

#FABCONSQLCON2026

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**ATLANTA** MARCH 16 - 20, 2026



# Designing for The Right User

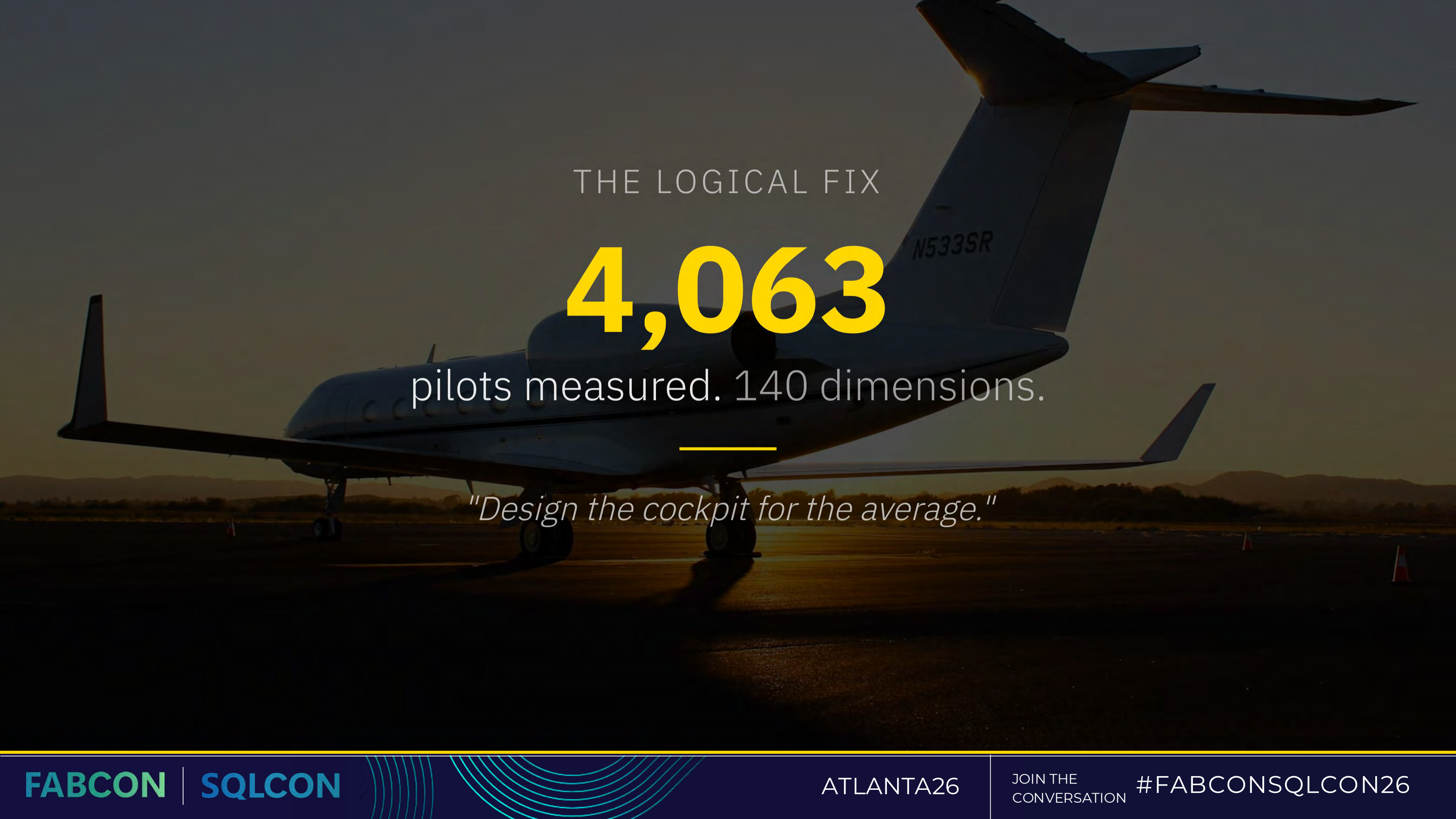
Why User Personas are the  
Secret to Better Power BI  
Reports

Elena Drakulevska



# 1940s.

Planes are advancing. Pilots keep crashing.



THE LOGICAL FIX

4,063

pilots measured. 140 dimensions.

*"Design the cockpit for the average."*

How many pilots actually fit the average?

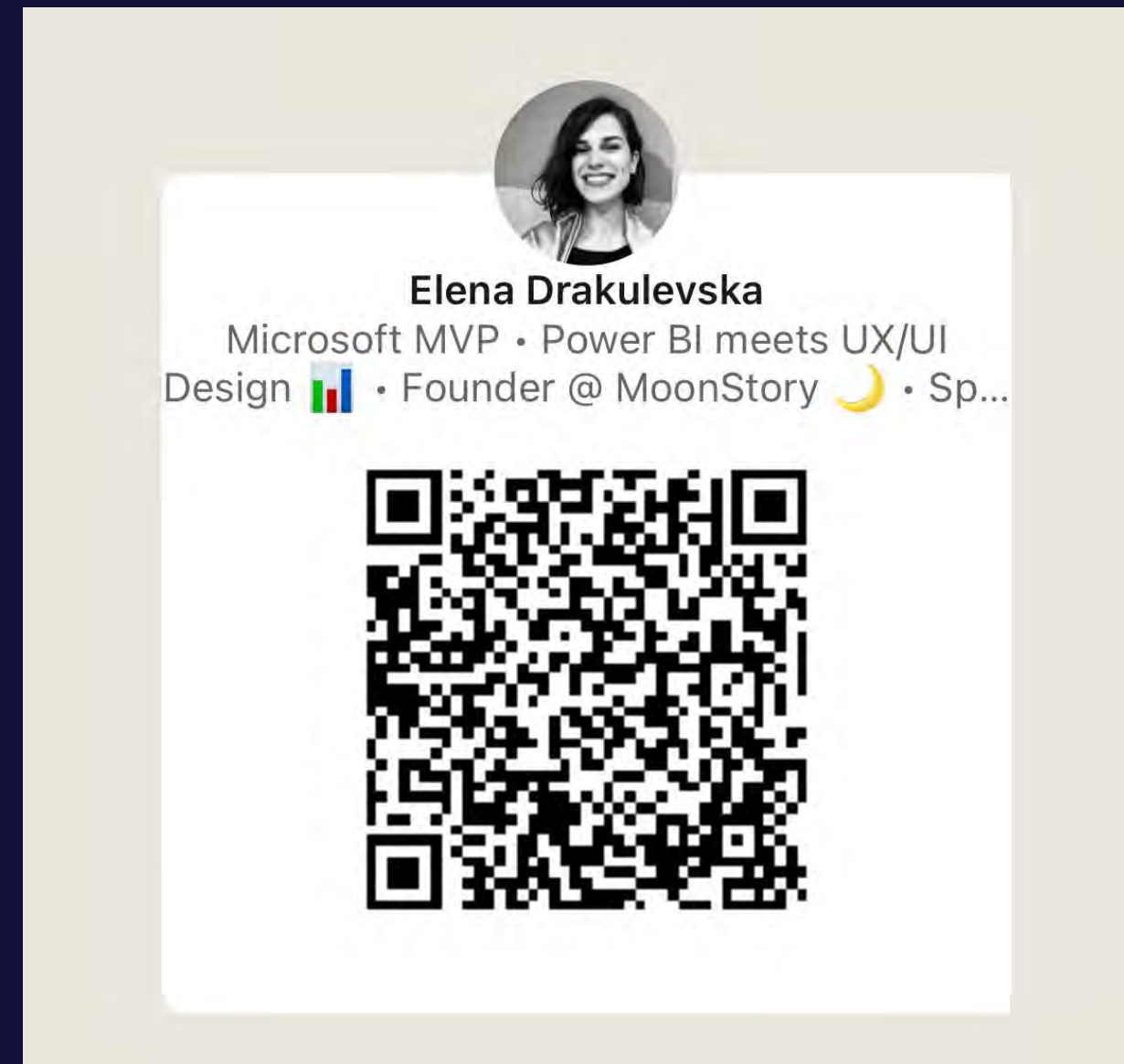
**Zero.**

*Designing for the average = designing for no one.*



# Elena Drakulevska

## BI & UX Consultant





# Your report has **failed**.

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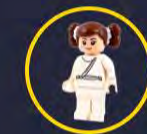
But not because you're bad at design.

Because it was built for the **wrong user**.

# The **One-Size-Fits-All** Problem



One report for everyone = nobody's happy



The CEO sees too much detail



The analyst can't drill down



The ops manager can't find actions



The explorer gets a static wall



# The solution? **Know your audience.**

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Different users need different things from the same data.  
**Personas** help you design for each one.

Layout

Detail Level

Interactions

MEET THE PERSONAS

EPISODE I

# THE USER AWAKENS



**Leia**

The Strategic Leader



**Han**

The Action Taker



**C-3PO**

The Precision  
Specialist



**R2-D2**

The Operations  
Guardian



**Yoda**

The Wisdom Seeker



**Vader**

The Control Master



# Princess Leia

## The Strategic Leader

*"Are we on track to hit our strategic targets?"*

## Who is she?

The executive, VP, or director. She checks KPIs weekly before board reviews. She needs the **big picture**, not the noise.

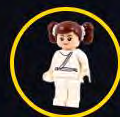
## What she needs

👁️ Track strategic targets & drive decisions fast

📈 Trends, YoY comparisons, and forecasts

📊 Clean, actionable dashboards, not the noise

⚠️ Anti-pattern: Overloading dashboards with detail instead of surfacing strategic insights



# Designing for Leia

## The Strategic Leader's Dashboard

### Layout

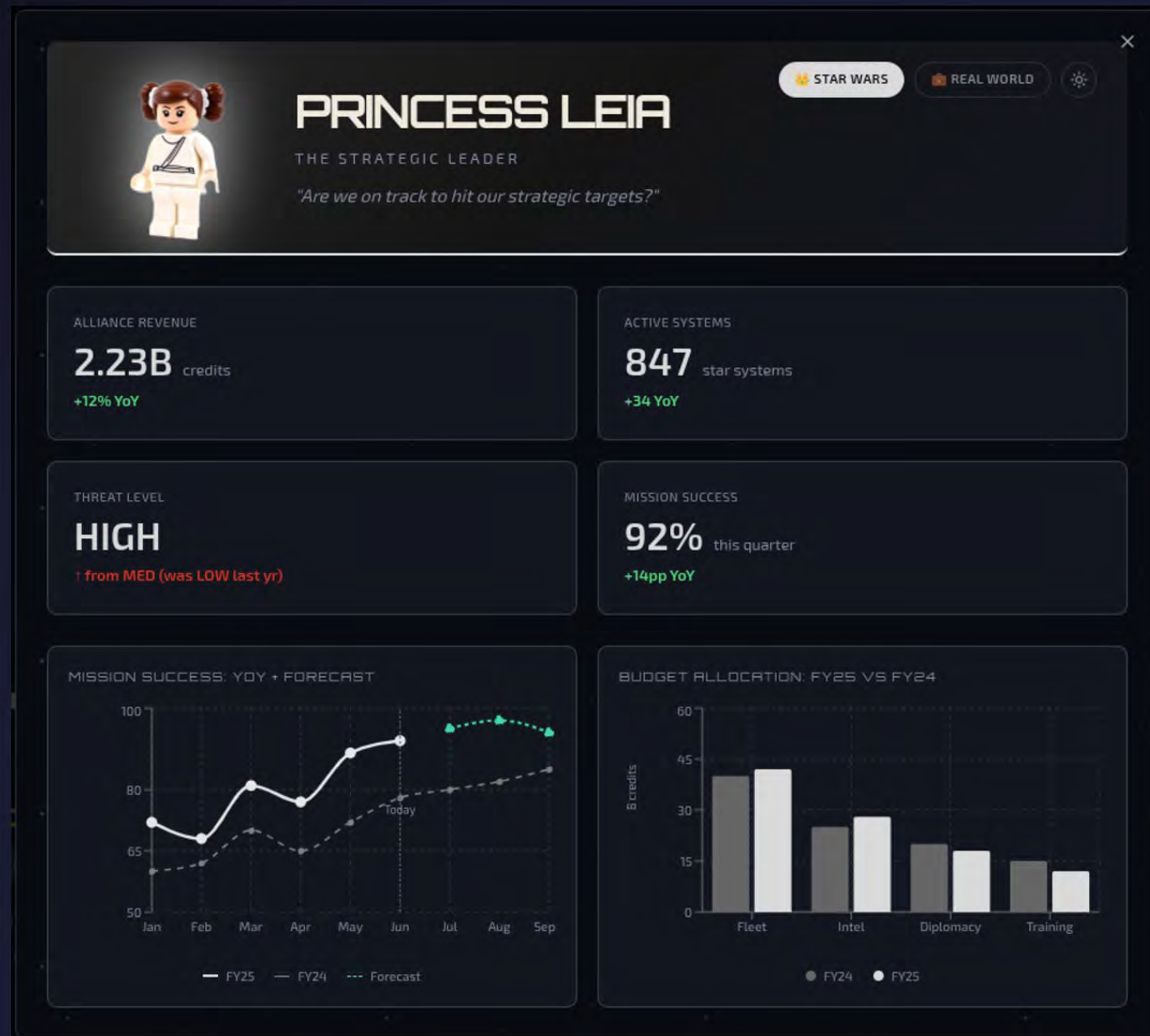
- KPI cards at the top
- Trend charts front & center
- Single-page executive view

### Detail Level

- Aggregated metrics only
- Period-over-period comparisons
- RAG status indicators

### Interactions

- Minimal clicks required
- Date slicer only
- Auto-refresh subscriptions





## Han Solo

### The Action Taker

*"What needs my attention  
RIGHT NOW?"*

## Who is he?

The ops manager, team lead, or field supervisor. Han checks alerts multiple times a day. He **spots fires and acts** before it's too late.

## What he needs

⚠ Alerts and exceptions: what's off?

☑ Actionable items: what to fix NOW

⚡ Quick filters to his area of responsibility

⚠ Anti-pattern: Burying critical alerts in multi-page reports with no mobile access



# Designing for Han

## The Action Taker's Dashboard

### Layout

- Alert banner at top
- Exception-based visuals
- Priority-sorted lists

### Detail Level

- Show what's WRONG, not right
- Threshold-based highlighting
- SLA breaches prominent

### Interactions

- Quick filters by region/team
- Drill-through to details
- Data alerts via email



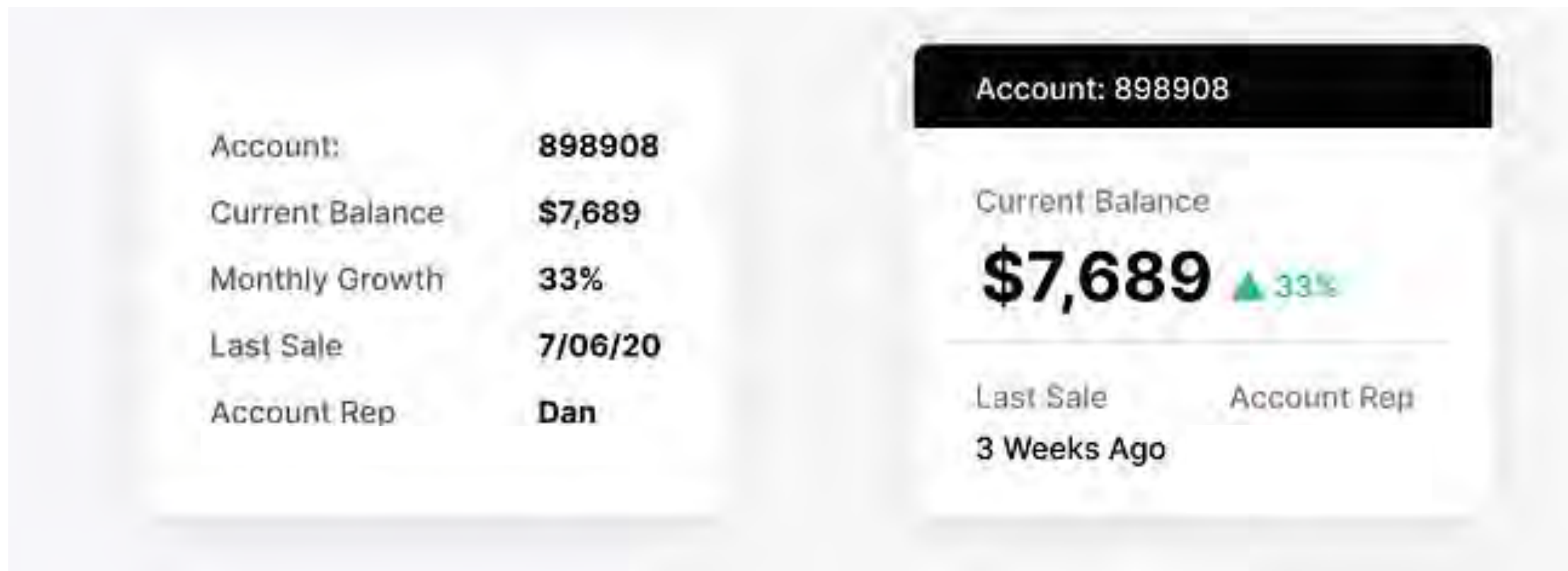
And you will read this last.

# You will read this first.

## And then you will read this.

Then this one.

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Account:        | <b>898908</b>  |
| Current Balance | <b>\$7,689</b> |
| Monthly Growth  | <b>33%</b>     |
| Last Sale       | <b>7/06/20</b> |
| Account Rep     | <b>Dan</b>     |



A

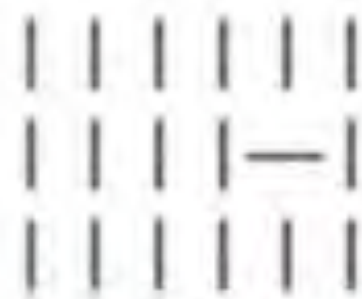
B



Length



Width



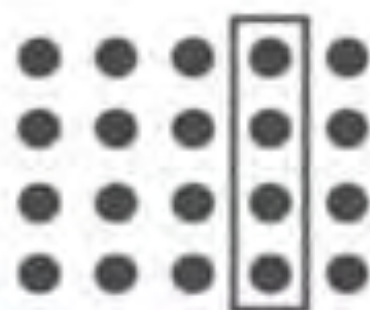
Orientation



Size



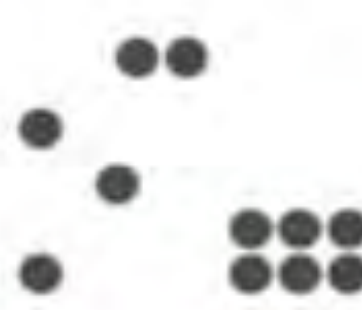
Shape



Enclosure



Position



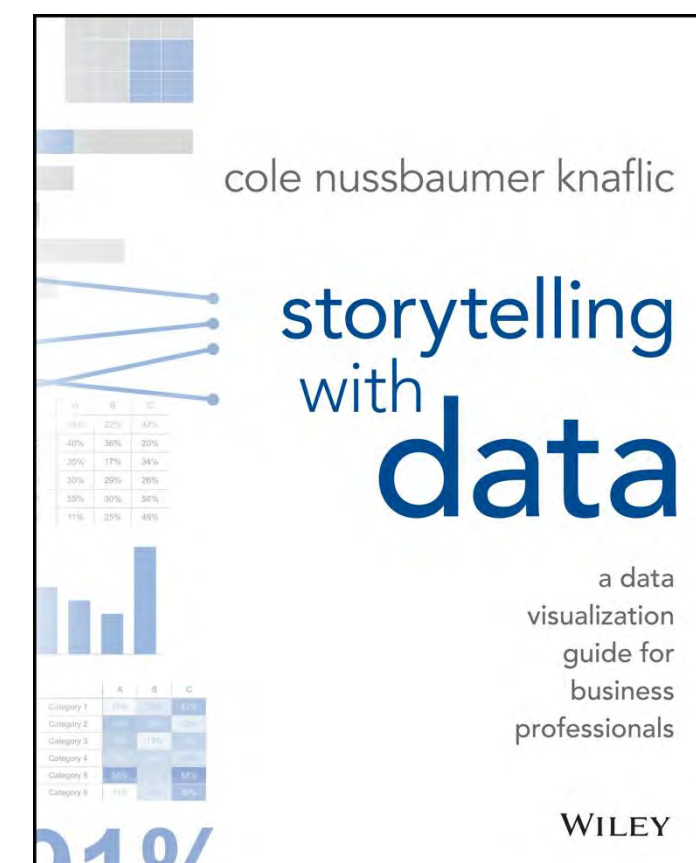
Grouping



Color Hue



Color Intensity





## C-3PO

### The Precision Specialist

*"Sir, I must insist, this KPI requires precise interpretation."*

## Who is he?

The financial analyst, data team member, or auditor. C-3PO checks reports daily for discrepancies. He ensures **every metric is accurate** and audit-ready.

## What he needs

📊 Decimals, tooltips, and field definitions

📄 Consistent naming and data dictionary

📄 Export for full transparency

⚠️ Anti-pattern: Only showing summary charts with no way to see raw data



# Designing for C-3PO

The Precision Specialist's Dashboard

## Layout

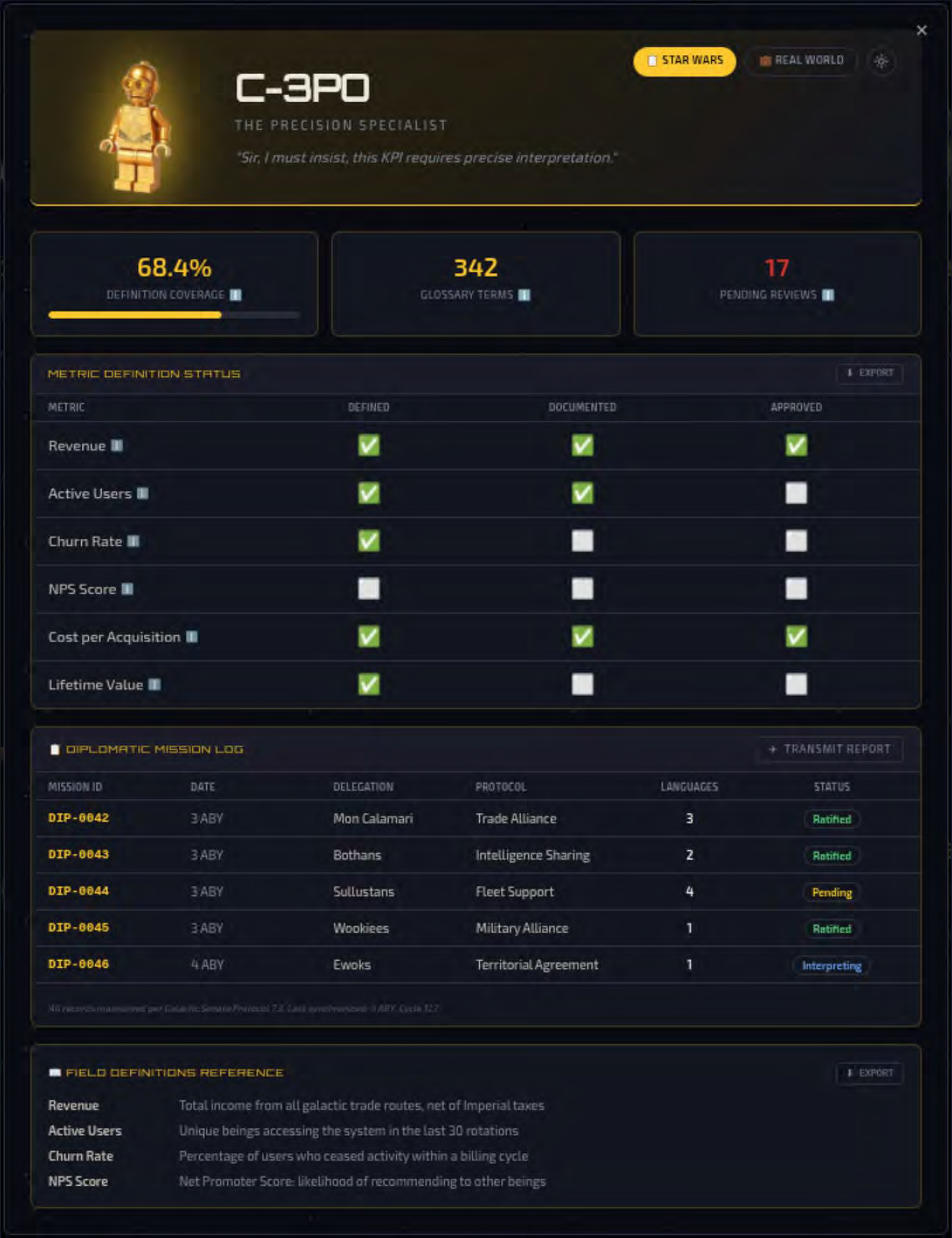
- Precise KPI cards with decimals
- Multi-page report structure
- Matrix visuals with hierarchies

## Detail Level

- Field definitions & data dictionary
- Variance calculations shown
- Audit-trail ready

## Interactions

- Export to Excel is a MUST
- Advanced slicers (multi-select)
- Paginated report option



METRIC DEFINITION STATUS

EXPORT

| METRIC               | DEFINED | DOCUMENTED | APPROVED |
|----------------------|---------|------------|----------|
| Revenue              | ✓       | ✓          | ✓        |
| Active Users         | ✓       | ✓          | ✗        |
| Churn Rate           | ✓       | ✗          | ✗        |
| NPS Score            | ✗       | ✗          | ✗        |
| Cost per Acquisition | ✓       | ✓          | ✓        |
| Lifetime Value       | ✓       | ✗          | ✗        |

DIPLOMATIC MISSION LOG

TRANSMIT REPORT

| MISSION ID | DATE  | DELEGATION   | PROTOCOL              | LANGUAGES | STATUS       |
|------------|-------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------|
| DIP-0042   | 3 ABY | Mon Calamari | Trade Alliance        | 3         | Retified     |
| DIP-0043   | 3 ABY | Bothans      | Intelligence Sharing  | 2         | Retified     |
| DIP-0044   | 3 ABY | Sullustans   | Fleet Support         | 4         | Pending      |
| DIP-0045   | 3 ABY | Wookiees     | Military Alliance     | 1         | Retified     |
| DIP-0046   | 4 ABY | Ewoks        | Territorial Agreement | 1         | Interpreting |

All records maintained per Galactic Senate Protocol 7.3. Last synchronized: 0 ABY, Cycle 127.

FIELD DEFINITIONS REFERENCE

EXPORT

|              |                                                                    |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Revenue      | Total income from all galactic trade routes, net of Imperial taxes |
| Active Users | Unique beings accessing the system in the last 30 rotations        |
| Churn Rate   | Percentage of users who ceased activity within a billing cycle     |
| NPS Score    | Net Promoter Score: likelihood of recommending to other beings     |



## R2-D2

### The Operations Guardian

*"Beep boop... something's off.  
Let's fix it!"*

## Who is R2?

The systems admin, data engineer, or ops specialist. R2 checks dashboards hourly for anomalies. He **keeps systems running** with zero downtime.

## What R2 needs

📶 Real-time system health & pipeline status

🔑 Drill-throughs and diagnostic tables

⬇️ Export options to fix problems fast

⚠️ Anti-pattern: No drill-through paths or system integration for root-cause diagnosis



# Designing for R2-D2

The Operations Guardian's Dashboard

## Layout

- Real-time status indicators
- Pipeline health monitors
- Quick-action buttons

## Detail Level

- Latency and refresh timestamps
- Health % per pipeline
- Row counts and model size

## Interactions

- Drill-through to root cause
- Refresh & run diagnostics
- Real-time auto-refresh





# Darth Vader

## The Control Master

*"I find your lack of real-time data... disturbing."*

## Who is he?

The stakeholder who demands total visibility. Vader is a consumer, but will force-choke you if the numbers are wrong. He checks **live dashboards continuously** and expects complete control over every metric in real-time.

## What he needs

- 👁 Total visibility over every metric in real-time
- 🛡 Master filters with complete control over every dimension
- 🔒 Drill-through paths to details on demand

⚠ Anti-pattern: Incomplete data with no master filters: Vader can't drill into details on demand



# Designing for Vader

## The Control Master's Dashboard



### Layout

- Master filters at top
- Live alerts panel
- Department summary grid



### Detail Level

- Total visibility over every metric
- Real-time data, no delays
- Efficiency % per department



### Interactions

- Drill-through on every visual
- Region/time/priority slicers
- Complete control over all dimensions





# Redemption

The Light Side

## From Vader to **Anakin** 🌕

They're not evil. They control because they care. They demand because they're responsible.

- ✓ Start where they are. Give them the control they crave.
- ✓ Show them that less can be MORE.
- ✓ The right 5 metrics beat the wrong 50.
- ✓ Trust your team with clear data, not filters and fear.



# Design Principles Per Persona

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Same data. Different layouts.  
Different levels of detail. Different  
interactions.

## Layout

How info is arranged

## Detail

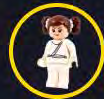
How much they see

## Interactions

How they navigate

# The Persona Matrix

Same data, five different designs

| Persona                                                                                          | Role           | Layout              | Detail Level      | Interactions      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|  <b>Leia</b>    | Strategist     | KPI cards + trends  | Aggregated only   | Minimal clicks    |
|  <b>Han</b>     | Action-Taker   | Alerts + exceptions | What's wrong      | Quick filters     |
|  <b>C-3PO</b>  | Analyst        | Dense tables        | Transaction-level | Export + drill    |
|  <b>R2-D2</b> | Explorer       | Flexible canvas     | On demand         | Everything clicks |
|  <b>Vader</b> | Control Master | Live dashboards     | Real-time metrics | Master filters    |



## Master Yoda

The Wisdom Seeker

*"In the data, patterns hide.  
Seek them, you must."*

# The **Persona-First** Design Process

**1 Interview your users**  
Ask them what decisions they make with data

**2 Map them to personas**  
Which Star Wars character are they?

**3 Design the right view**  
Layout, detail, interactions per persona

**4 Test with real users**  
Let them use it. Watch. Iterate.

# The **Dark Side** of Report Design

Don't fall to the dark side.



## Anti-Pattern

The Dark Side

- ✗ Building the report YOU want, not what users need
- ✗ Adding every metric "just in case"
- ✗ No clear visual hierarchy: everything looks the same
- ✗ Zero interactivity: a static PDF disguised as Power BI
- ✗ Ignoring mobile users entirely
- ✗ Never asking users what they actually need

# Your Pre-Build Checklist

Ask these questions BEFORE you build

✓ Who are the 2-3 main users of this report?

✓ What decisions do they make with this data?

✓ How often do they look at it? (Daily? Weekly? Monthly?)

✓ What level of detail do they need?

✓ Do they need to take action from this report?

✓ Are they on desktop, mobile, or both?

**"Know your audience before you design your report."**

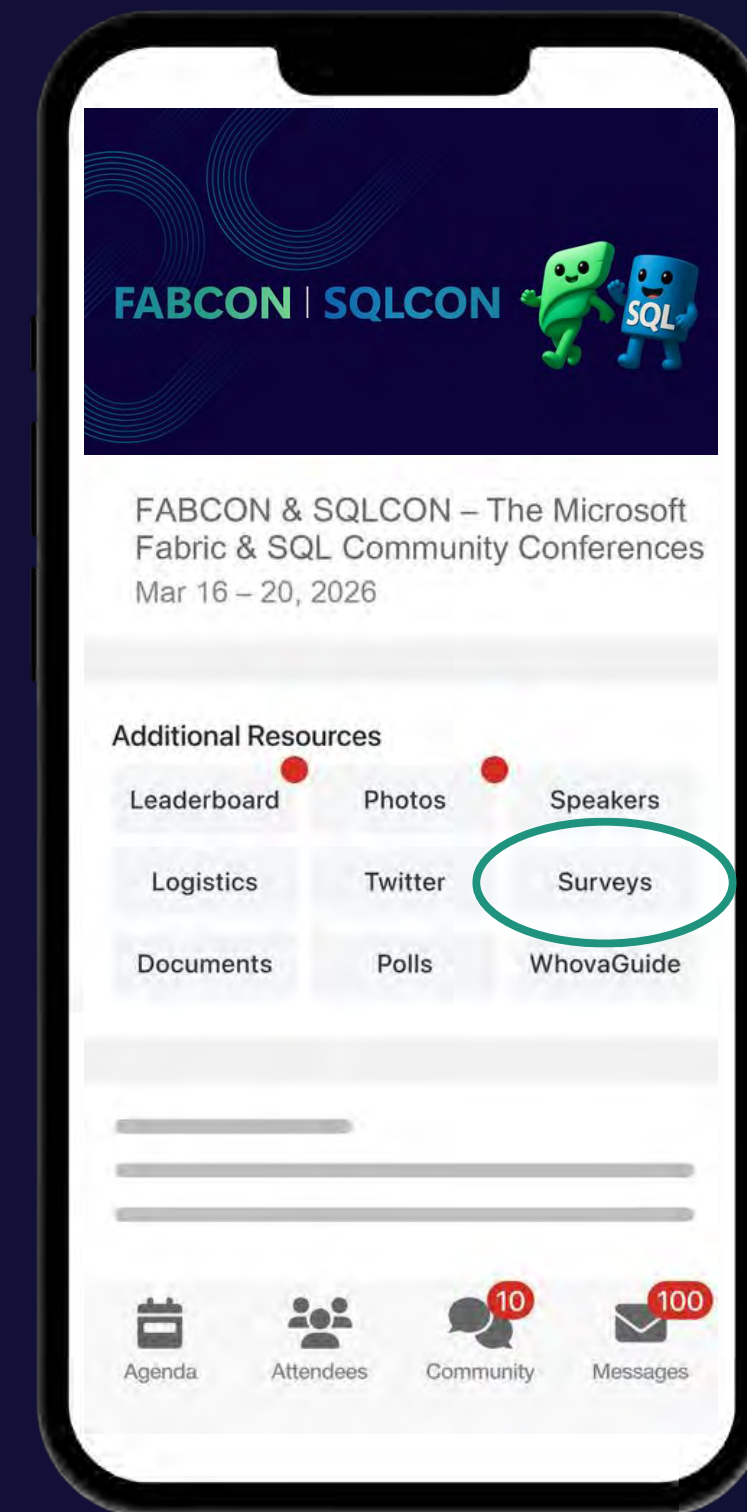


Join  
Mission Control

# How was the session?



Complete Session Surveys in  
*Uhova* for your chance to WIN  
PRIZES!

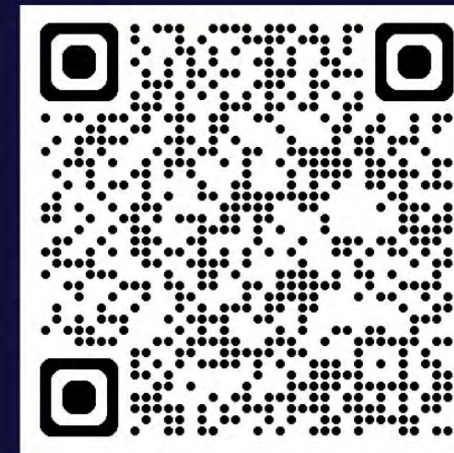


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# May the **Data** Be With You

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Design for the right user.  
Build reports that drive **confident decisions**.