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Breaking Down the Four Pillars of AI for Intermodal: Applied AI

Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 1:30 PM ET

Thank you for joining us.
The program will begin shortly.

Housekeeping

- Audience will be muted
- A question & answer session will follow the presentation
- Submit questions by clicking the Q&A icon at the bottom of your screen
- A recording of this webinar, including the slides, will be available in about a week on our website: Education On-demand

Today's Presenters

Chris Machut

Mark McKendry

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WARNING
This is interactive.
Please participate.

Session Agenda

- Applied AI / Physical AI for Intermodal
  - How AI becomes real in the field
- See
- Move
- Inspect
- Coordinate

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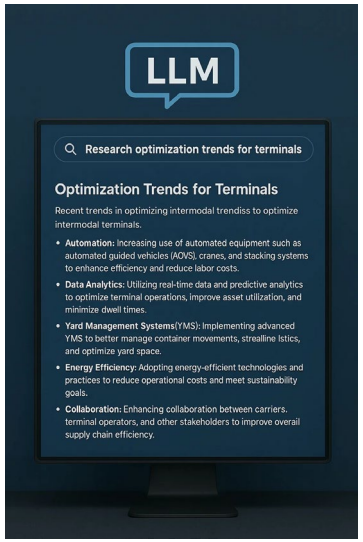
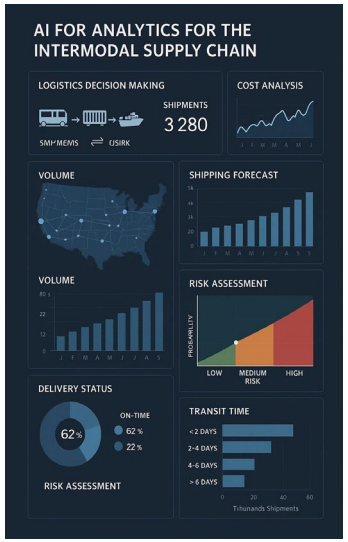
FOUR PILLARS RECAP

Pillars of AI for Intermodal



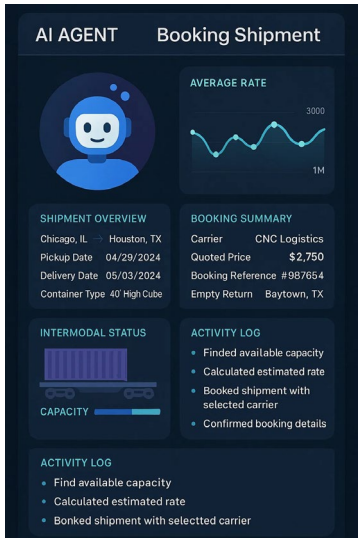
LLMs

Large Language Models i.e. ChatGPT for content generation and research.



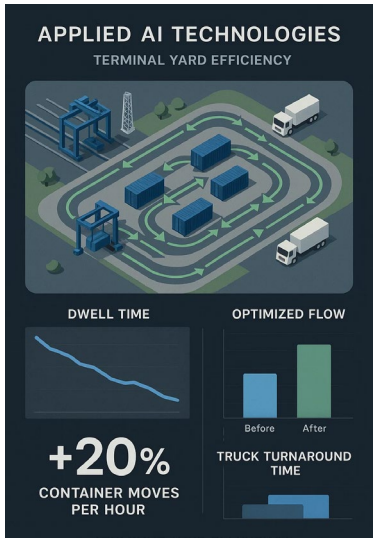
AI for Analytics

AIs capable of complex insights for forecasting and decision making.



AI Agents

Interactive AIs that can communicate and execute tasks independently.



Applied AI Tech

Action based AIs for automation and critical digital thinking to accomplish complex tasks.

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What we mean by Physical AI

The signal layer between operations and automation

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SECTION 1: SEE

SEE - turns field reality into usable signals

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What does “SEE” mean?

A picture is not a signal

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SiteTrax.io Drone Video

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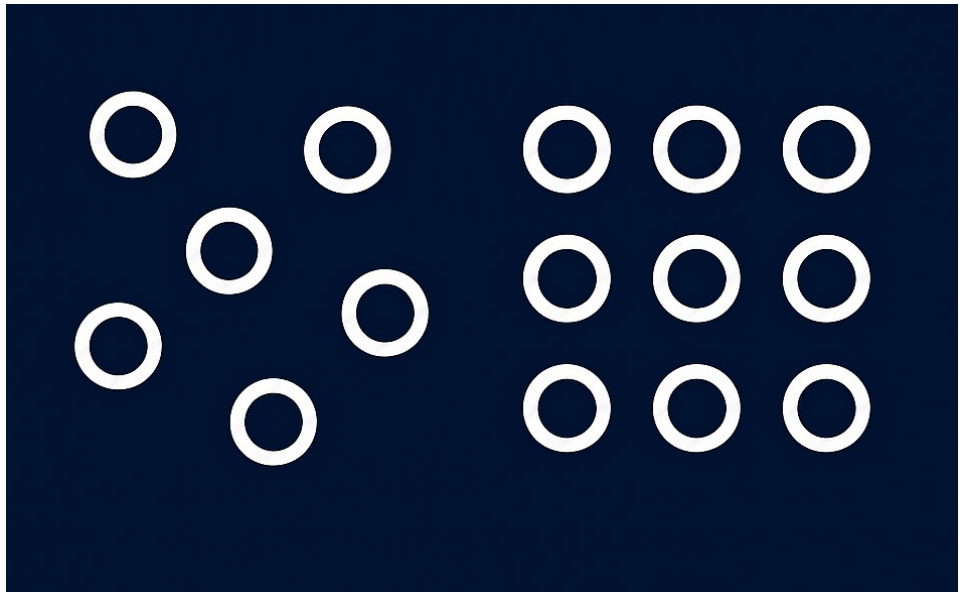
Why “SEE” is hard

Field conditions break clean demos first



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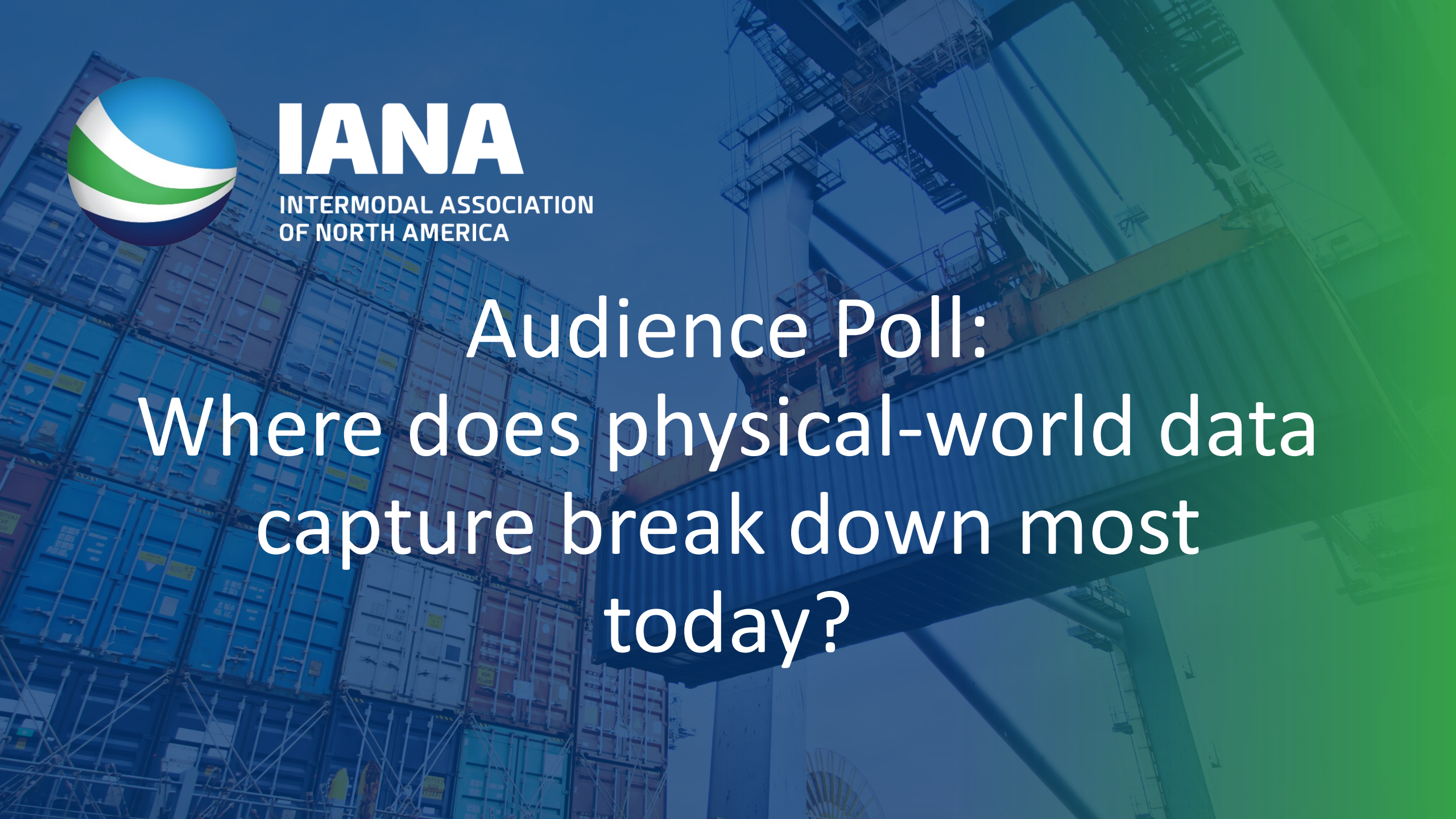
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Audience Poll:
Where does physical-world data capture break down most today?

SEE - Takeaways

Design for messy reality, not demo conditions

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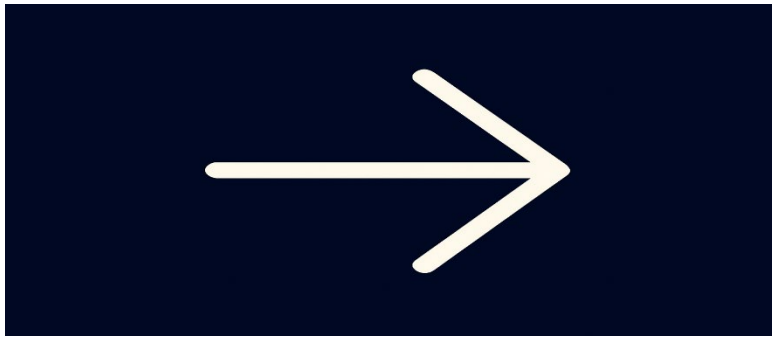
SECTION 2: MOVE

MOVE is where AI begins to affect operations



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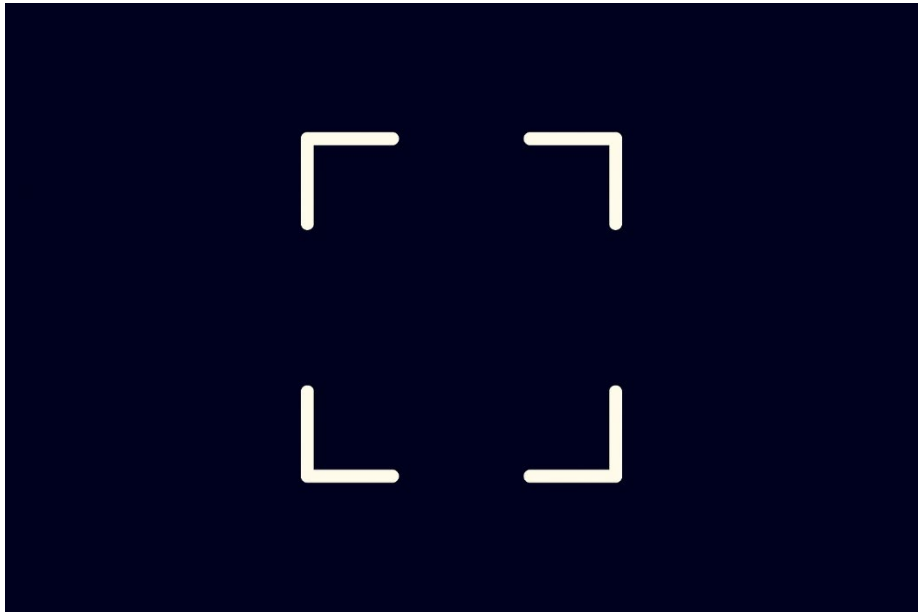
What “MOVE” means in practice

Movement AI works best in narrow, structured tasks



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Boston Dynamics Stretch

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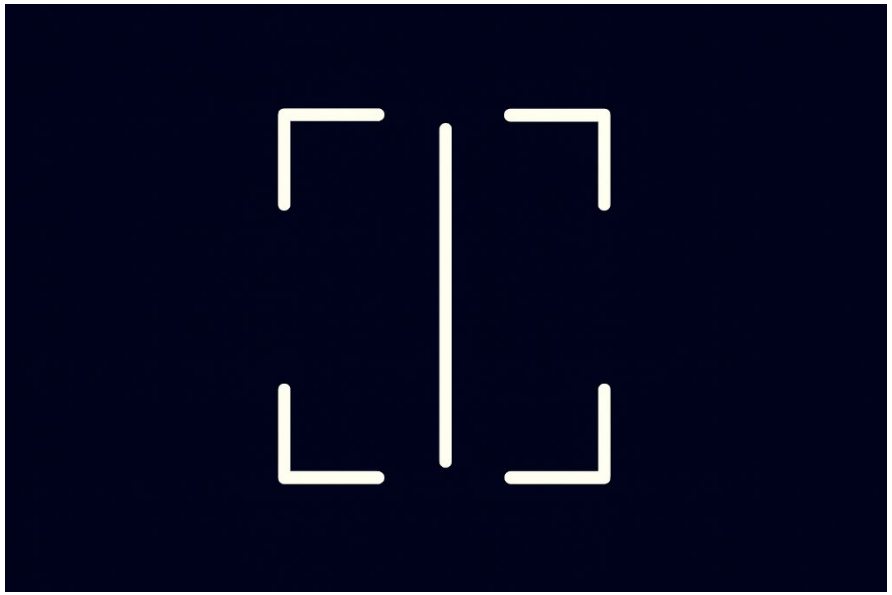
Useful Now vs. Still Early

Movement AI is useful now in constrained environments



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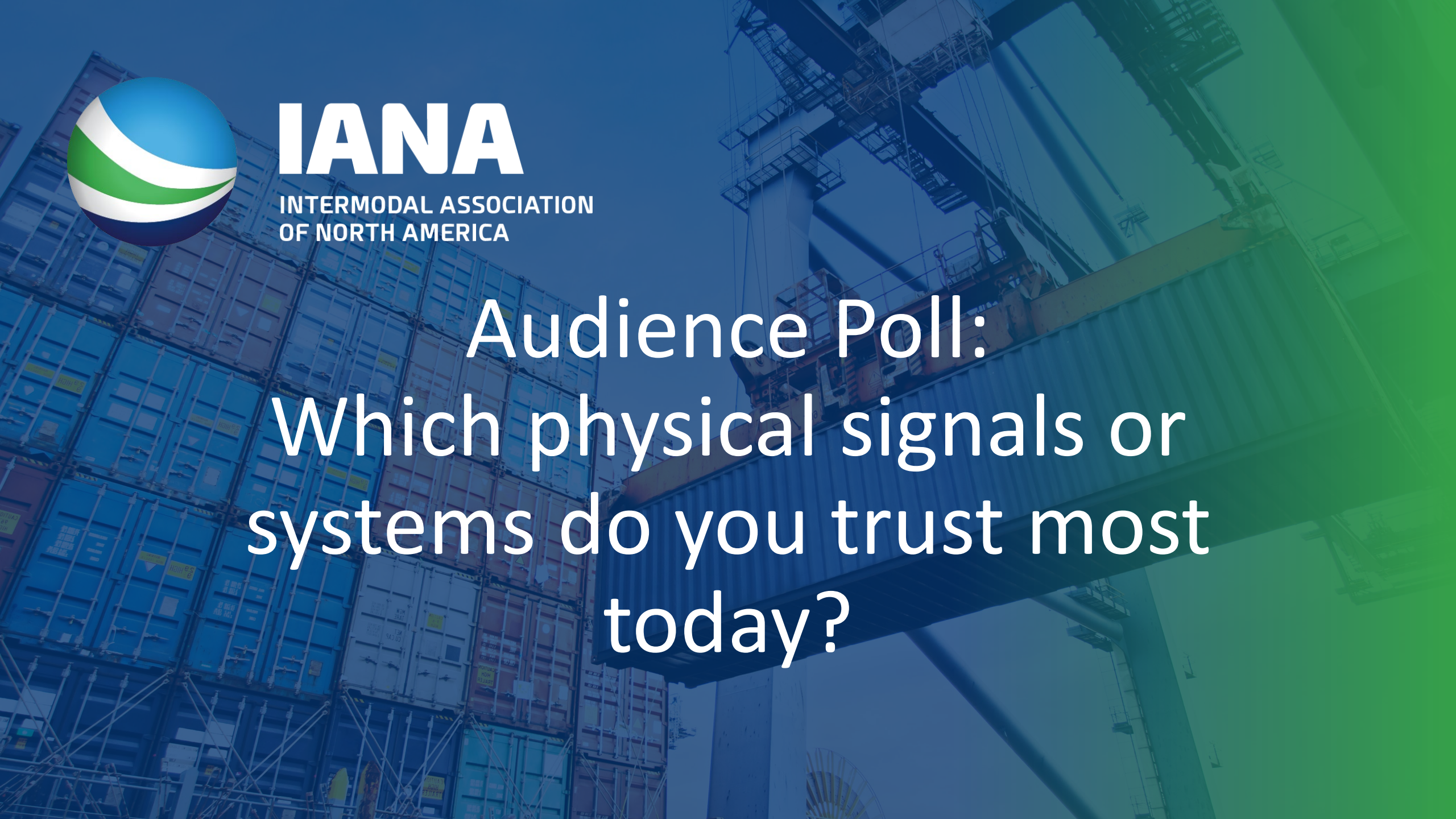
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Audience Poll:
Which physical signals or systems do you trust most today?

MOVE - Takeaways

Start with narrow,
high-confidence use cases

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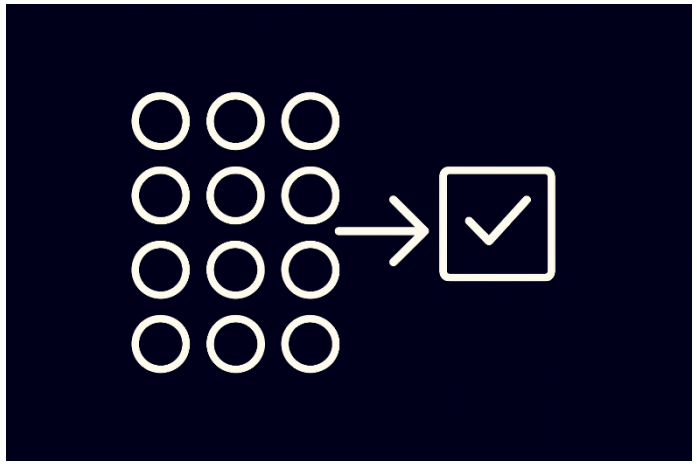
SECTION 3: INSPECT

INSPECT

- Condition, exceptions, and proof
- Turns observations into operational proof



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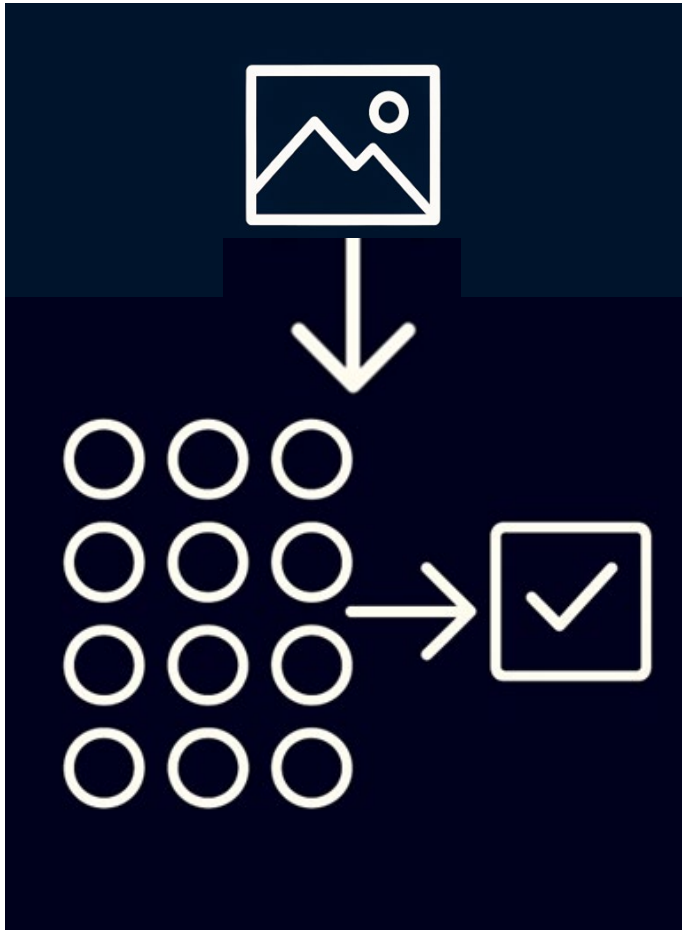
What “INSPECT” means

From image capture to operational proof



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Norfolk Southern Vision AI

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Why inspection AI is hard

Outcomes require trusted signals

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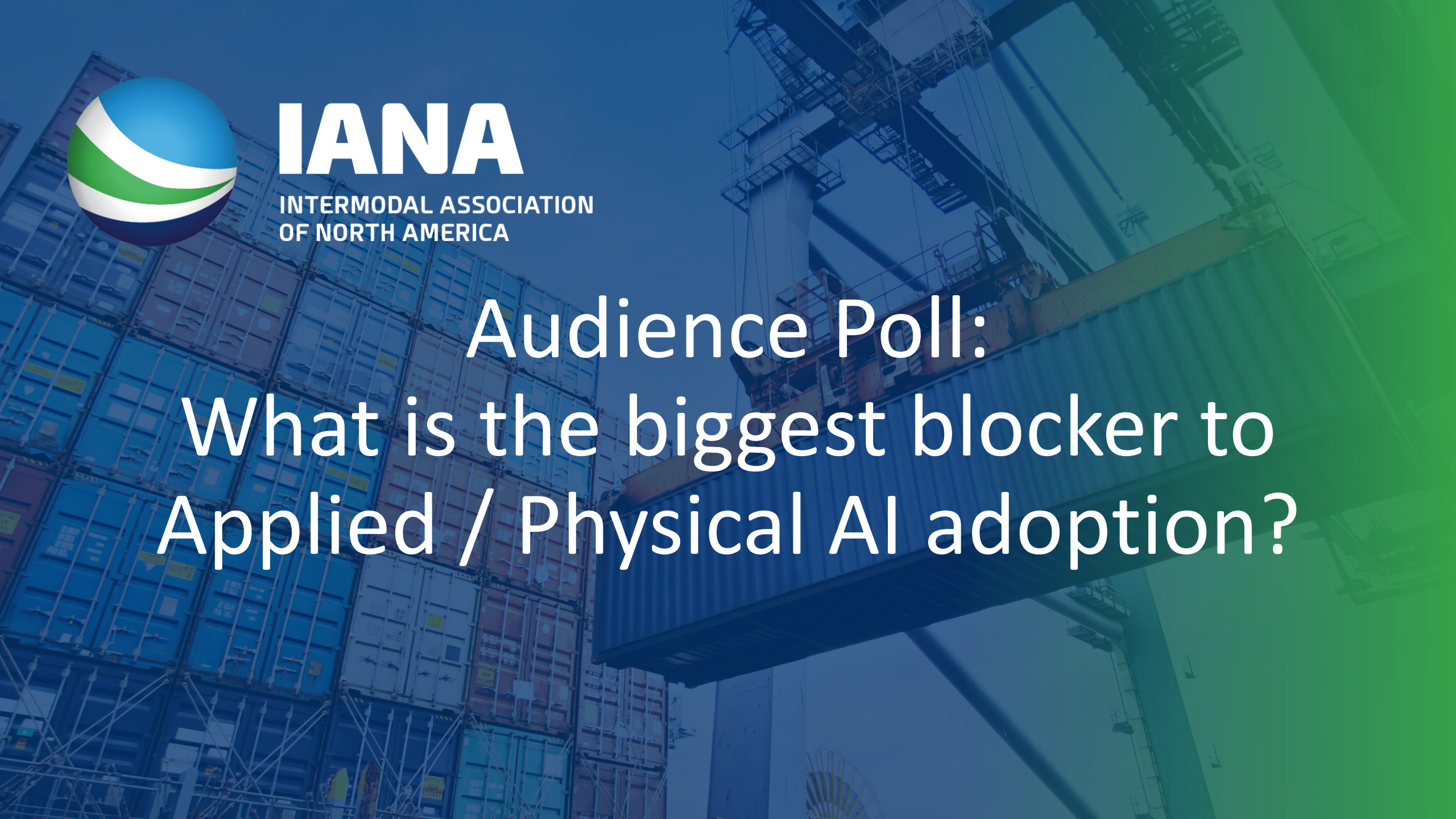
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Audience Poll:
What is the biggest blocker to
Applied / Physical AI adoption?

INSPECT - Takeaways

Prioritize trust, auditability, and proof over flashy demos

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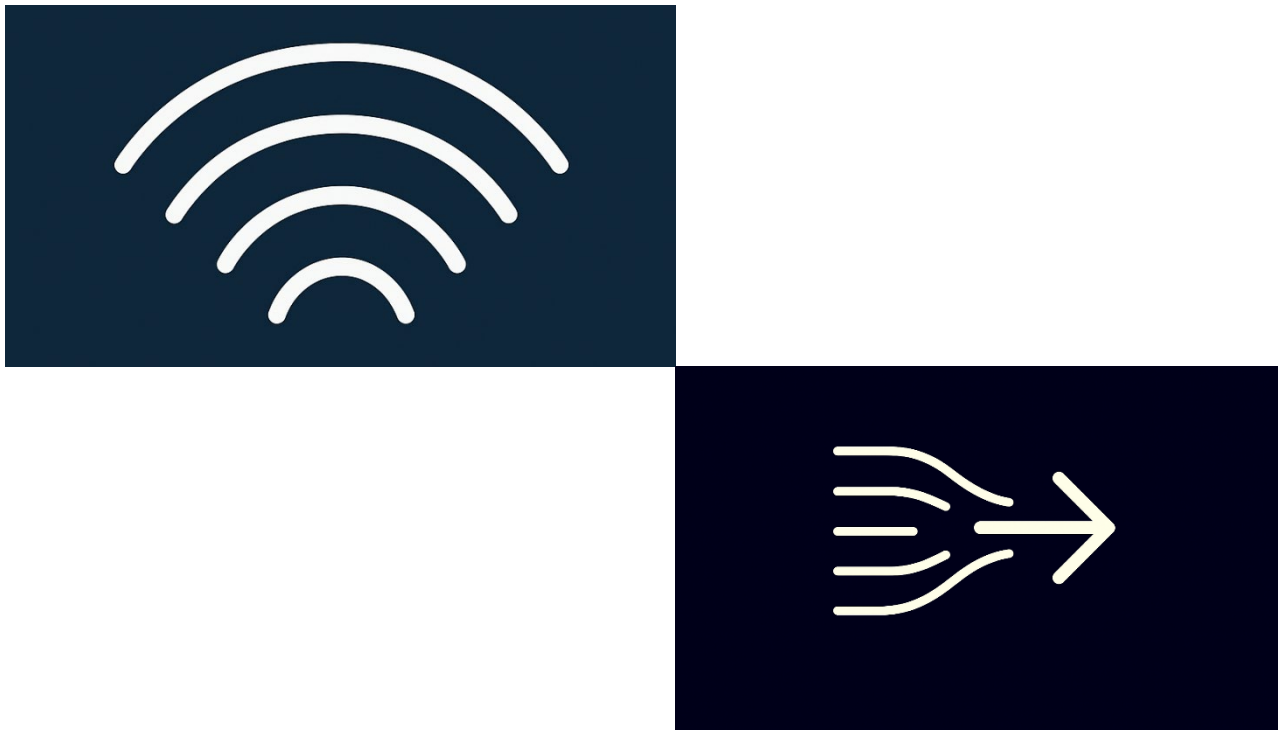
SECTION 4: COORDINATE

COORDINATE turns signals into action



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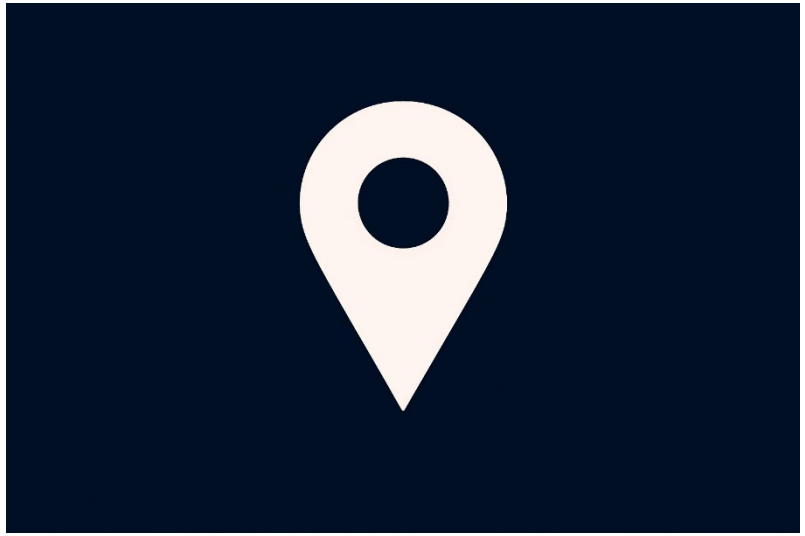
Signals need a next action

Signals matter only when they trigger the next action



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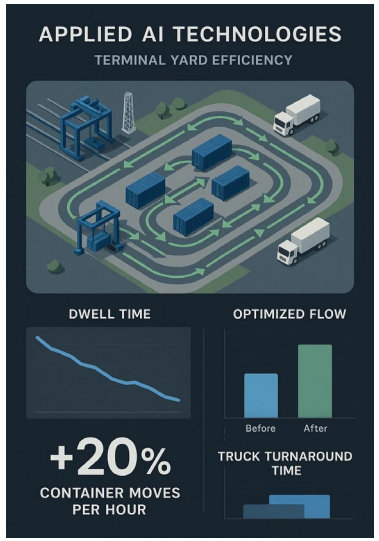
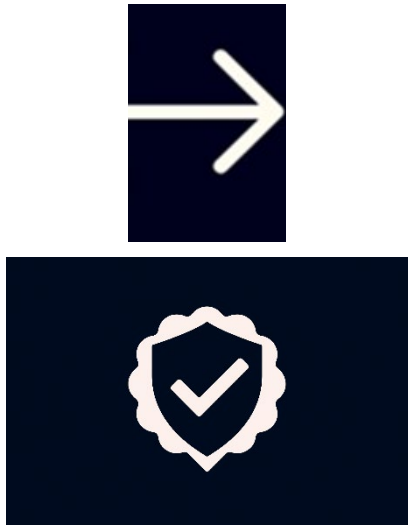
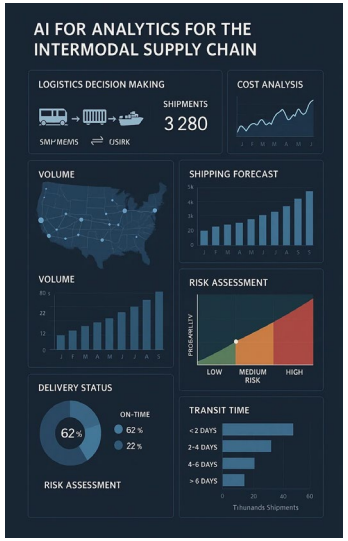
Why this pillar matters to the whole series

Physical AI makes analytics and agents credible in the field

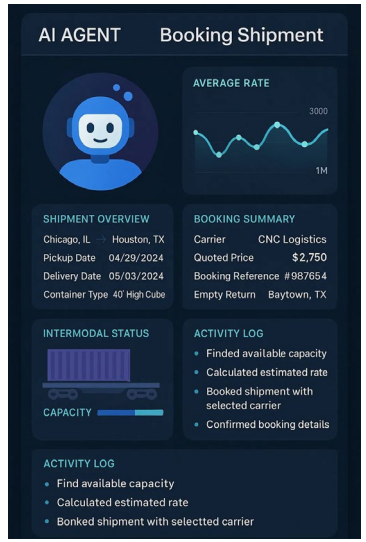


Physical AI





AI for Analytics



AI Agents

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Atlas Robot

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Trust but verify

Real deployment requires governance, control, and human override

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Synthesis and Recommendations

From poll results to practical guidance

What the audience told us

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Final recommended practices

AI Volume 1 - May 2026

1. Design for messy reality, not demo conditions
2. Start with narrow, high-confidence use cases
3. Treat trust and auditability as requirements
4. Use physical signals to reduce ambiguity, not add noise
5. Connect signals to workflows, not just dashboards
6. Blend human judgment with AI escalation and override
7. Measure operational usefulness, not just technical accuracy
8. Build around the signals your organization already trusts most

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Key takeaways and close

AI becomes useful when the signal becomes trustworthy

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Q&A

IANA Announcements

- IANA's Intermodal Business Meeting Registration is now open! Join us in New Orleans from May 4-6: Business Meeting
- Register now for IANA's Intermodal EXPO in Long Beach, Sept 14-16
- Register for upcoming webinars in our 2026 Intermodal Insights Virtual Education Program @ intermodal.org/upcoming-education

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Thank you for joining us!

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Applied AI for Intermodal: Practical Takeaways for Operations Teams

Applied AI becomes useful when a real-world event turns into a signal the operation trusts enough to use.
In intermodal, that means better visibility, better proof, better workflow triggers, and better decisions.

Use this framework with your team

Area	What it means	Good use cases	Questions to ask your team	Practical takeaway
SEE	Turn field reality into usable signals	Gate capture, equipment/container ID, location confirmation, handoff visibility, missing/delayed events	Where are we still relying on someone to notice something manually? Where do we collect data but still not trust it? Where do blind spots create delay or rework?	Design for messy reality, not ideal conditions. Lighting, weather, obstruction, bad angles, damaged markings, and inconsistent process are where systems succeed or fail.
MOVE	Use AI to influence physical activity safely and usefully	Guided movement, repetitive equipment motion, bounded autonomous tasks, structured handoff zones	Which tasks are repetitive and bounded? Where is the motion clearly defined? Where could automation reduce waste without adding unacceptable risk?	Start narrow. Pick one clearly defined use case where the signal is strong, the environment is controlled, and the outcome is measurable.
INSPECT	Turn capture into proof and accountability	Damage/condition documentation, exception validation, proof-of-event, audit support for disputes or claims	Which events need proof, not just visibility? Where do we need evidence for a claim, exception, or escalation? If AI misses something, who owns the decision?	Proof matters more than novelty. The output must be clear enough, reviewable enough, and trusted enough to support accountability.
COORDINATE	Turn trusted signals into the next action	Alerts, tasks, exception escalation, workflow status updates, routing for human review	Once the signal appears, what happens next? Who is notified? What action is triggered? What is the fallback when confidence is low?	A signal becomes valuable when it changes what happens next. If it stops at a dashboard, it is interesting. If it enters workflow, it becomes operational.

What Applied AI is — and is not

It is

- The signal layer between operations & automation
- A way to make real-world events visible & usable
- A tool for proof, trust, auditability, & workflow execution
- A practical path to better operations

It is not

- Sci-fi or humanoid robotics
- Abstract AI philosophy
- A replacement for people
- A flashy demo without operational follow-through

What to do in the next 30 days

Step	What to do	Output
1. Pick one signal problem	Start with one operational problem where the signal is weak, delayed, or disputed. Good candidates: gate events, asset ID capture, inspection proof, operator/mobile event capture, exception documentation.	One clearly defined use case
2. Define the minimum useful signal	Decide what the signal must include to be useful: event type, time, location, asset/equipment ID, confidence level, owner of next step.	Shared definition of a "usable signal"
3. Connect the signal to one workflow	Decide what the signal should do: trigger inspection review, create a task, change status, alert an operator, or hold an exception for human verification.	One workflow tied to one signal
4. Build trust and auditability in from the start	Define how the event is logged, reviewed, overridden, escalated, and owned when the system is wrong or uncertain.	Governance and exception path
5. Measure usefulness, not just accuracy	Track reduced ambiguity, fewer manual touches, faster exception handling, better documentation quality, fewer disputes, and increased trust in action.	Operational success metrics

Five questions for your next team meeting

Question	Why it matters
1. Where are we still guessing?	Reveals weak or missing signals
2. Which of those gaps actually matters?	Focuses effort on real operational or financial pain
3. What is the first narrow use case worth solving?	Prevents over-scoping
4. What action should a trusted signal trigger?	Forces workflow design, not just dashboards
5. How will we govern, review, and override it?	Builds trust and accountability early

Final takeaway

AI becomes useful when the signal becomes trustworthy.

Use that standard with your team. If a capability improves trust, proof, visibility, and action, it is probably worth testing. If it only looks impressive in a demo, it is probably not ready for operations.

Let's Continue the Conversation

Chris Machut, CEO, SiteTrax.io linkedin.com/in/chrismachut/