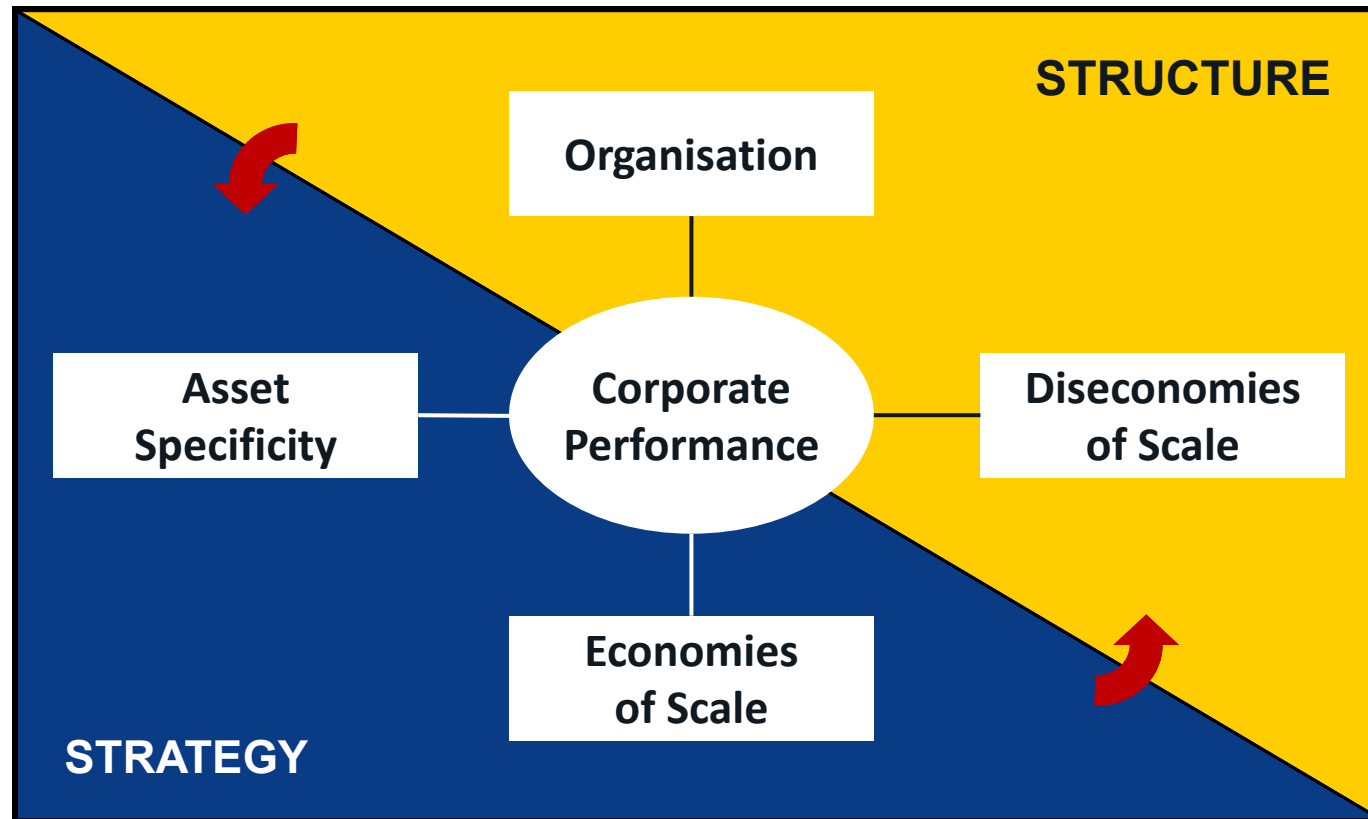# From Greenlands to Tellusant

Academic research meets real-world management problems
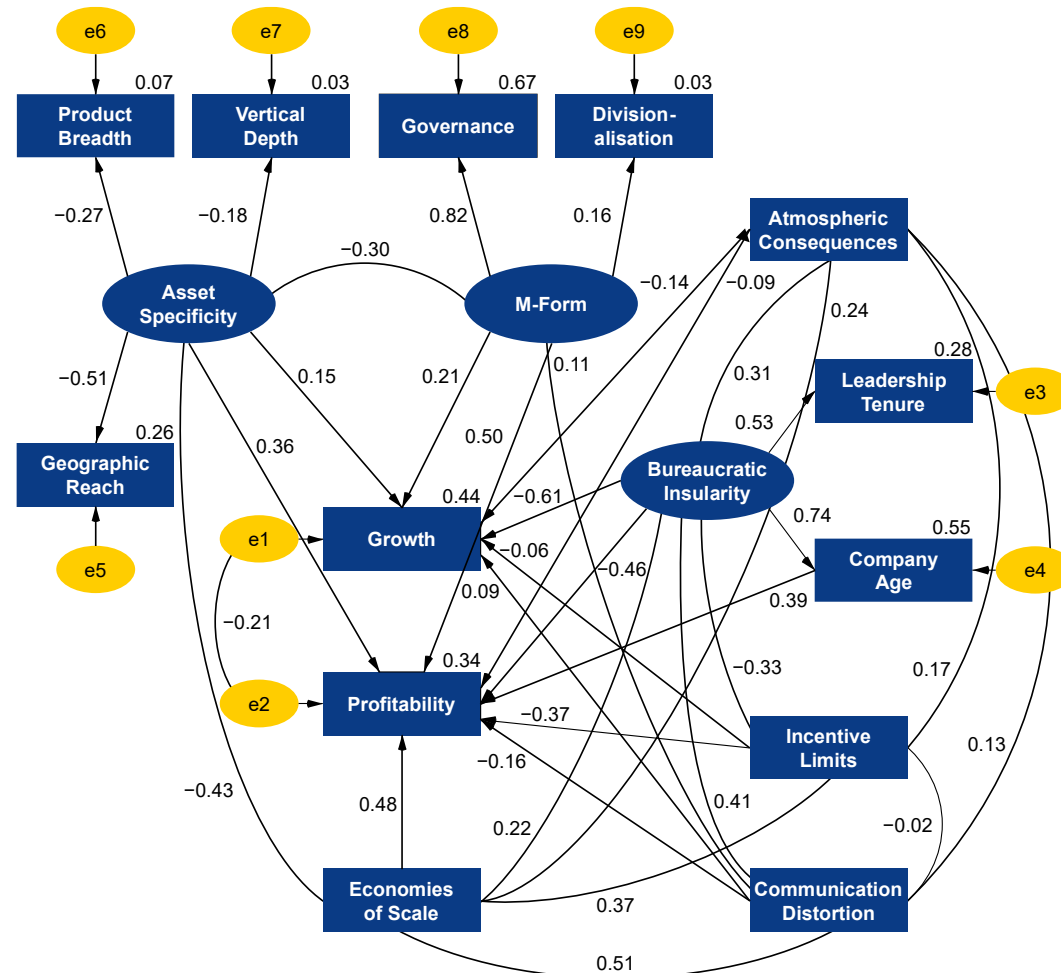
Staffan Canback, DBA6

In 2002, I received my DBA based on research on diseconomies of scale

Canback, S. 2002:Bureaucratic Limits of Firm Size. DBA thesis, Henley Business School

The conceptual framework was converted into a path diagram

Dataset comprised the 784 largest US nonfinancial companies

The next slide converts this path diagram into LISREL notation matrix equations

I learned that a company can be expressed in algorithms; no executives required (in the future)

$$\begin{bmatrix} \eta_1 \\ \eta_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \gamma_{11} & \gamma_{12} & \gamma_{13} & \gamma_{14} & & \gamma_{16} & \gamma_{17} \\ \gamma_{21} & \gamma_{22} & \gamma_{23} & \gamma_{24} & \gamma_{25} & \gamma_{26} & \gamma_{37} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \xi_2 \\ \xi_3 \\ \xi_4 \\ \xi_5 \\ \xi_6 \\ \xi_7 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \zeta_1 \\ \zeta_2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} Y_1 \\ Y_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & \\ & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \eta_1 \\ \eta_2 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \varepsilon_1 \\ \varepsilon_2 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\Phi = \begin{bmatrix} - & & & & & & \\ \varphi_{21} & - & & & & & \\ \varphi_{31} & \varphi_{32} & - & & & & \\ \varphi_{41} & \varphi_{42} & \varphi_{43} & - & & & \\ \varphi_{51} & \varphi_{52} & \varphi_{53} & \varphi_{54} & - & & \\ & & & & \varphi_{65} & - & \\ & & & \varphi_{74} & & \varphi_{76} & - \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} X_1 \\ X_2 \\ X_3 \\ X_4 \\ X_5 \\ X_6 \\ X_7 \\ X_8 \\ X_9 \\ X_A \\ X_B \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & & & & & & \\ \lambda_{22}^X & & & & & & \\ \lambda_{32}^X & & & & & & \\ & 1 & & & & & \\ & & 1 & & & & \\ & & & 1 & & & \\ & & & & \lambda_{76}^X & & \\ & & & & \lambda_{86}^X & & \\ & & & & \lambda_{96}^X & \lambda_{97}^X & \\ & & & & & \lambda_{A7}^X & \\ & & & & & \lambda_{B7}^X & \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \xi_2 \\ \xi_3 \\ \xi_4 \\ \xi_5 \\ \xi_6 \\ \xi_7 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \delta_2 \\ \delta_3 \\ \\ \\ \\ \delta_7 \\ \delta_8 \\ \delta_9 \\ \delta_A \\ \delta_B \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\Psi = \begin{bmatrix} - & \\ \Psi_{21} & - \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\Theta^\delta = 0$$

OR

$$\mathbf{H} = \boldsymbol{\Gamma} \cdot \boldsymbol{\Xi} + \mathbf{Z}$$

$$X = \boldsymbol{\Lambda} \cdot \boldsymbol{\Xi} + \boldsymbol{\Delta}$$

$$Y = \mathbf{I} \cdot \mathbf{H} + \mathbf{E}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\Phi}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\Psi}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\Theta}^\delta$$

For this work, I was awarded the EDAMBA first prize for best DBA thesis in Europe, 2002
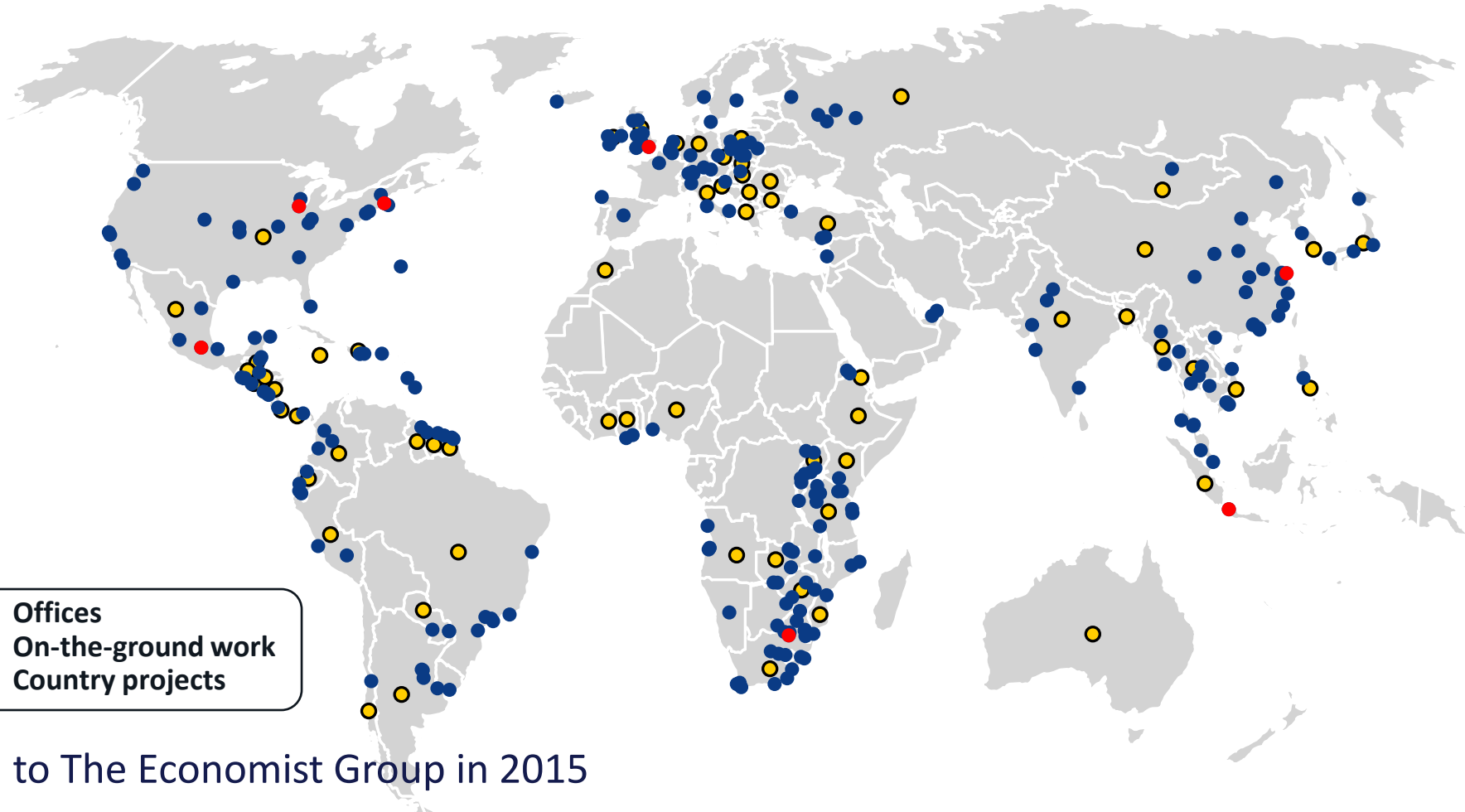
With a McKinsey and Monitor partner background, and fueled by the DBA, I built a next generation consulting firm

CANBACK CONSULTING
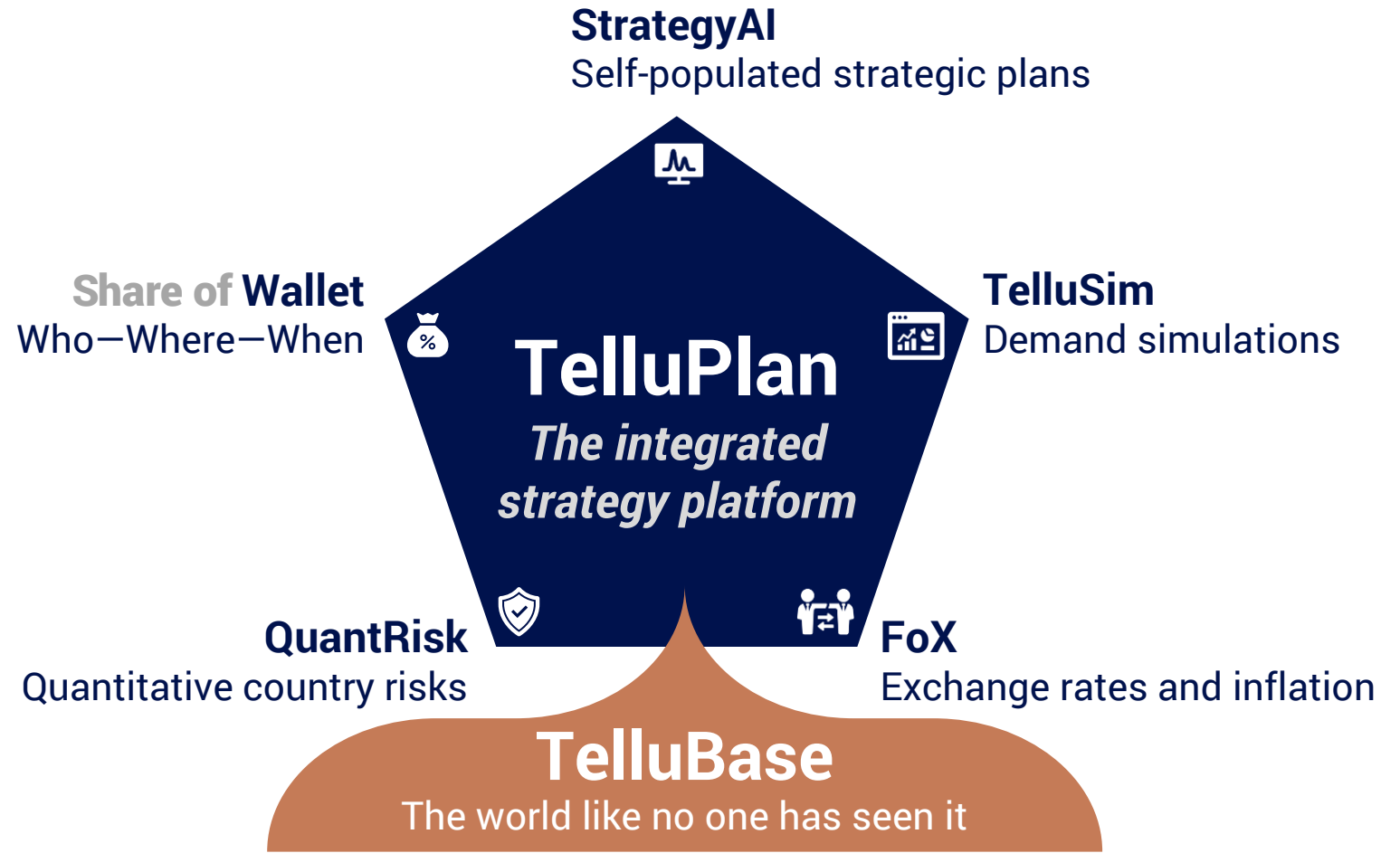*Managerially Relevant*
—
Analytically Robust

- Algorithmic analyses
- Subnational focus
- In-market insights

Legend:
- 🔴 Offices
- 🔵 On-the-ground work
- 🟡 Country projects

Canback Consulting was sold to The Economist Group in 2015

From this, I took the step in 2020 to realize the vision of automating management—Tellusant was founded

TELLUSANT®
Streamlining Decision Making

StrategyAI
Self-populated strategic plans

Share of Wallet
Who−Where−When

TelluSim
Demand simulations

TelluPlan
The integrated strategy platform

QuantRisk
Quantitative country risks

FoX
Exchange rates and inflation

TelluBase
The world like no one has seen it

I gained invaluable insights on my 'Greenlands to Tellusant' journey

Staffan in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, drinking *airag* (fermented horse milk) during an M&A effort

- My Henley DBA instilled a worldview
  - Rationality
  - Facts
  - Attention to detail

- My professional life got immeasurably more fun after Henley

- It is not the specifics of what I learned but the generalized wisdom that matters. I never:
  - applied structural equation models after Henley
  - used the academic papers I read
  - had to write, write, write again

Henley Business School
UNIVERSITY OF READING

Finally, a large thank you to Henley and some key people. Their support made this journey possible

Phillip Samouel – Thesis adviser

David Price – Thesis adviser

Louise Hillier – DBA program administrator

Karl Lippert – CEO, SABMiller Latin America

Carlos Brito – CEO, Anheuser-Busch InBev

Richard Rushton – CEO, Distell

Jesse Logan – VP, Canback Consulting

Philip Burgin-Young – CEO, Tellusant (& Canback Consulting)

Bobo Shen – Chief Product Officer, Tellusant (& Canback Consulting)

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