

# BUILT FOR THE MINE

## Quarry of the Future Forum



March 3, 2025  
Virginia Tech





Take a step into the future of the aggregates industry at the "Quarry of the Future" Forum, where we discussed technology changes and anticipated what is to come.

Hosted by **Built For The Mine**, this event was designed to inspire forward-thinking professionals to anticipate and embrace technology and industry evolution.

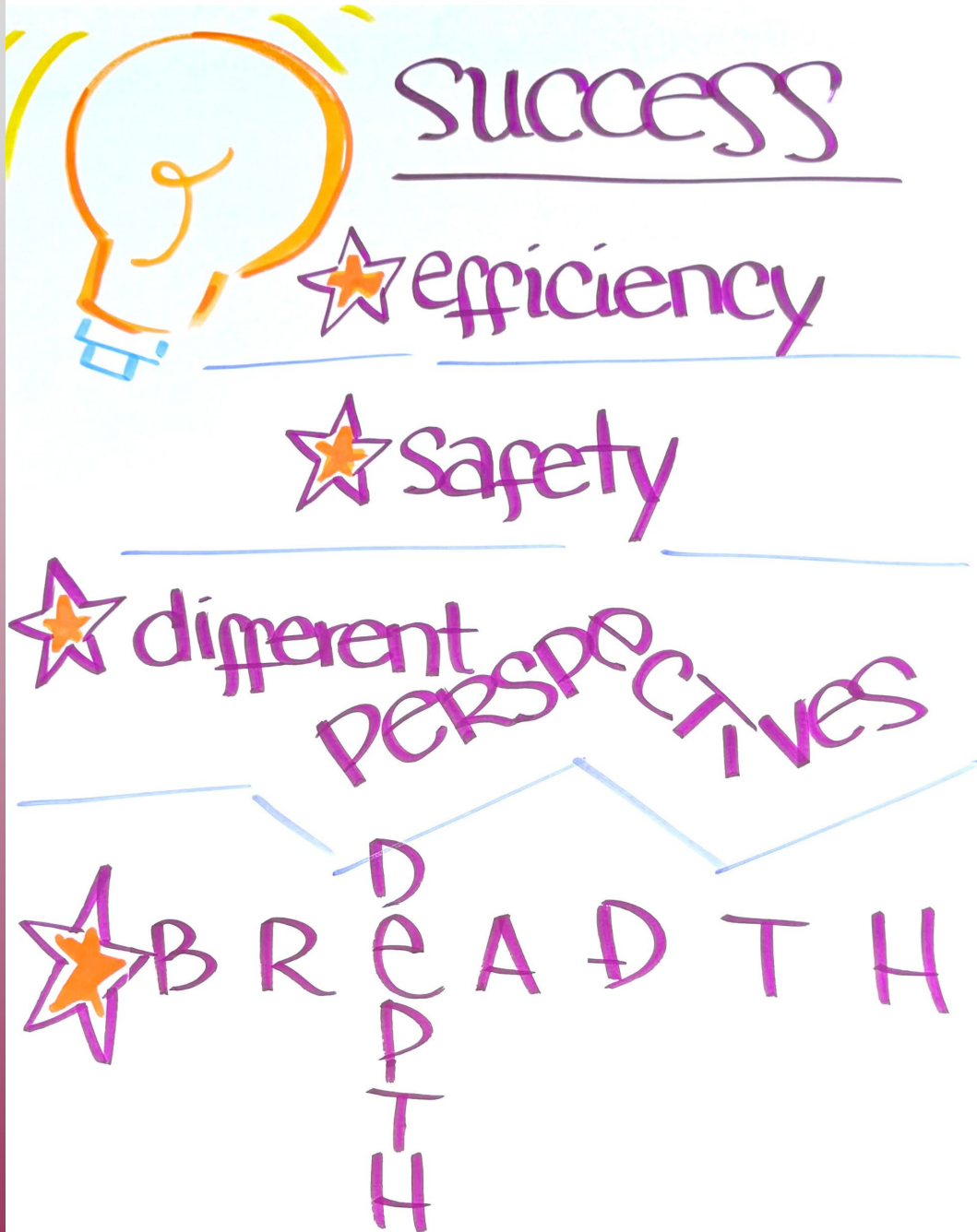
The Forum had more than 60 attendees from nearly 40 companies.

These visual notes are intended to organize and capture the information that was shared.

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## Forum Objective



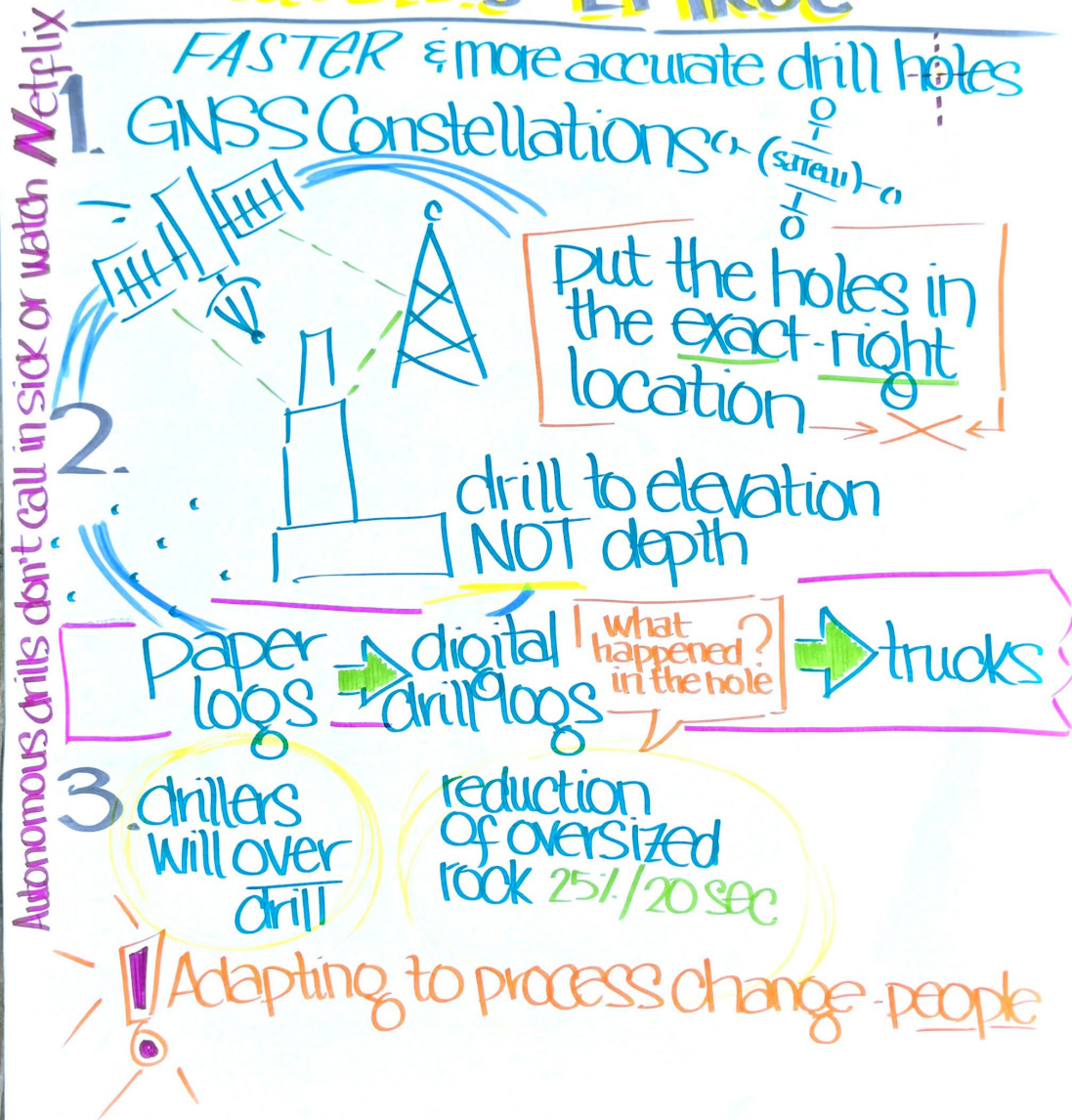
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# Precision Blasthole Drilling

## PRECISION BLASTHOLE DRILLING ZACHILLUS • EPIROC

FASTER & more accurate drill holes



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# Drones and Machine Learning for Blast Design Optimization

## DRONES & MACHINE LEARNING FOR BLAST DESIGN OPTIMIZATION RAVI SAHU · STRAYOS



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# NOx Tracking in Blasting with Drone and Machine Learning

## NOx TRACKING IN BLASTING WITH DRONE VIDEO & MACHINE LEARNING LUKE PROVENCER · AUSTIN POWDER

1. SAFETY → post blast fumes  
[N, CO<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O]

Machine Learning: RIT  
blast for fumes



2. Where in the blast did it come from?  
Review in reverse!

(a) QUANTIFY  
& IDENTIFY WHERE

(b) ID  
Concentration  
& Volumes

(c) Drone v/s  
after shoot

3.

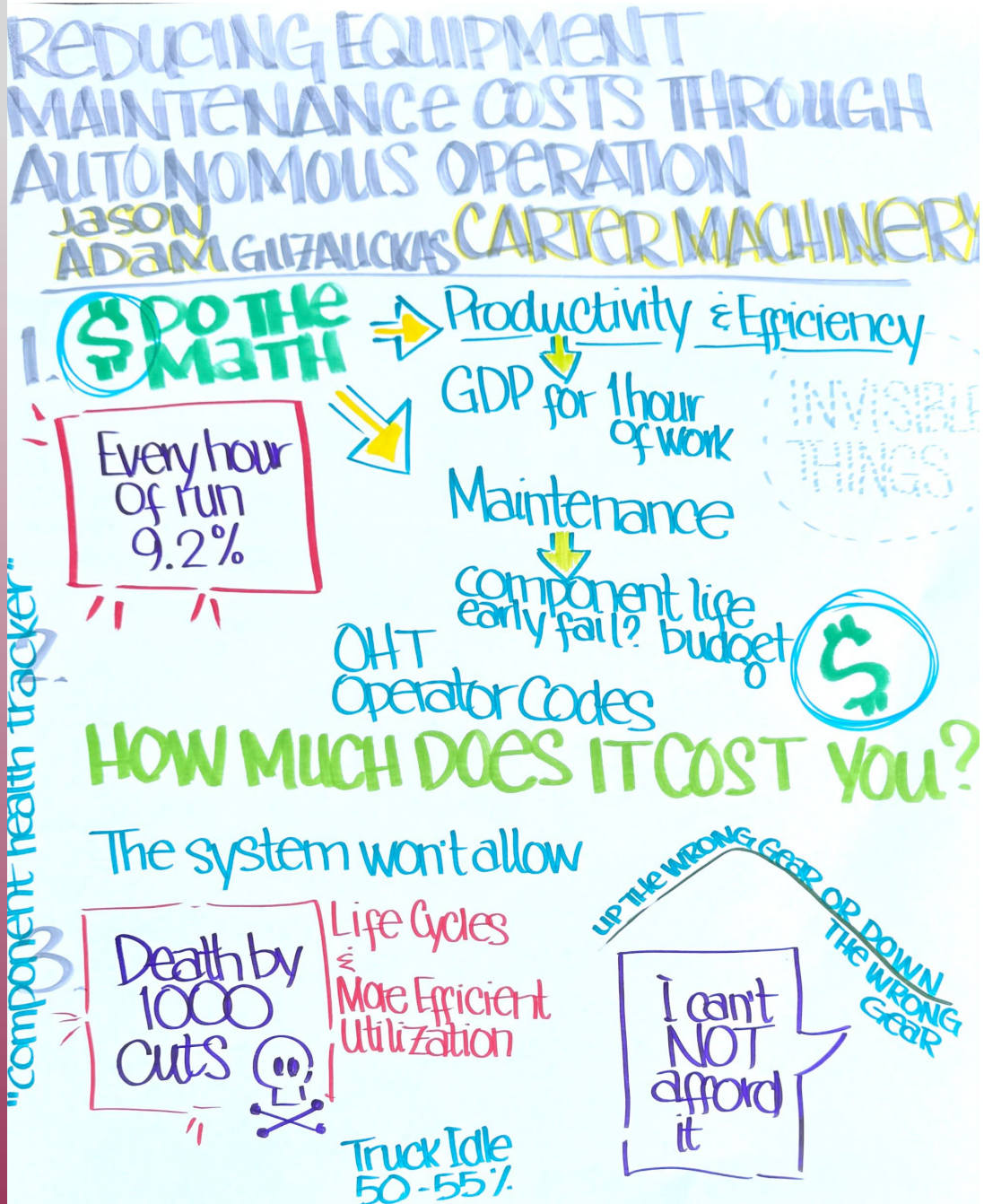
HEALTH  
HAZARD  
RISK

STILL PRODUCT  
SELECTION &  
BEST PRACTICES

evolving

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# Reducing Equipment Maintenance Through Autonomous Operation



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# Autonomous Haulage

AUTONOMOUS HAULAGE  
TOM SMITH · CATERPILLAR  
RUSTY MINIX · LUCK STONE

1. WHY?

efficiency  
process  
optimization  
expose  
inefficiencies  
real  
time

THE PEOPLE  
Big Change

BUILD  
RAMPS  
unexpected

2.

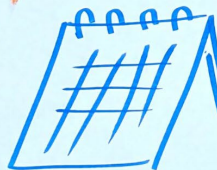
7 people → 3  
(4 people to other jobs)

lot of material  
not a small  
endeavor

downtime just  
isn't there

happens  
when people  
don't want  
to trucks

3.



12-mo  
implementation

+ track  
+ learn  
+ prevent  
INTER  
ACTIONS

MORALE?




JOB 1 → JOB 2

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# Hydraulic Nuts

## HYDRAULIC NUTS ON SCREENS NICK COX - PASCHAL

- 1. TORQUE**  
↓  
**large nuts/bolts**  


STRETCH

FRICITION  
RUST  
LUBRICATION

35%
- 2.**  


XFR hydraulic  
to mechanical

hammer until  
it's tight  
& not measuring torque

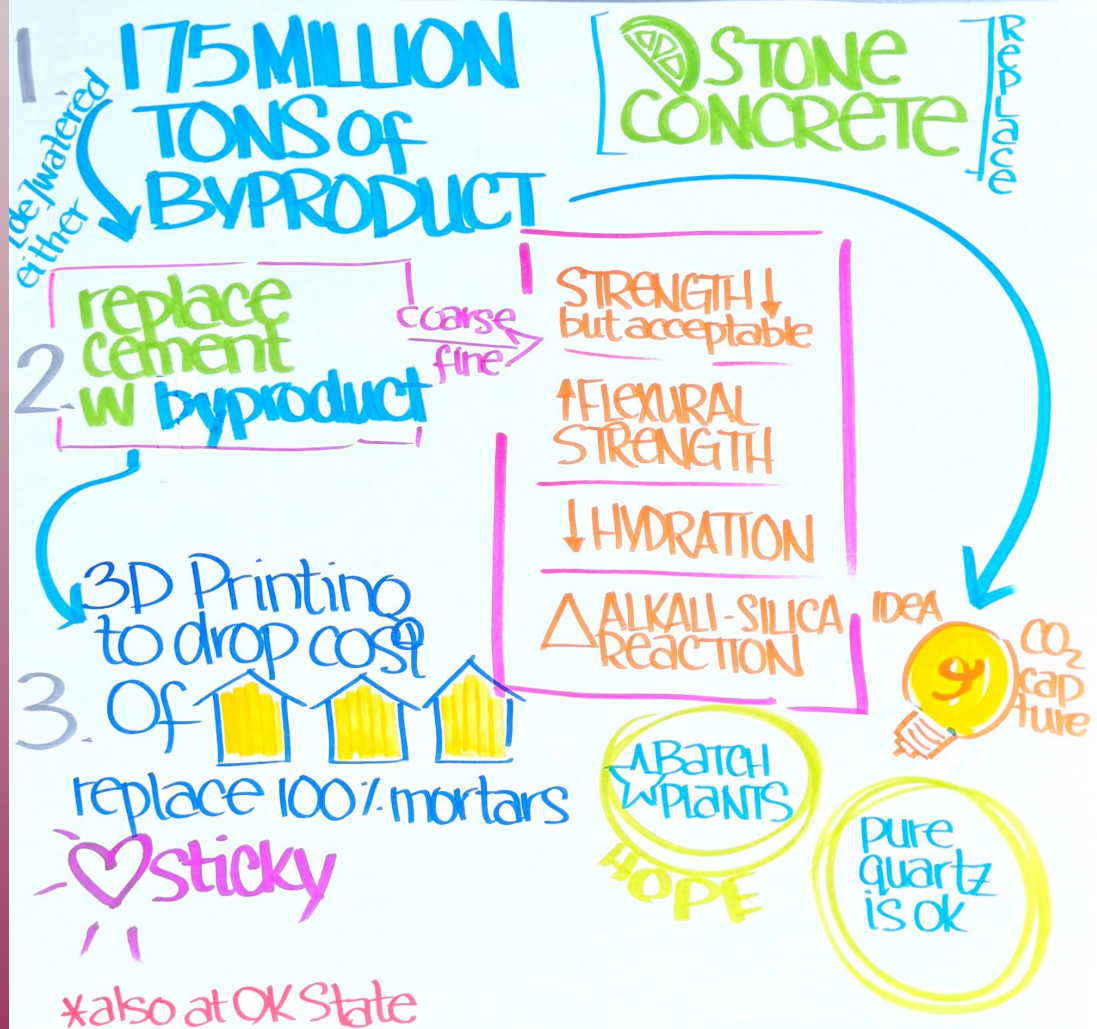
daisy  
chain  
~30 min
- 3. safer & efficient & quick  
& precise**

removal is exact opposite

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# Alternative Uses for Fines

## ALTERNATIVE USES FOR FINES DR. ALEX BRAND · VT CIVIL & ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

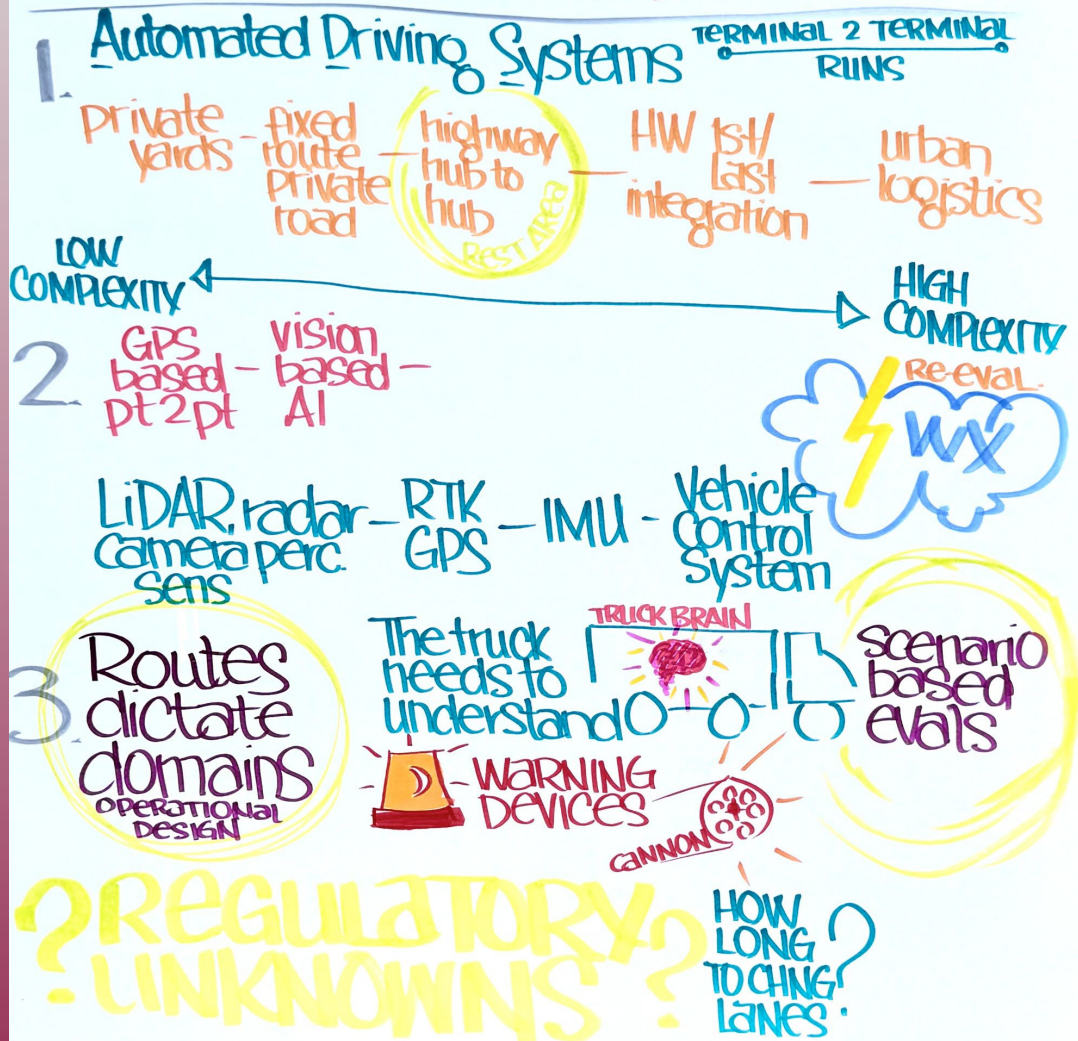


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# Autonomous Tractor Trailer Technologies

## AUTONOMOUS TRACTOR TRAILER DR. ANDREW MILLER VT TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE



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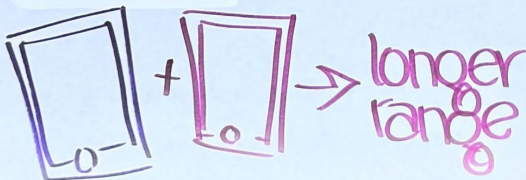
# Emerging Wireless Technologies

## EMERGING WIRELESS TECHNOLOGIES

DR. MIKE BUEHRER · VT WIRELESS

3→5 YEARS:

- + cellular - 6G incremental → ↑ data rates ↓ latency
- + WiFi 7
- + IoT - connect long range low power
- + LEOs - low earth orbit satellite - reliable connectivity  
↓ launch costs
- + V2X — vehicle to EVERYTHING  
ALERTS TRAFFIC
- + AI - predict & modify  
move to the edge
- + Spectrum Sharing - 700 megahertz → crowded  
tolerating interference



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# Productivity Optimization with Data Analytics

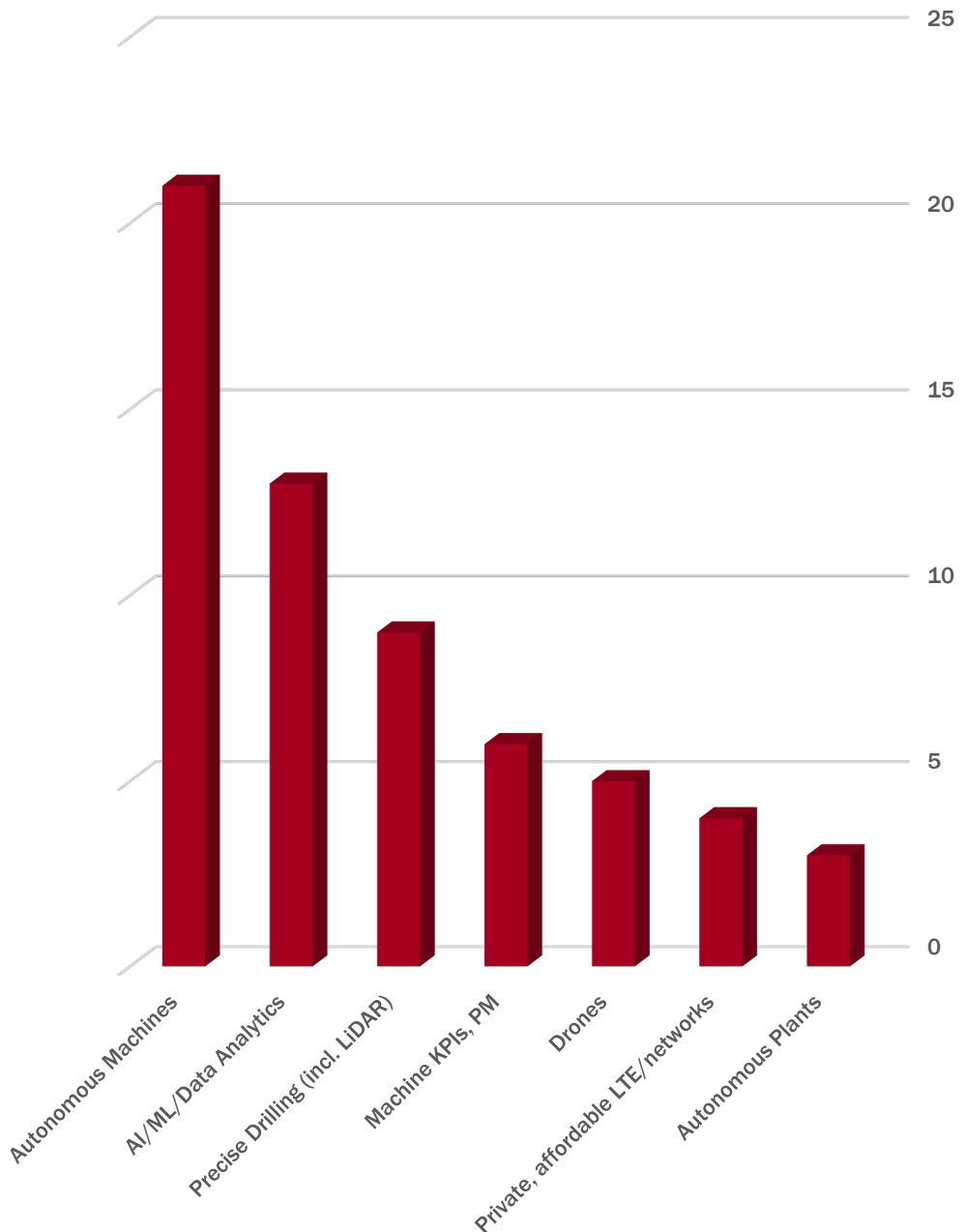
PRODUCTIVITY OPTIMIZATION IN  
OTHER INDUSTRIES W/ INDUSTRIAL  
INTERNET DATA ANALYTICS &  
DATA QUALITY · DR RAN JIN · VT  
ISE



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# What Current Technologies Excite You Most?

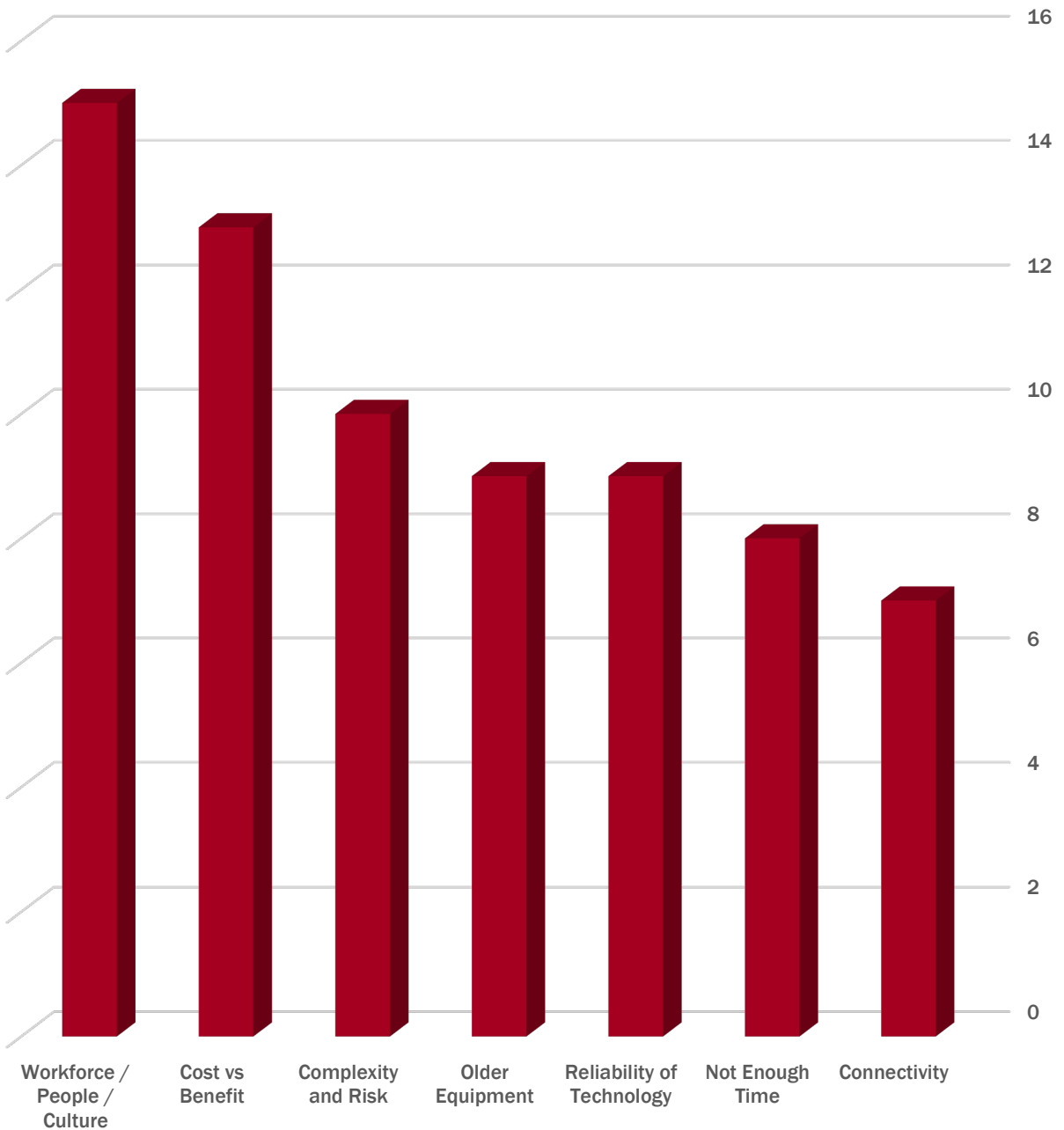


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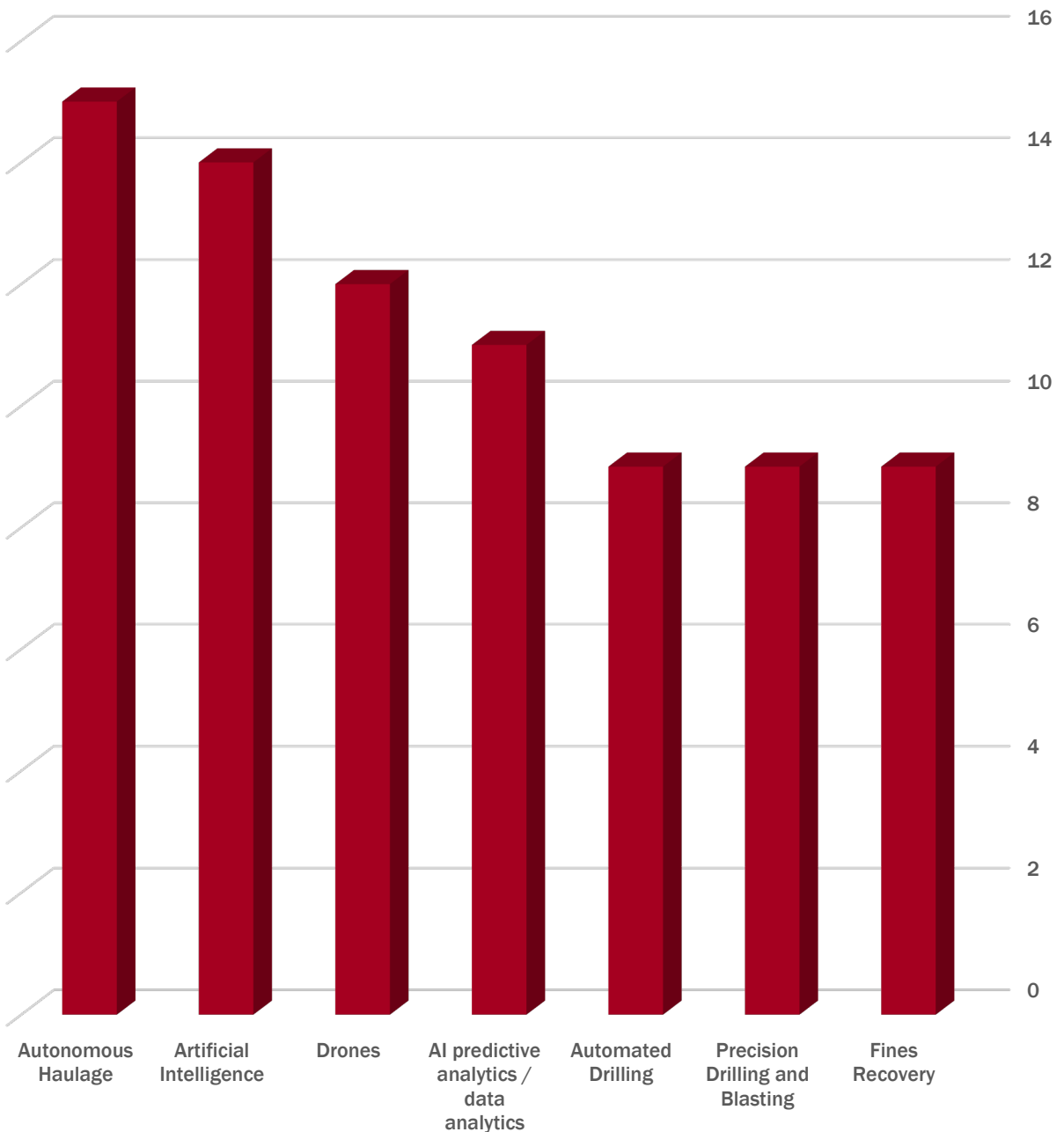
# What Are the Top Barriers to Adopting New Technology?



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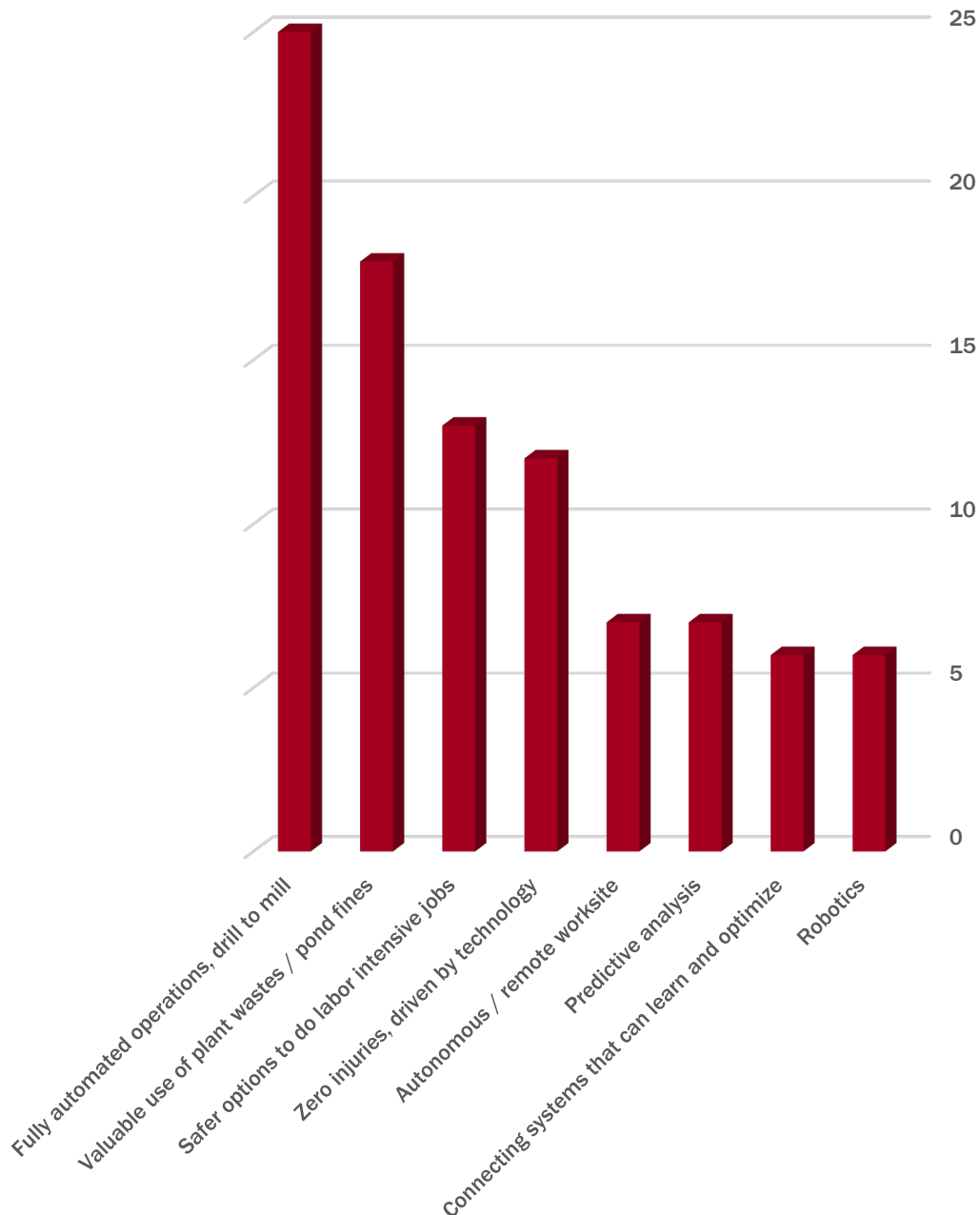
# What Technologies do you Anticipate Being the New Normal in 10 Years?



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# What Technologies do you Dream About for Our Industry?



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## Conclusions

1. There is a clear interest in currently available technologies including autonomous equipment, AI/data analytics, and precision drilling.
2. However, there are several hurdles that exist to implementing these existing technologies. The key barriers include workforce/culture, payback period (including the need to update equipment), and risk/reliability.
3. Within the next 10 years, it is anticipated that autonomous haulage, the use of AI/data analytics, the use of drones, and automated precise drilling will be commonly used technologies within the crushed stone industry.
4. In the longer time frame, there is a strong desire to see the development of fully automated drill-to-mill operations, a profitable market for fines/dust, and continued improvement in safety due to increased use of technology.

The development and implementation of these technologies will be expedited by strong cooperation between producers, equipment manufacturers, universities, and other sectors of our industry.

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**Built for the Mine** is an educational partnership between mining industry leaders and the Virginia Tech Department of Mining and Minerals Engineering.

The mission of Built for the Mine is to “Develop the next generation of people and technology for the next generation of the aggregate industry.” This mission will be accomplished by establishing and growing a partnership between industry representatives and the Mining and Minerals Engineering Department at Virginia Tech.

The vision of Built for the Mine is to have an industry brand and be the recognized leader for developing talented graduates who are prepared to fill the growing knowledge gap within the aggregates industry created by the onset of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The program prepares students for careers in mining by enhancing goal-setting, improving interview and resume skills, developing professional paths, networking with industry leaders, and giving them access to internships and employment opportunities.

For more information,  
Contact Dr. Erik Westman  
[ewestman@vt.edu](mailto:ewestman@vt.edu)

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