

Why API Strategies Struggle for Funding and What To Do About It

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APIOps Helsinki, June 2026



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- **What gets shown.**
- **How it's seen (and why).**
- **What to do about it.**

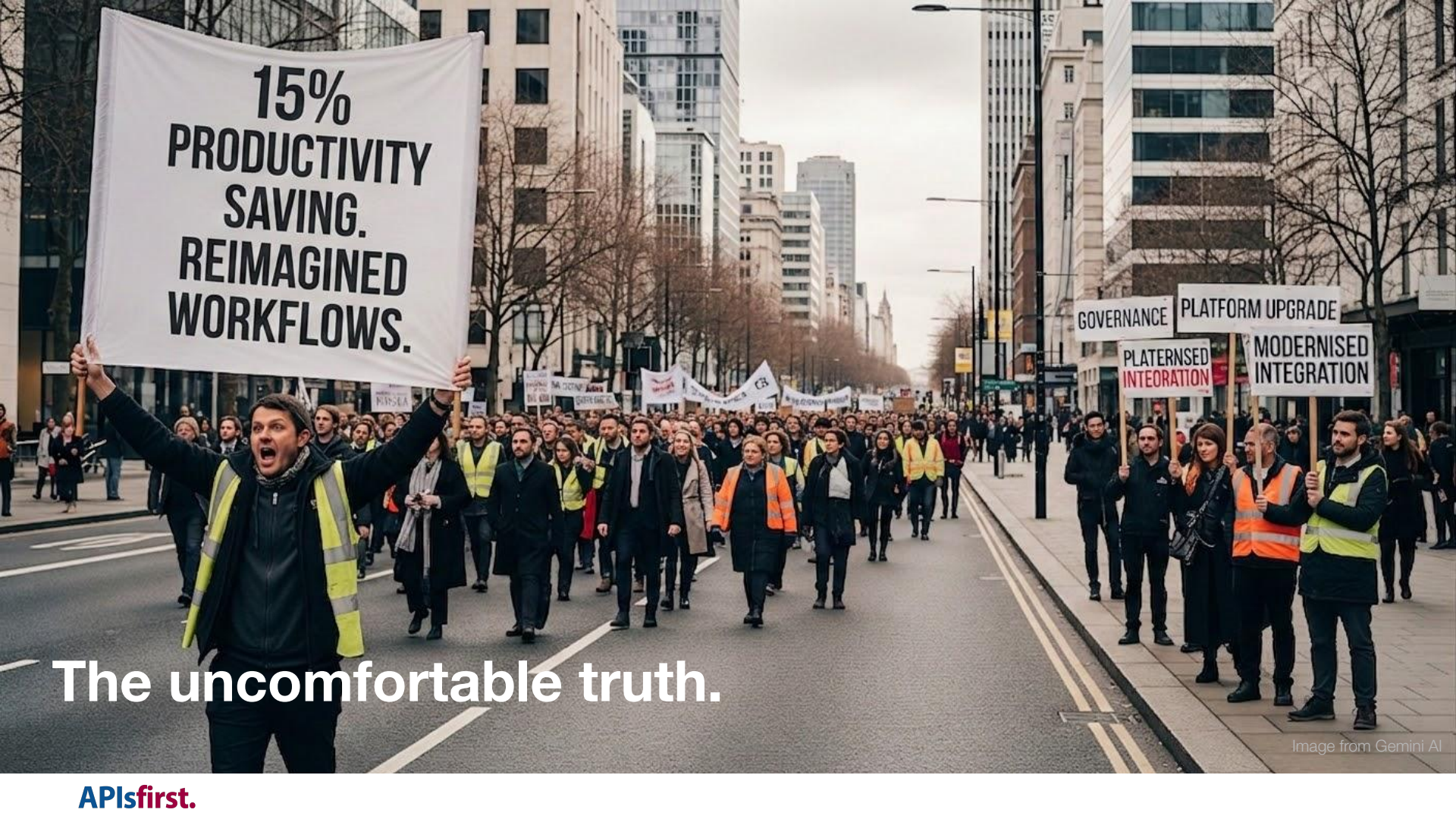


Question?

“We’re only interested in AI investment.”

“We’ve already invested enough in APIs.”

“Just prove AI is making a difference in your area.”



**15%
PRODUCTIVITY
SAVING.
REIMAGINED
WORKFLOWS.**

GOVERNANCE

PLATFORM UPGRADE

**PLATERNSED
INTEORATTION**

**MODERNISED
INTEGRATION**

The uncomfortable truth.

Image from Gemini AI

Yet, there's still important work to do.

Why is this important?

- The arguments for investment have changed
- Technologists need to explain things differently
- We don't want to be naysayers

What gets seen.

API initiatives show up as:

Needs such as:

- Modern ways to integrate
- Governance
- Platform upgrade

“Costs...”

AI ideas show up as:

Compelling case such as:

- A business story
- A headline metric
- A clear sponsor ‘hero’

“Advantage!”



Naysayers >> Yay-sayers

Image from Gemini AI

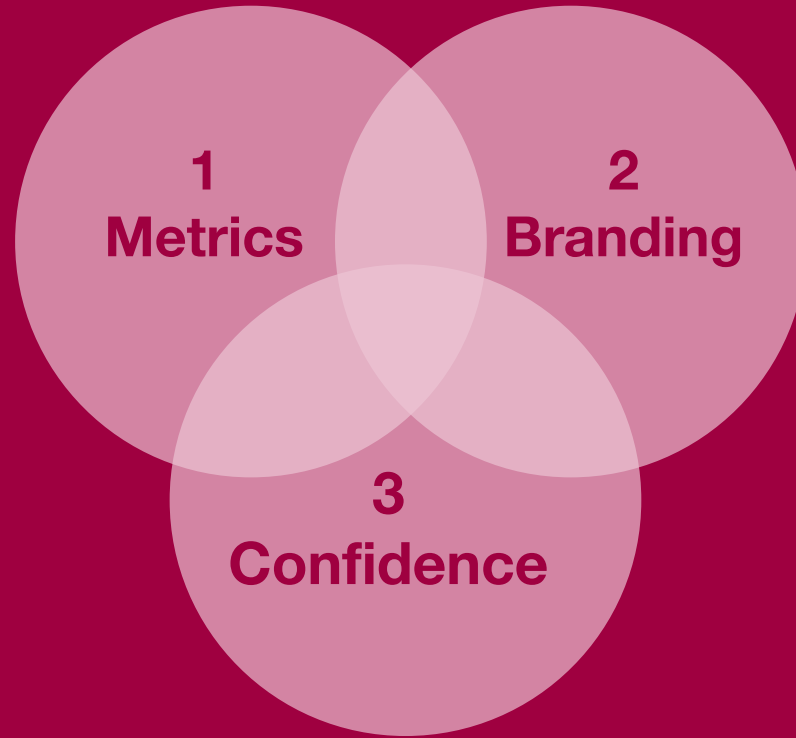
...while some systemic issues persist.

Too many API-related investment
have tripped up.



Source: pinterest.com

Funding failure points





Unstable baseline METRICS.

Local easy. Enterprise hard.

Image from Gemini AI



Multiple, competing metrics
>> Simple measures.

Indirect aspirations and intent
>> Direct benefits.

**BRANDING
problems.**

**New power dynamics.
Old power models.**



Image from Gemini AI

The symptoms

“APIs aren’t the main reason things are too slow.”

“APIs/MCPs are engineering hygiene”

“We’re bored of hearing about APIs.”

“We’ve invested enough already in APIs and API management for questionable benefit.”

“We get AI to create our APIs now.”

“APIs are **soooo** pre-ChatGPT.”

A roller coaster car is shown at the peak of a steep drop, with passengers cheering and raising their arms. The scene is set against a sunset sky with a bright sun low on the horizon, creating a golden glow. The roller coaster's steel structure is silhouetted against the sky.

Dips in CONFIDENCE.

Respect for the past.
Earned right.

Image from Gemini AI

Take a walk in the audience's shoes.

Budget < “Must have” totals.

Value from AI is *the* priority.

Shifting baselines (teams, talent, tokens).

Safety in numbers.

Vagueness loses.



Image from Gemini AI

So what to do about it?

Five moves. All actionable now.

01

Name the AI outcome to move.

02

Write API strategy as decisions.

03

Make value legible.

04

Have one narrative owner.

05

Start “proof of value” cycle.

Example

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Run “proof of value” cycle.

“Our API program exists to deliver *[this]* AI outcome.”

Growth?

Efficiency?

Speed?

Risk?

vs

Customer experience

Sustainability

Innovation

Employee experience

**Pick one measure
to rule them all.**



Image from Gemini AI

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“Our API strategy is simple and designed to last.
To explain, to follow, and to measure.”

Example of API strategy as decisions.

We focus relentlessly to reduce friction for engineers and agents without compromising safety or scalability.

Ownership : Every API has a clear owner (person or team).

Design : We only deploy APIs to production that meet our minimum design and security standards.

Architecture : We commit to resolving debt from APIs doing similar things within two years.

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“We measure *actual* value rather than fake return on investment (ROI)”

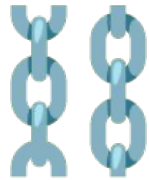
Examples for metrics to track speed.

Lead time	FROM	TO
<i>Overarching</i>	Approved change	In production
<i>Engineering-centric</i>	First commit	In production
<i>AI-specific</i>	“Model wants X”	“X is reliably available via API”
<i>Integration-centric</i>	AI feature ready	Integration/data access ready

The story does not need to be complicated.



The bet.

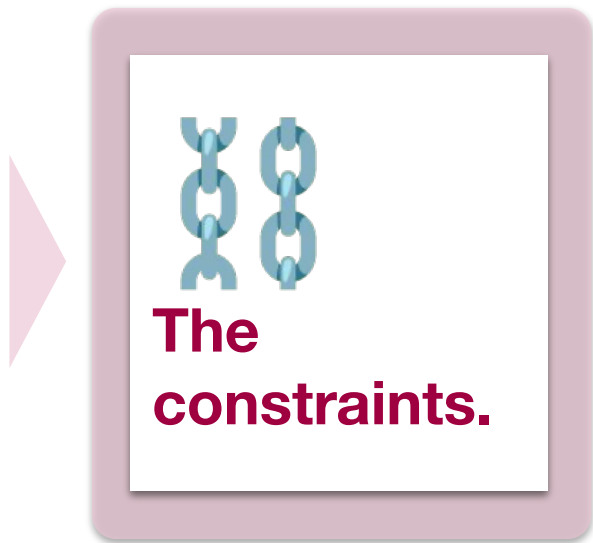


**The
constraints.**



**The
enablement.**

Examples



Questionable data quality?

Uncharted compliance?

Fragmented or brittle integrations?

Partner mis-alignment?

Underestimated token costs?

Examples



**The
enablement.**

<i>Primary metric</i>	Enablers
<i>Faster change</i>	Flow & self-sufficiency
<i>Safer change</i>	Controls; observability
<i>Scalability and reuse</i>	Composability
<i>Partner readiness</i>	Transparency & op model
<i>Lower costs</i>	Consumption & resources

The message.

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“Without funding the AI change machinery, we’re spending on demos rather than results.”

API strategy owner.

Keep the strategy simple to focus on execution

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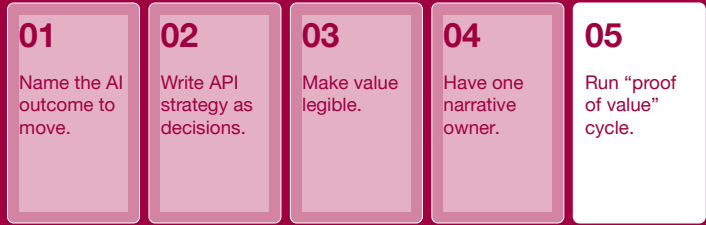
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05

Run “proof of value” cycle.

“Our approach is to match our AI pace and style.”

Earn the right to fund further steps.



Sample experiment:

1. Pick a product journey / capability.
2. Map friction (where AI work will fail).
3. Implement the API/APIOps improvements.
4. Measure the before >> after.
5. Make the story shareable internally.

Five moves. All actionable now.

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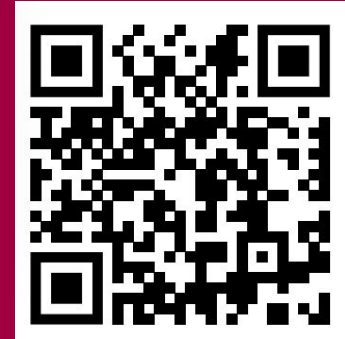
05

Start “proof of value” cycle.

Takeaways

- Everything's changed...except the fundamentals.
- You're competing with AI unless you're enabling it.
- Be bold about simplifying the over-complicated.

Thank you



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