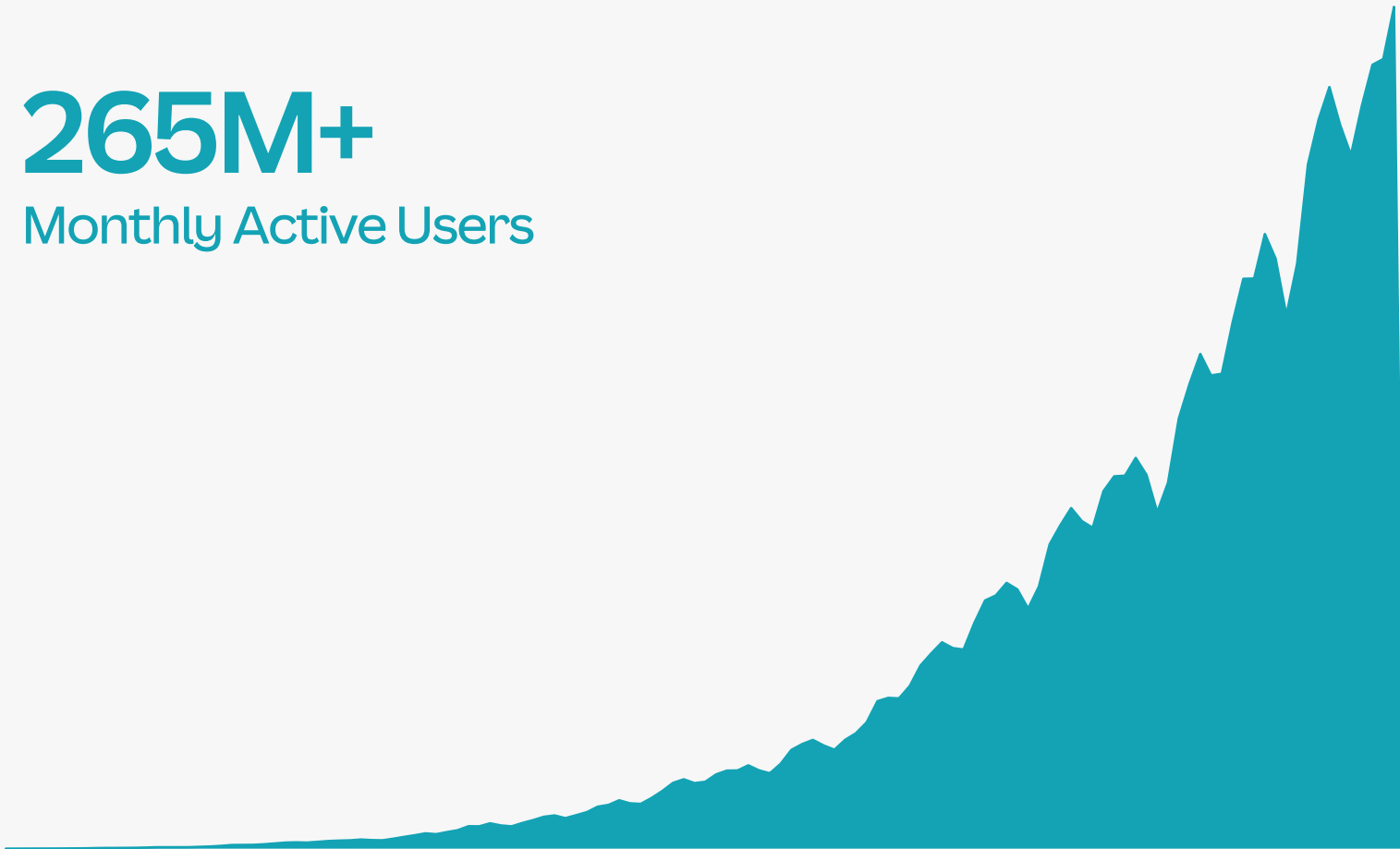
At a glance



190
countries

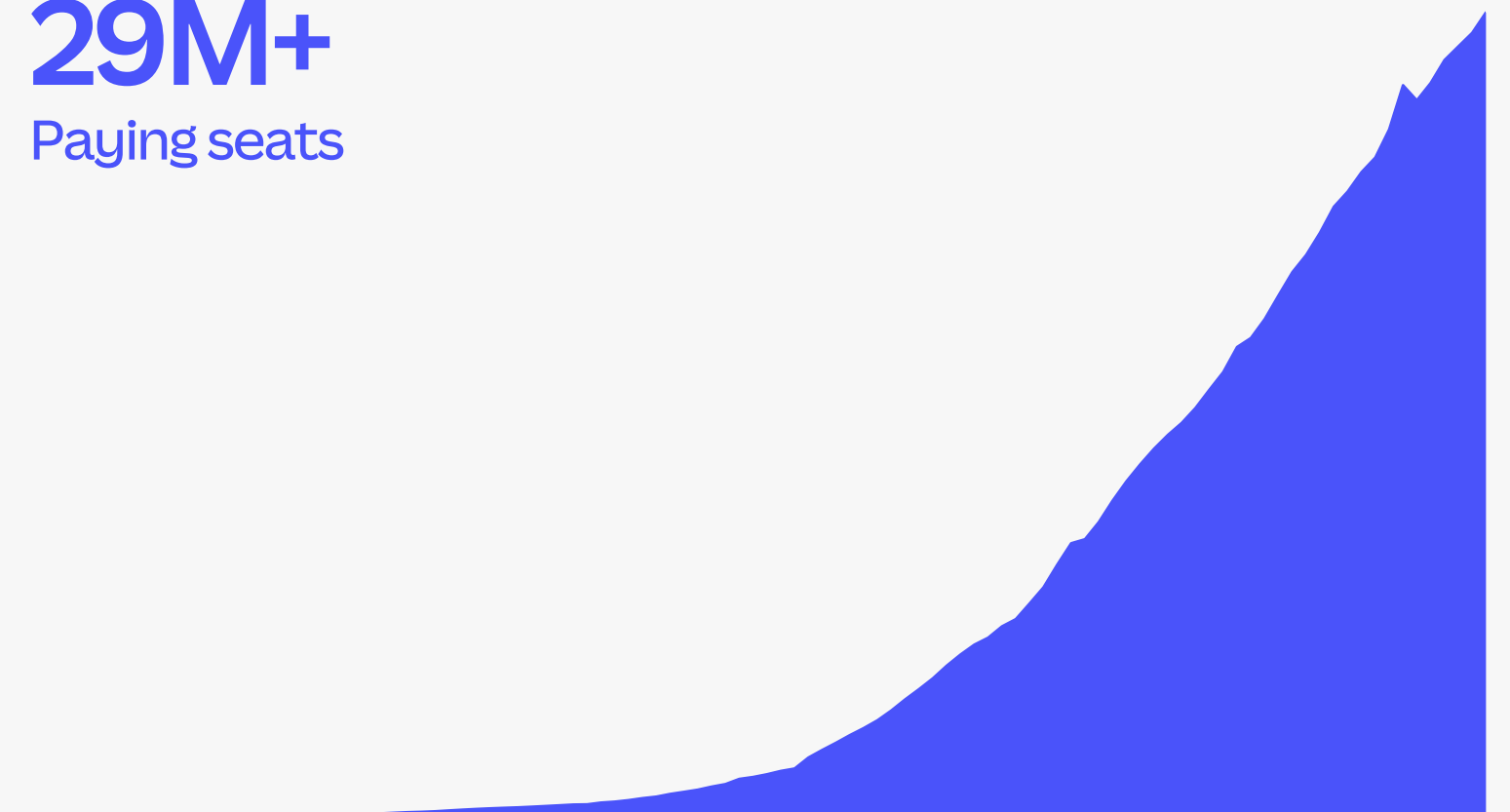
265M+

Monthly Active Users



29M+

Paying seats



40B+

Total designs created

400+

Designs per second

100M+

Students and teachers

950,000+

Nonprofits

A typical retention policy

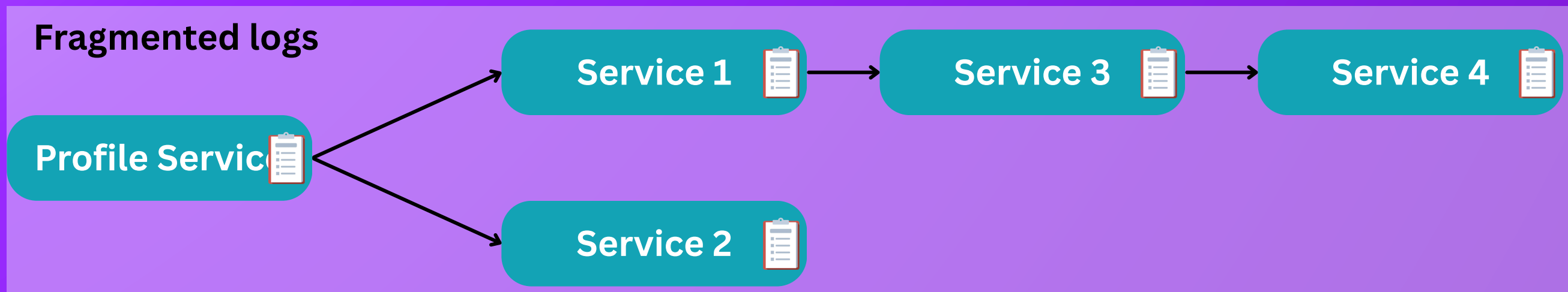
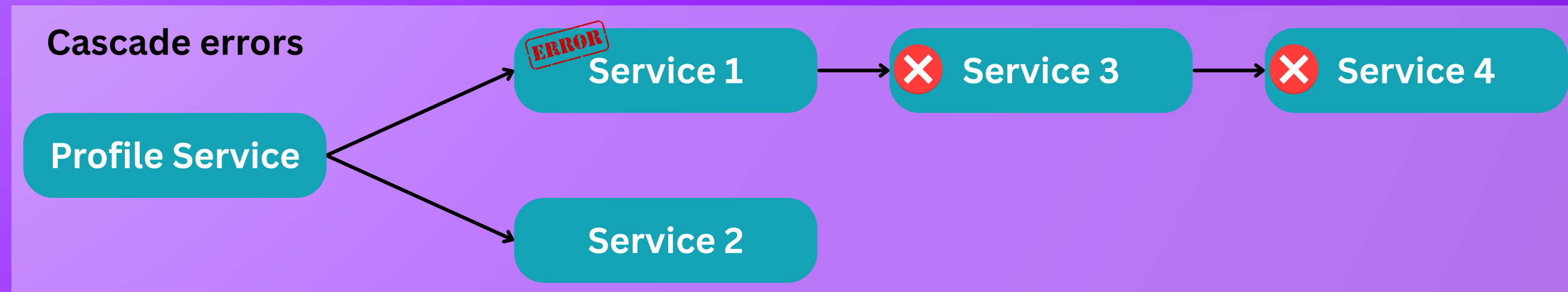
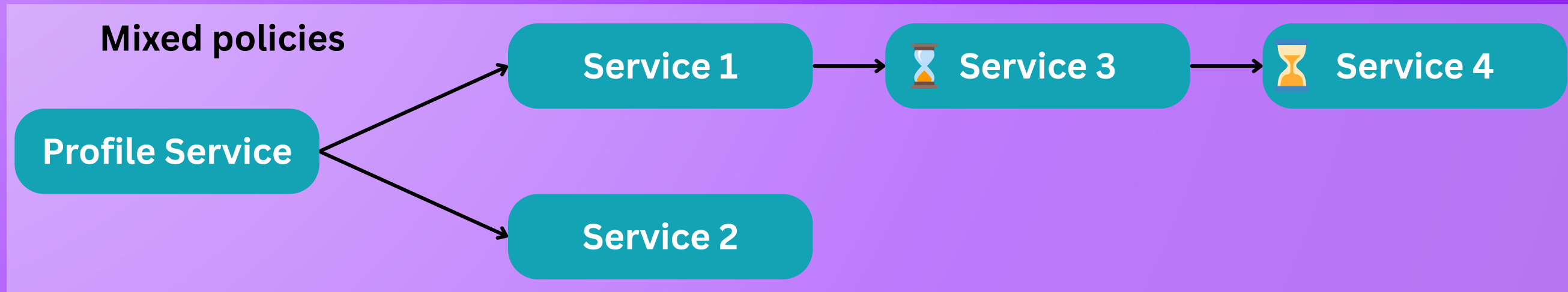
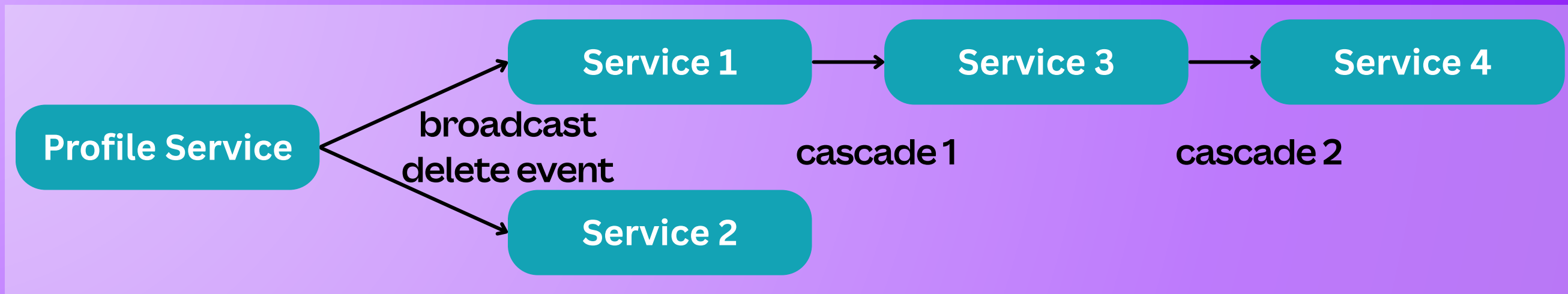
Data Type	Purpose	Retention Period	Deletion / Treatment
Customer Account Data	Account creation, authentication, user experience	Active account + 2 years after closure	Full deletion after period unless legally required
Billing & Financial Records	Regulatory compliance audits, tax	7 years	Permanent deletion; anonymized aggregates may be kept
Marketing Data (emails, campaigns)	Customer engagement, lead nurturing	Until withdrawal OR 2 years of inactivity	Remove personal identifiers within 30 days of opt-out
Customer Support Tickets	Service quality, dispute resolution, training	3 years after closure (pseudonymized), 5 years	Pseudonymize after 3 years; delete after 5 years
Employee HR Records	Employment, benefits, compliance	Employment + 7 years	Secure deletion unless legally required (e.g., pension laws)
Recruitment / Candidate Data	Hiring process	12 months from last interaction	Secure deletion unless candidate opts into talent pool
System & Security Logs	Fraud detection, incident response, troubleshooting	12 months	Auto-deleted or rotated after 12 months

*this is an example only

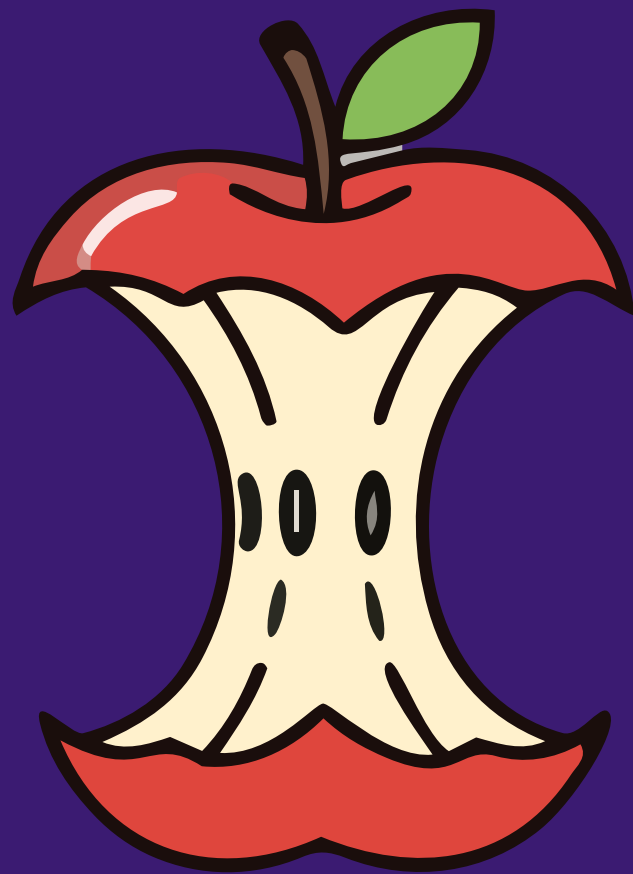
2



Deletion & Retention Model



Core concepts



Star topology

Delete triggered by owners

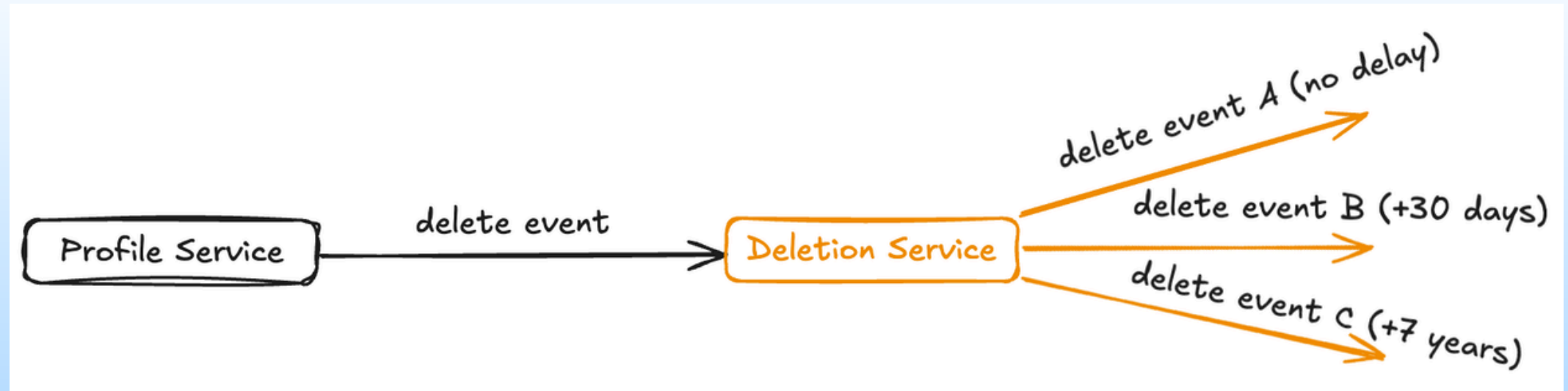
Standard infrastructure

Templated for policy and keys

Multiple Policies

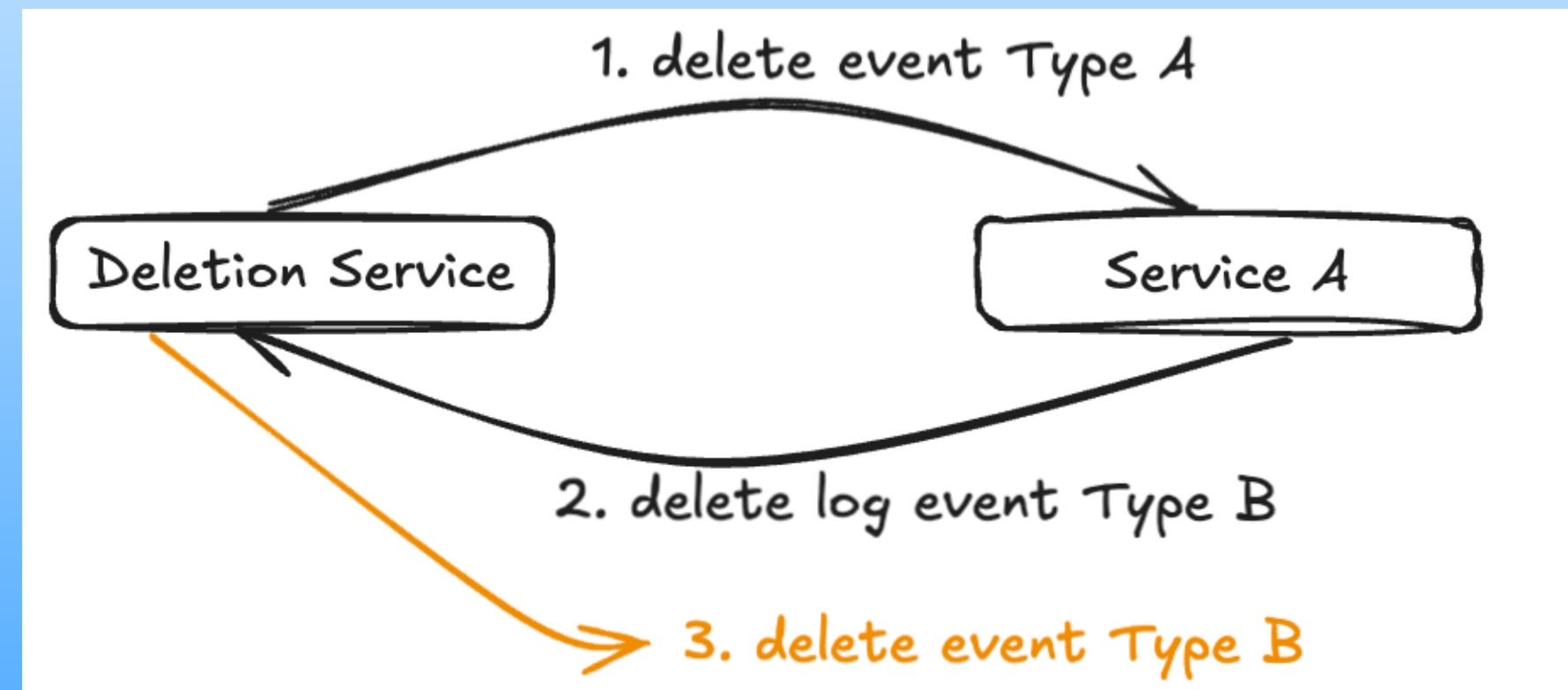
In: Event triggers

Out: Timed delete instructions



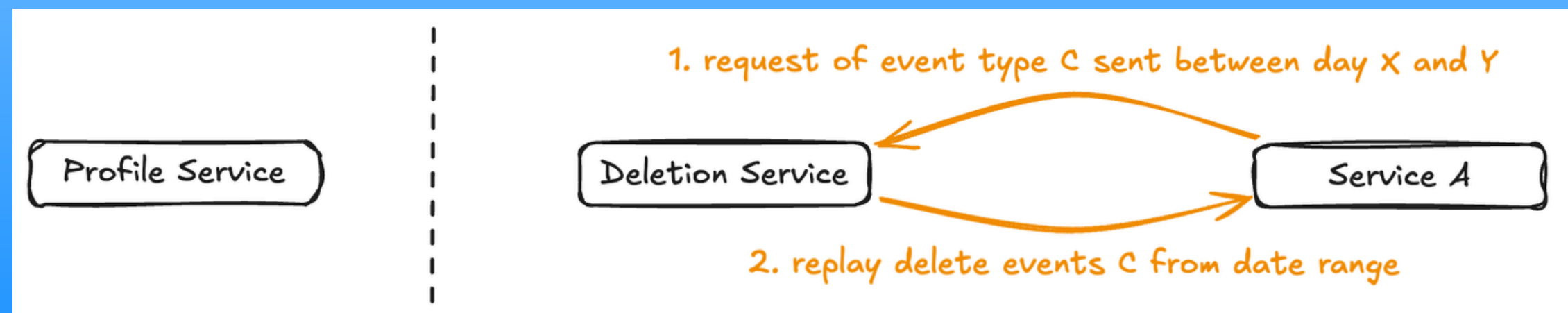
Scalable Cascading

Chain deletes via the central service

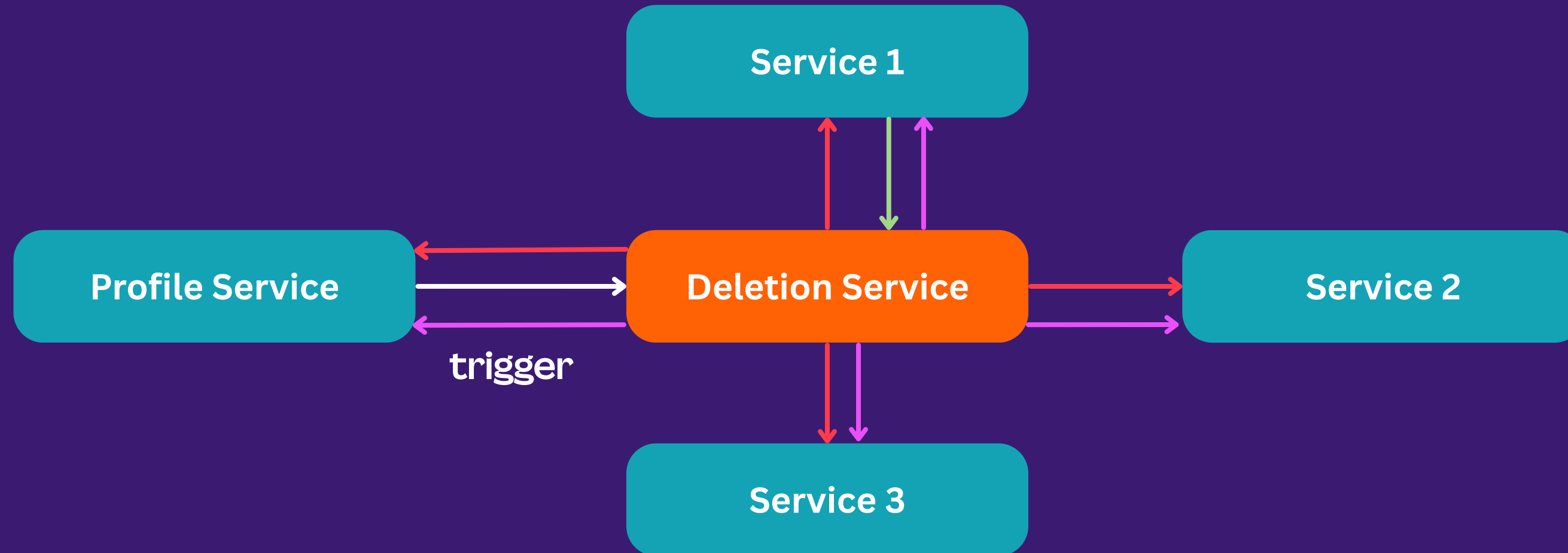


Replay and recovery

Services only talk to Deletion, not to each other.



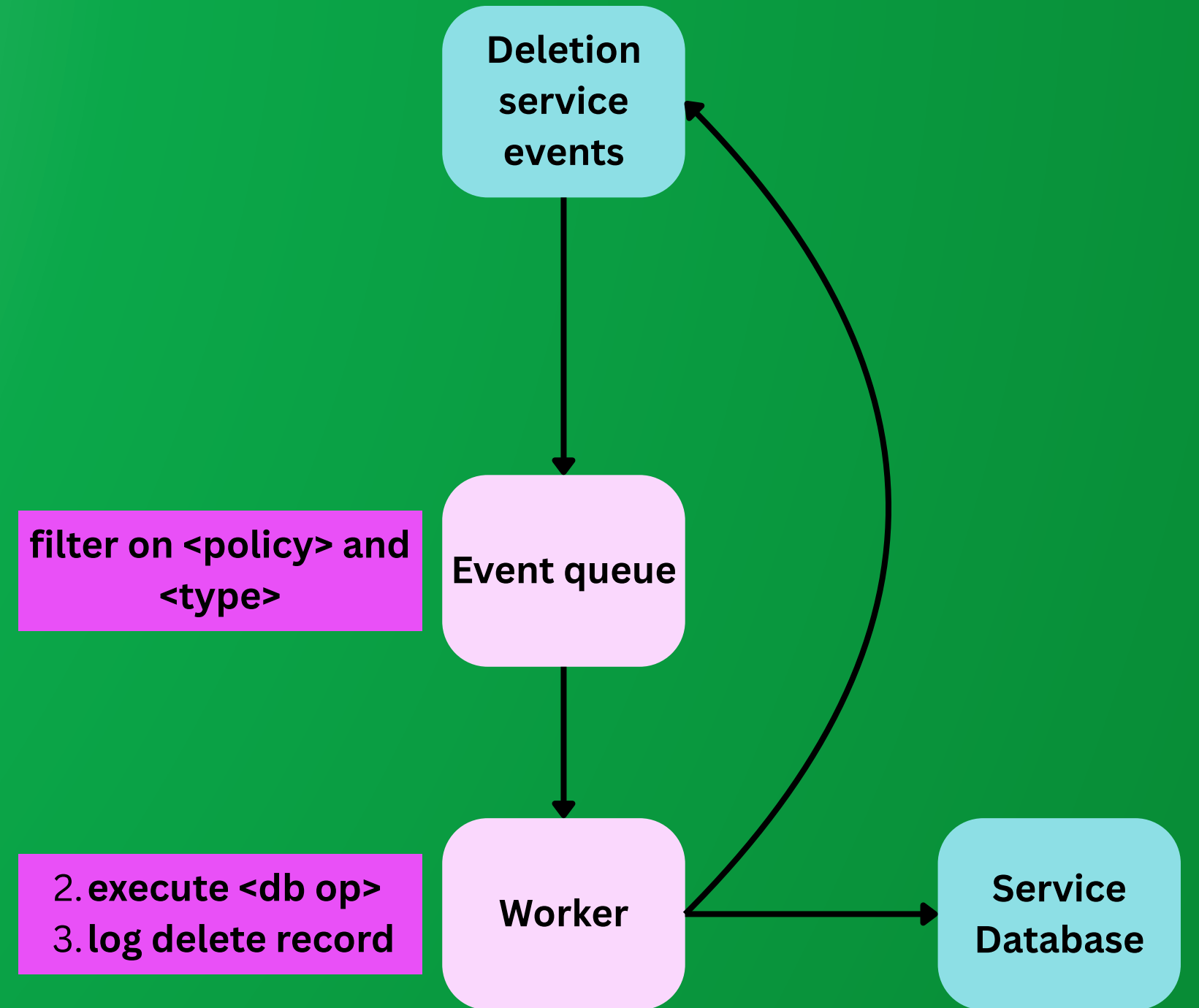
Star topology in action



The implementation

<policy>	USF001
<type>	user
<db_table>	emailRecords
<db_op>	update <db_table> set email = null, delete = NOW() where id = <id>

Per-service parameters



Auto-generation and deployment

3



Auditing at scale



Compliance Team

1

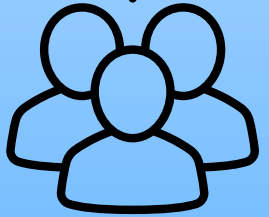
Request compliance/audit

Evidence is solely based on human judgement

2

Interpret Policy

Every change to policy require re-interpretation

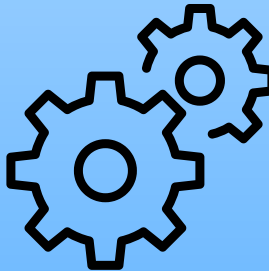


Software Engineers

3

Verify/Implement

Fragmented and opaque implementation



Systems



Company Policy

What do we really want?

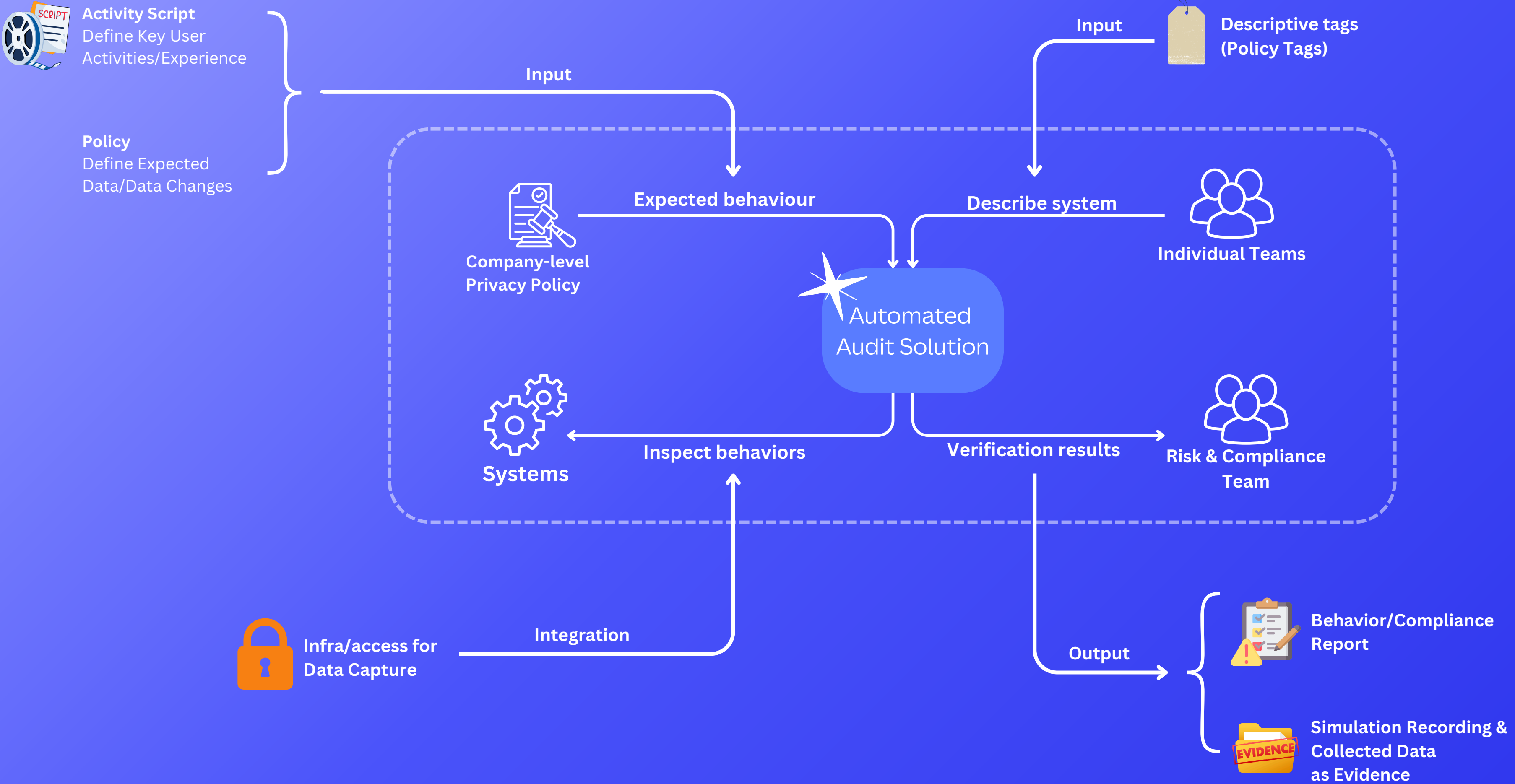
Compliance today and tomorrow

Transparent and consistent implementations

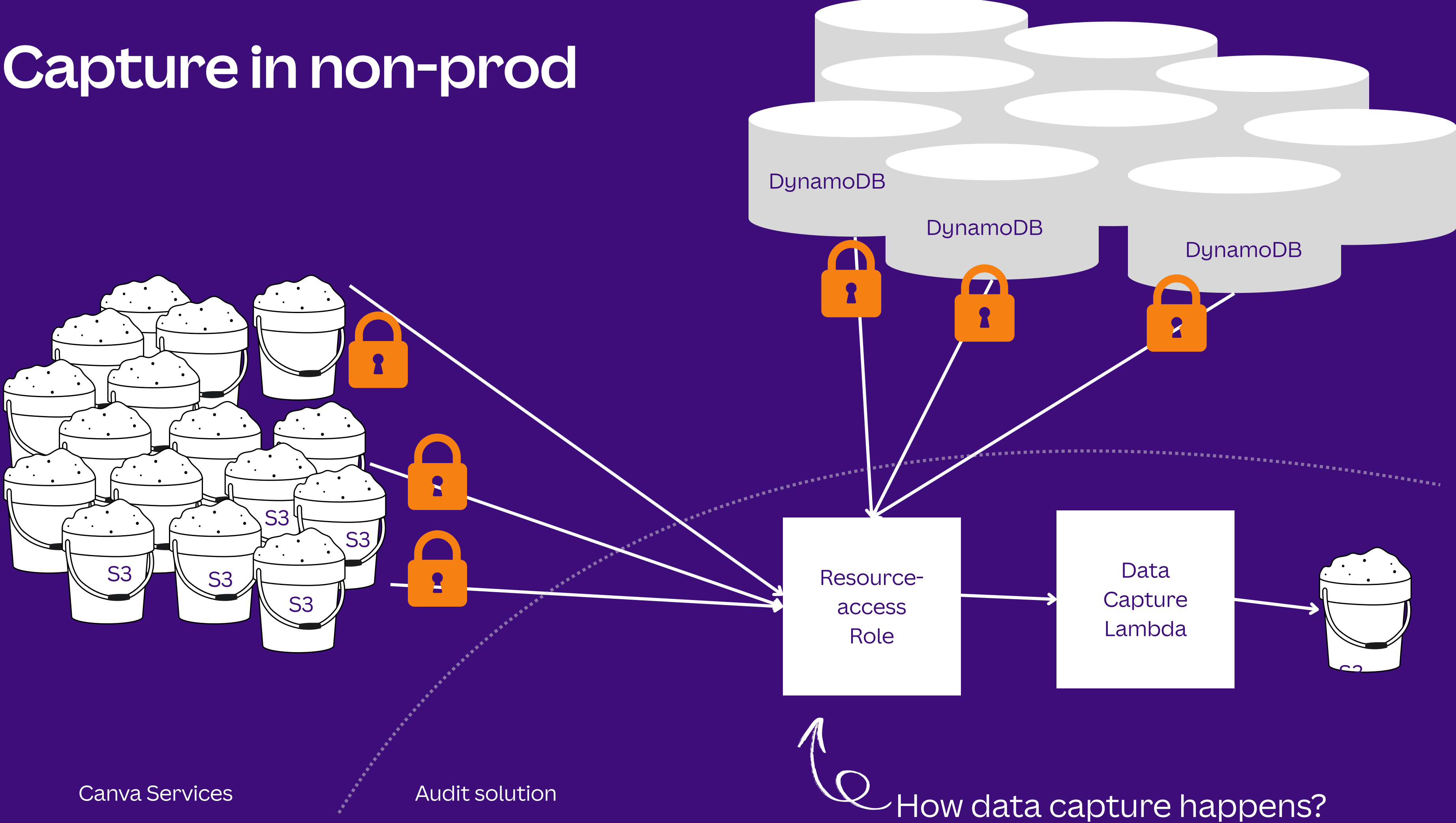
Reliable evidence

Minimal goodwill burning

Audit components



Capture in non-prod



Canva Services

Audit solution

How data capture happens?

Audit Results

Audit Policy

Storage Resources

Cookie Audit

Audit Results

This page shows the results of the privacy audit.

Edit

Report #01JNJ6E92QJRHGH3ETHQ9NCM1P

Cloud Platform	Instance	Retention Tag	Native Type	Result	Reason
	app-identity-documents.canva-staging.com	PRS002/PRS003	bucket	pass	No residual data found
	app-resources.canva-staging.com	PRS002/PRS003	bucket	pass	No residual data found
	apps.canva-apps-staging.com	PRS002/PRS003	bucket	pass	No residual data found

Key takeaways



1

Design for everything, build for **one thing.**

2

Focus on the **crown jewels**, identify the non-negotiables and start there.

3

Decoupling: Hard-coding policy is **debt-trap.**

4

Play to your **strengths.**



Enoch Leow, Jessica Hu, Doaa Gomaa, Wageesha Gunasena, Xushen Ma, Saeed Attar

Thank you!



Activity simulation

```
Background:  
  Given I am signed out  
  And I visit the login page  
  Then I can see the auth panel  
  And I can see the header on the login page  
  And I can see the primary auth options panel  
  And I can see the auth options form in the primary auth options panel  
  And I accept all cookies if prompted  
  
Scenario: I sign up with an email and OTP code  
  # Oauth Form  
  When I click the continue with email button in the auth options form  
  Then I can see the continue with account panel in the auth panel  
  And I can see the continue with account form in the continue with account panel  
  And I can see the account field label in the continue with account form  
  
  # Continue Form  
  When I type privacy audit tester email into the account field on the continue with account form  
  And I click the continue button on the continue with account form  
  And I wait for 1s  
  
  # Signup step  
  Then I can see the account password signup panel in the auth panel  
  And I can see the account information signup form in the account information signup panel  
  And I type privacy audit tester info into the display name field on the account information signup form  
  And I click the signup button on the account information signup form  
  And I wait for 1s  
  And I can see the code verification panel in the auth panel  
  And I can see the code verification form in the code verification panel  
  When I wait for the code verification form to be submittable  
  And I want to retrieve email for privacy audit tester  
  And I type the otp code for privacy audit tester into the verification code field form  
  And I wait for 1s  
  Then I am redirected to the logged in homepage  
  And I wait for 3s  
  And I saved the request context
```

