

Queue-it

How to choose your virtual waiting room

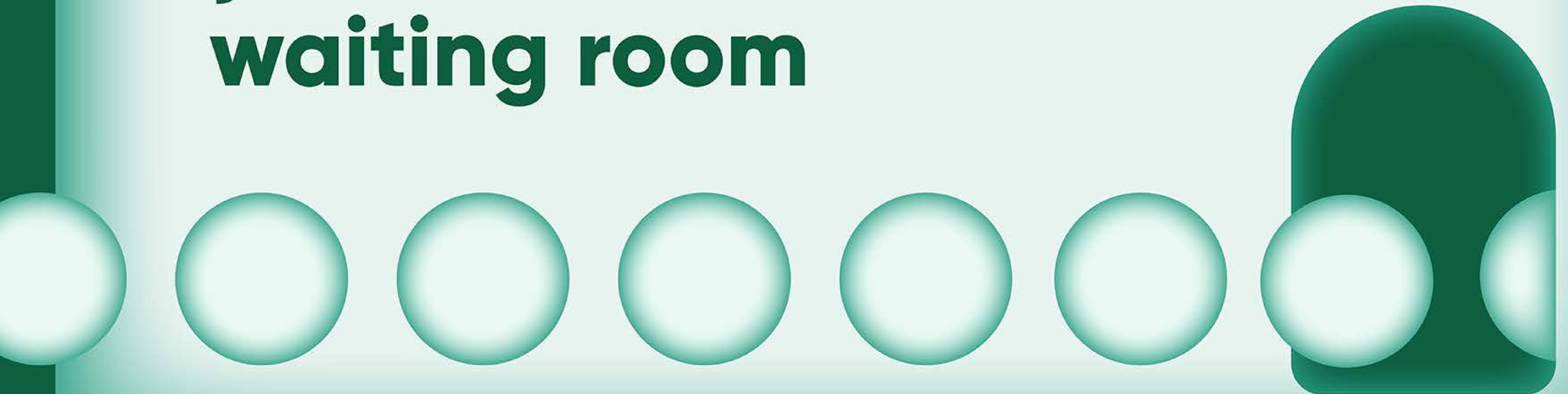
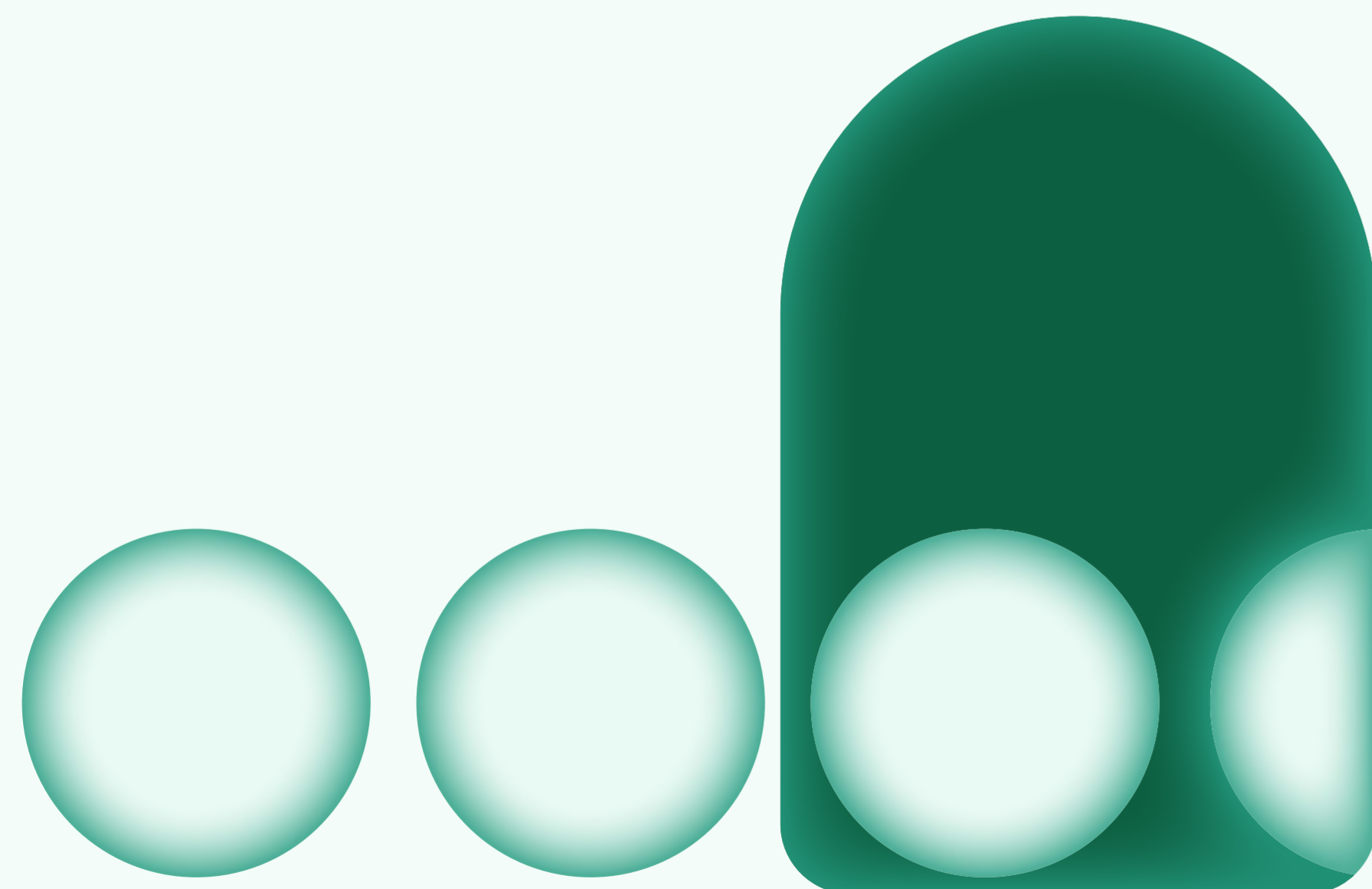


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What to expect from this guide

You've decided you want to control your online traffic with a virtual waiting room. That means you're in good company. Virtual waiting rooms are a powerful solution the world's biggest brands use to protect their web infrastructure and capitalize on the business opportunity of their biggest days.

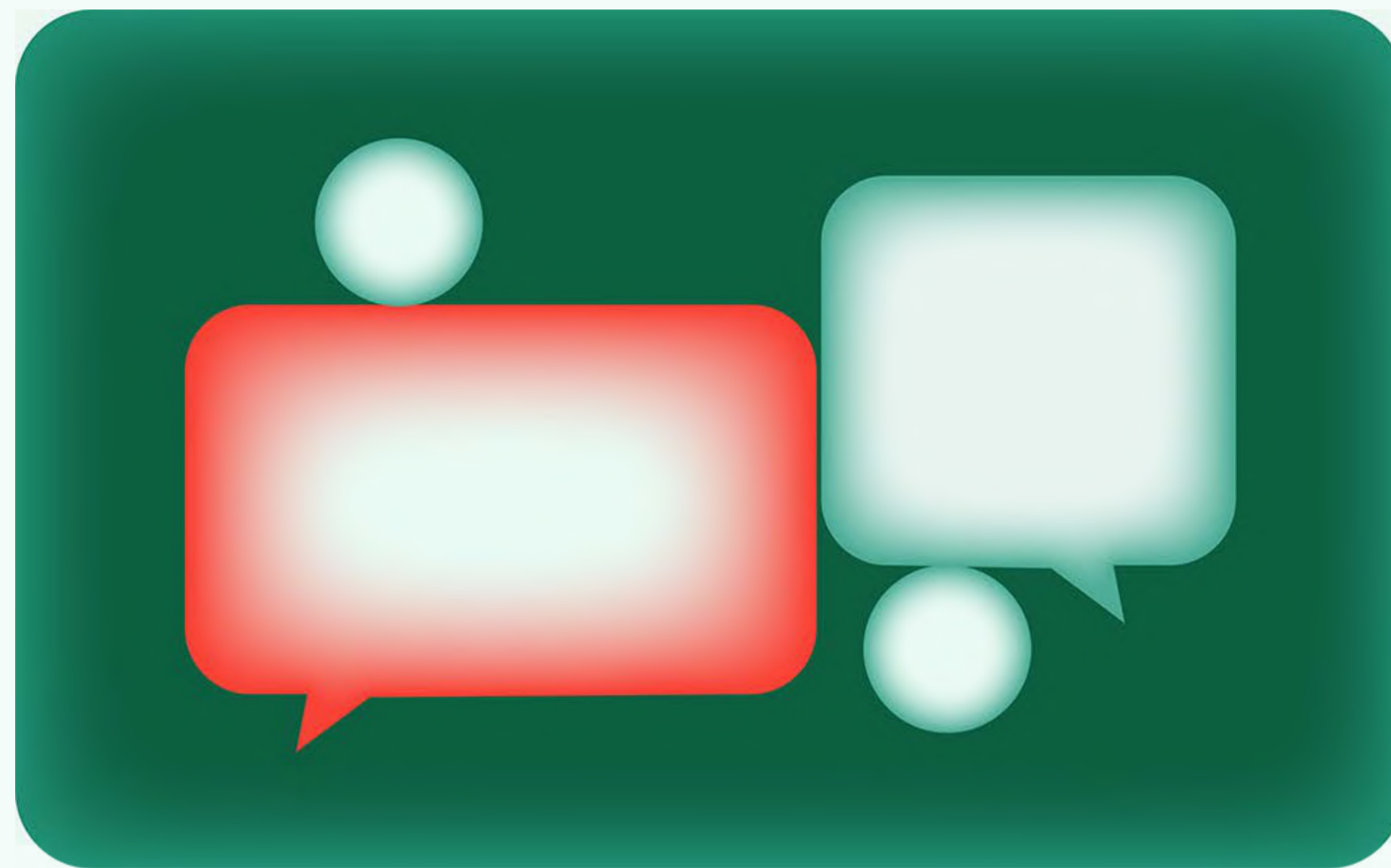


But choosing a virtual waiting room software provider is a big decision. The flow of online traffic is the river that runs through your website, supporting and sustaining your sales, your brand reputation, and your customer data and interactions. It needs to be controlled with precision so it doesn't flood your systems. But you also want to capture the business value that peak traffic represents. This guide is designed to cover the critical business and technical considerations you need to inform your decision—it's here to help you decide how to choose your virtual waiting room wisely.

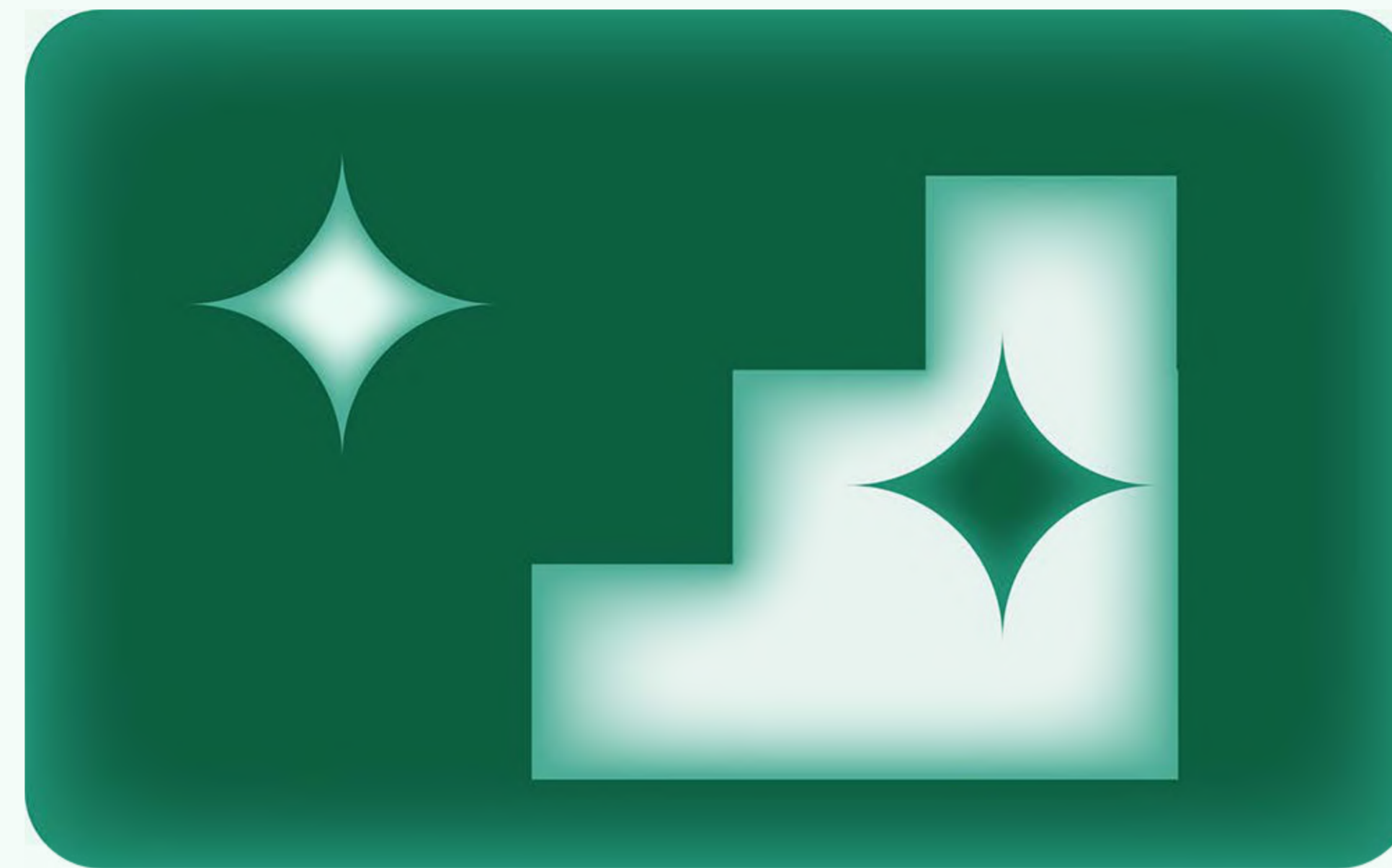
What are these considerations based on? 10+ years of experience. Processing an average 60 million visitors per day. And learning from work with enterprises like Ticketmaster, The North Face, Currys, Zalando, AXS, SNIPES, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, and many more. These companies' busiest days are Queue-it's business-as-usual.

You'll find the critical questions major organizations have asked us again and again. From nitty-gritty technical queries about implementation and security to big picture considerations around user experience and customizability—you'll get a comprehensive list of the crucial questions to ask to ensure you've thought through everything you need from your virtual waiting room.

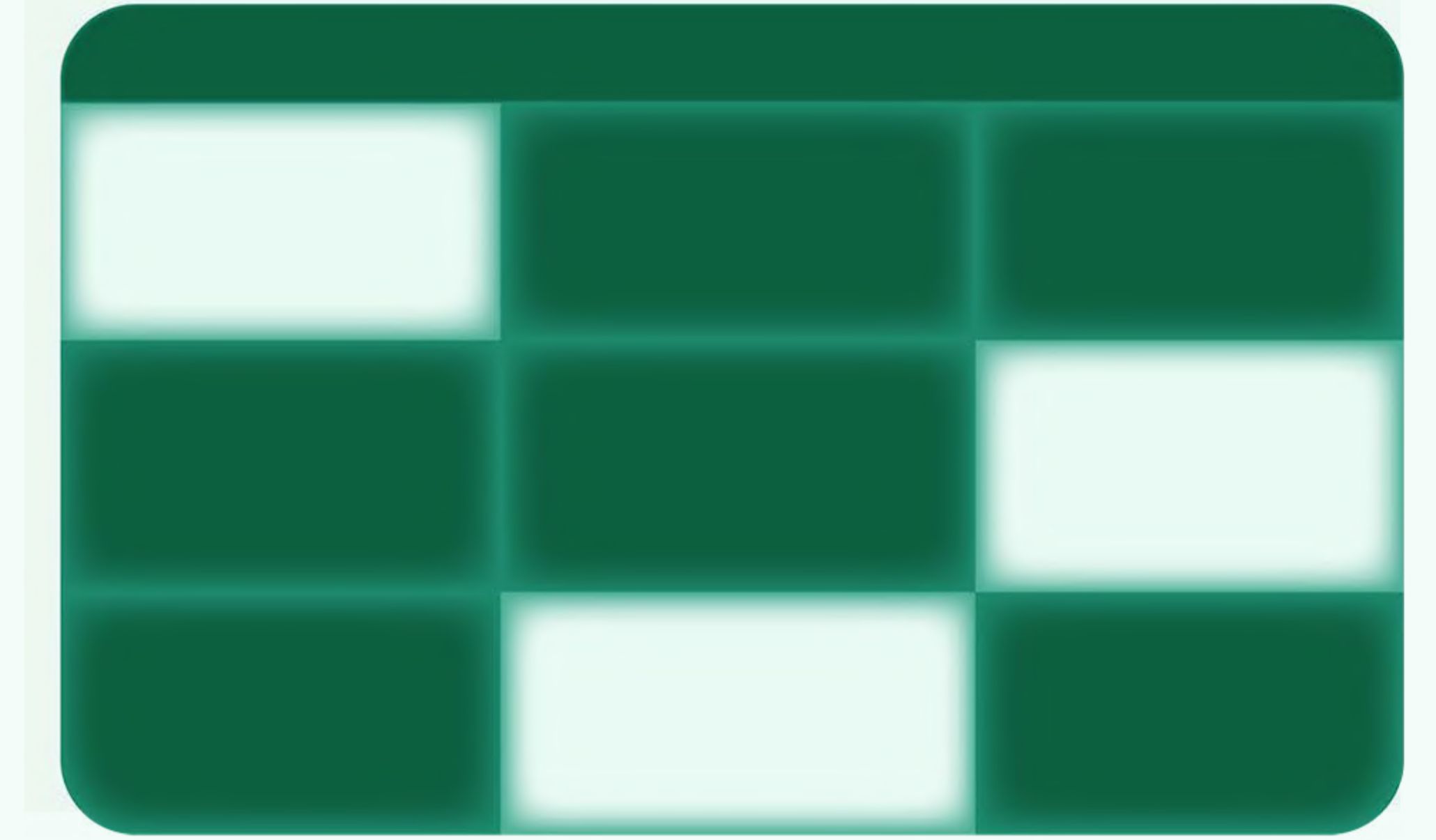
By the end of this guide



You'll know the key questions to ask yourself and your virtual waiting room provider to ensure you're getting the best possible experience—for both your team and your customers.

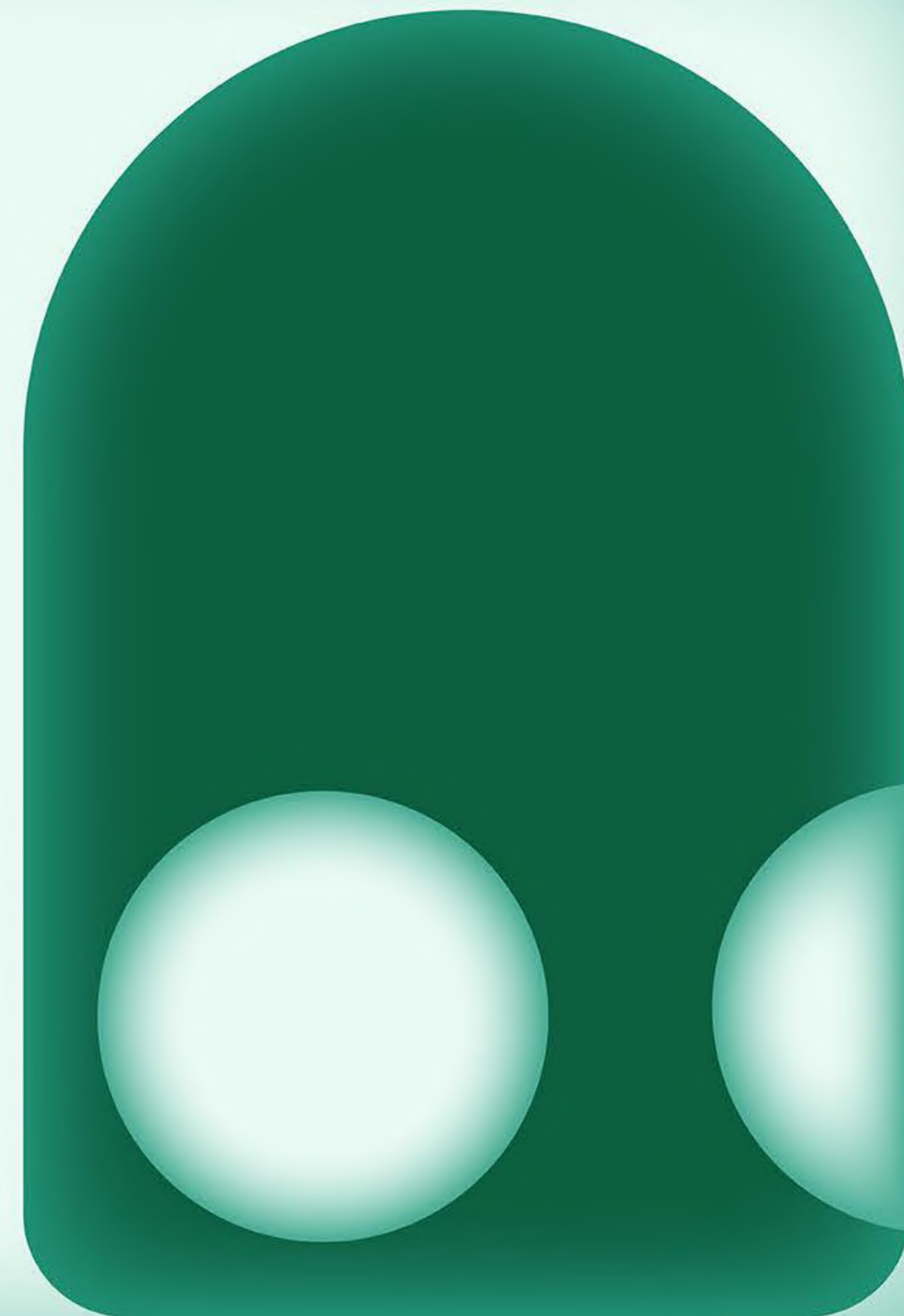
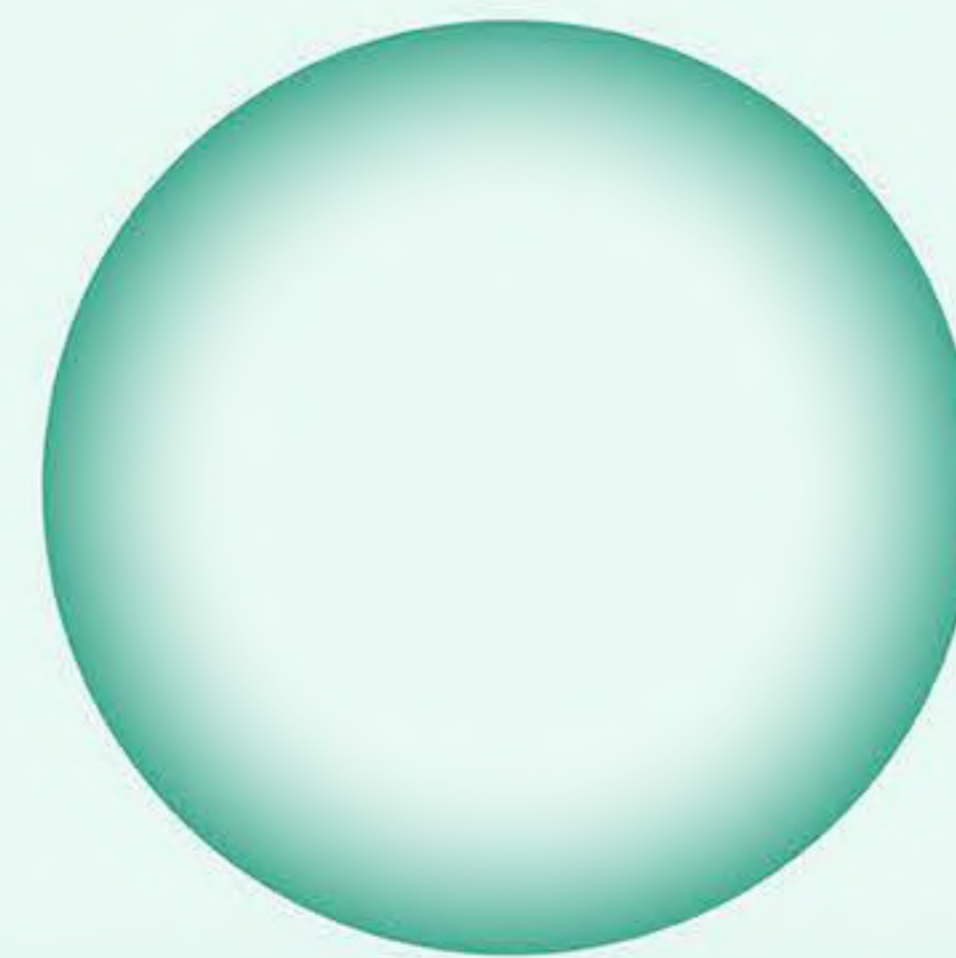
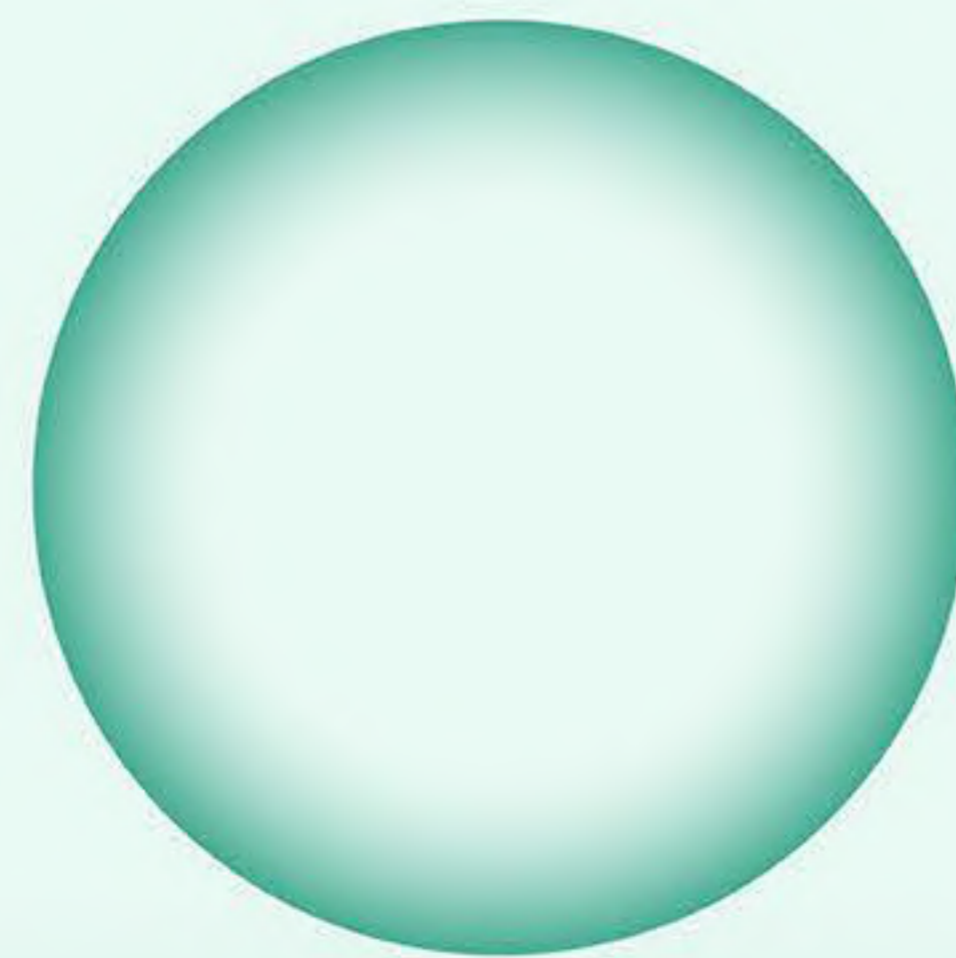
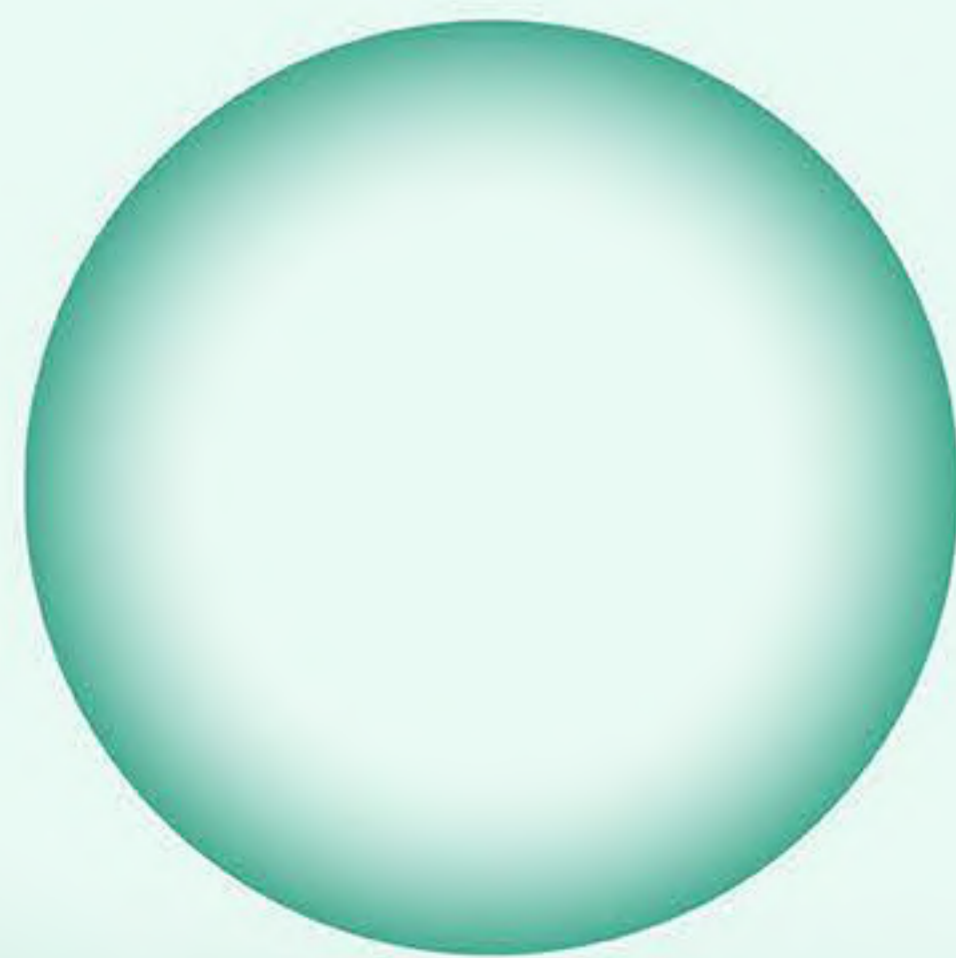
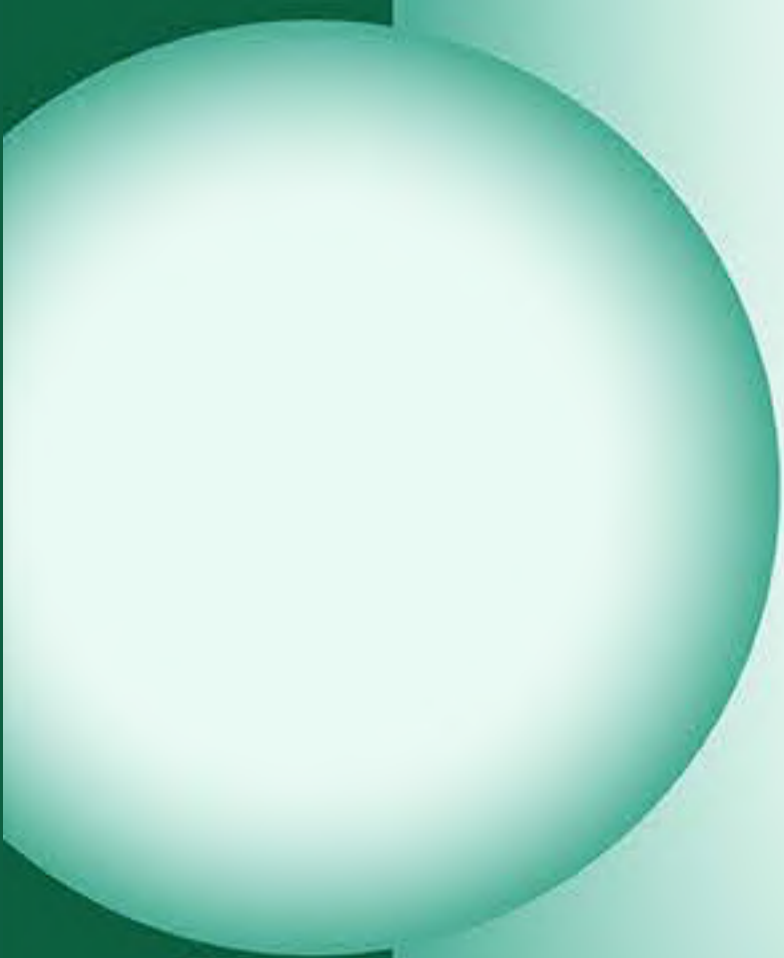


You'll have the background, context, and knowledge needed to make an informed decision that's aligned with your business goals.



You'll get an interactive checklist you can use to compare solutions and streamline the decision-making process.

**How can a
virtual waiting
room help you?**



How can a virtual waiting room help you?

Mitigate risks from uncontrolled traffic

Complaints. Crashes. Costs. Without web traffic control, you can expect all three to increase.

When demand outstrips supply, it's tough to allocate product fairly, reward loyal customers, and keep bots and resellers at bay. The social media complaints about your sales and registrations are just the tip of the iceberg—dig a little deeper and you'll find a hit to brand reputation, lost sales revenue, and lost customer loyalty.

When there's more site traffic than site capacity, it can crash or slow your site, overheat bottlenecks, and ruin your team's productivity. Customers can't buy products or complete their journeys.

And behind the scenes, stressed-out teams get caught in a cycle of putting out fires, diverting attention from core business objectives.

When your site crashes, you'll find increased costs everywhere you look. 91% of enterprises report downtime costs exceeding \$300k per hour. And costs for companies with frequent outages are 16x higher than those with few outages.

At its foundation, a virtual waiting room helps you mitigate the risk of crashes, complaints, and costs. But there's more potential than that. A well-implemented virtual waiting room can unlock major benefits across your business. Confidence and control during

peak events gives you time to focus on innovating your offerings, delighting your customers, and driving your sales.

Check the pyramid on the next page to see the higher-order benefits you could be enjoying.

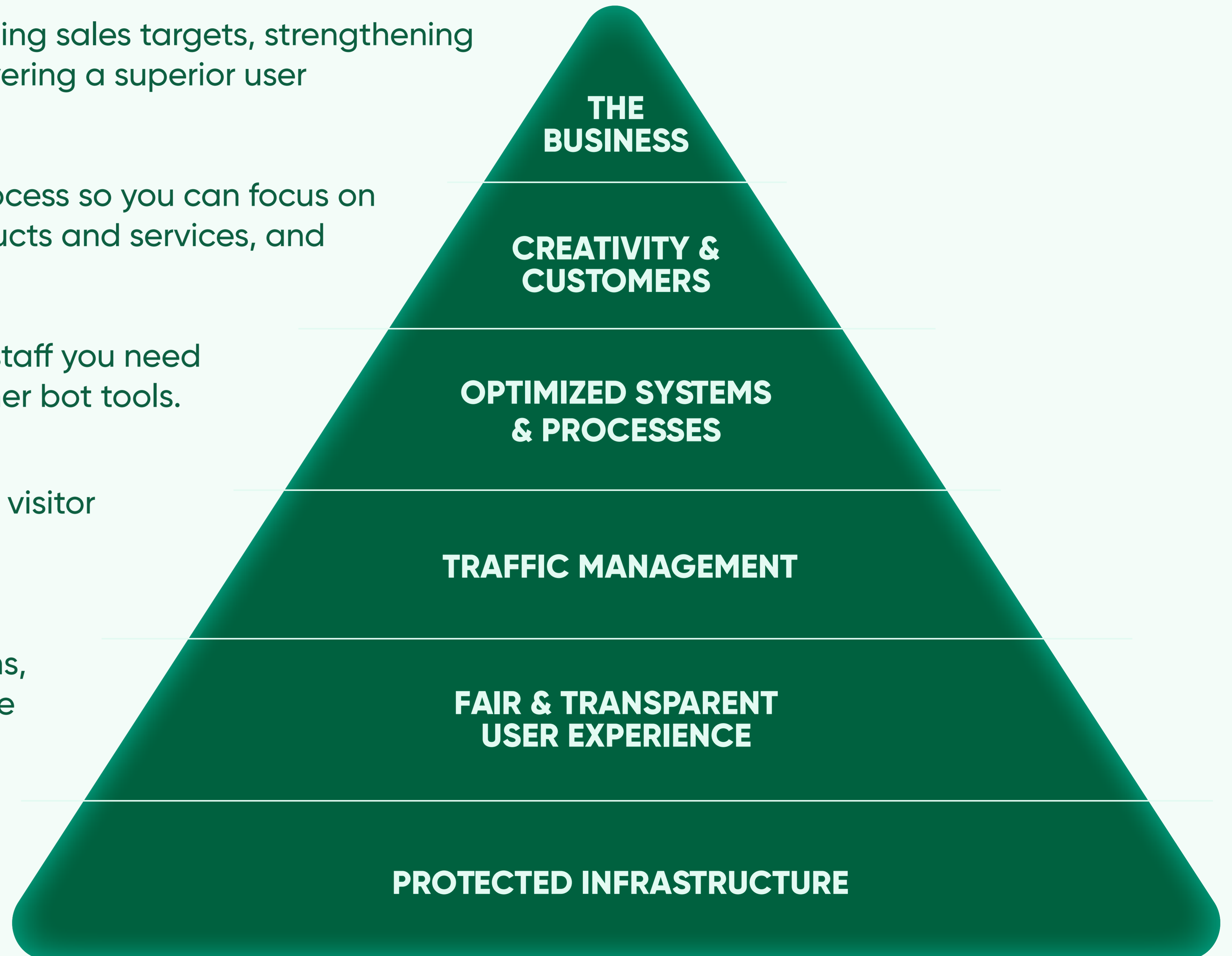
According to Forrester, the three main cost drivers of crashes are:

- 1 Lost revenue
- 2 Lost productivity
- 3 Lost brand equity and trust

How can a virtual waiting room help you?

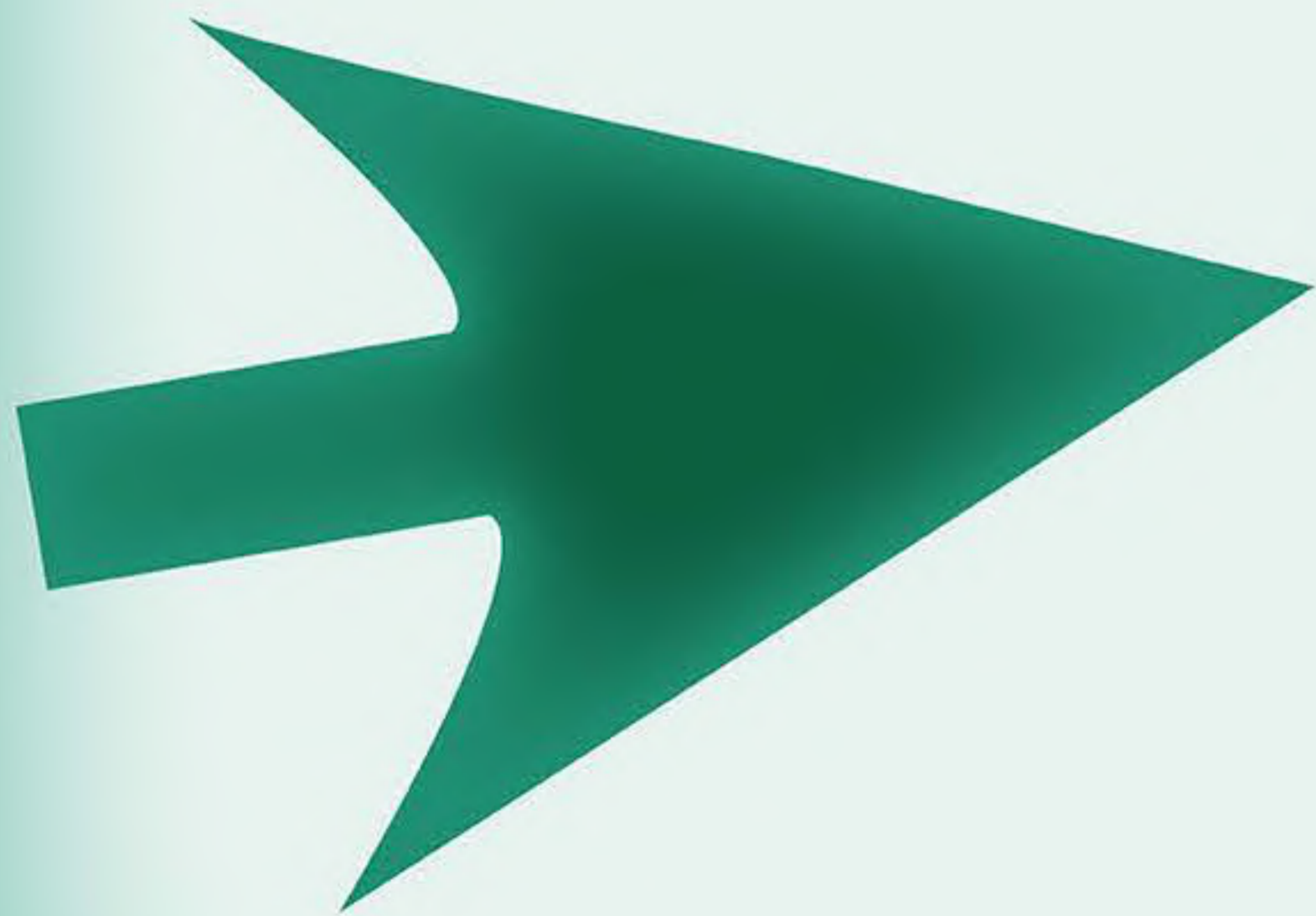
Benefits a virtual waiting room adds to the organization

- 6 Drive your business engine forward by hitting sales targets, strengthening your brand, lowering tech costs, and delivering a superior user experience no matter the demand.
- 5 Reclaim your time and trust your sales process so you can focus on innovating your offerings, improving products and services, and strengthening customer relationships.
- 4 Streamline your sales, reduce how many staff you need on-call, and lower spend on scaling & other bot tools.
- 3 Get granular control over traffic, enabling visitor segmentation, exclusive access, and bad bot mitigation.
- 2 Allocate product with fairness mechanisms, like a randomized live raffle or unskippable first-in-first-out queue, and keep visitors informed.
- 1 Prevent website crashes, payment errors, and overselling.





1. Consider your customer experience



How do you want your visitors to feel while they're in line?

When it comes to queues, you'd think the length of the wait would be the biggest determiner of customer satisfaction. Shorter wait = happier customer, right? Not quite.

Psychological studies show that how people feel when they wait in line matters a lot more than the duration of the wait. As Harvard Business School Professor David Maister explains, there are key principles behind the psychology of waiting.

The tenets of queue psychology

- 1 Occupied time feels shorter than unoccupied time
- 2 People want to get started
- 3 Known, finite waits feel shorter than uncertain waits
- 4 Explained waits feel shorter than unexplained waits
- 5 Fair waits feel shorter than unfair waits



How do you want your visitors to feel while they're in line?

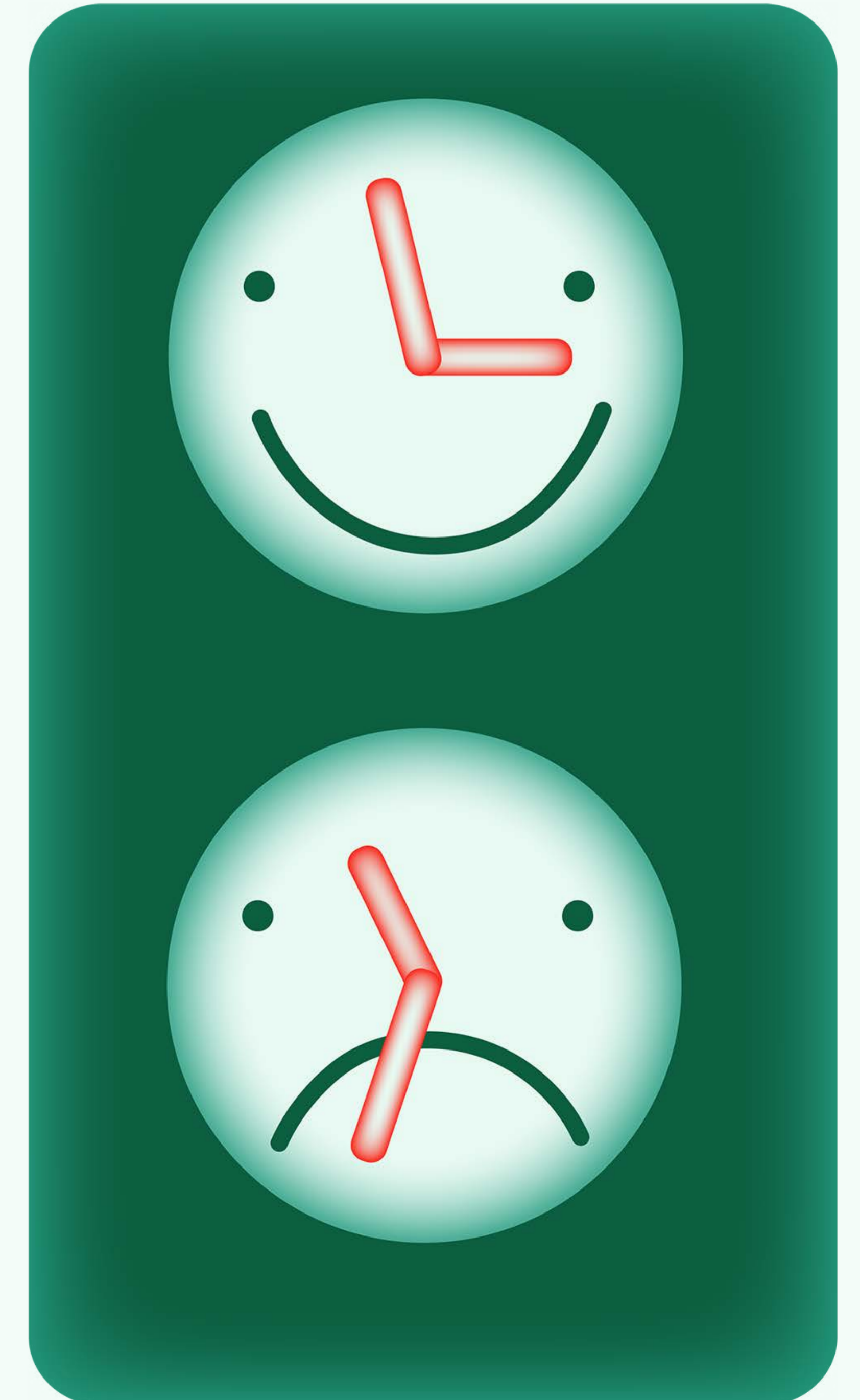
Think of the difference in how you've felt when you call a phone number and:

- A** Get a busy tone
- B** Connect but just hear busy music
- C** Connect and be informed on your estimate wait time and place in line, with an option to receive a callback

Those are exactly the same feelings people have during a queue situation online with:

- A** A "sorry" page
- B** A basic waiting room
- C** An advanced waiting room with an informed wait

If you want to create the best possible waiting experience for your customers, make sure your virtual waiting room is built with the principles of queue psychology at its core.



Does the virtual waiting room offer:

1. Occupied time

- ✦ An option to notify customers when it's their turn in line
- ✦ Customization of the waiting page including embedding games and videos

2. Getting started

- ✦ A progress bar to shift the focus to progress versus waiting
- ✦ An option to include sneak peeks of the upcoming products or the products they're waiting for
- ✦ An option to include details & instructions for visitors to help them complete their transaction as quickly as possible

3. Finite waits

- ✦ An estimated wait time
- ✦ Up-to-date progress on where the visitor is in the queue
- ✦ Information on how many other people are in line

4. Explained waits

- ✦ An option to customization your queue page with messaging in your brand voice
- ✦ An option to send real-time communications to customers waiting in the queue

5. Fair waits

- ✦ An unskippable queue
- ✦ Redirection of the customers to your website in a FIFO process
- ✦ Early visitor randomization before the official start of the sale or registration

How important is a seamless customer experience?

74% of CX professionals say creating a seamless customer journey across assisted and self-service channels is “important” or “very important.”

A customer experience that’s smooth, efficient, and enjoyable drives satisfaction and loyalty. Some virtual waiting room solutions won’t be able to match the look and feel of your website, so pay attention to the level of customization that’s possible.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Customization of the URL, page title, and favicon of the waiting room so it looks like customers are still on your domain
- ✦ Ability to reflect your visual identity and brand voice
- ✦ An option to have the waiting room in your and your customers’ local language
- ✦ Native integration with mobile apps
- ✦ An option for customers to keep their spot in line if they open a new app, lock their phones, or run out of battery
- ✦ An option for customers to keep their spot in line if they switch between different devices
- ✦ Customization on how long customers can browse before they need to be queued again

Would you like to give early or exclusive access to your customers?

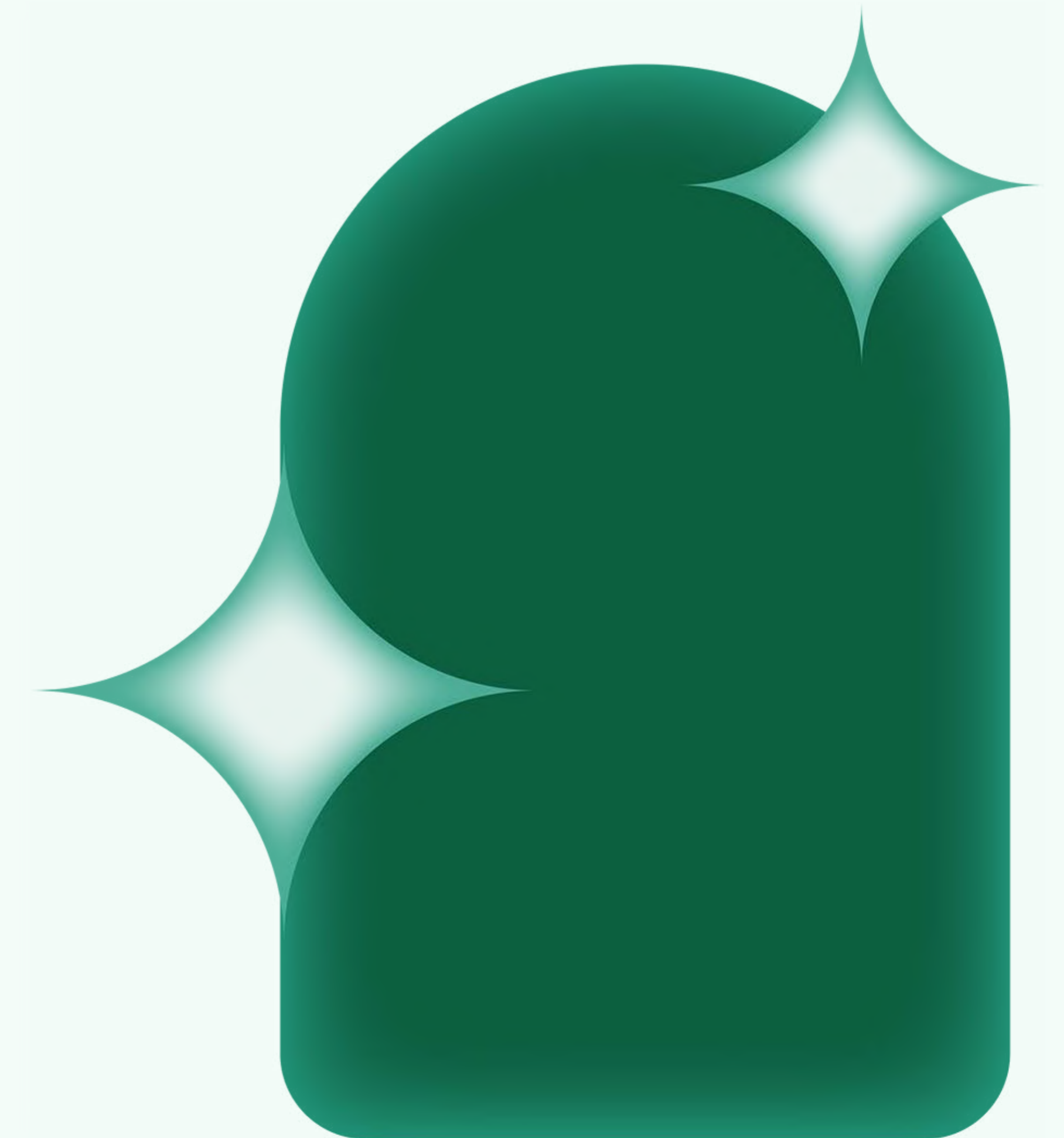
Loyalty programs are instrumental in nurturing customer loyalty, increasing customer retention, and driving revenue growth.

It's 5-25x more expensive to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing one. Plus, you have a 60-70% chance of selling to an existing customer, versus a 5-20% chance of selling to a new prospect.

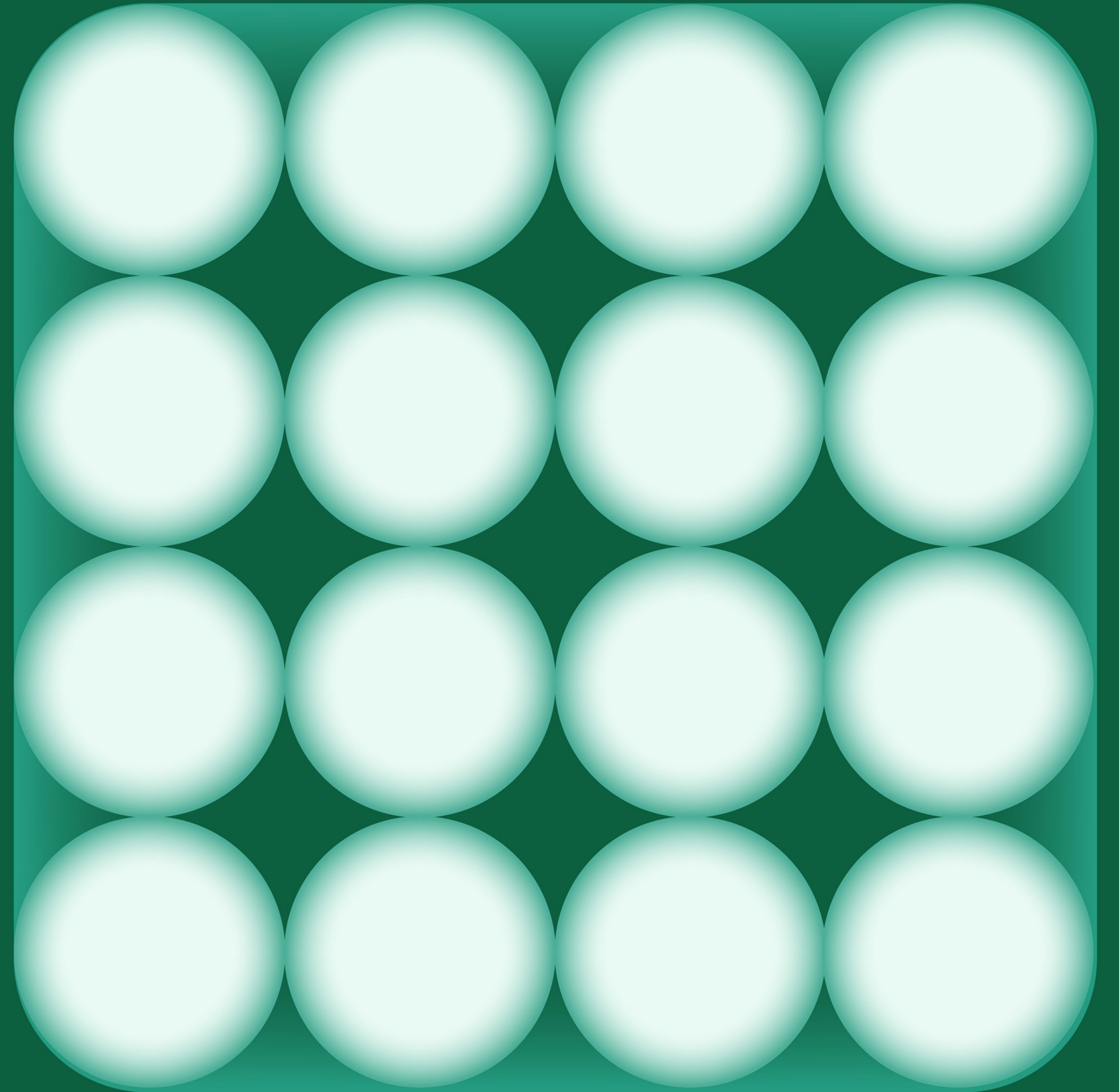
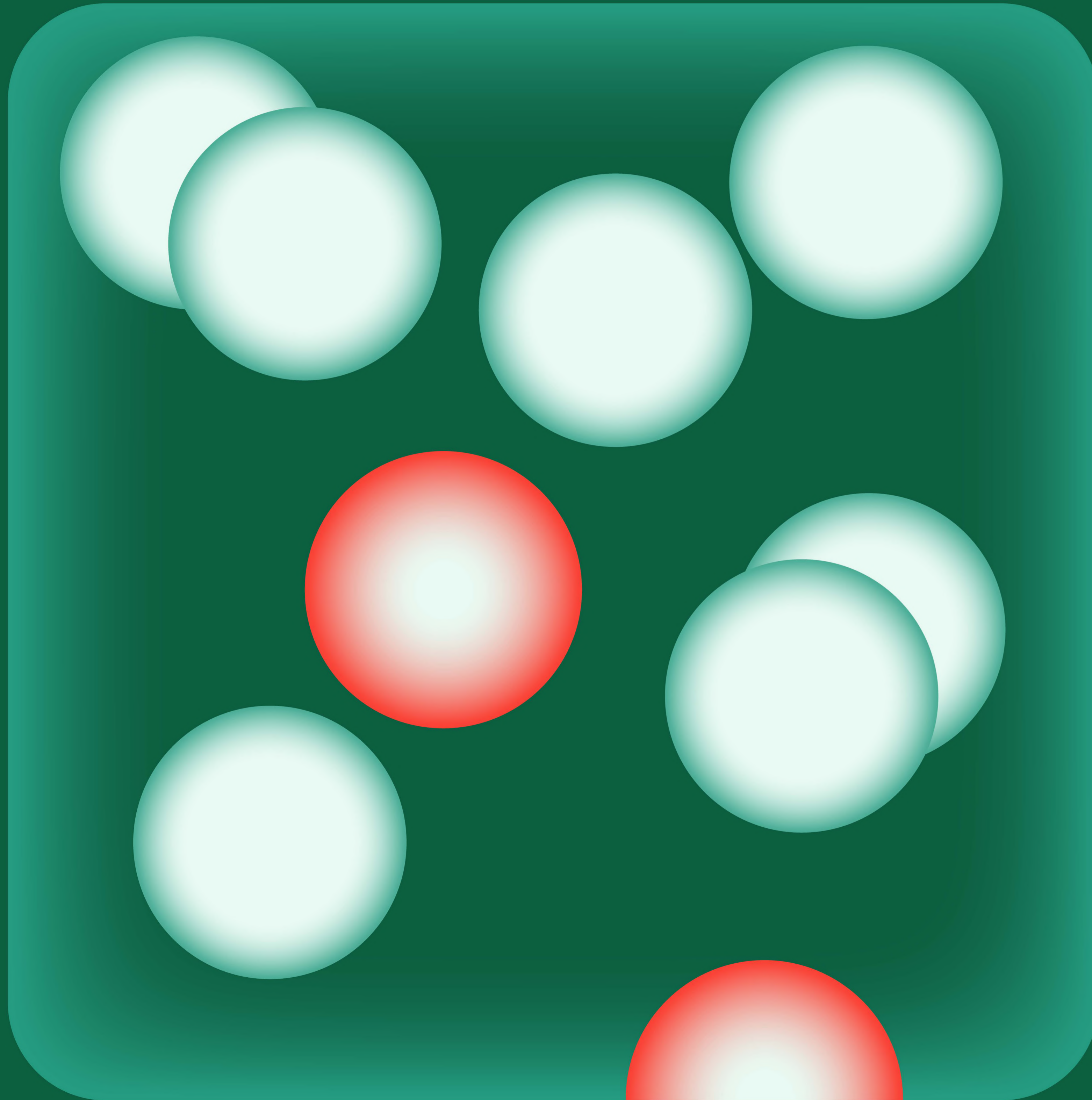
Consider whether your virtual waiting room solution offers a way to engage loyal customers by giving them special sales access.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ An option to grant sales access to targeted groups of customers
- ✦ A mechanism to drive signups and expand first-party marketing data
- ✦ Access to loyal shopper behavior data to see who joined your sale



2. Factor in fairness



Can visitors skip the line?

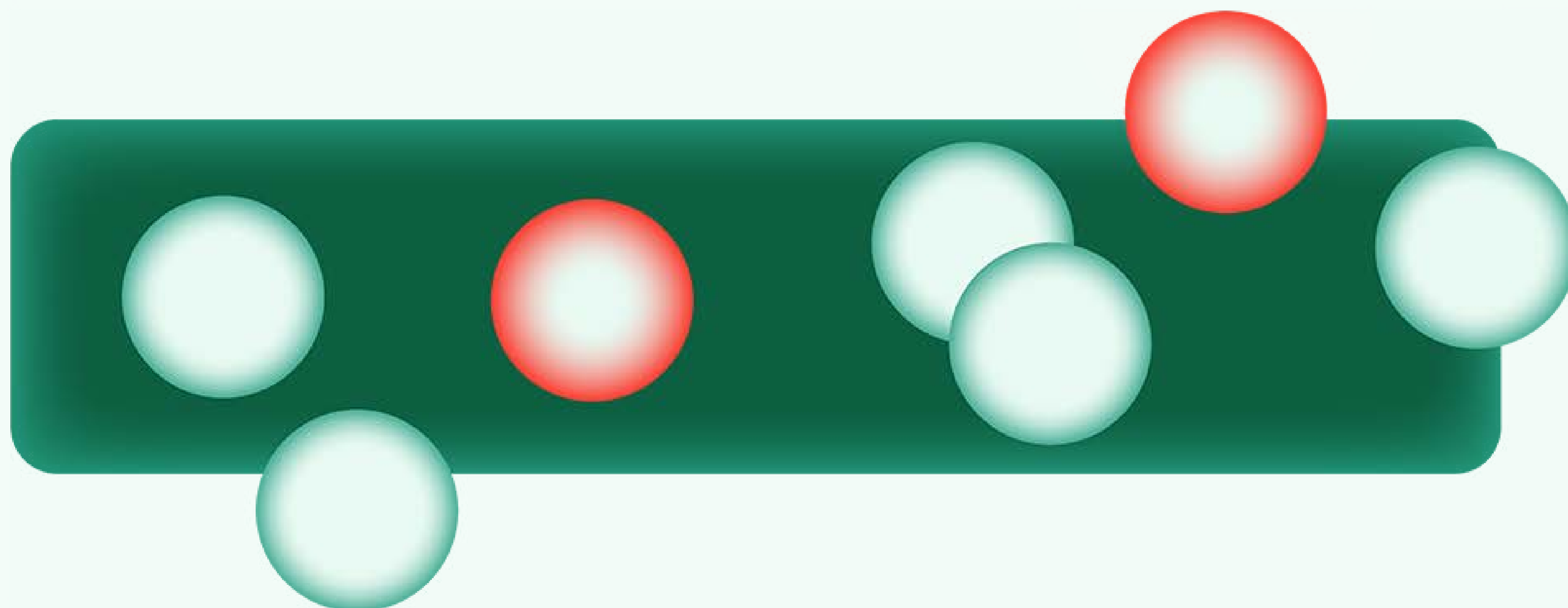
If visitors skip the online queue, it can undermine trust and disrupt the overall customer experience, triggering negative feedback and complaints on social media.

Virtual waiting rooms have several integration options which vary in how bypassable they are.

A client-side integration is easy to set up, but tech-savvy visitors can manipulate front-end code and skip the line. If an unskippable queue is your priority, make sure to look for a server-side, edge, or reverse proxy integration option (go to page 25 "Inspect integrations" to learn more).

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✧ An unskippable queue
- ✧ Possibility to integrate a virtual waiting room via server-side, edge, or reverse proxy



Can the virtual waiting room queue visitors in a first-in, first-out (FIFO) order?

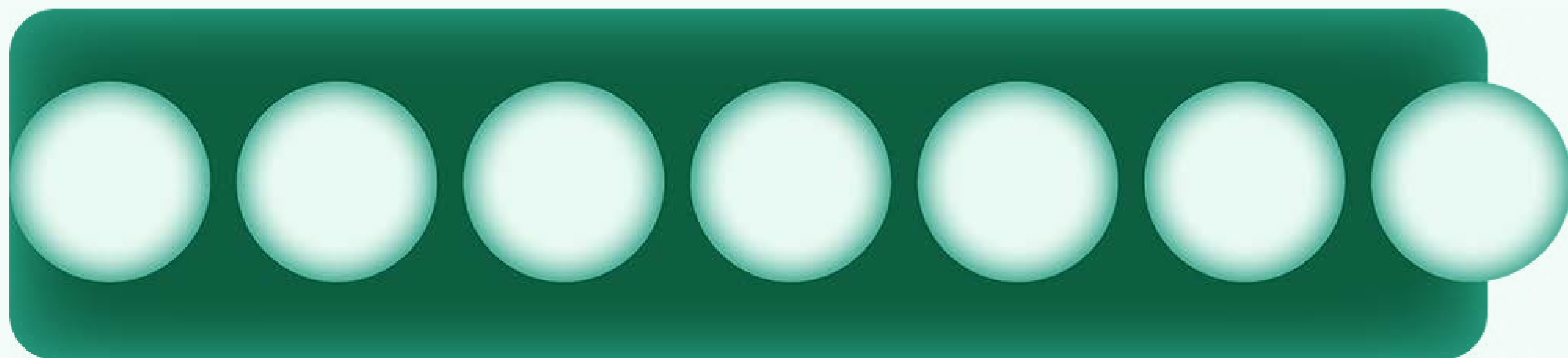
A FIFO (or first-come, first-served) queue is epitome of fairness in queue management. A FIFO queue helps instill trust among customers and create a fair and transparent wait for all.

To operate a first-in, first-out queue, a virtual waiting room needs to have a centralized (vs decentralized) list of requests to your website.

That way, it can track the order of all traffic, assigning an accurate place in line to your visitors and determining who should be the first ones out.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✧ A centralized list of requests to your website
- ✧ Redirection of the customers to your website in a FIFO process

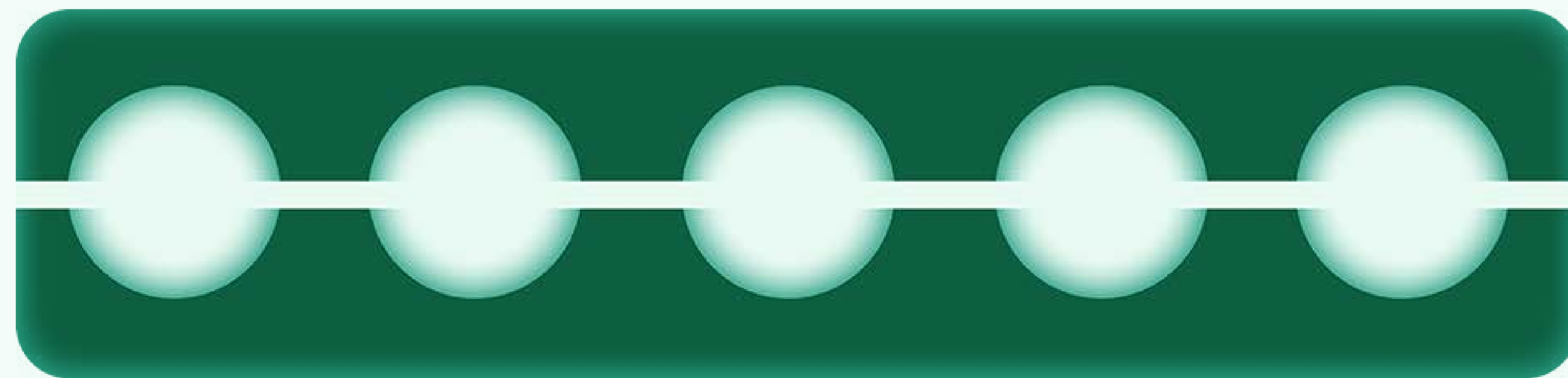


Does it provide strategies to run scheduled sales & drops?

If you're running scheduled product drops, flash sales, or ticketing onsales, what happens with customers or speedy bots who arrive early? And how will you fairly allocate products when there's more demand than supply?

If you use a FIFO queue, you can end up artificially moving the start of the sale earlier as shoppers fight to enter the second the queue starts. This runs the risk of giving speedy bots the first spots in line.

Make sure you know how your virtual waiting room manages visitors who show up before a sale begins.



Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Functionality to park users on a waiting page before the sale begins
- ✦ An option to configure a waiting page in advance
- ✦ A countdown on a waiting page until the sale starts
- ✦ "Live raffle" functionality to randomize shoppers and give everyone an equal shot at limited product

Does it offer bot & abuse protection tools?

High-demand, limited-supply products—think sneaker drops, ticket onsales, government grants—are prime targets for bots. Bad bots account for over 23% of ecommerce traffic and nearly 40% of ticketing traffic.

Bots and abuse pose major risks to online businesses, damaging brand reputation and customer loyalty, harming business relationships, skewing analytics, and adding load to your website.

The key to preventing bad bots is a multilayered approach to mitigation. The more layers of protection you use, the fewer bots can slip through the cracks.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✧ Default bots and abuse tools
- ✧ Additional bots and abuse tools that can be added on top
- ✧ Ability to limit visitors to one spot in queue based on validated identifiers
- ✧ An option to challenge suspicious traffic before completely blocking it
- ✧ The possibility to target and block specific groups of malicious traffic (e.g., IP addresses, subnets, ASNs, user agents, geographic locations)
- ✧ An option to invite selected groups of genuine customers
- ✧ Randomization of early visitors to neutralize speedy bots
- ✧ An option to put purchase limits on your products to combat the resellers
- ✧ Real-time malicious traffic alerts



3. Compare control & analytics



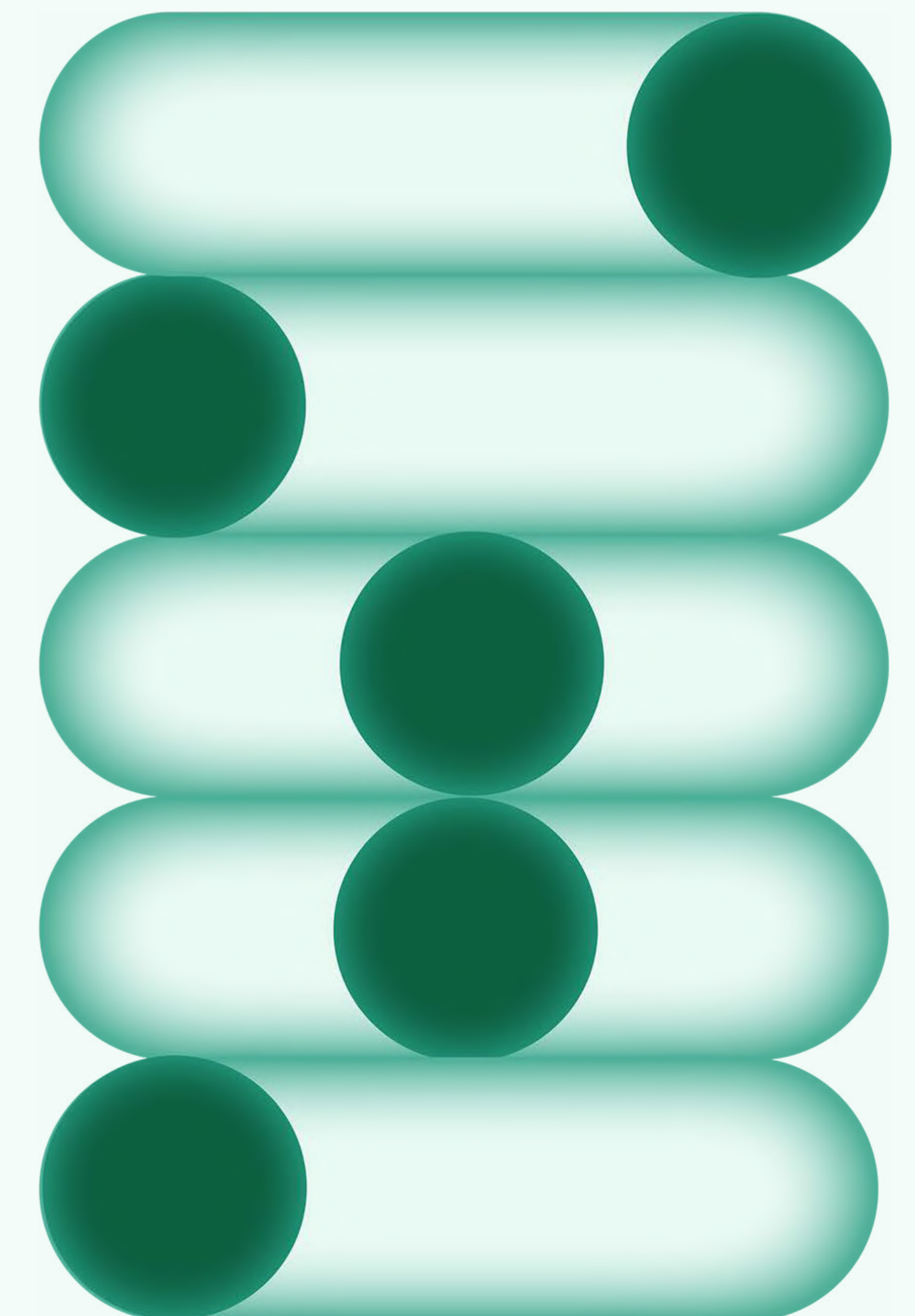
Can you choose which part of the user journey should be protected with the virtual waiting room?

You may need to implement the virtual waiting room in front of your whole site/app, on specific landing pages, or just on specific bottlenecks like dynamic requests, database calls, or 3rd party services.

To have this level of control, check if the waiting room is implemented using an IF/THEN rules framework. For instance, when a trigger happens (e.g. a customer visits a specific web page), you can activate the waiting room logic (e.g. the customer is redirected to your waiting room).

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Implementation in front of your whole site or mobile app
- ✦ Implementation on specific landing pages
- ✦ Implementation on dynamic requests like "Add to cart"
- ✦ Implementation upon adding a specific product to the shopping cart
- ✦ Implementation when adding one product to the cart, but not another, even if both products have the same URL



Do you have a central command during high demand?

High-demand sales and registrations can be stressful. Especially if you're running multiple events at once. Everything must go smoothly, with no surprises. A virtual waiting room should give you the confidence and peace of mind that everything's under control.

Key to feeling in control is the ability to adjust the flow of visitors to your site in real-time. This lets you ensure downstream systems aren't running hot, and that your customers get user experience they deserve, no matter the demand.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Easy-to-use controls, allowing you to pause, resume, or stop the online queue as needed
- ✦ API to automatically manage the waiting rooms
- ✦ Ability to adjust maximum inflow/outflow rates on the fly
- ✦ Automatic control of the maximum outflow based on your system capacity
- ✦ Real-time traffic analytics like traffic inflow and outflow
- ✦ Real-time traffic analytics like number of genuine and malicious visitors in the waiting room

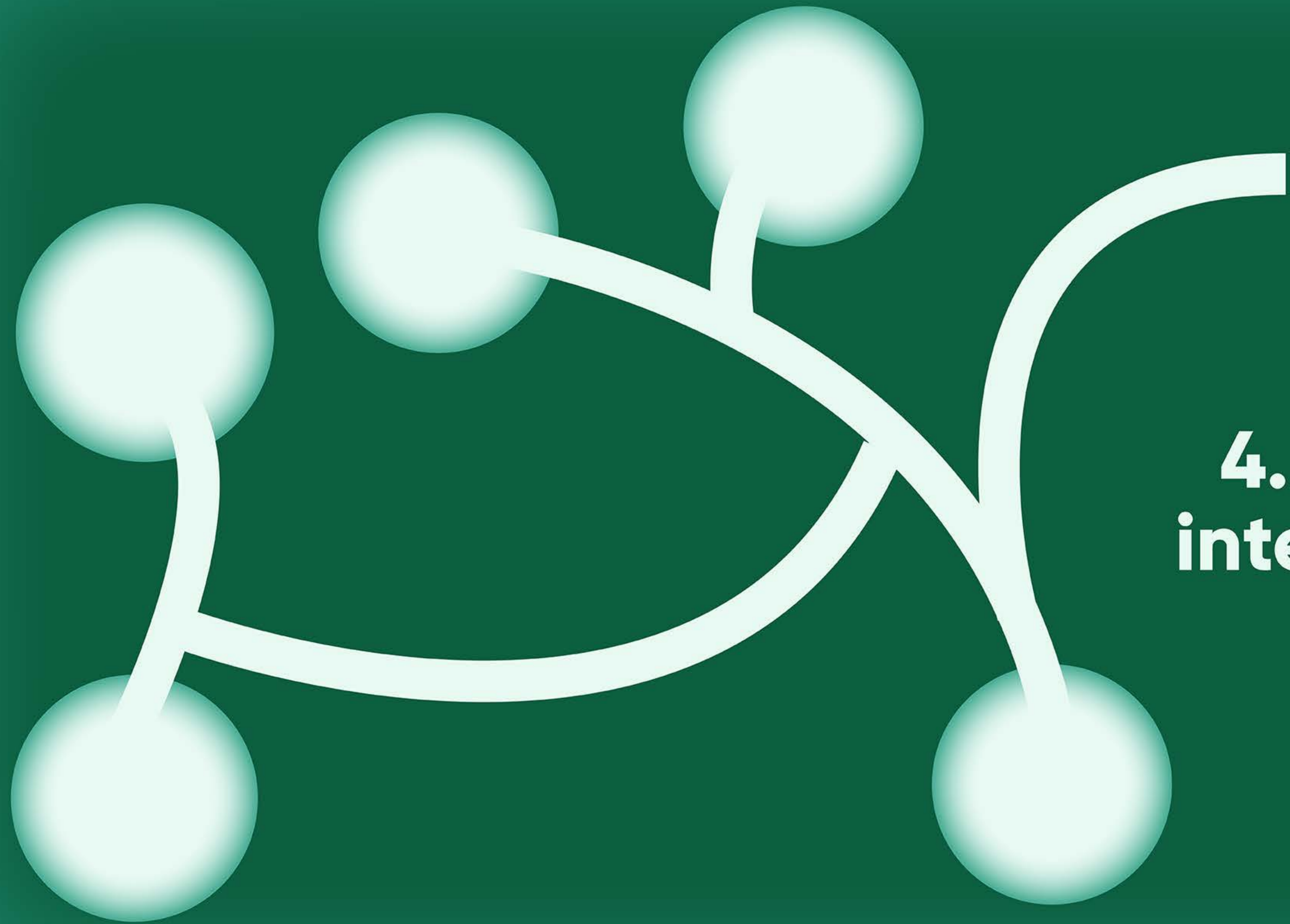
Can you get insights into your traffic that can help you optimize your next sale or registration?

After running a sale or registration, it's time to evaluate the performance, inform stakeholders of the key details, and prepare for your next big business day.

You might need to strengthen your bots and abuse strategy, adjust marketing efforts, or rethink the way you sell your products. Consider the quality and quantity of traffic data and insights you can get from your virtual waiting room, and the possibilities to securely share that data with key stakeholders.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

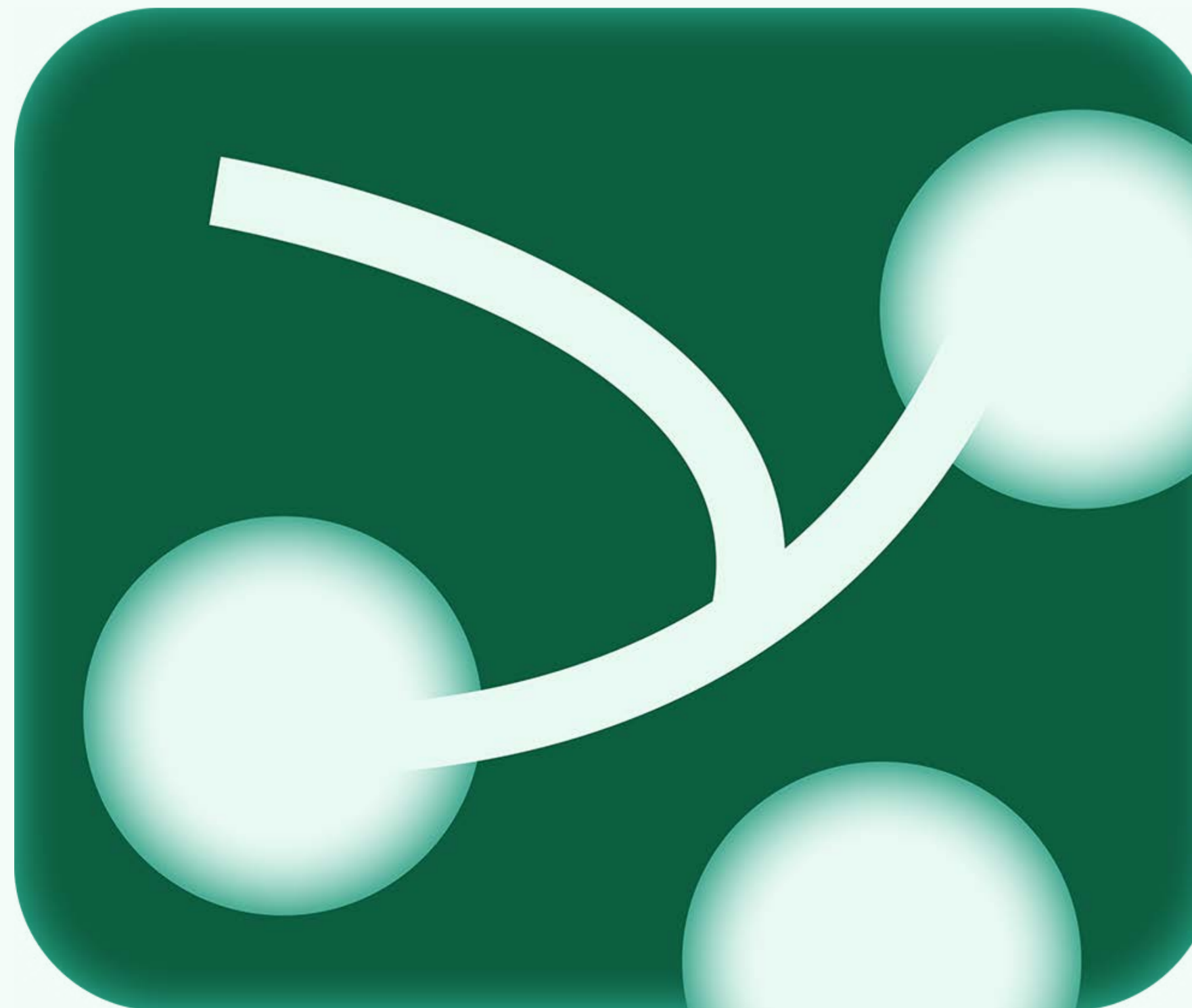
- ✦ API to return waiting room statistics and securely share read-only analytics
- ✦ Data to understand the extent of bot traffic
- ✦ Analytics on unusual traffic patterns and its sources
- ✦ Statistics on how often visitors were challenged and what share of visitors passed the challenges
- ✦ Traffic details like data center traffic, IP addresses, geographic location, devices used
- ✦ Insights into individual requests, like how many times a specific visitor purchased your product
- ✦ Post-event waiting room data export
- ✦ Data export in multiple formats like CSV, XLS, PNG, JPEG, PDF, or SVG
- ✦ Sharing of real-time reports with stakeholders



**4. Inspect
integrations**

What integration options are available?

Virtual waiting rooms are typically integrated in one of four ways: client-side, server-side, edge, or reverse proxy. Each integration method has its pros and cons.



Consider the trade-offs you're willing to make when it comes to ease of integration, security, performance, troubleshooting, availability, and feature enhancements.

Pay attention to the variety of connectors the solution offers. The more connectors available to complete integrations into your system, the higher the chance is you'll get exactly what you need out of your virtual waiting room.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Quick integration options
- ✦ An unskippable queue
- ✦ Protection of the origin server from requests
- ✦ Integrations that are easy to troubleshoot
- ✦ Control for websites, apps, and PWAs
- ✦ A solution-agnostic approach to integrating with CDN, load balancer, or ecommerce platform

Integration options comparison

| | Client-side | Server-side | Edge | Reverse proxy |
|---|-------------|-------------|------|---------------|
| Quick to integrate | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Unskippable queue | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Allows visitor verification | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Protects the origin from requests | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Easy to troubleshoot | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Works on websites apps & PWAs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Doesn't require a CDN with edge computing | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Doesn't expose data to the VWR provider | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

What are the options to integrate with mobile applications?

Mobile makes up 60% of global ecommerce sales and 71% of all internet traffic.

Mobile queuing delivers flexibility for your customers as they wait. They can work, run errands, or drop the kids off at school while their queue status progresses, so it doesn't feel like waiting at all. Plus, if the wait is long, mobile queuing can allow customers to transfer their queue number from desktop to mobile, so they don't lose their spot while on-the-move.

If you want to use the virtual waiting room to protect traffic surges on your mobile app, don't take for granted that it'll work seamlessly.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ SDKs for major native app platforms like iOS, Android, and React Native
- ✦ Responsive queue page on mobile
- ✦ Flexibility to put app users into the same or separate queue as desktop users
- ✦ Ability for customers to maintain their spot in line if they leave the app, lock their phones, or if their phones run out of battery
- ✦ Ability for customers to transfer their position in line between desktop and mobile devices

How much time do you have for integration?

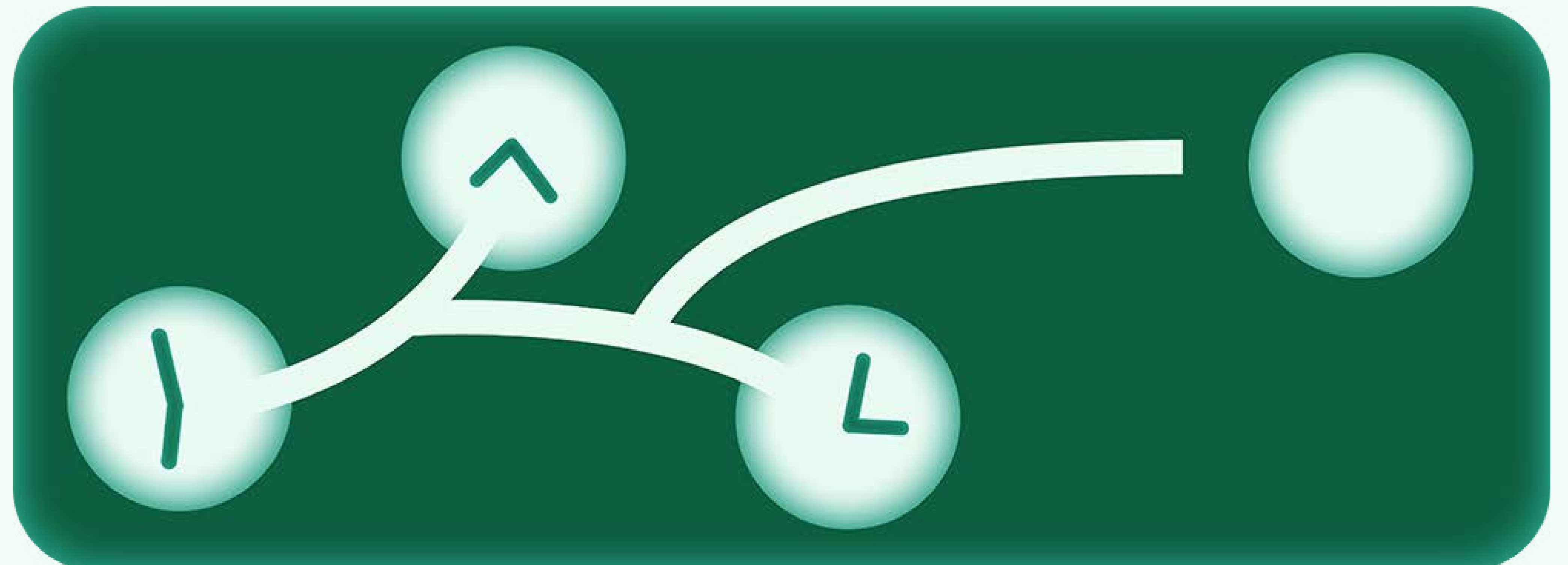
Integrating new software into your tech stack takes time. You'll need to match your goals with the resources you have available to you.

Virtual waiting rooms aren't complex to integrate. But there's a difference between the 30 minutes it takes to put in place JavaScript on your website, and the day it can take to integrate server-side.

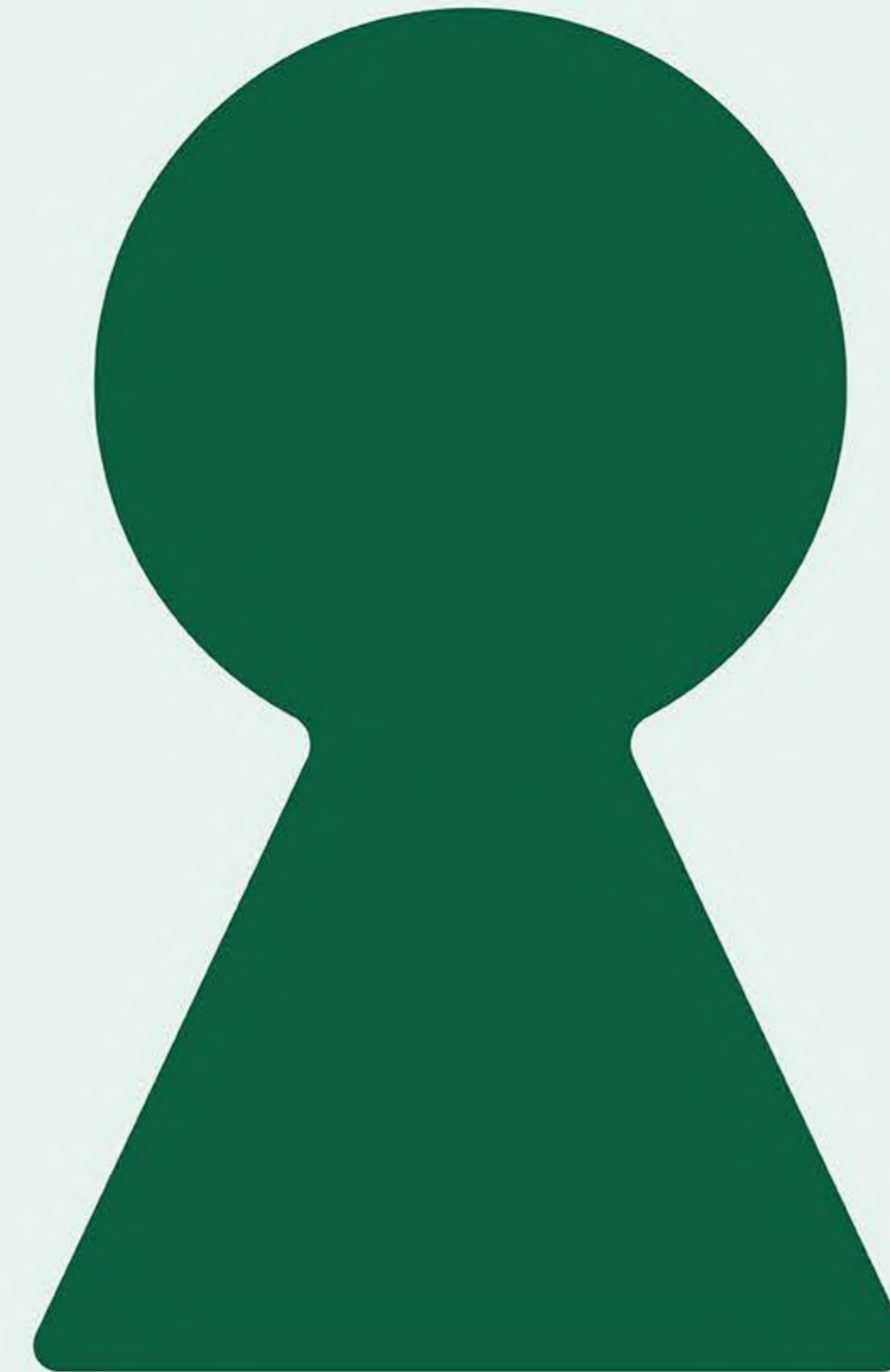
Consider the level of support you'll receive from the virtual waiting room provider, as it'll determine how quick and easy the implementation process will be (see page 34).

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Multiple integration options to match your resources available for doing the integration



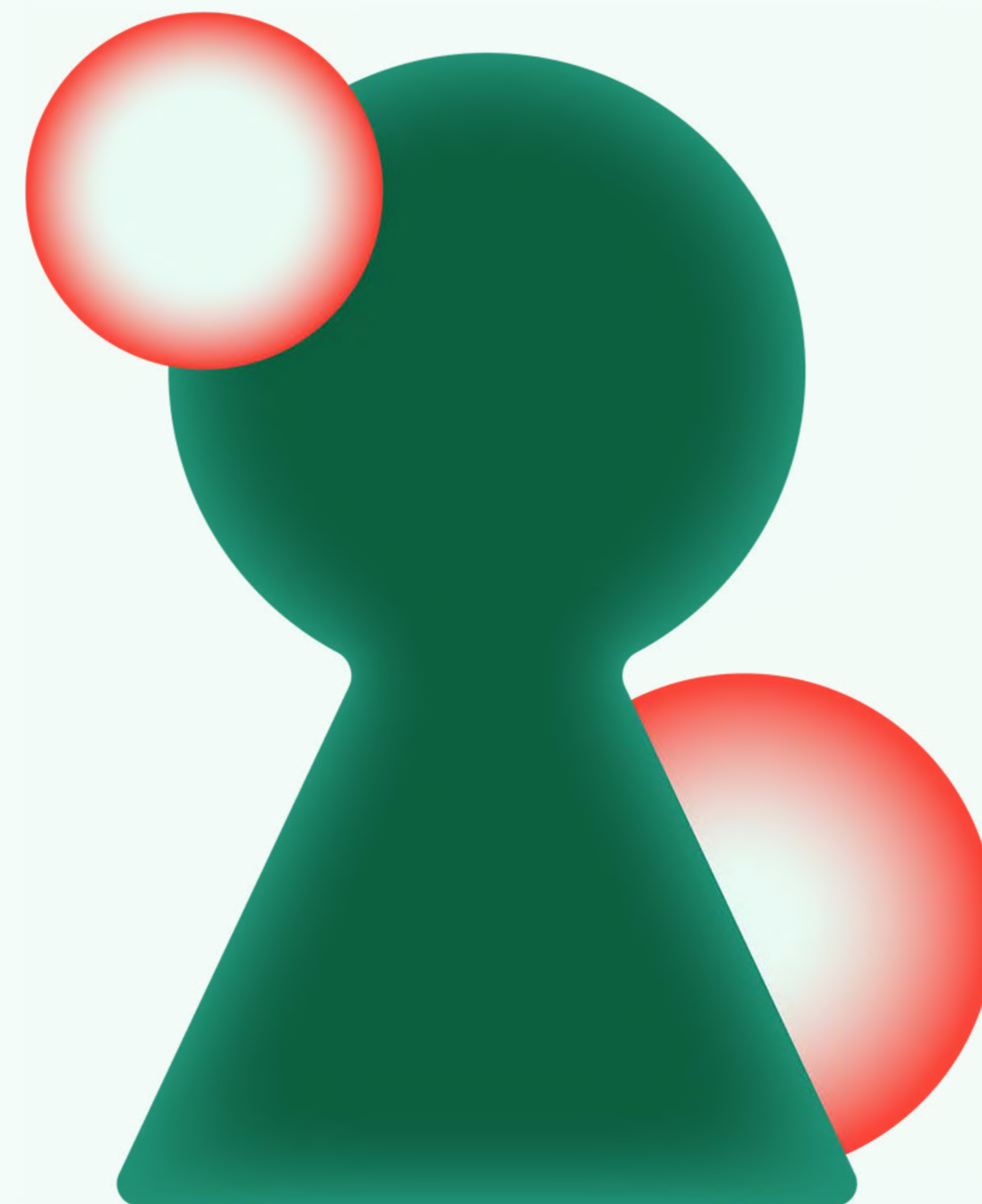
**5. Assess
accessibility,
security &
compliance**



How secure is the platform against security threats?

If you're considering a virtual waiting room, you're probably running some of the most high-heat, high-profile sales and registrations out there. And where there's high demand, there's bad bots and malicious actors looking to exploit it. Someone will try to break into your system to get a backdoor into your sales or registrations. The question isn't if it happens, but when—and how prepared you are.

Your virtual waiting room provider should be transparent about their security stance so you can focus on your core business objectives without the constant worry of potential security vulnerabilities or breaches.



Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Tools like Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) that add an extra layer of security against unauthorized access to the system
- ✦ Server communication using encrypted HTTPS protocols, ensuring that sensitive information remains protected from unauthorized access
- ✦ A platform that undergoes regular cybersecurity checks including pen testing and open-source vulnerability scanning

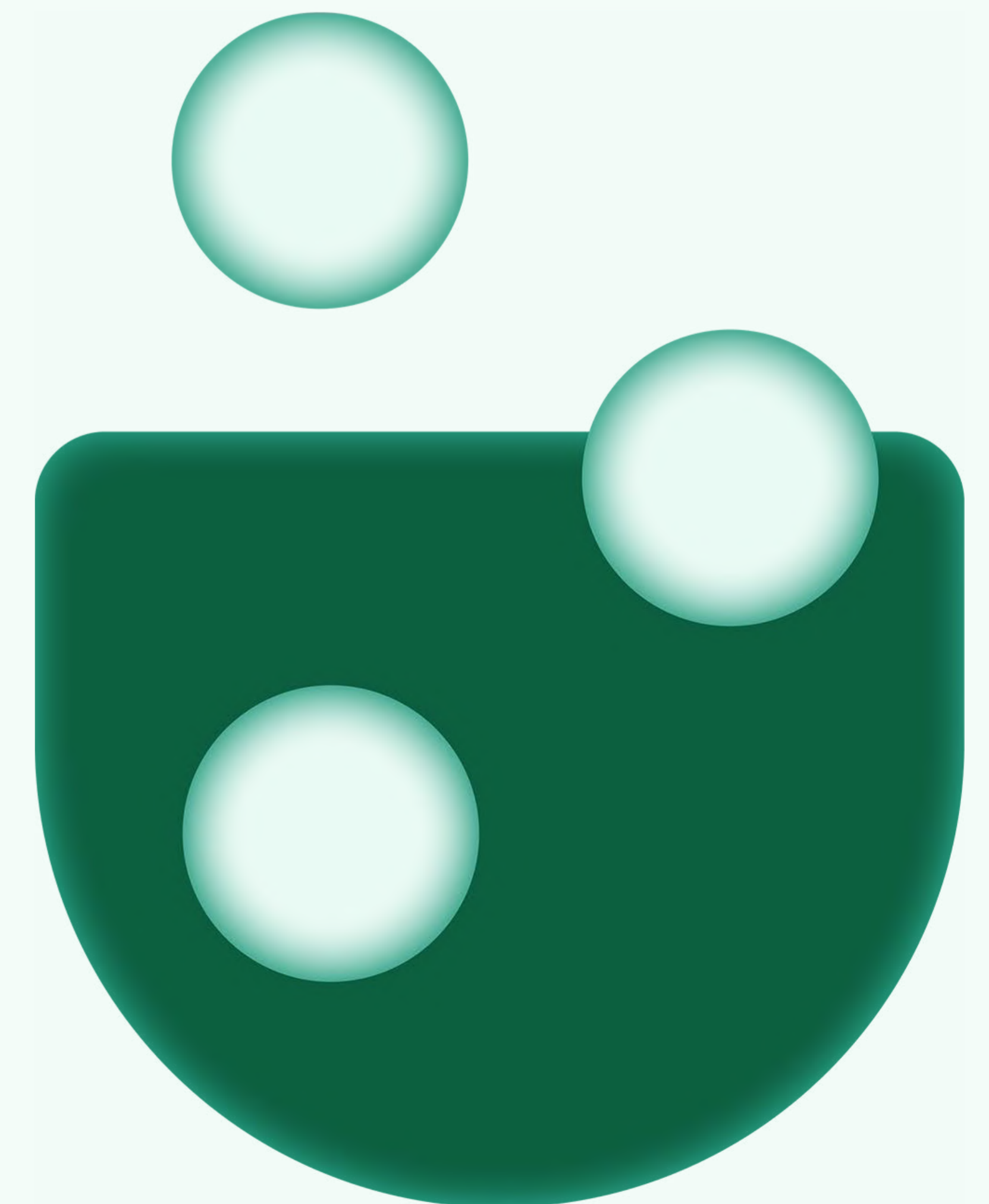
Does the virtual waiting room collect any user data?

By selecting a platform that is protected against security threats, you demonstrate your commitment to maintaining the privacy and security of your customers' data. This fosters trust among your customer base and enhances your overall reputation as a reliable and secure organization.

Understanding the extent and nature of data exposure is vital in ensuring the privacy and security of your customers' information. See if the virtual waiting room architecture aligns with your requirements to ensure it won't put your business at risk.

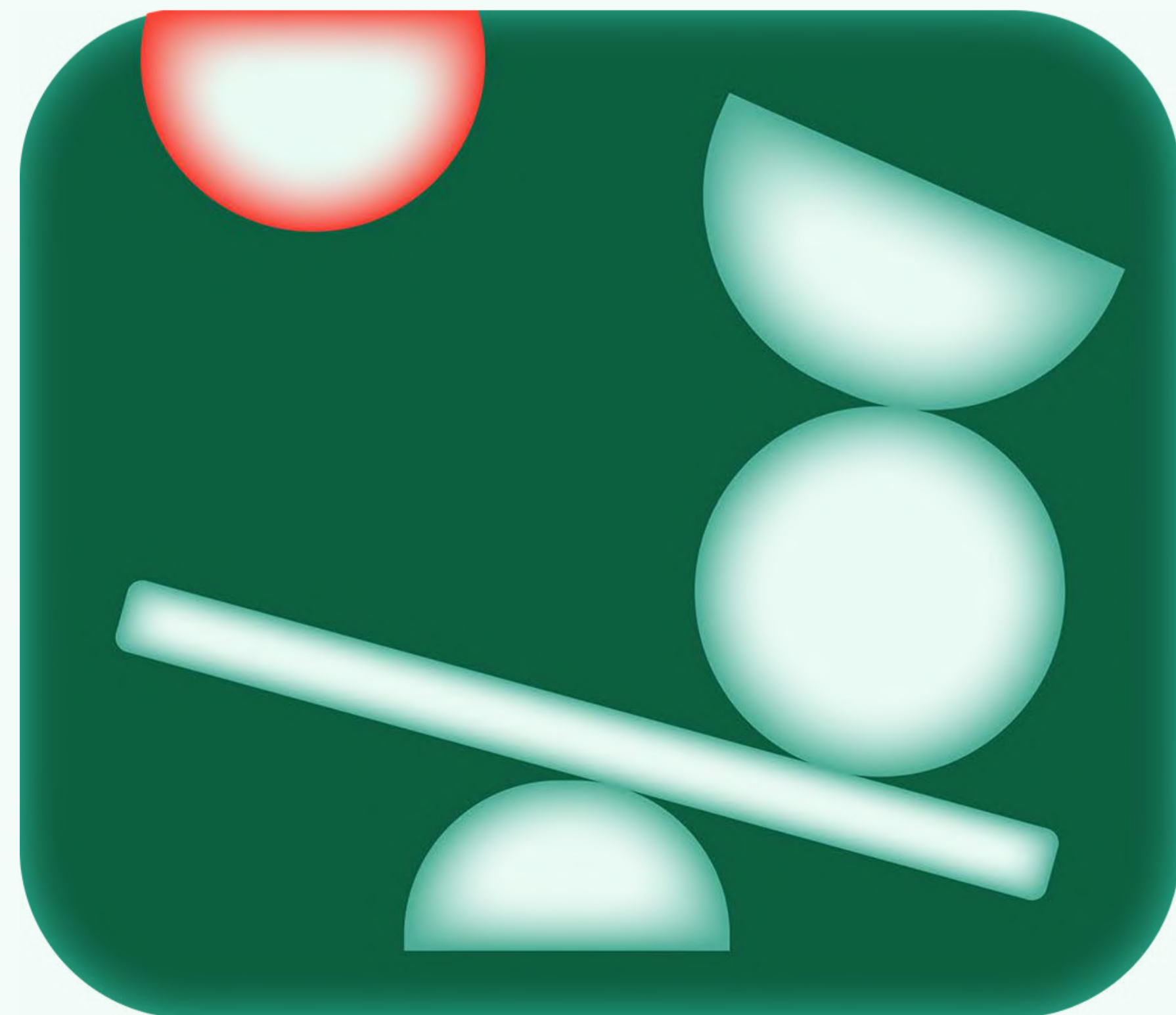
Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ A system architecture that doesn't expose your payload or session data, including credit card or personally identifiable information
- ✦ An option to protect user session and prevent unauthorized access to sensitive information by securing cookies



How reliable is the solution?

The days you use a virtual waiting room are mission critical. They're when your business is at its most visible, and your sales and reputation are on the line. One of the core benefits of a virtual waiting room is that it



can keep your services online, no matter the demand. So it's crucial the virtual waiting room is built for extreme reliability.

You'll want to understand the technical foundation of the provider's setup, including how many failsafes and redundancies they've built into their systems. The provider should also be able to give you their track record of performance.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Uptime statistics
- ✦ Load test results
- ✦ Fault tolerance built into the solution
- ✦ Clear recovery plans in the event of an issue
- ✦ Evidence of high-load sales or registrations run by real customers

Are admin activities tracked?

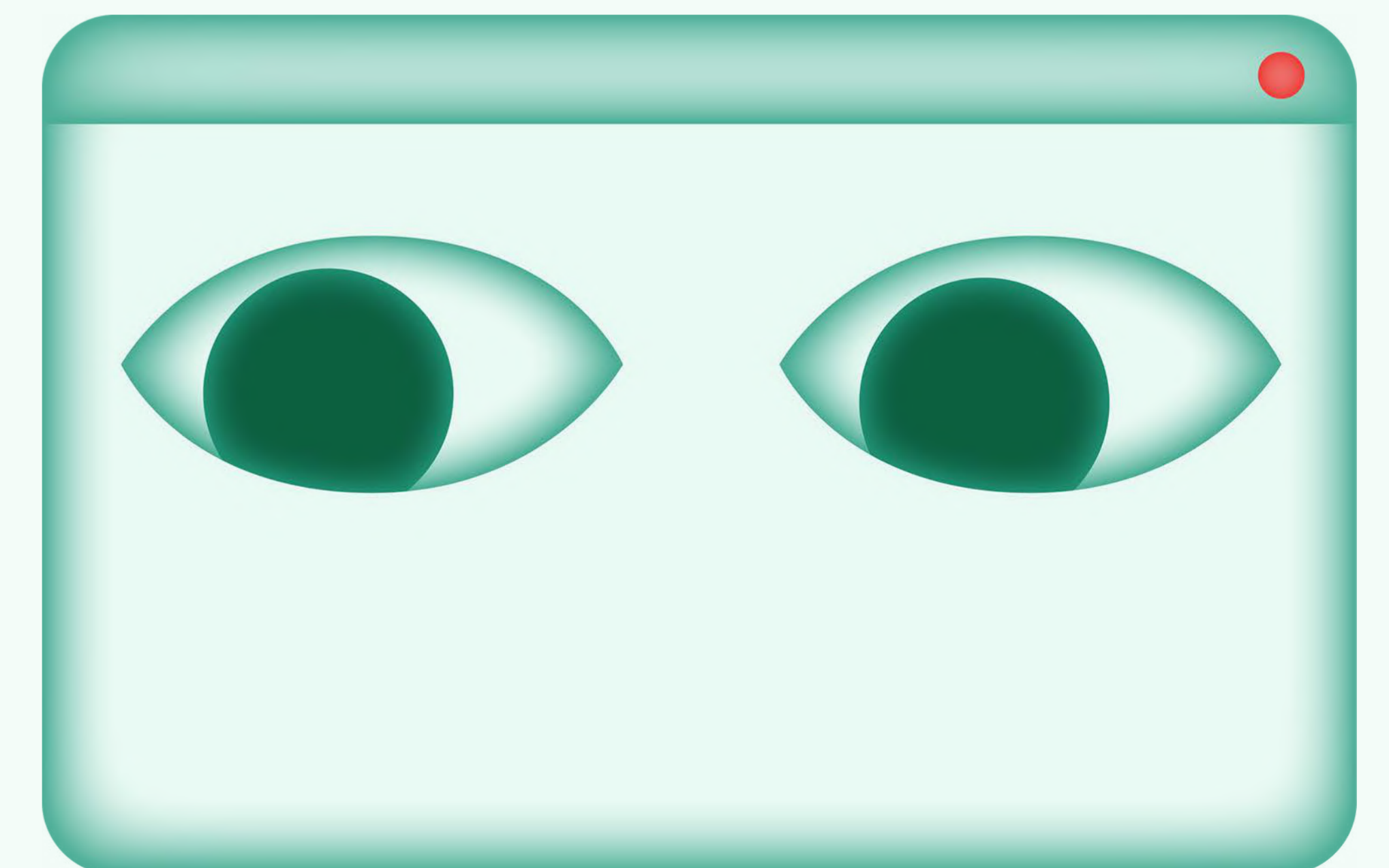
An audit trail plays a critical role in maintaining security, compliance, transparency, and accountability.

With an audit trail, you can: detect important changes to the waiting room setup, track admin user activity and identify any unexpected behavior, and flag shifts in your waiting room status (e.g. paused, disabled, speed increased, speed decreased).

When choosing your waiting room provider, check if the activity in the platform is logged and traceable and if you're able to receive alerts for specific changes or activity.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Audit trail for waiting room updates
- ✦ Audit trail for user activity
- ✦ Notifications for specific types of waiting room or user activity



What regulatory requirements does it comply with?

You may need to adhere to regulatory requirements related to data protection and security. Adhering to these standards helps ensure the security, privacy, accessibility, and legal compliance of the platform, encouraging trust and confidence among customers and other stakeholders

Ensure the virtual waiting room complies with the privacy, security, and accessibility guidelines that apply to you—particularly if you're in a highly regulated environment like the public sector.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance
- ✦ California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) compliance
- ✦ Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance
- ✦ Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) compliance
- ✦ Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) compliance

**6. Scrutinize
the support
you'll get**

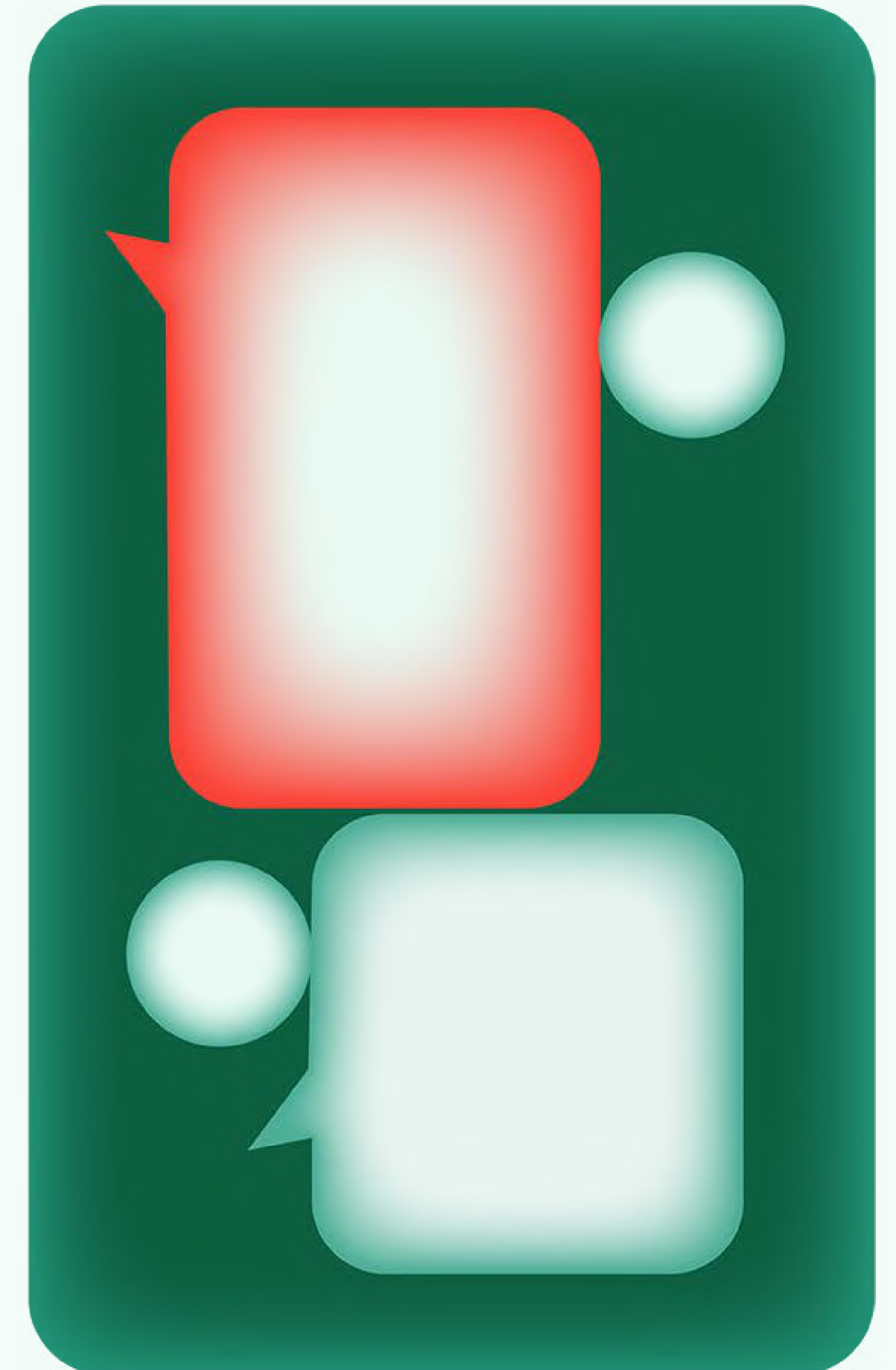
What level of support is available before, during & after your sales or registrations?

They're not called "high-heat" or "high-sweat" sales for nothing. When you have a high-demand sale or registration, you'll want to know you have full access to knowledgeable support for all your key systems.

Verify the virtual waiting room support team is accessible to all customers, regardless of your subscription tier. Determine whether the support offered is basic or sophisticated, and whether the provider has a tested playbook for helping you through your next sale or registration.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ 24/7/365 access to the support team for quick help
- ✦ Customer support included regardless of your subscription tier
- ✦ Pre-sale/registration support to setup, integrate, configure, design the waiting room
- ✦ "At-the-elbow" support during a sale/registration
- ✦ Support for post-sale/registration analytics, takeaways, and optimizations for your next sale or registration



How are their online reviews?

As with any software purchase, why go in blind when you could be guided by the experiences of others like you?

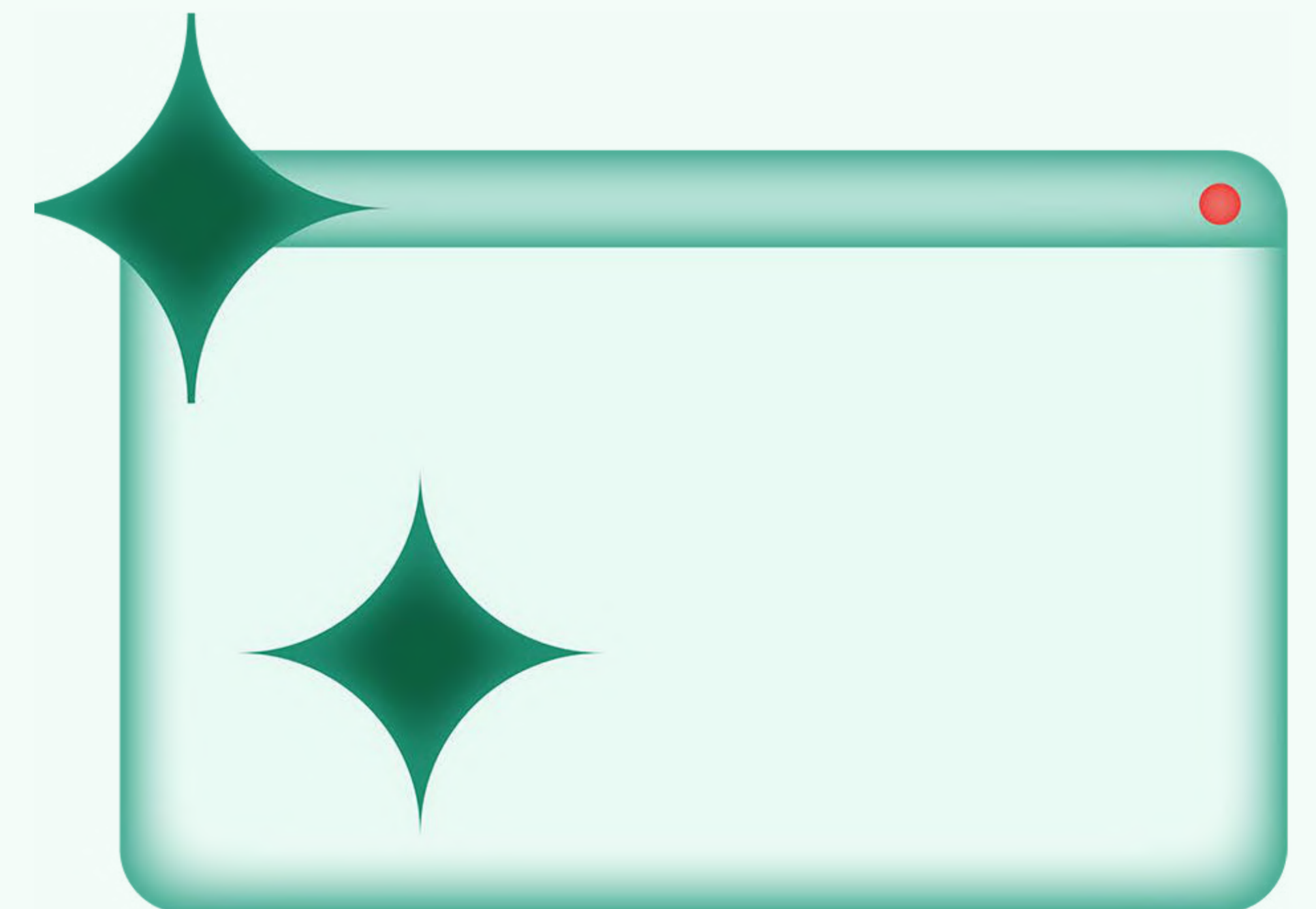
By looking at other companies' experiences, you can gain a deeper understanding of the virtual waiting room provider's strengths, weaknesses, and overall reputation. Look for reviews that describe the reliability

of the platform, the effectiveness of customer support, and the level of satisfaction with the features and functionality offered.

In addition to major review sites like G2, many partner marketplaces include reviews. Once you know which integrations and partners the provider has, explore if there are reviews on those marketplaces or profiles, too.

Does the virtual waiting room have:

- ✦ High-scoring reviews across review sites and partner marketplaces



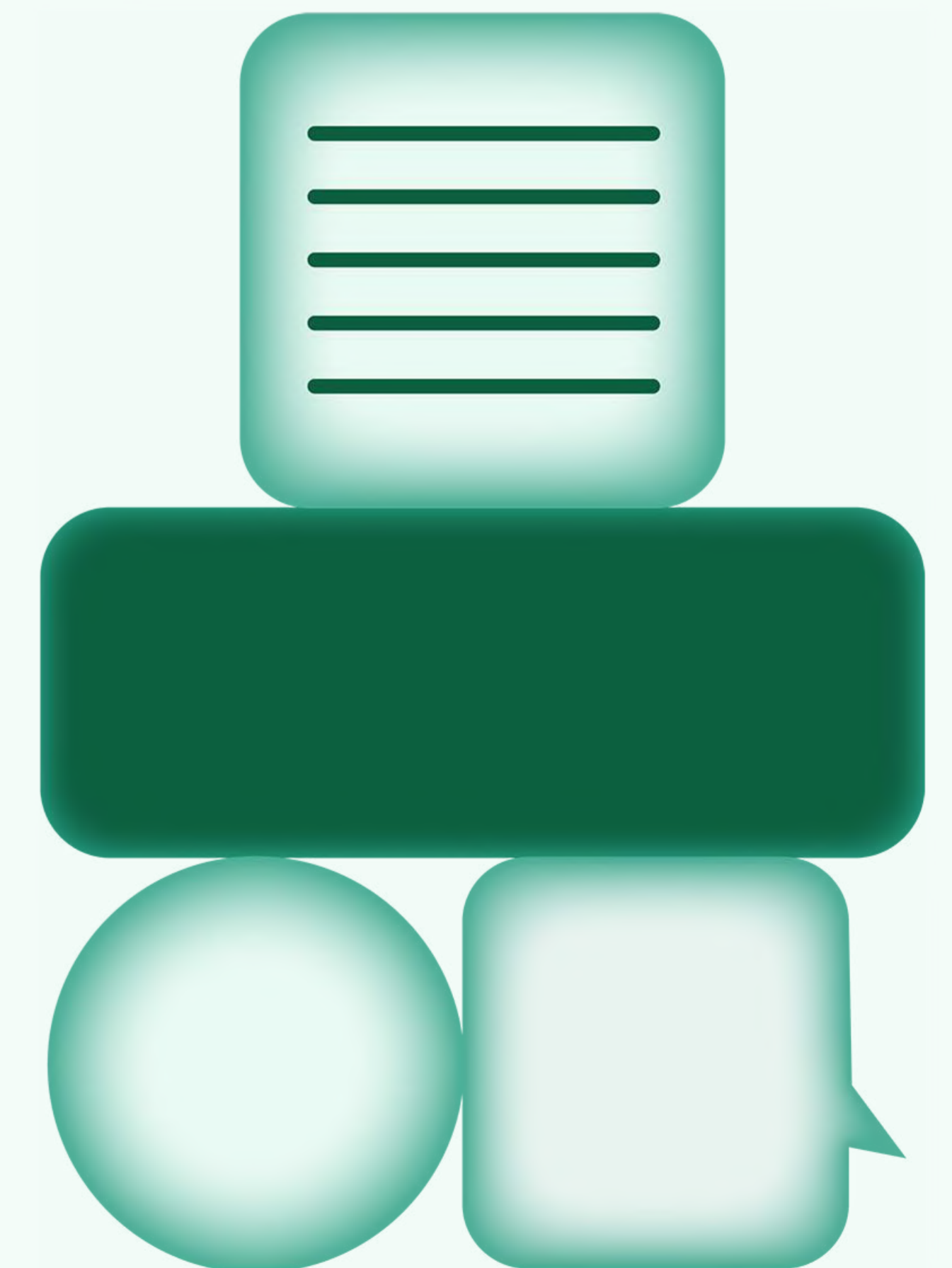
What support documentation is available?

Support documentation empowers you to implement and troubleshoot software faster, with fewer meetings, and less assistance from the provider.

Solid support documentation helps you make the most of your virtual waiting room, improving your ROI and ensuring you're delivering a good user experience to your customers, no matter the demand.

Does the virtual waiting room offer:

- ✦ Whitepapers, comprehensive documentation, and guides that provide step-by-step instructions for setup and configuration
- ✦ Video tutorials and knowledge bases that offer visual guidance and in-depth explanations of key features
- ✦ Support forums or community platforms that enable you to connect with other users, share insights, and seek assistance
- ✦ Open-source and freely available code



Your considerations checklist

Considerations for your virtual waiting room

| | Queue-it | Option B | Option C |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Customer experience | It's built with queue psychology to provide a positive wait experience | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | You can customize the look & feel for a seamless user experience | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It offers granular access control to run truly exclusive sales & registrations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Fairness | Visitors cannot skip the line | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It can queue visitors in a first-in, first-out order | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It provides strategies to run scheduled sales and drops | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It offers bot & abuse protection tools to add a critical layer to your mitigation strategy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Traffic control | You can choose which part of the user journey to protect | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It offers real-time visitor flow control and analytics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It offers detailed post-event analytics and reporting options | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Integration | You can select from various integration options to suit your requirements and resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It integrates and works seamlessly on mobile applications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Security | It has security mechanisms to protect your systems | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It processes no sensitive customer data | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It's built for extreme reliability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | The activity in the platform is tracked and traceable | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It complies with privacy, security, and accessibility standards | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Customer support | You get expert support before, during, and after your event regardless of subscription tier | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | It has many positive customer reviews and comments | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | You can access comprehensive support documentation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

Discover Queue-it's virtual waiting room

Book a demo

Explore success stories

Queue-it

