

LEITMOTIV



Summer School 2026

Frankfurt, Germany



The boring stuff.

Safety

Food

All vegetarian. Warm lunch, snacks in between.

Toilets.

Chatham House Rules

Photos, Recordings, ...

The Summer School in 2023:



3 key takeaways from these two days



Your stories

Why are you here?

**What's the story of data centers
in your region?**

What have you learned personally
about data centers, digital economy
or otherwise?



**A story about a digital future that
could be.**



**A story about a digital future that
could be.
If we make it so.**



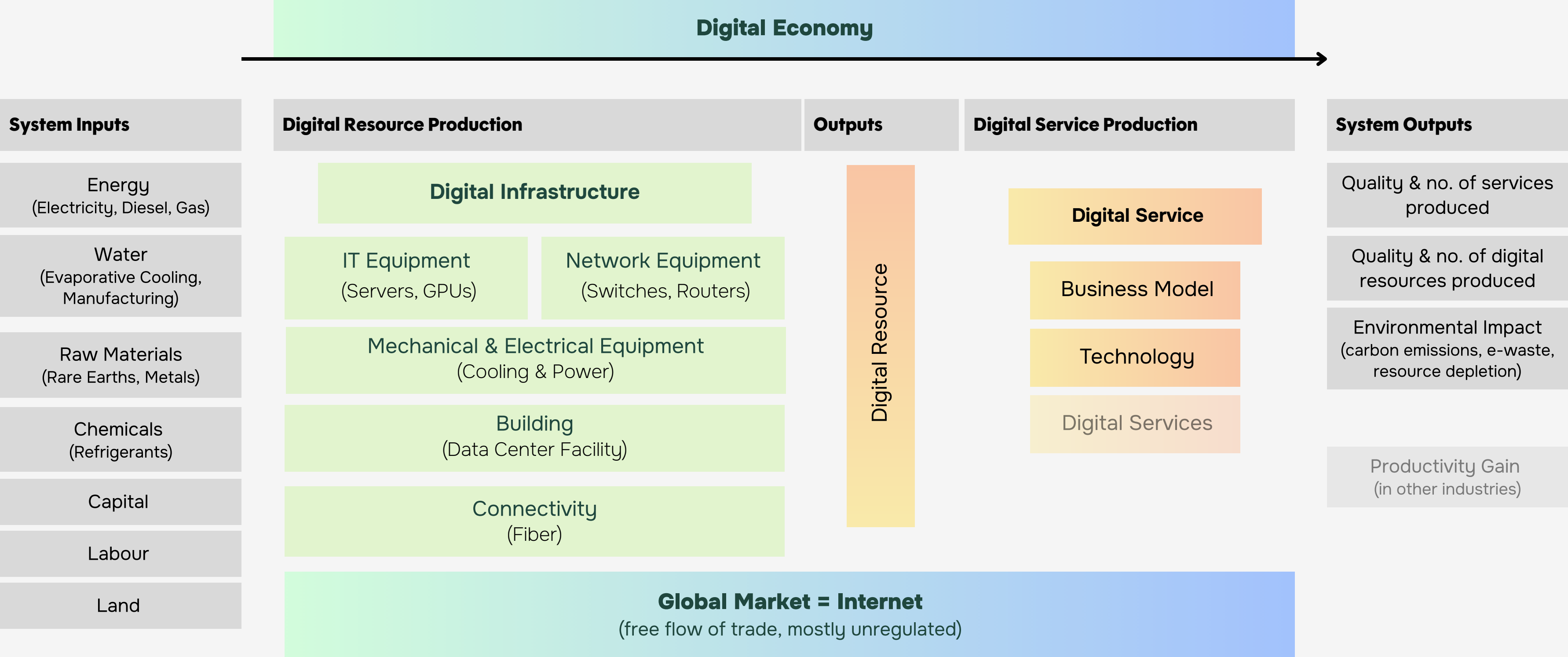
~~regional~~ digital infrastructure



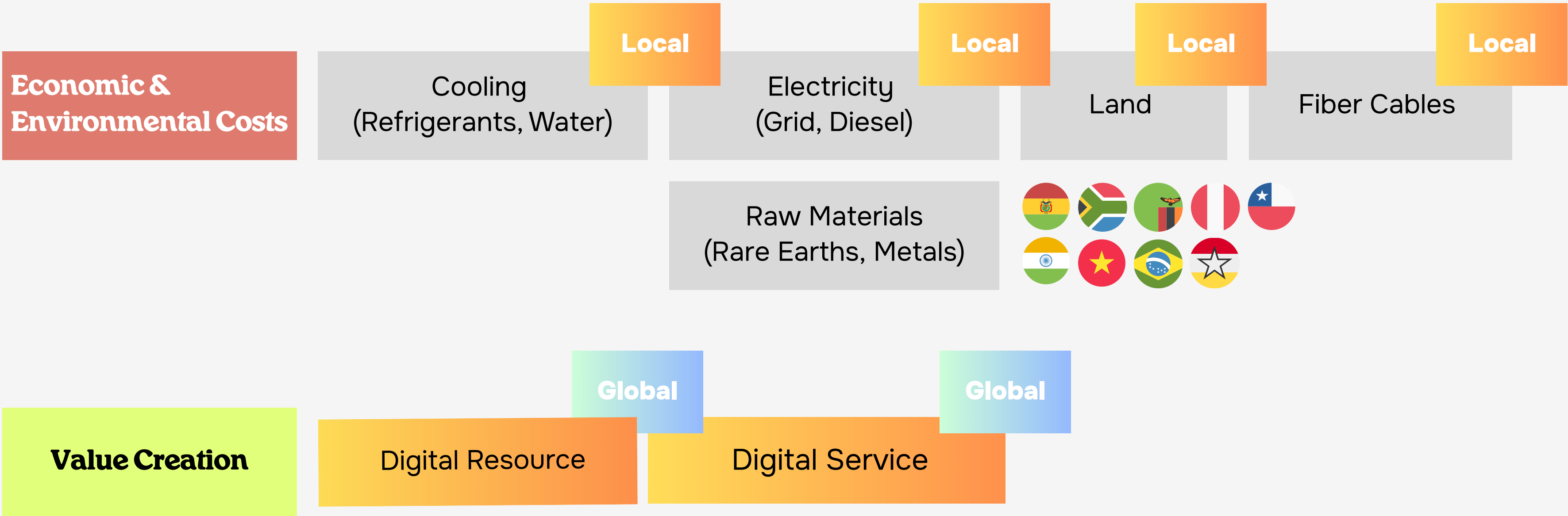
~~regional~~ digital infrastructure
global/EU digital infrastructure



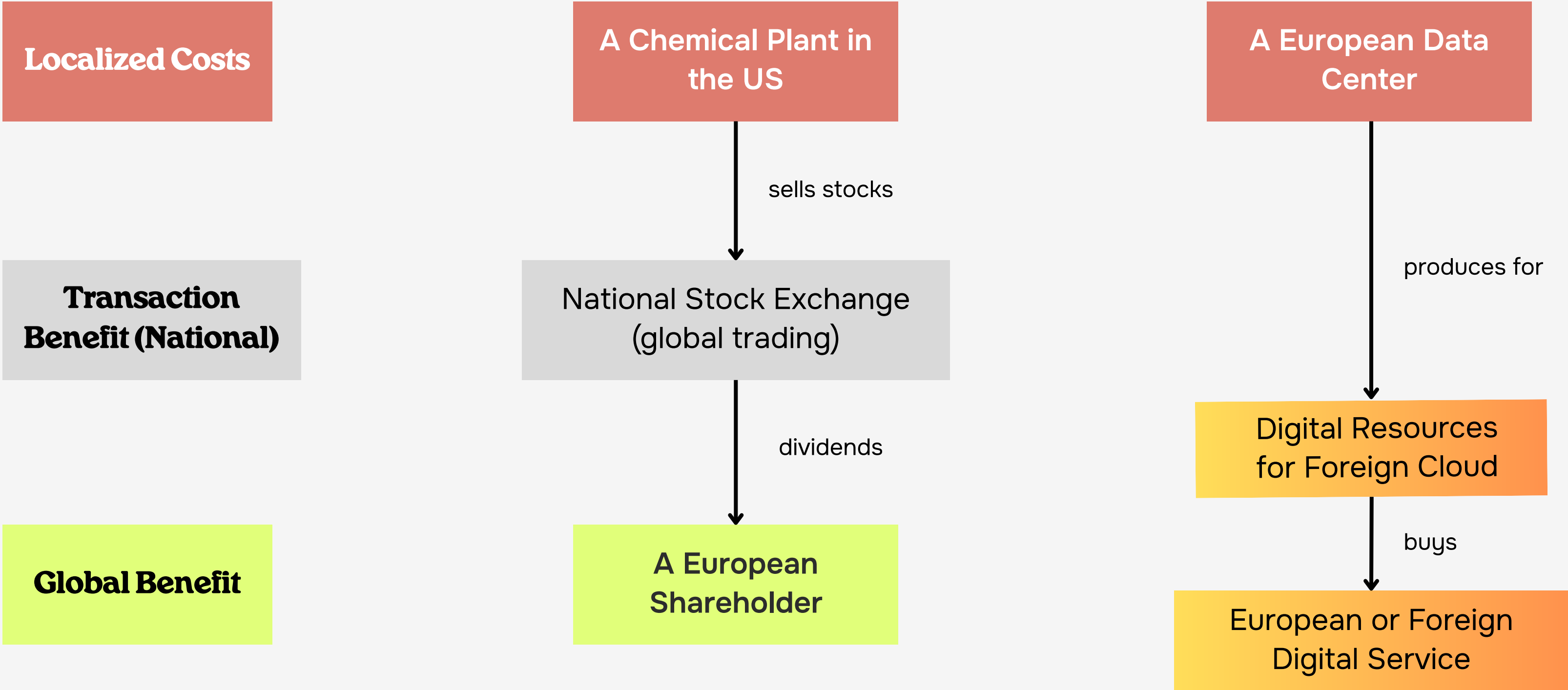
Leitmotiv: Our Taxonomy of the digital economy



Digital economy: Localize costs, globalize benefits



Digital economy is globalized, just like the financial markets



Both are enabled by global connectivity - the internet.

global trade
+
global connectivity
=



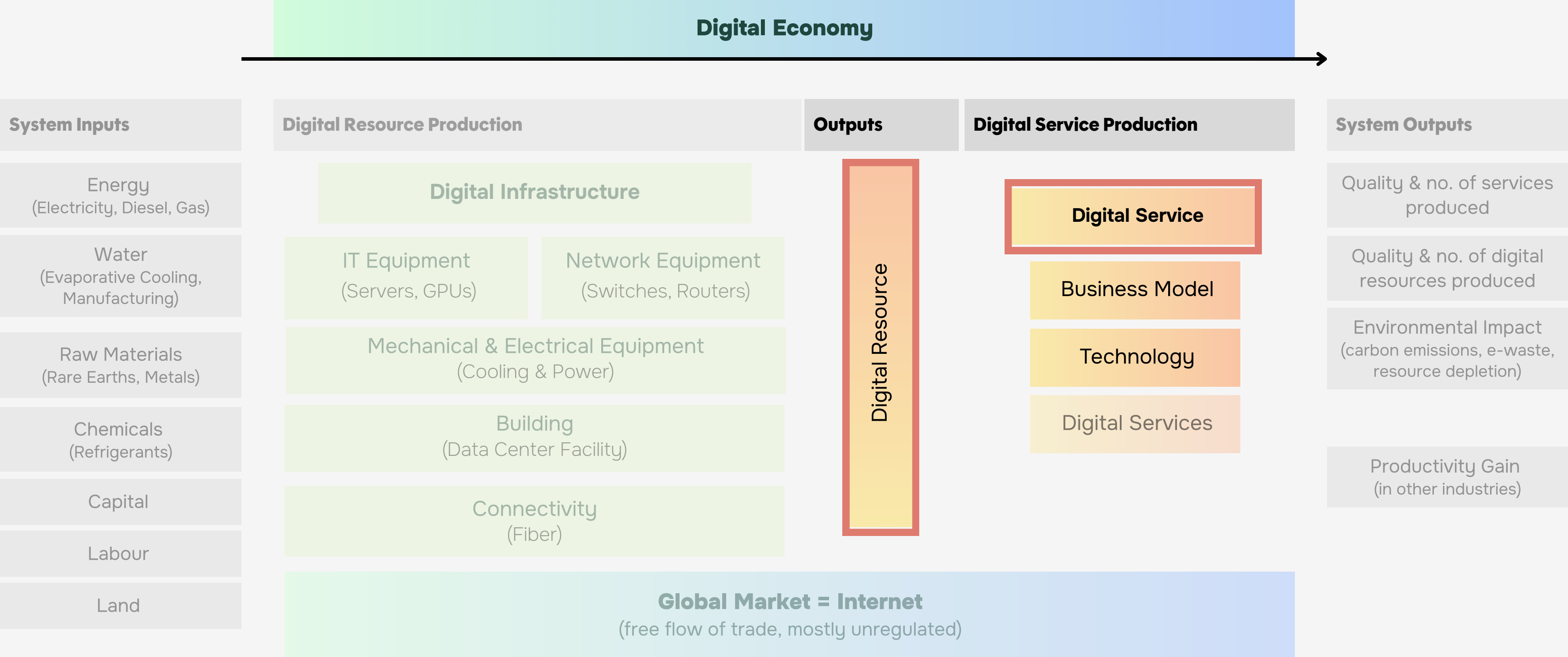
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**global trade at unprecedented
speed and scale**

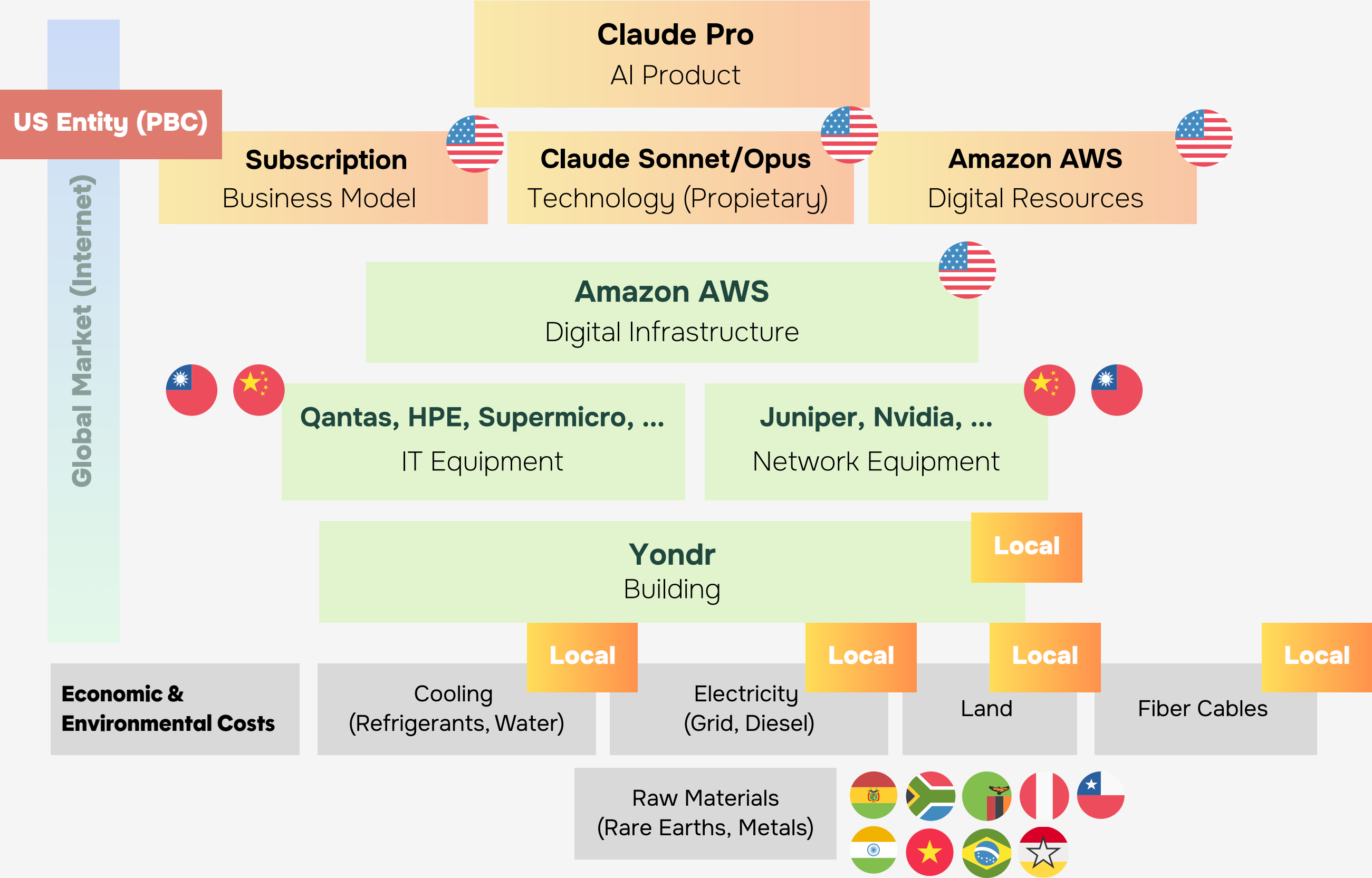


It adds digital resources (commodity) and digital services:



Value distribution

The Case of Anthropic



* Source: The Cost of Cloud, a Trillion Dollar Paradox,
<https://a16z.com/the-cost-of-cloud-a-trillion-dollar-paradox/>

Issue #1

How do we ensure that data centers compensate the costs of **local impact** they create?



Dilemma #1: We have competition not consensus.

European regions are competing for data centers, not harmonizing requirements.



The Alternative: **Localize benefits.**

Value creation from digital resource
production & digital services

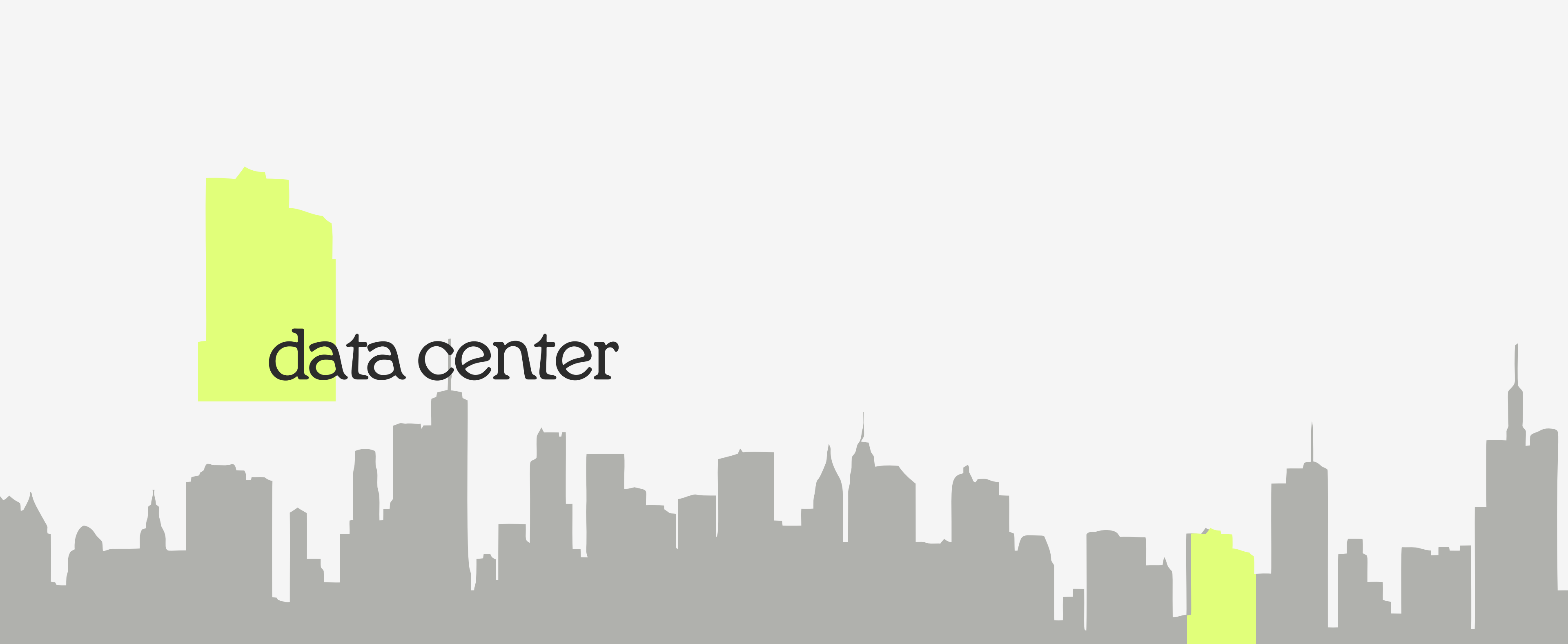
stay in the region.





data center





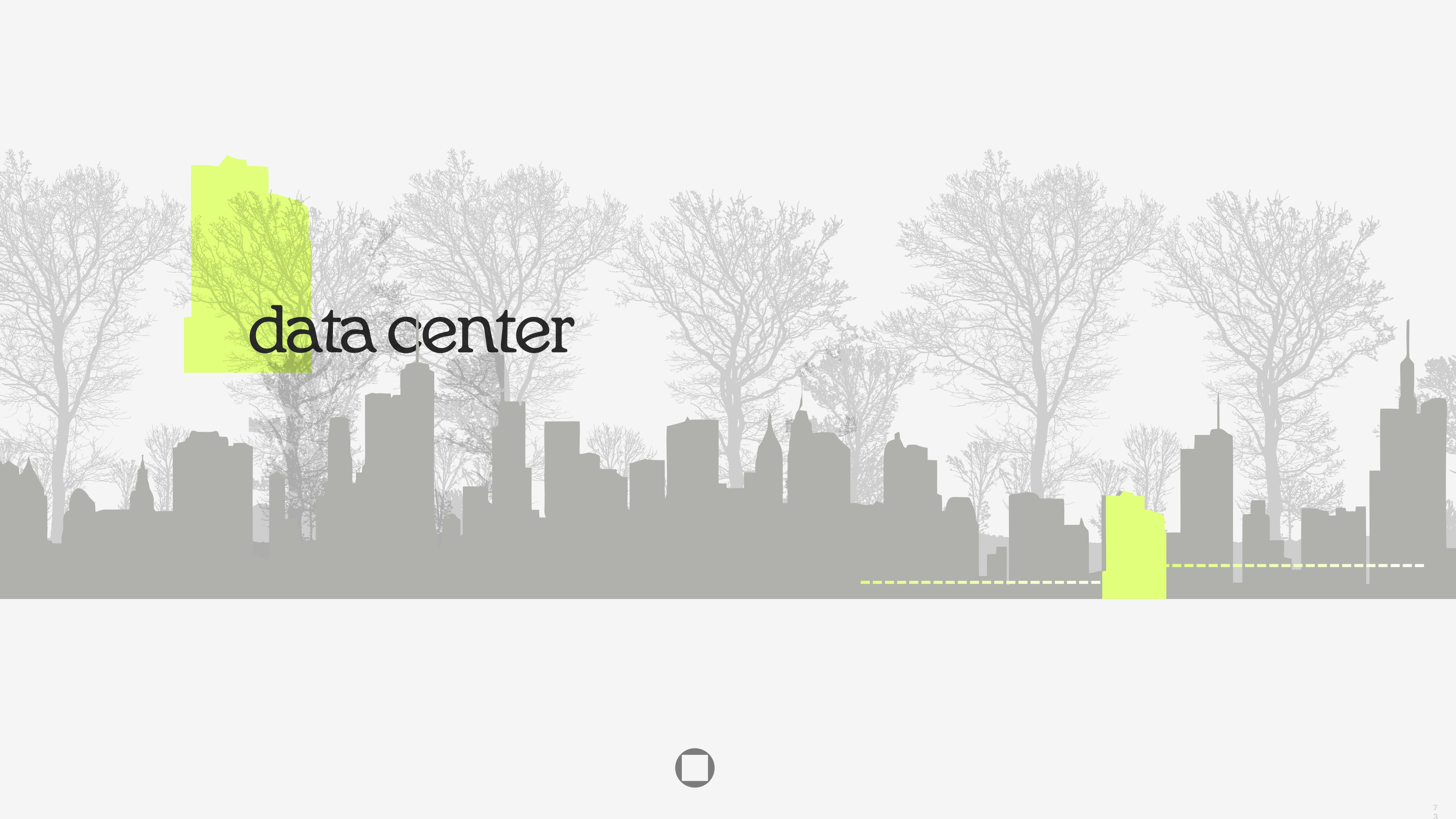
data center





data center



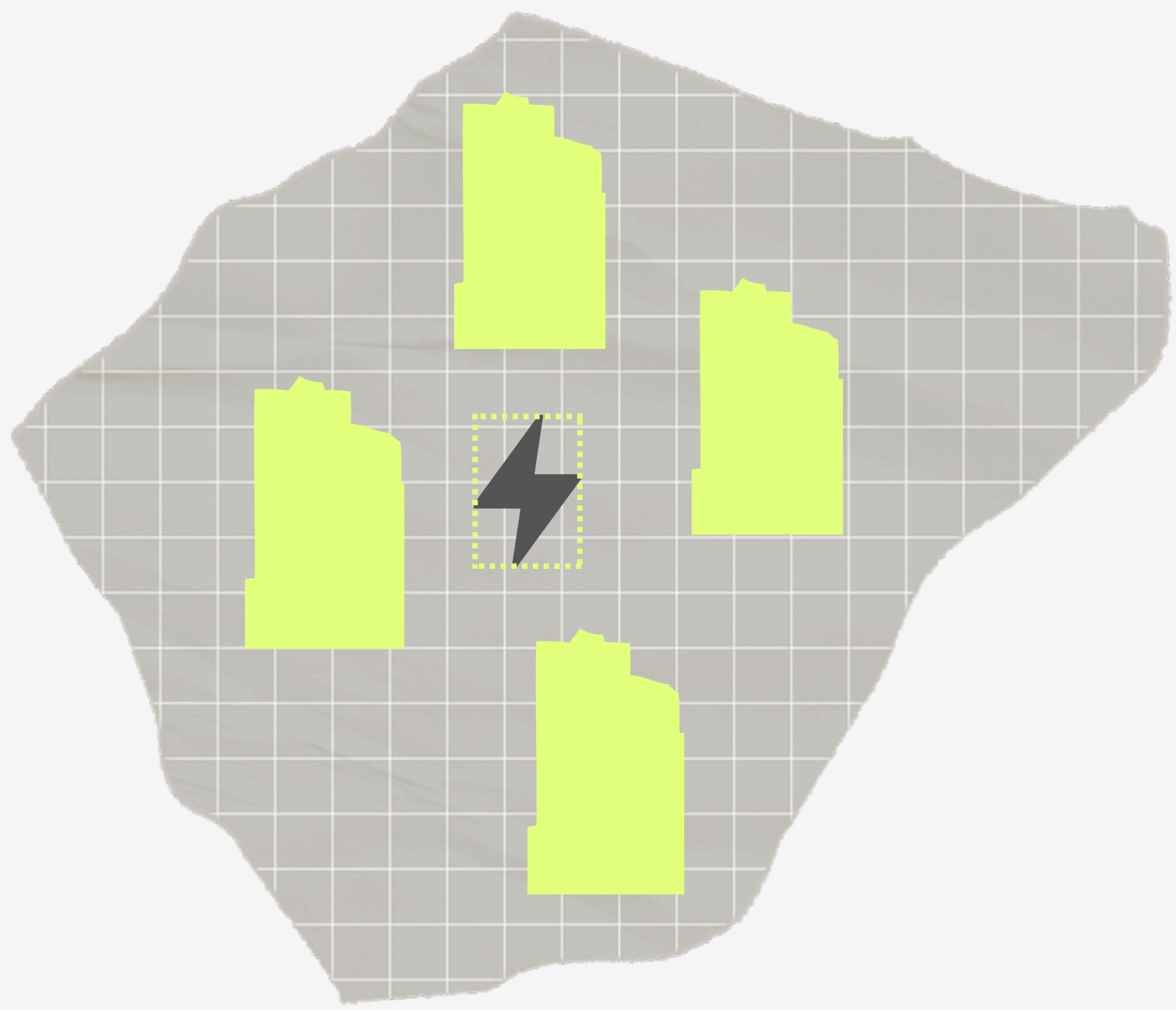


data center





co-owned



**But it still only localizes a small fraction
of the value creation.**

Digital Resource

Digital Service



Option 1: Locally owned digital infrastructure

- Profits derived from rental & electricity sales stay within the region



Source: Bryden Wood

Option 2: Localized materials & construction

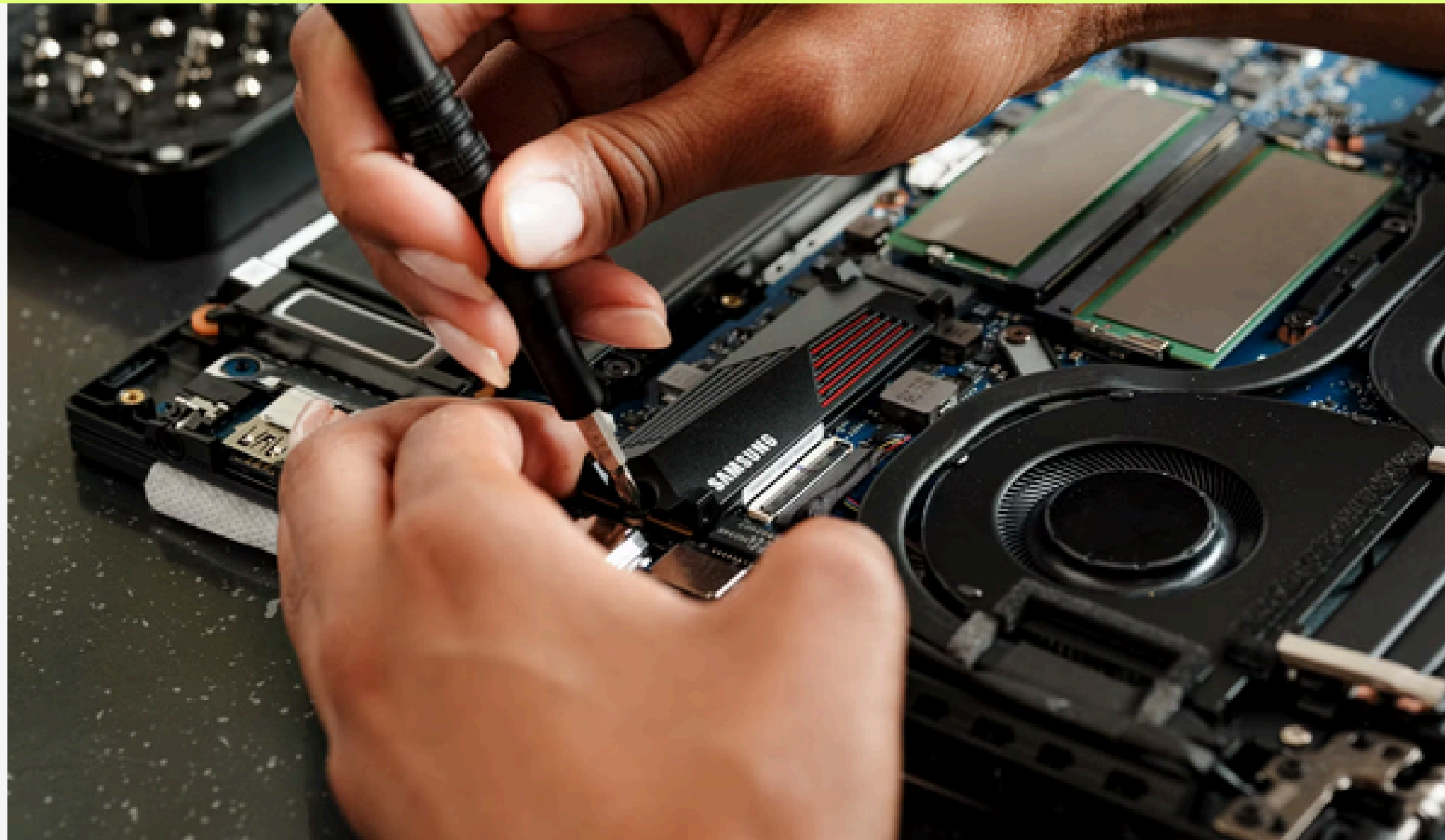
- Maintenance and construction by local suppliers
- Materials sourced from a local supply chain (re-used, recycled, new)



Source: Marcus Reubenstein, Unsplash

Option 3: Local IT equipment and electronic waste refurbishment

- Data centers generate a lot of IT equipment waste, that can be refurbished or recycled locally (secondary markets, value creation)



Source: Samsung Memory

Option 4: Local businesses and entrepreneurs add value to the locally produced digital resources

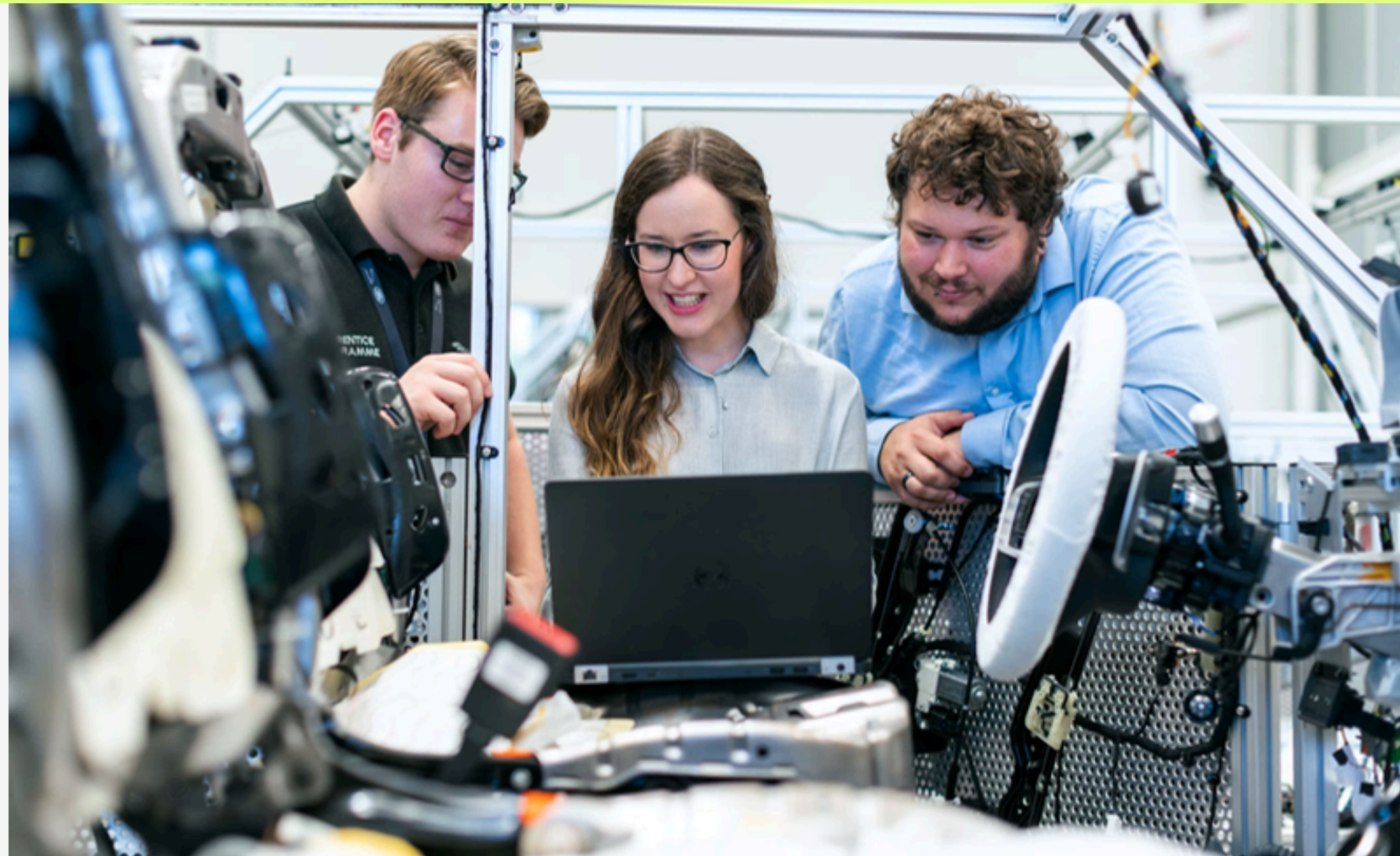
- Traditional businesses undergoing digital transformation can use locally produced digital resources to build their own services



Source: Snapmaker 3D Printer, Unsplash

Option 5: Local IT businesses could create & sell services using the locally produced digital resources

- Can give them a competitive advantage
- Support local value creation & integration; de-risks compliance (GDPR, Data Act)



Source: This is Engineering, Unsplash

Option 6: Local entrepreneurs could create new digital services for the region, from local digital resources

- Cost of creating new digital services using AI is lower than ever
- Nothing blocking the re-creation of digital services based on local values/market, e.g. food delivery, car services, social media



Source: Sabel Flow, Unsplash

Option 7: Global digital services could be served from local digital infrastructure

- Uber or any other digital service can deliver its digital service from local digital infrastructure; sharing more of the value creation



Source: T, Unsplash

Building good, local data centers: possible.

**Produce digital resources locally
in a regional cloud: possible.**

**Re-creating digital services
locally: possible.**



What it takes

Political will!

Capacity building.

Entrepreneurs, digital services, data center construction, IT refurbishment, ...

Good policies.

Creating space for the local digital economy to emerge and grow.

Community.



let's make the possible, possible.



Toward Our Digital Future

LEITMOTIV

Questions?

Contact

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Leitmotiv

a think-and-do-tank
for an alternative
digital economy.

Key Facts

Founded in 2025

Non-partisan, independent
Dutch Charitable Foundation
4 team members

CHRISTIAAN VAN VEEN



MAX SCHULZE



DR. CORINNE CATH



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