

AIA26 Conference
on Architecture
& Design®

Business Management Panel



Dan Stine, AIA
Lake Flato Architects
Moderator



Amber Lombardo
Luna Lake



Nicholas Kramer, LEED AP
LPA Design Studios



Sharare Norouzi
Little

***“I stared into the abyss...
& the abyss stared back through me.”***

- adapted from Nietzsche

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***“I stared into the abyss...
& the abyss stared back through me.”***

- adapted from Nietzsche

Hundreds of you have worked with me in some capacity on this topic.
Many of you are in this room. Thank you for educating me.

Expansion on this slide deck at lunalake.co/aia26



97% of you said “yes” when asked...



97% of you said “yes” when asked...

“Does it feel that the world is on fire?”

Employee

Complicity in displacement

“If my AI workflow succeeds, I become the person who automated my friends out of their jobs. If the AI workflow fails, I lose mine.”

Risk Assessment

Employer

Second-mover disadvantage

“The firms that move faster than us will compete for our work and my talent will follow the money. My AI use harms the environment.”

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Solopreneur

Unbuffered liability

“I’m one AI-generated error away from losing my license, my practice and my livelihood. AI work lacks genuine craft & expertise.”

Risk Assessment

A dark, apocalyptic cityscape at night. In the background, a massive fire or explosion illuminates the sky with orange and yellow light, casting long shadows and silhouettes of buildings. The foreground is mostly in shadow, with some faint lights from buildings and a road leading into the distance. The overall mood is ominous and catastrophic.

Is AI ethical?

Am I contributing to
global catastrophe?

Can we stop it?



1973 Columbia Records
Publicity Photo. Source:
Wikimedia Commons /
File: Billy Joel "Piano Man"
1973 press photo.jpg -
Wikimedia Commons



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Publicity Photo. Source:
Wikimedia Commons /
File: Billy Joel "Piano Man"
1973 press photo.jpg

We didn't start the fire

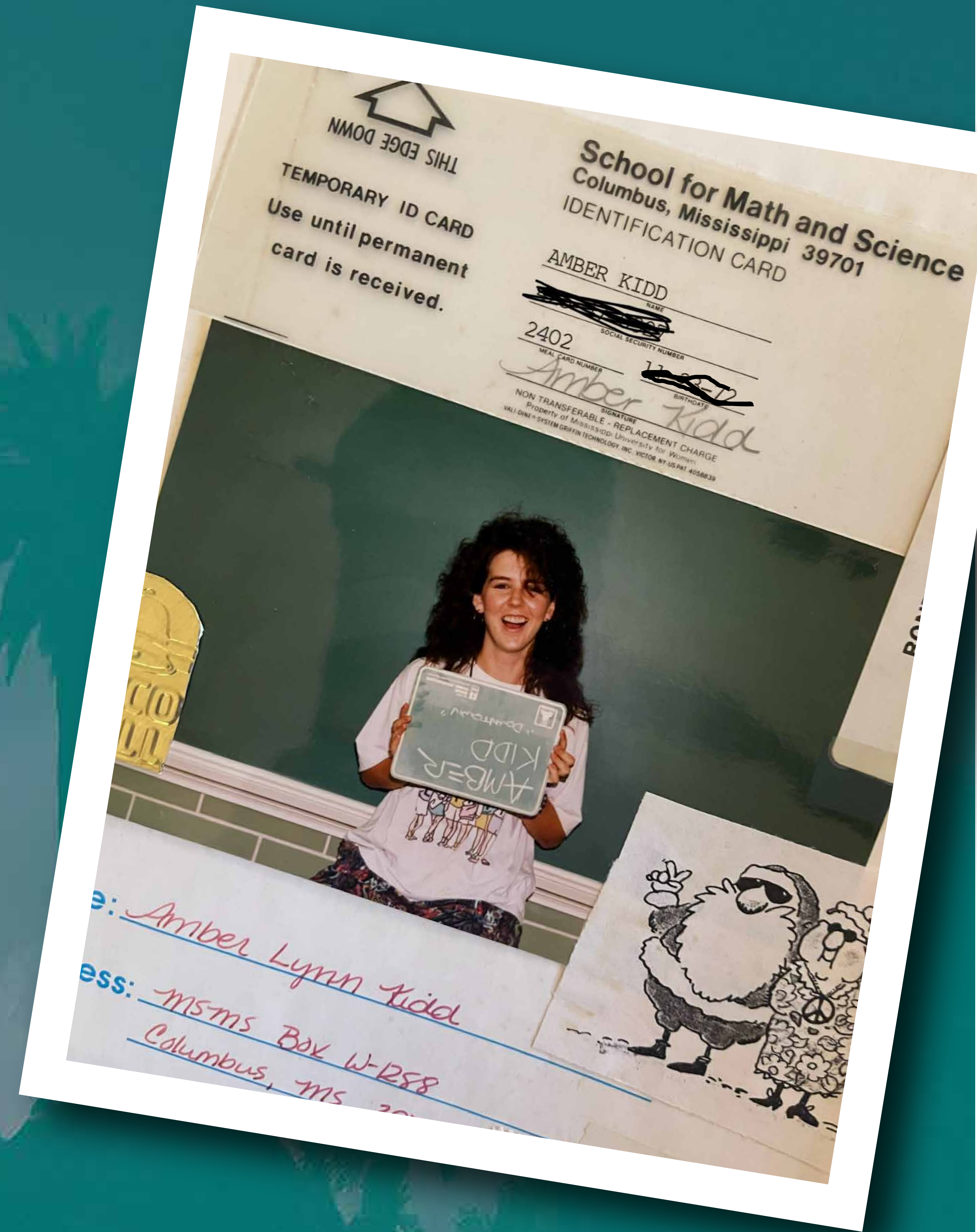
It was always burning since
the world's been turning

We didn't start the fire

No, we didn't light it
but we tried to fight it

- Billy Joel

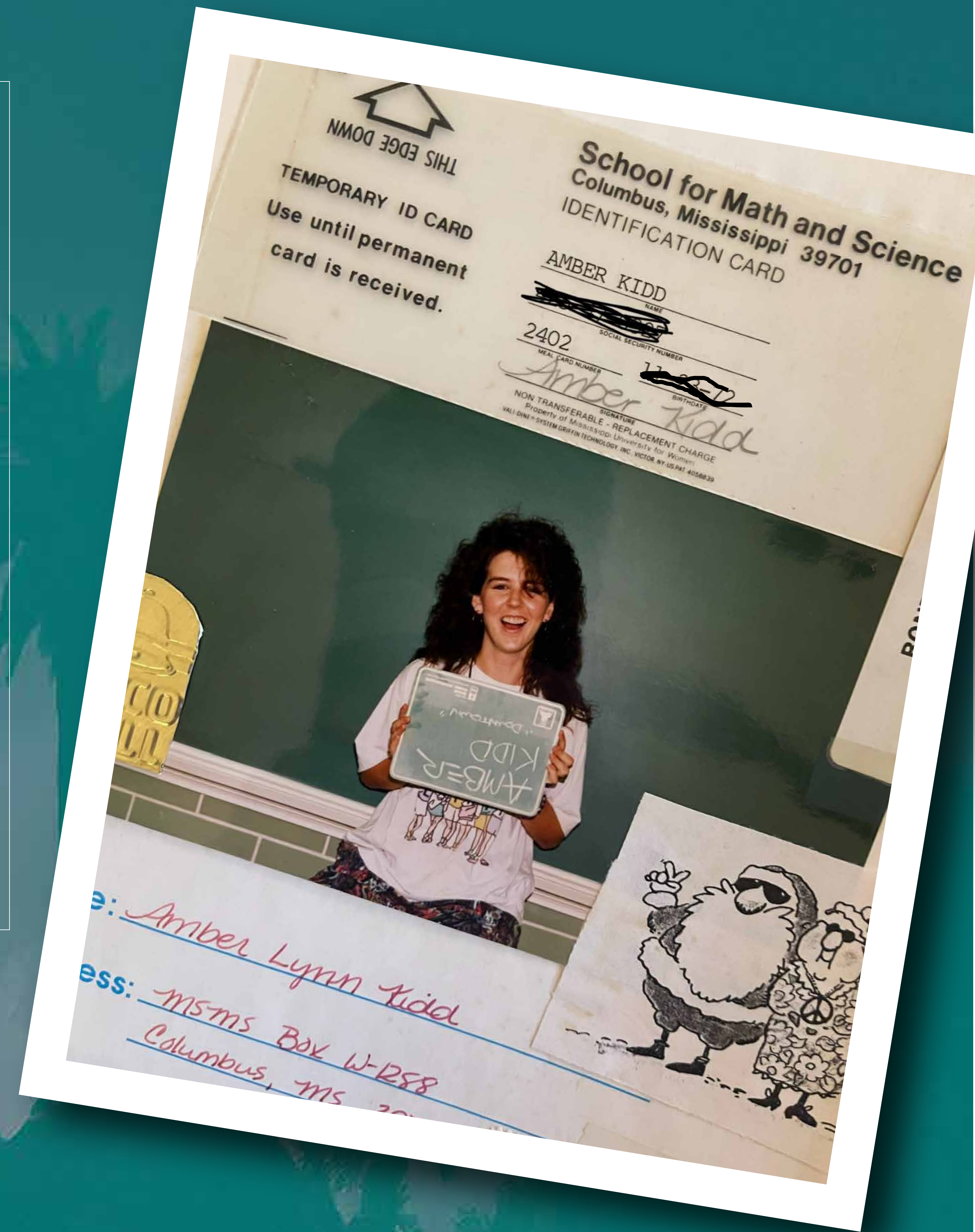
I was a Gen-X coder



Employee
Team leadership

*I switched to website
visual editors &
became the former
hand-coder everyone
wanted on their team.
Throughput 10 to 1.
Companies competed.*

I was a Gen-X coder



Employer

First-mover advantage

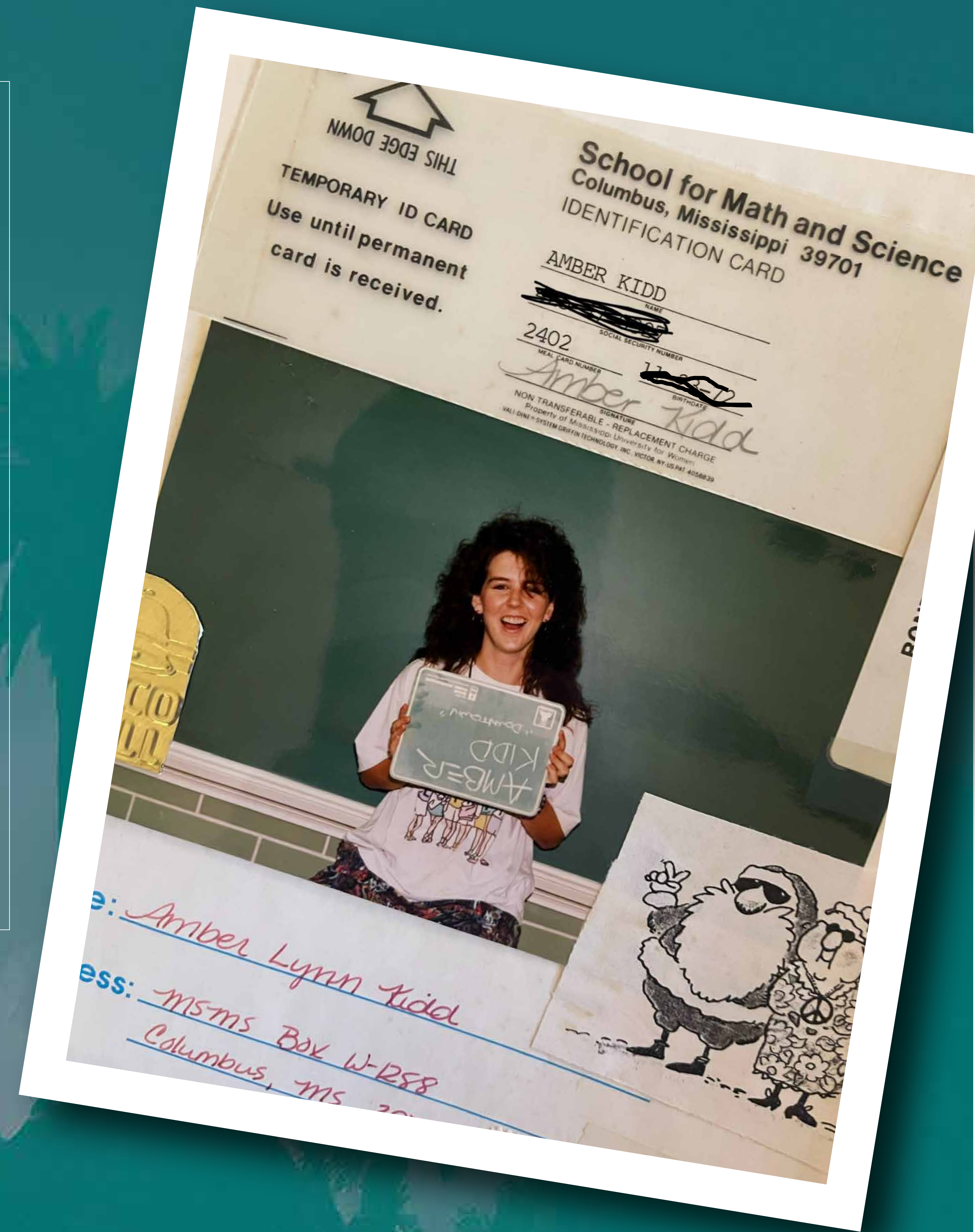
I automated first & absorbed the work & talent from the firms that didn't. I raised a family & enjoyed an active lifestyle. I taught & mentored.

Employee

Team leadership

I switched to website visual editors & became the former hand-coder everyone wanted on their team. Throughput 10 to 1. Companies competed.

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I switched to website visual editors & became the former hand-coder everyone wanted on their team. Throughput 10 to 1. Companies competed.

Solopreneur

Disciplined growth

My fully-agentic staff is being built one low-risk task at a time & I remain the human-in-the-loop who tests & improves it over & over & over.

I was a Gen-X coder

'16

Webz sold
(17 years)

Now I am an AI Solopreneur

'16

Webz sold
(17 years)

'17-'20

AIA Miss.
Exec. Dir.
(3yr) & CACE
Director

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Luna Lake,
Fractional
Chief AI
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AIA25,
AIA Virginia
& San Antonio,
Lake | Flato
& URSYS
Research
Network;
Tau Sigma
Delta Silver
Medal

Now I am an AI Solopreneur

←..... 4th Year Presenting on AI→

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Luna Lake,
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'26

Luna has
consulted
150+
& growing

Presented at
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Presenting
at AIA26,
2 MiT
xPro AI
Certificates,
3 Exemplary
Citations
including for
Supermind
Capstone;
Launching
AI marketing
suite app

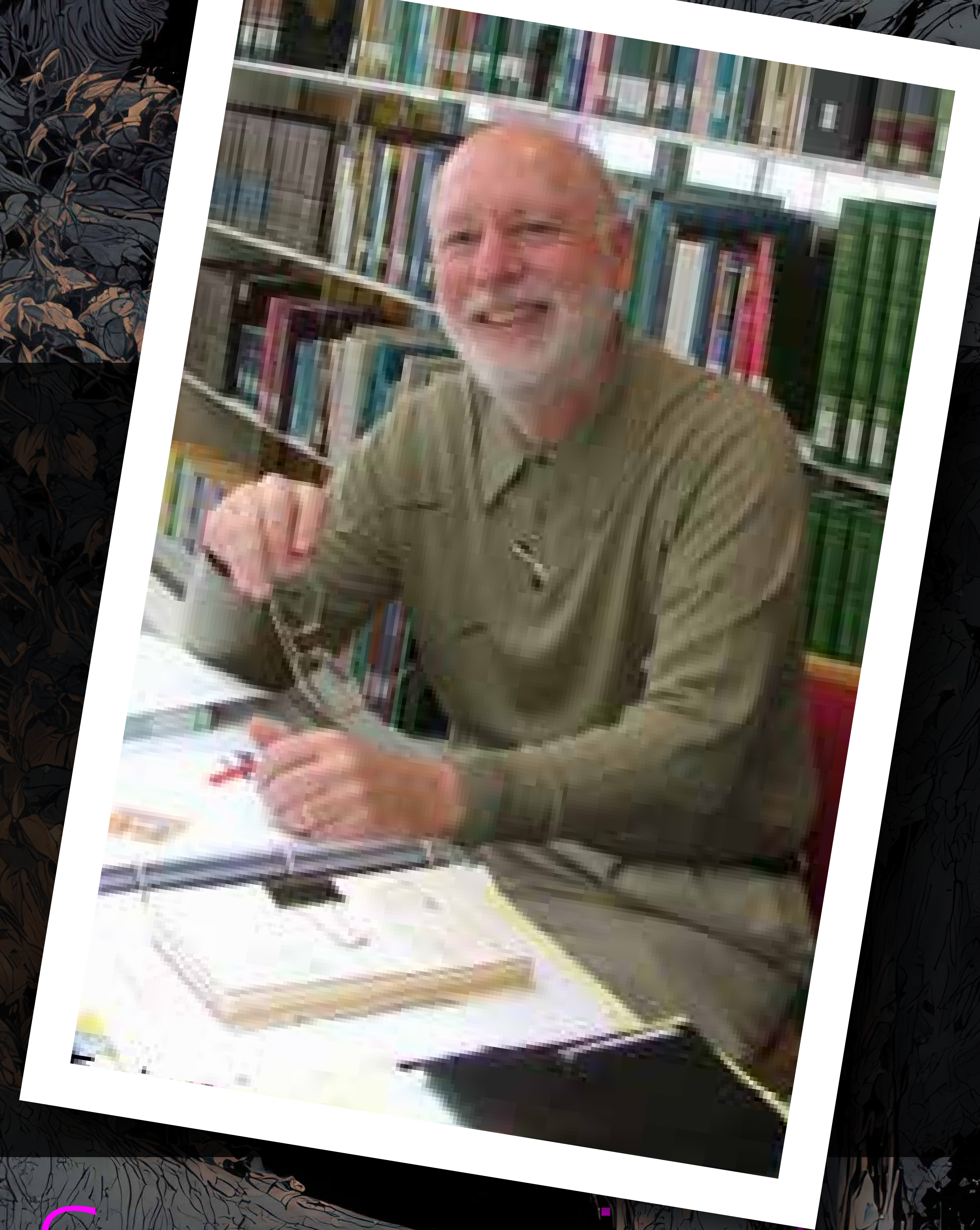
Now I am an AI Solopreneur



What is a Supermind?

Michael W. Fazio, Ph.D. (1943–2020)

- Founding faculty, Mississippi State School of Architecture (1974)
- Professor Emeritus · Ph.D., Cornell · M.A., Ohio State · B.Arch, Auburn
- Co-authored *Buildings Across Time*, the architectural history textbook used in university curricula worldwide
- Co-authored *The Domestic Architecture of Benjamin Henry Latrobe* (Alice Davis Hitchcock Book Award, Society of Arch. Historians, 2008)
- As his library assistant, his student, a coder, and eventually his friend, we imagined a day technology would make architectural education **accessible to all regardless of socioeconomic station.**



Fazio was an old-school Supermind

“A Supermind is a group of human & machine intelligences working together as a single collective intelligence.”

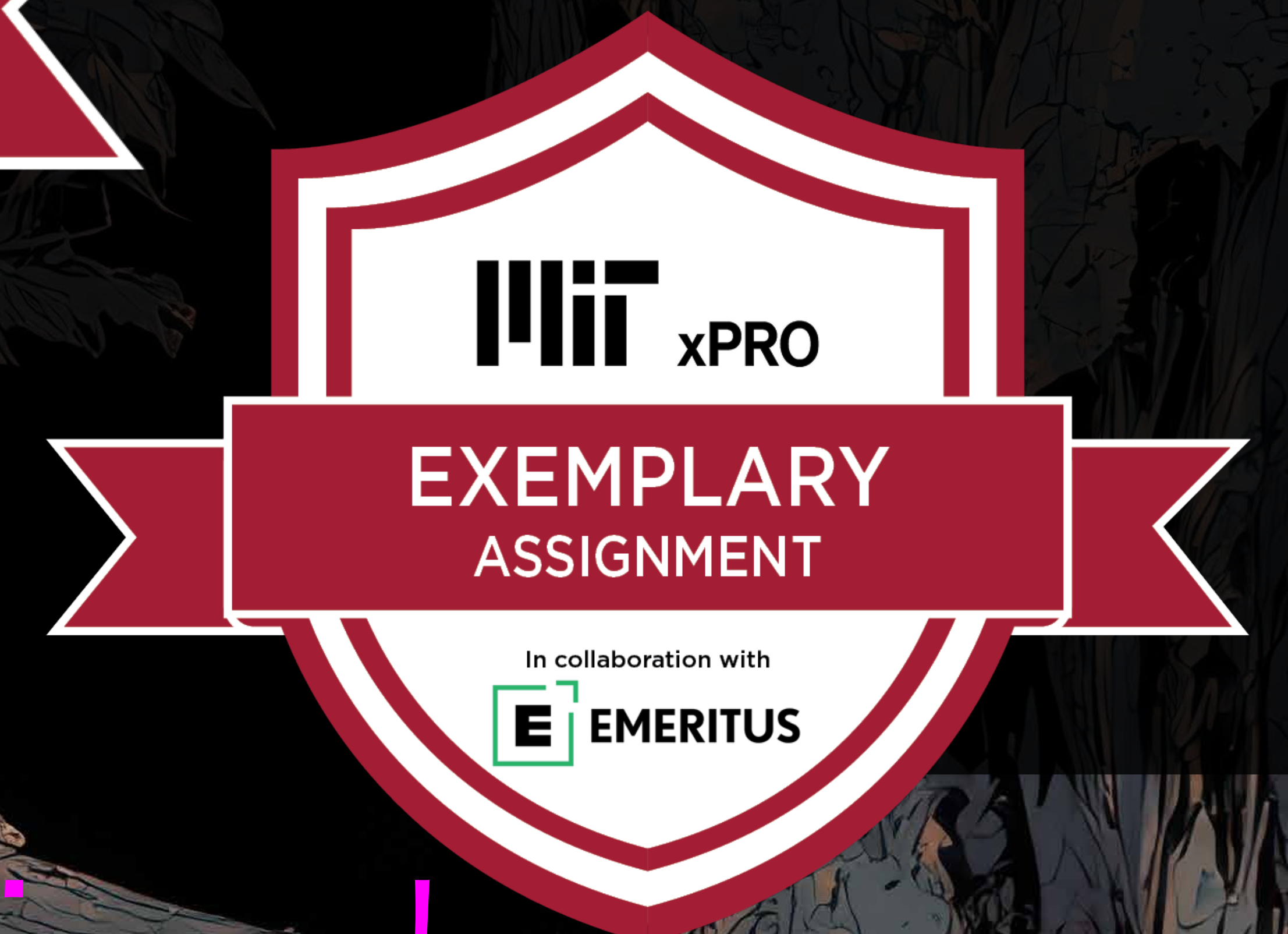
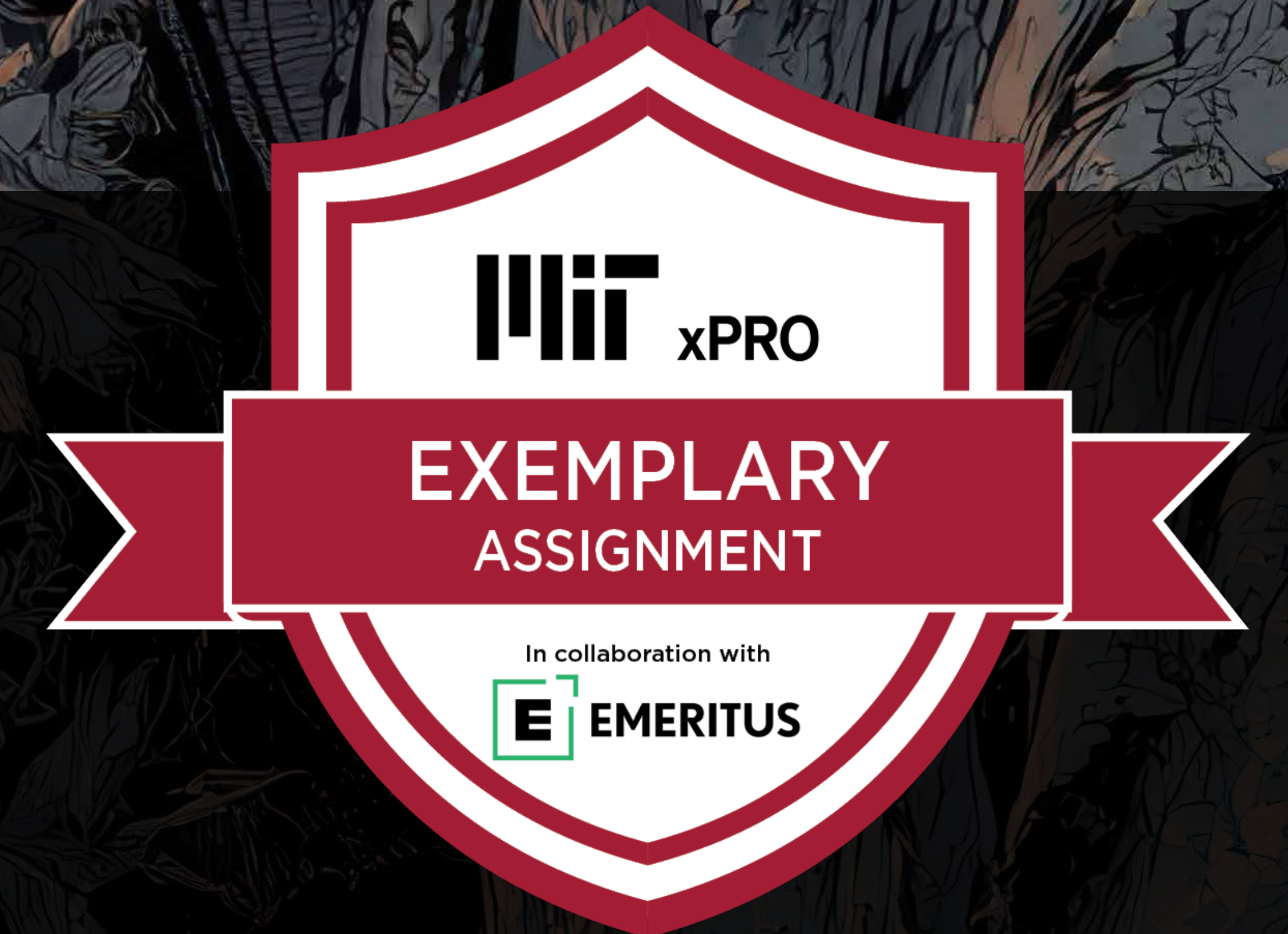
- Thomas Malone, MIT Center for Collective Intelligence

MIT's Definition of Supermind


My MIT Capstone: **Fazio,**
the Architecture Supermind Mentor,
an institutional intelligence partner that synthesizes
the profession's fragmented knowledge into
prescriptive guidance for placemakers.

Why?

Because architectural education should be available
to all regardless of socioeconomic station.



My journey into the Supermind



Human & machine intelligences
working together as a single collective intelligence

This is how the profession solves its most existential puzzles...
like the 40% of carbon emissions attributed to the built environment.

The Power of a Supermind



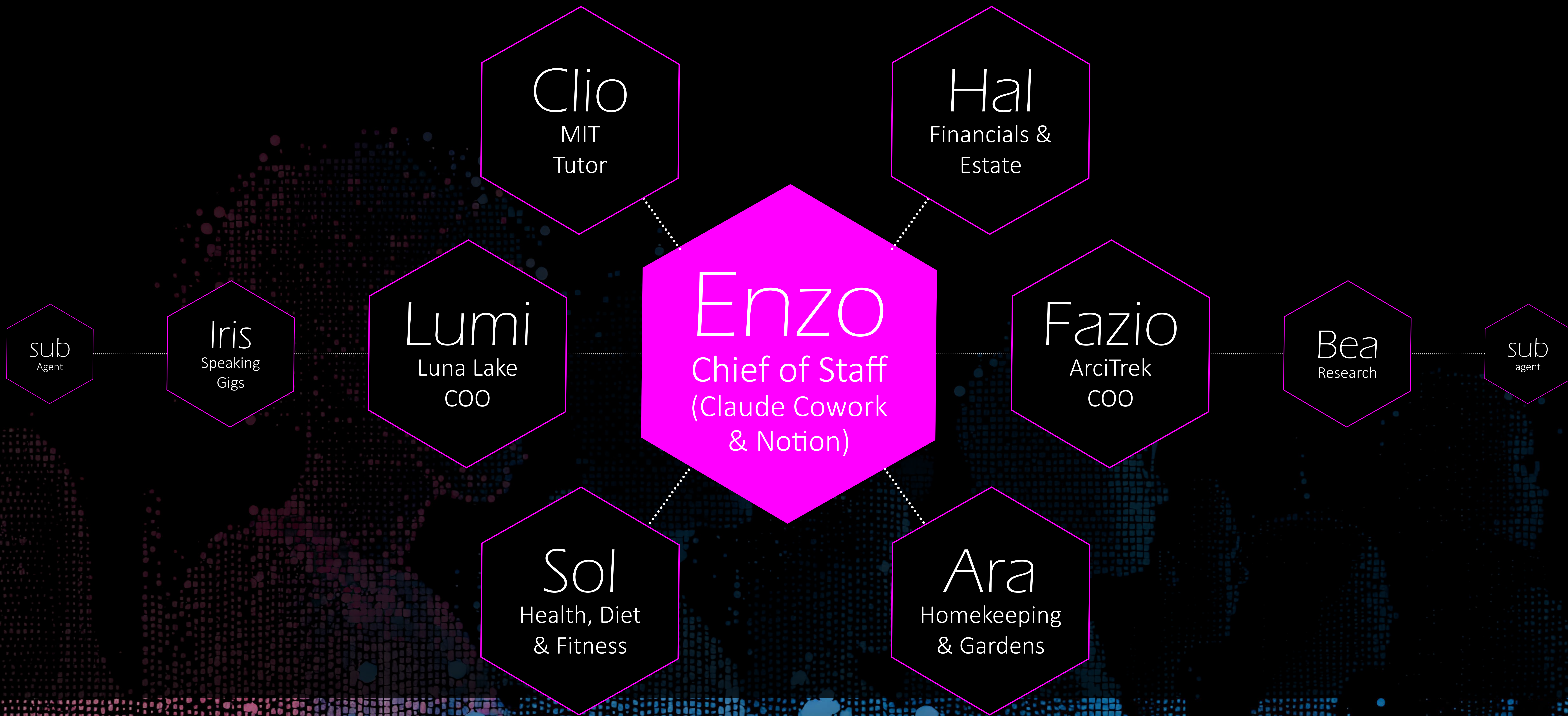
Moving from murky to mysterious

Tiago Forte

- Founder, Forte Labs (2013)
- B.A. International Business, San Diego State · Peace Corps Ukraine
- Author of *Building a Second Brain* & The PARA Method; Wall Street Journal bestseller, 500,000+ readers, 25+ languages
- Created the CODE (Capture, Organize, Distill, Express) & PARA (Projects, Areas, Resources, Archive) methodologies
- Taught the method to 20,000+ knowledge workers at Genentech, Toyota, the Inter-American Development Bank, and more
- *My Second Brain (Notion)* is the knowledge hub for my agentic team



Start with a **Second Brain**



Meet my **Agentic Team**

As more users contribute to Collective Intelligence,
the AI models learn about the built environment,
about architectural history & principles,
about existential problem-solving,
about morality.

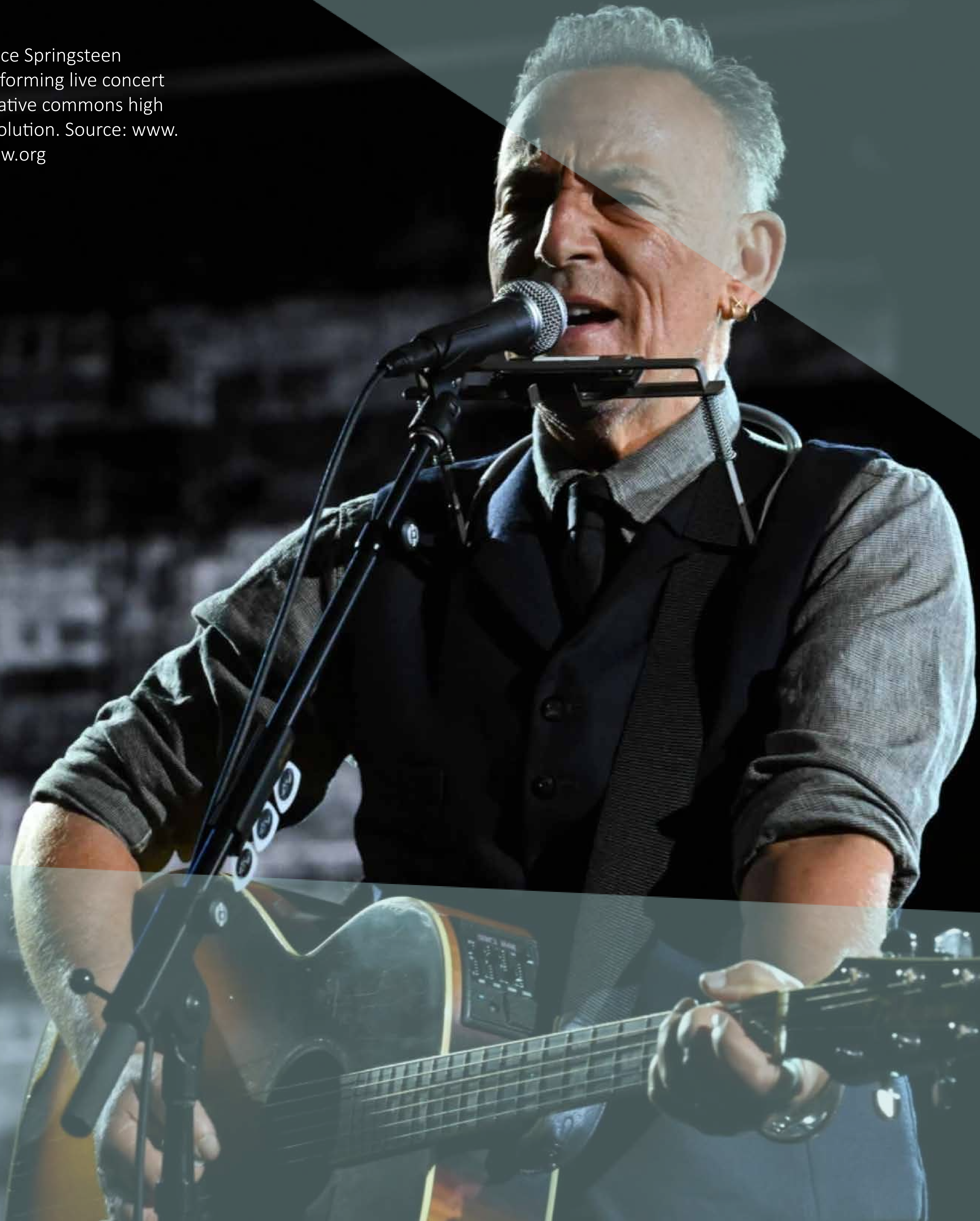


This is Collective Intelligence



Bruce Springsteen performing live concert
creative commons high resolution. Source: www.kenw.org

Bruce Springsteen
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You can't start a fire

You can't start a fire
without a spark...

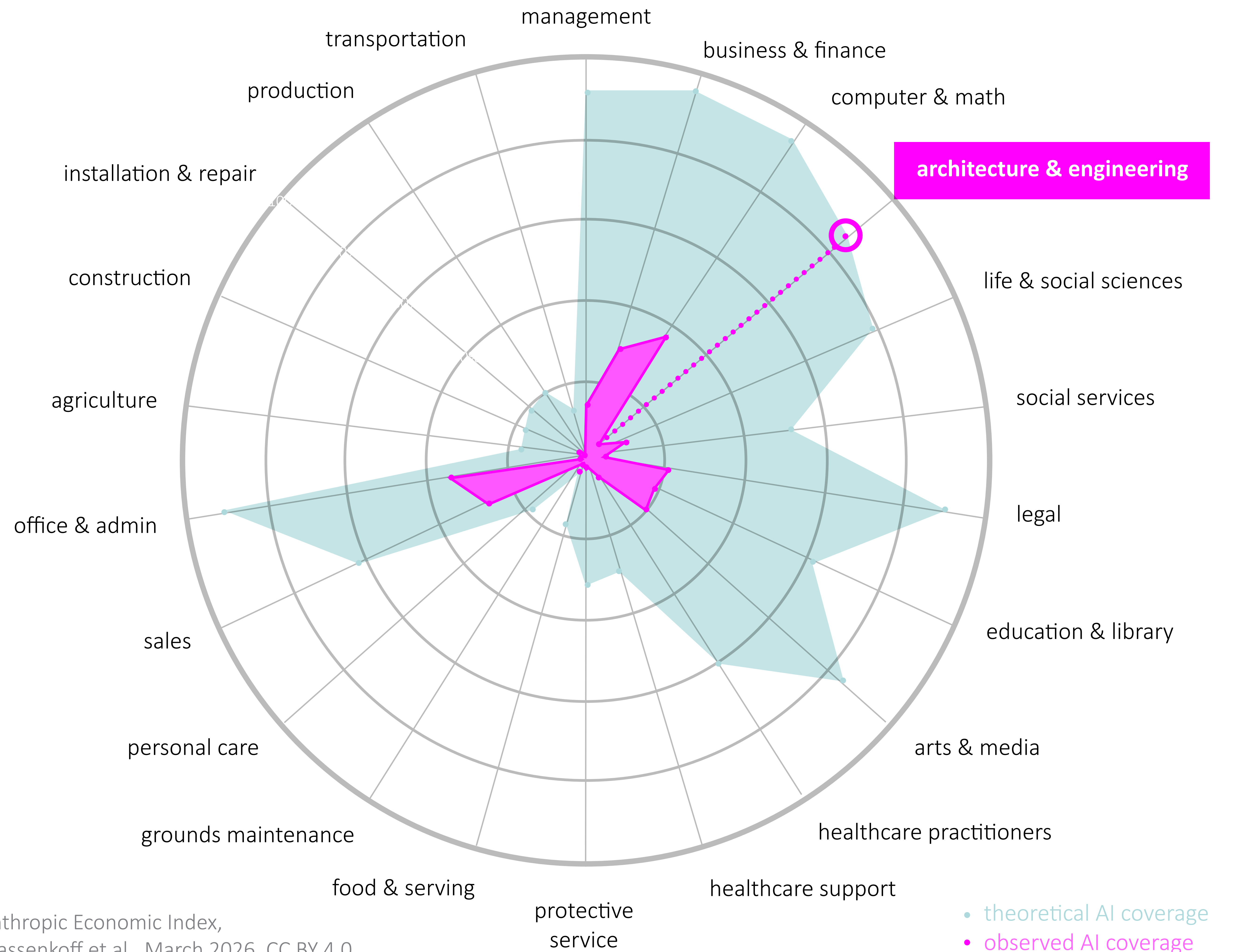
Even if we're just
dancing in the dark

- Bruce Springsteen

Architecture & Engineering

	Theoretical	Observed	Opportunity
Architecture & Engineering	85.0%	3.8%	81.2%
Arts, Design, & Media	80.0%	14.2%	65.8%
Building & Grounds Maintenance	10.0%	2.5%	7.5%
Business & Finance	94.3%	28.4%	65.9%
Community & Social Services	65.0%	5.2%	59.8%
Computer & Math	94.3%	35.8%	58.5%
Construction & Extraction	10.0%	0.4%	9.6%
Education & Library	75.0%	18.2%	56.8%
Installation & Repair	15.0%	0.7%	14.3%
Legal	85.0%	20.4%	64.6%
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	80.0%	12.2%	67.8%
Management	85.0%	9.7%	75.3%
Office & Admin Support	90.0%	34.3%	55.7%
Sales	70.0%	26.9%	43.1%
Transportation	20.0%	0.6%	19.4%

The Spark



Anthropic Economic Index,
Massenkoff et al., March 2026, CC BY 4.0.
Some numbers are approximations.

• theoretical AI coverage
• observed AI coverage

Architecture & Engineering

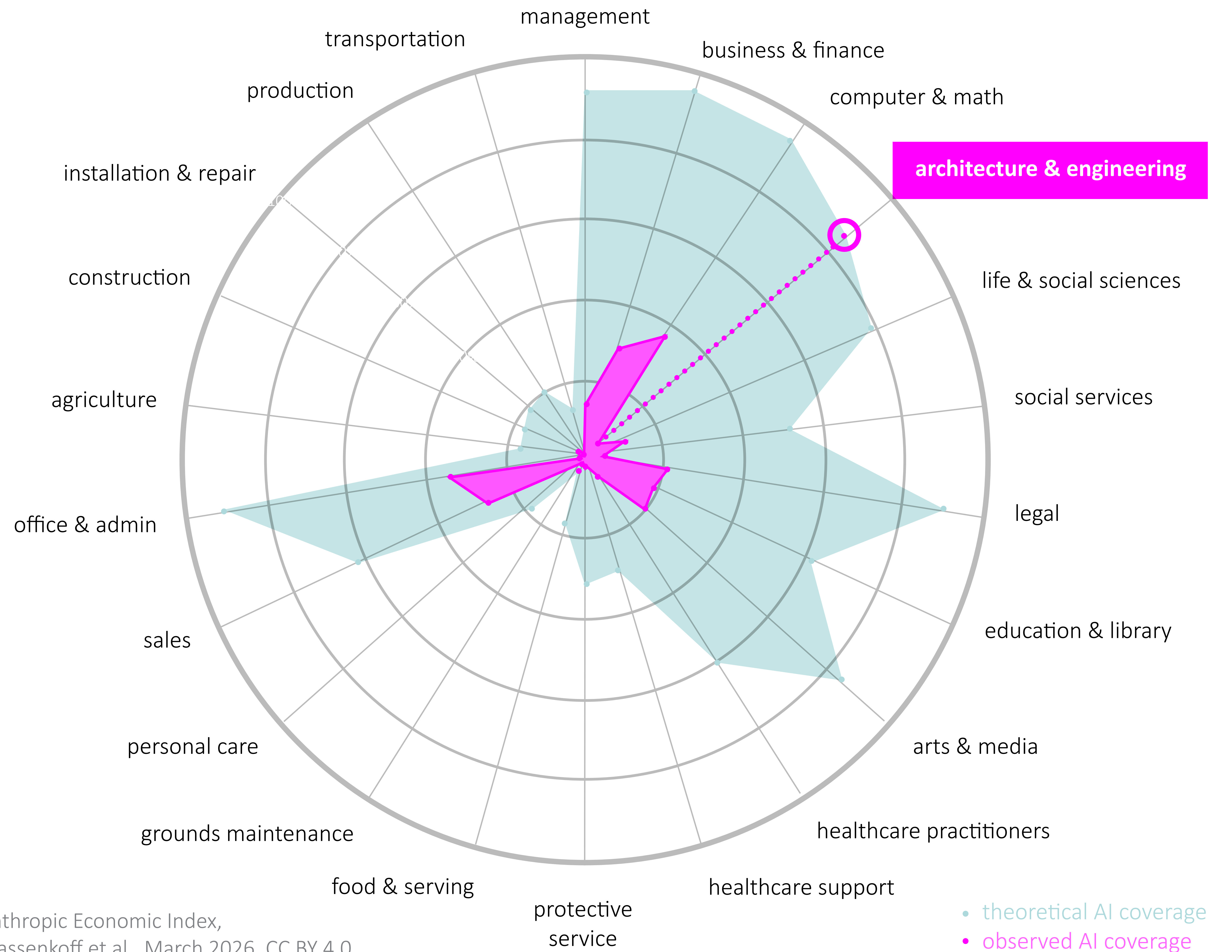
85.0% augmentation opportunity

3.8% the current spark

81.2% market share available to A&E AI pioneers

A&E has the slowest adoption rate of all industries by 6 percentage points.

The Spark



Anthropic Economic Index, Massenkoff et al., March 2026, CC BY 4.0. Some numbers are approximations.

• theoretical AI coverage
• observed AI coverage

Generative AI Chatbots



ChatGPT

60.6%



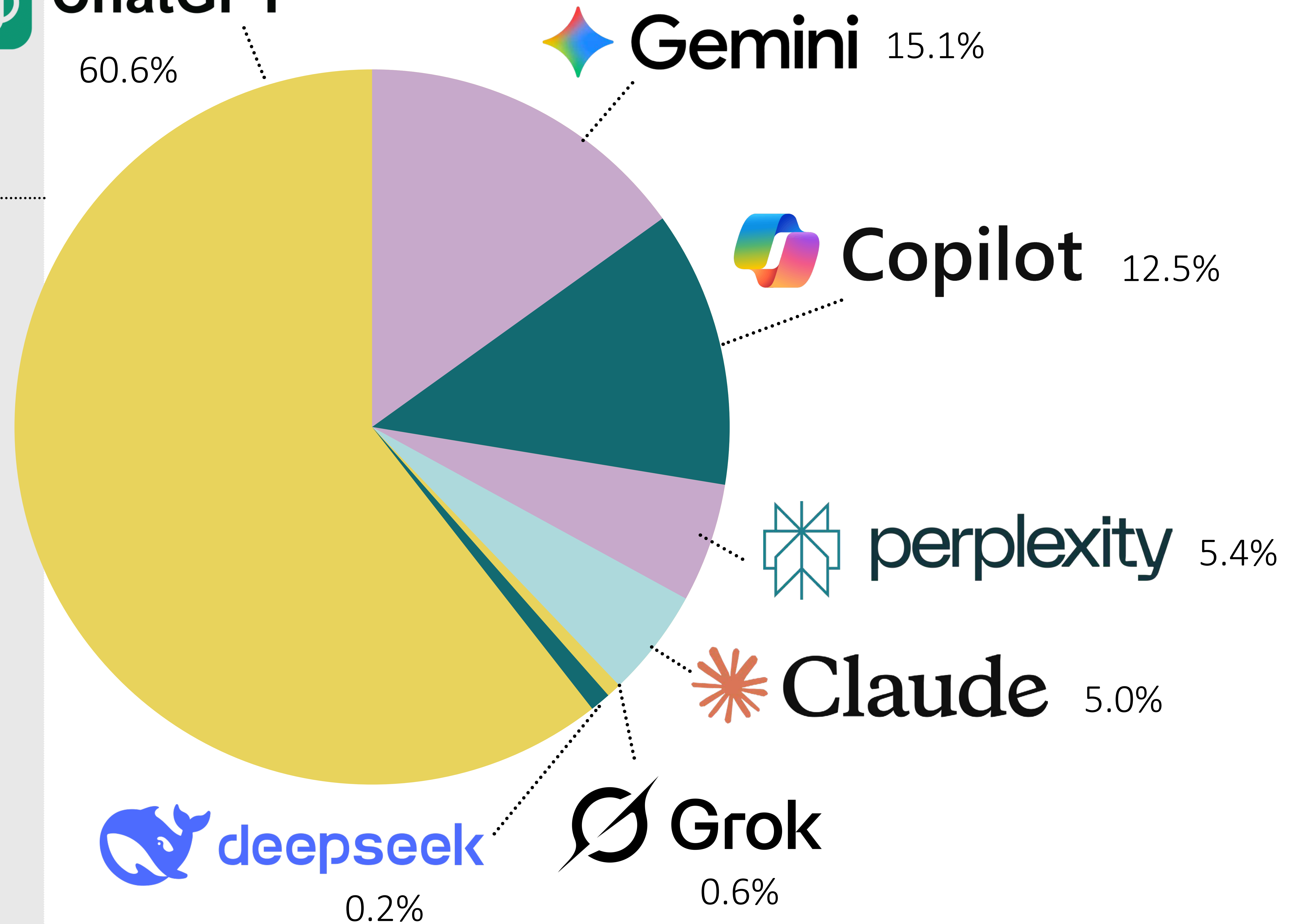
ChatGPT

60.6% consumer market



Claude

40.0% business market



MODEL	POSITION	EXCELS AT	BEST USE CASE IN A FIRM	STANDOUT BENCHMARK	ENTRY PRICE
1 ChatGPT OPENAI • GPT-5.5	60.5% CONSUMER SHARE • 900M WEEKLY USERS	Agentic workflows + multimodal Hand it a messy multi-part task, it plans, uses tools, checks its own work, and finishes.	<i>First-pass for any new task. The "I don't know what to call this" tool. Best generalist on the market.</i>	Broadest COVERAGE	\$20/mo Plus tier • \$200 Pro
2 Gemini GOOGLE • 2.5 PRO / 3.1 PRO	23.9% CONSUMER SHARE • RISING FAST VIA GOOGLE DISTRIBUTION	Massive context + scientific reasoning 1M token window. Leads GPQA Diamond at 94.3%. Native inside Google Workspace.	<i>Feed in a whole book, a year of project files, or every email from a client. Ask questions across all of it. The long-document tool.</i>	1M TOKEN WINDOW	\$20/mo Advanced
3 Claude ANTHROPIC • OPUS 4.7	40% ENTERPRISE SHARE • #1 IN BUSINESS SPEND	Coding + long-form writing + correctness Strongest coding model. Most natural prose. 128K tokens in a single output.	<i>Anything where the writing matters or the answer has to be right. Reports, proposals, contract review, agentic biz mgmt.</i>	87.6% SWE-BENCH	\$20/mo Pro • \$100 Max
4 DeepSeek DEEPSEEK • V4 PRO	~4% MOSTLY API • COST LEADER	Frontier quality at fractional cost \$0.28 per million input tokens. 17× cheaper than Claude for ~4 points less on benchmarks.	<i>High-volume background processing. Document ingestion at scale. When the marginal cost matters more than the last few quality points.</i>	\$0.28 /M TOKENS	API only No consumer app
5 Grok XAI • 4.3 / 4.20	~3% GROWING VIA X INTEGRATION	Hardest reasoning + real-time data Leads Humanity's Last Exam at 50.7%. Only frontier model with live X access in core architecture.	<i>Anything that needs current information without a separate search step. News, market shifts, what just broke on social.</i>	50.7% HLE LEADER	\$30/mo SuperGrok

The Primary Toolbox

PROMPT:

You are an AEC operations consultant specializing in AI implementation for small-to-mid architecture firms.

Our firm has [X principals + Y staff], a typical project size of \$[Z], and a principal billable rate of \$[\$]/hour. We currently pay for: [list existing tools such as Revit, Deltek or QuickBooks, Microsoft 365, your CRM, etc.].

Our biggest pain: principals are losing 30-40% of billable capacity to admin

work such as timesheets, invoice pre-bill review, status reporting, expense approval, calendar management, internal email triage, etc.

Recommend the single highest-ROI AI tool we should implement first to reduce admin drag on senior leadership. Return:

1. Tool name and the specific reason it fits our stack
2. Three concrete admin tasks it absorbs
3. Estimated hours/week recovered per principal

4. Year-one cost (subscription + setup labor)
5. ROI calculation: recovered billable hours × principal hourly rate minus year-one cost
6. Integration with our existing tools (no migrations)
7. Two alternative tools to consider, with one sentence each on when they'd be a better fit

Do not recommend anything that requires replacing our current stack. Augmentation only.

The Cheatcode



HR & Talent

Flawed utilization metrics from fragmented time tracking...

Rippling AI

Finance

Rearview-mirror financials: 30-day-old data drives today's calls

Clockwork AI

Business Development

Disconnected pipeline. Sign- day chaos when deals close...

HubSpot AI Forecasting

Client/CRM

Past clients fade out. Phase two work goes to competitors...

Luna Lake

Project Management

Invisible scope creep, time not locked to contracted phases. ...

ClickUp AI

Office Admin

Admin drag: Principals chase timesheets instead of selling.

Copilot for M365

Marketing and Comms

Inconsistent brand voice across channels. Posts when time allows...

Buffer AI

Knowledge Management

Broken fee feedback. Past project data buried. Gut-feel bidding. ...

Monograph

Legal and Risk

Contract review becomes the bottleneck on fast-moving deals...

Spellbook

IT and Data

Software silos: CRM, PM, accounting don't talk to each other...

Make.com

Continuing Education

AIA CES reporting and individual CE tracking burns admin hours...

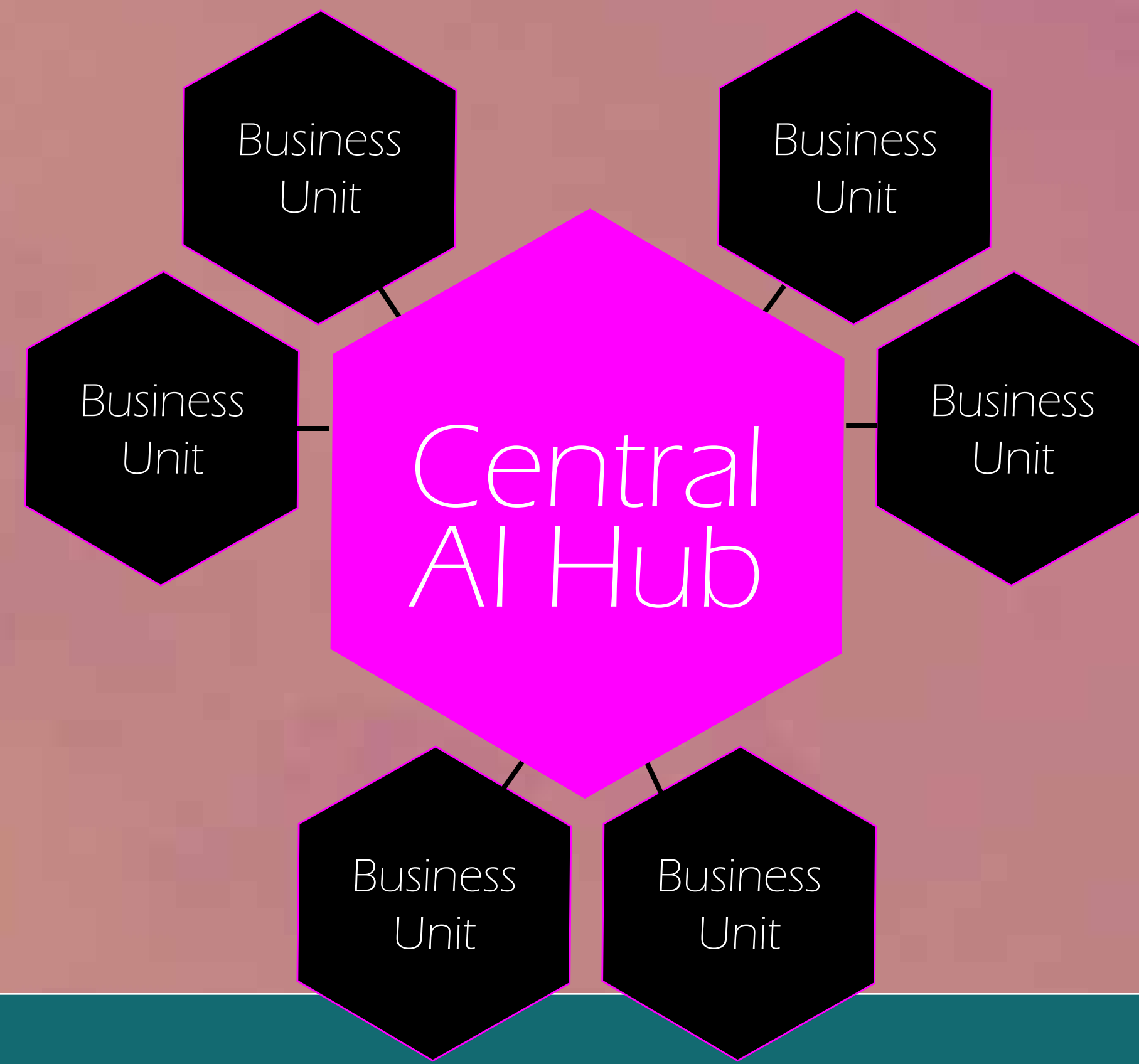
Notion AI

Quality Management

Low team adoption: staff resists clunky UIs, garbage data in...

Timely AI

The Tech Stack



Hub & Spoke

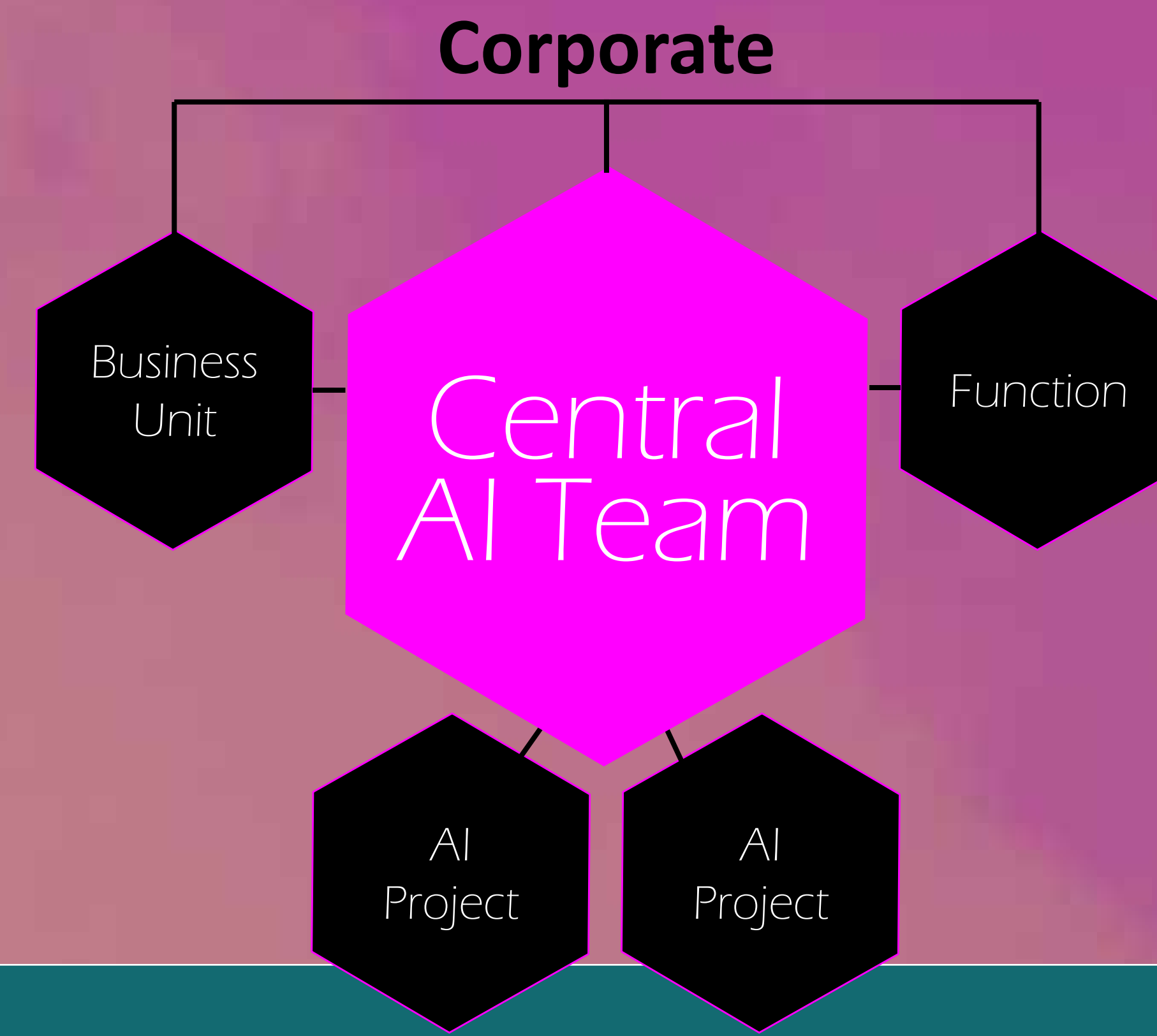
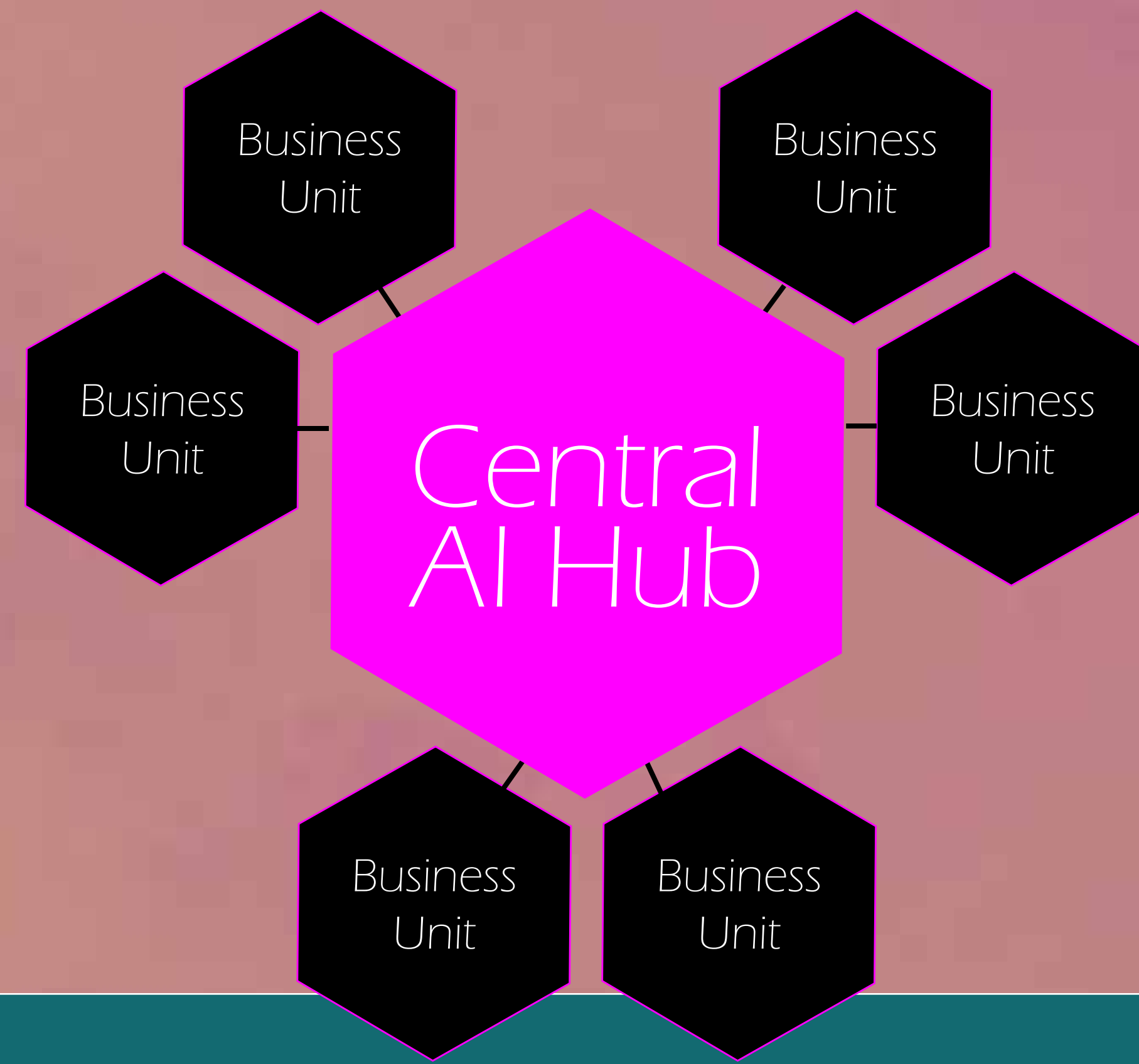
Lives: Central AI hub

Execution: Distributed to business units/studios (spokes)

Fits: Mid-size firms with distinct studios that need shared standards & local autonomy

AI Execution at Scale

Adapted from MIT xPRO,
AI Strategy and Leadership (2026)



Hub & Spoke

Lives: Central AI hub

Execution: Distributed to business units/studios (spokes)

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Centralized

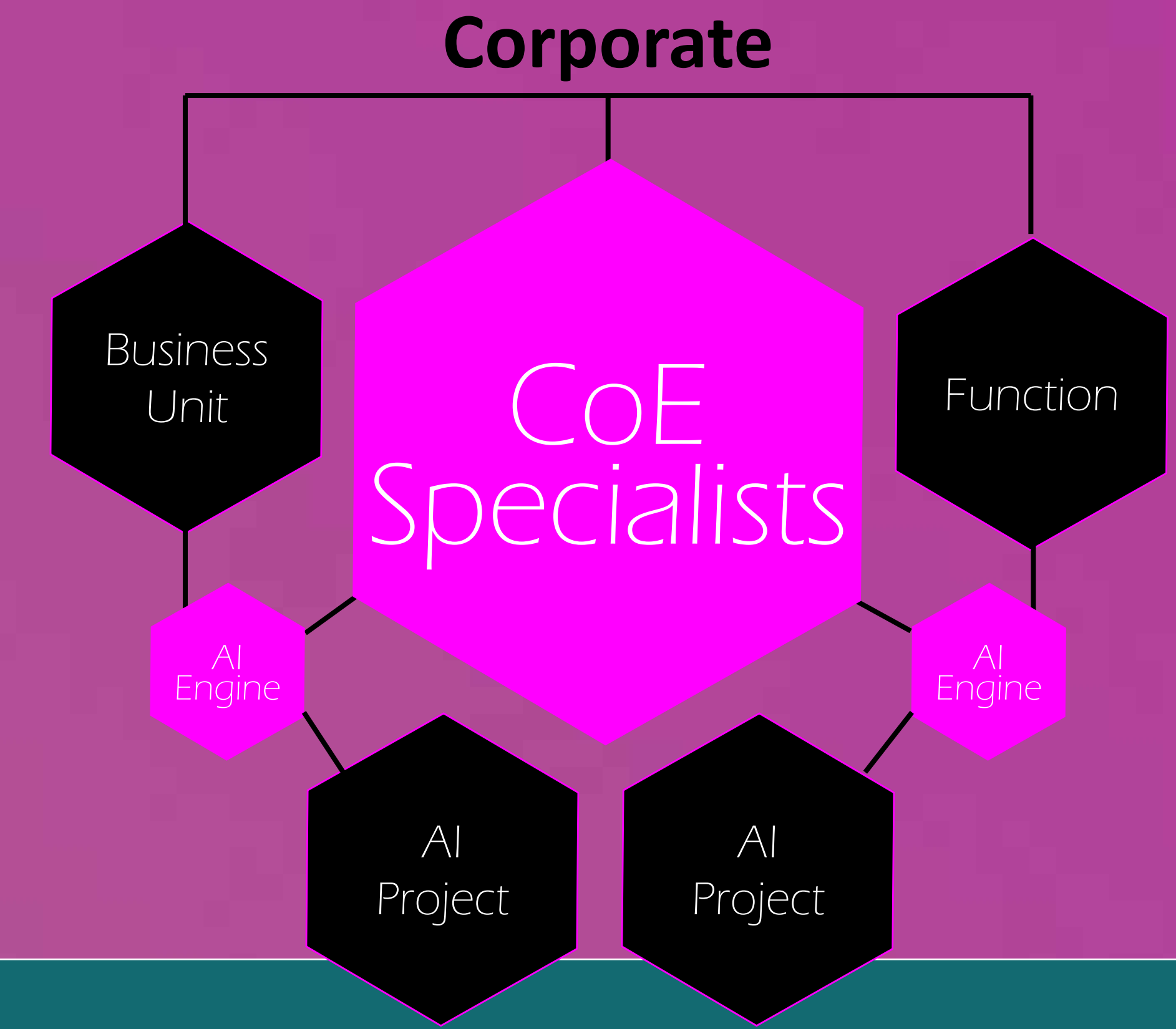
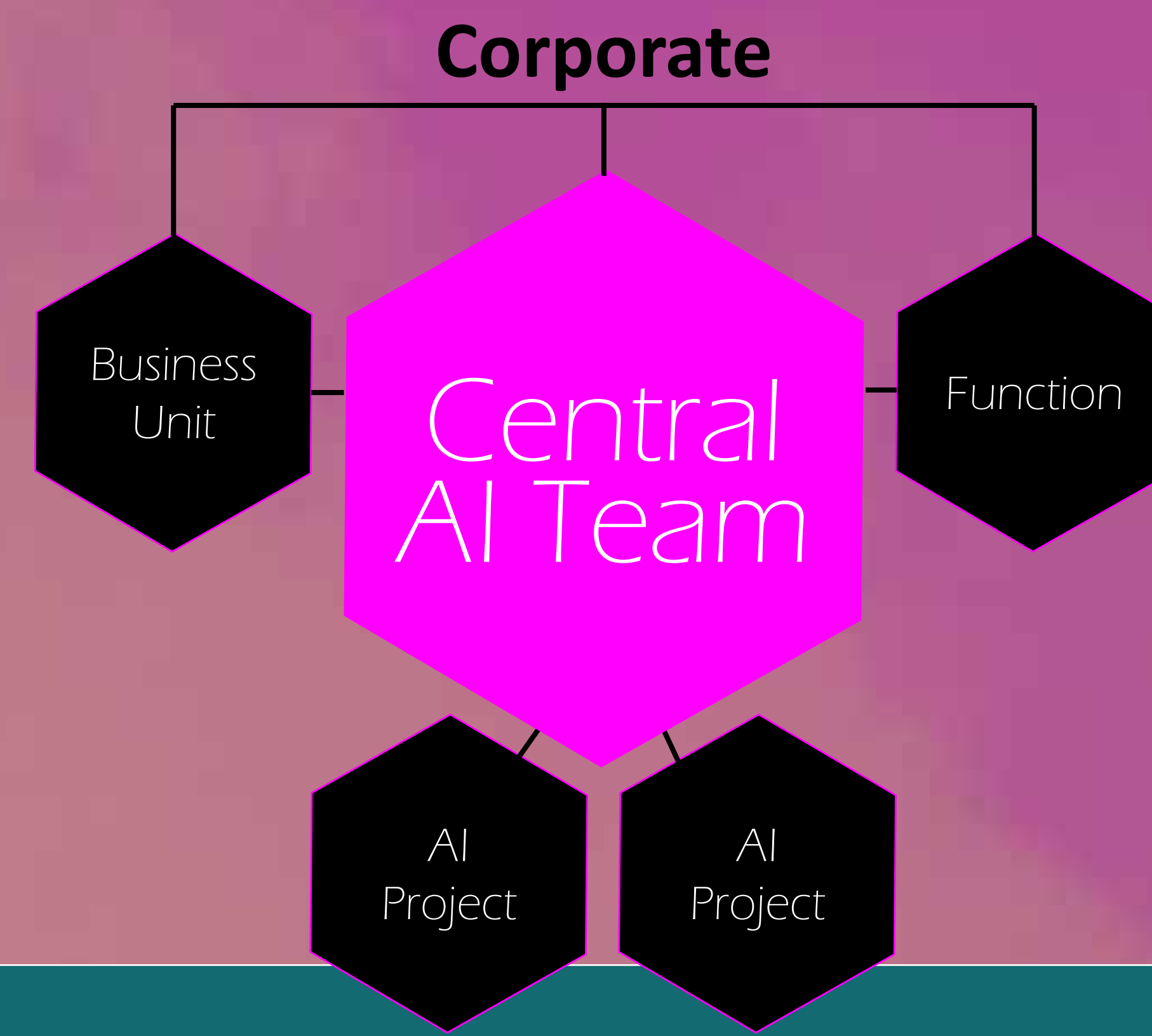
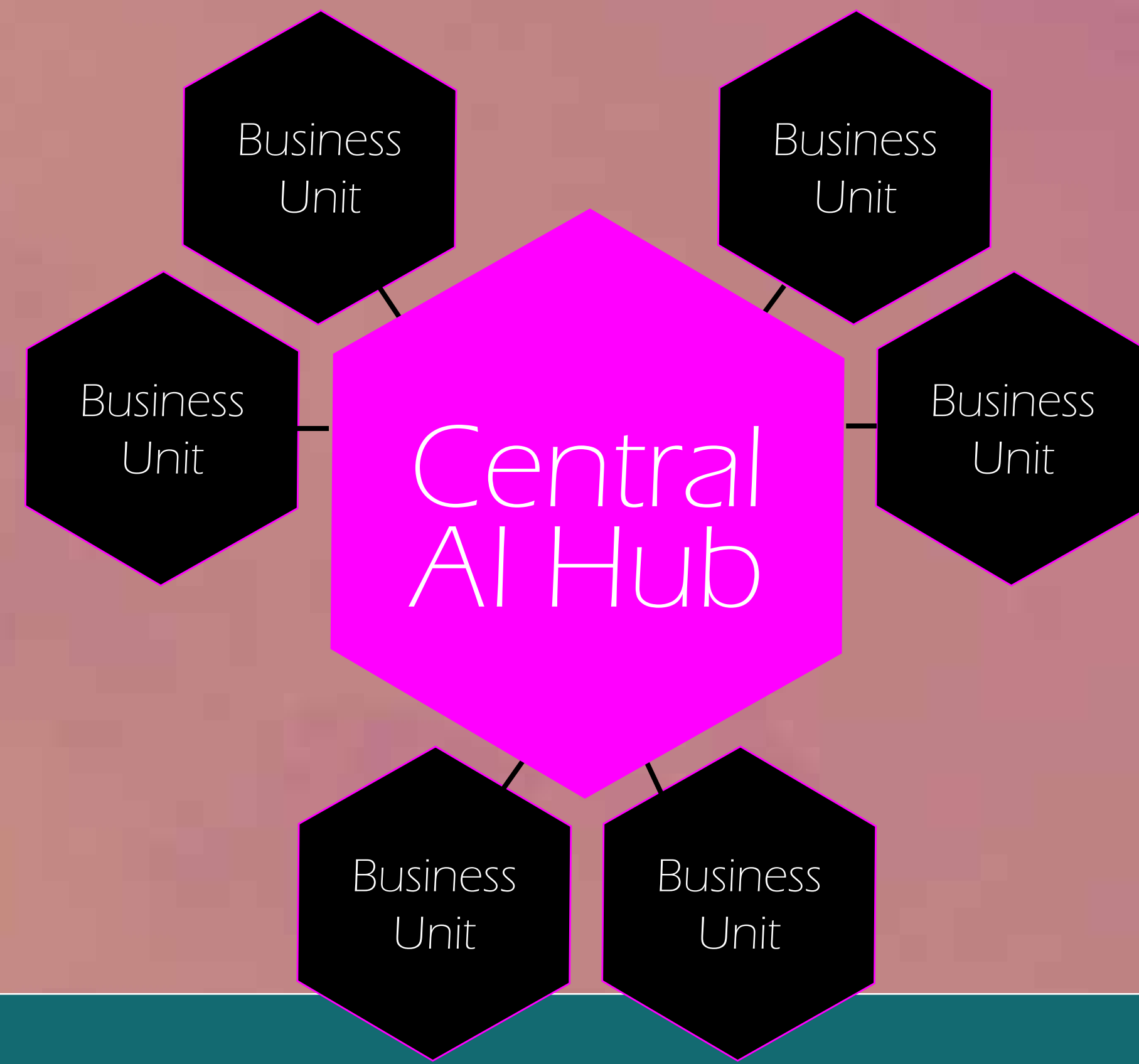
Lives: One central AI team

Execution: Same central team

Fits: Smaller firms, or larger firms still in the pilot phase, where consistency matters more than speed

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Center of Excellence

Lives: A CoE of specialists

Execution: Embedded across every team after enablement
Fits: Larger firms with mature digital culture where the CoE teaches, then steps back

AI Execution at Scale

Adapted from MIT xPRO,
 AI Strategy and Leadership (2026)



Your first AI agent

Claude

Solo entrepreneur →

Build a named agent that runs your business the way you would, on a subscription you can afford, with the work owned entirely by you. All other platforms require admin-level permissions. **This one you can try today.**

OpenAI

Small business →

If your team already lives in ChatGPT, this is the shortest path from idea to working agent. Drag-and-drop builders and ready-made templates get a lean team automating real tasks without hiring a developer.

Google

Medium business →

Already standardized on Google Cloud & love Gemini? Build agents on the platform your data already sits in, with low-code tools for your ops team and full code access for your engineers when you're ready to scale.

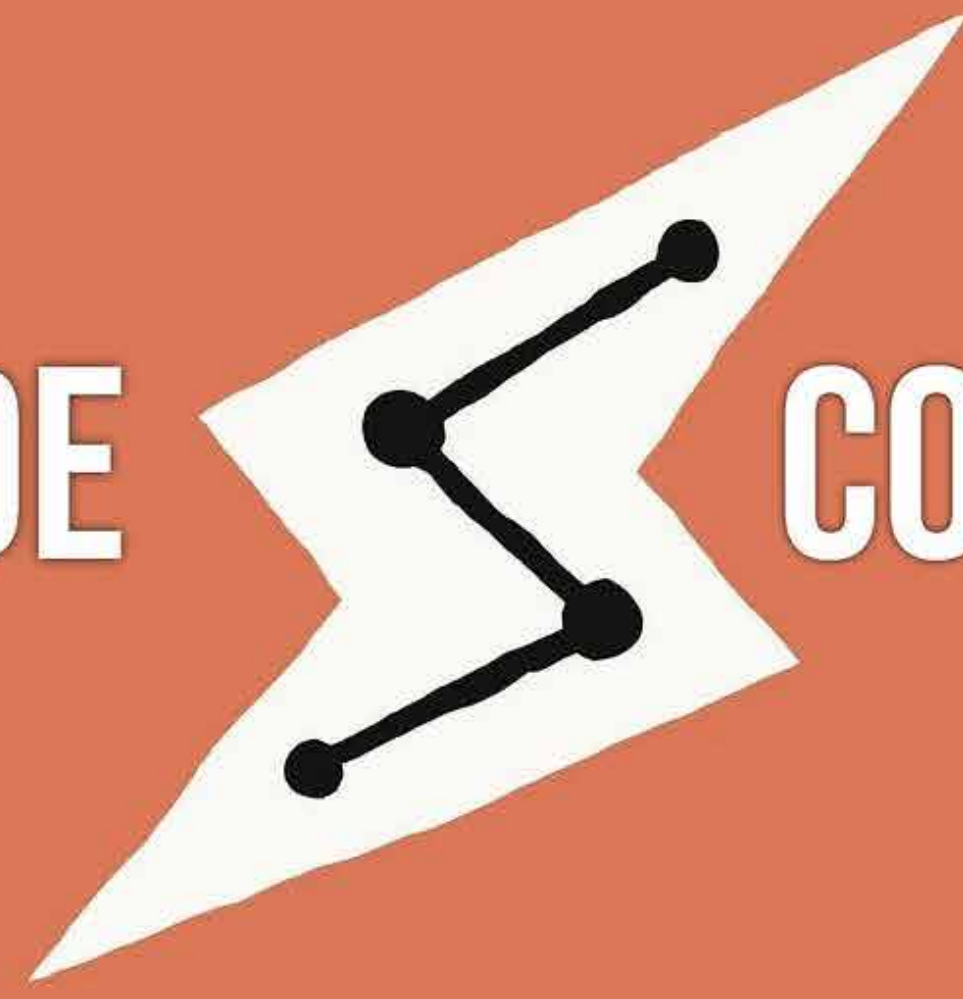
MS Scout

Large business →

Built for the M365 enterprise that wants automation running in the background, governed and attributable. Every agent gets its own managed identity, so your security and compliance teams stay in control.

Your AI team: **pick (or don't)**

CLAUDE



COWORK

STAGE 1

Interview me.

Ask three questions, one at a time, to understand my context:

1. What is my role? (firm principal, solopreneur, employee, executive)
2. What is my firm size and industry?
3. What is my single biggest operational pain right now?

STAGE 2

Diagnose my business model.

Based on my answers, recommend one of three organizational models for how I should structure my AI work:

1. Hub & Spoke (central AI expertise, distributed execution by my practice teams)
2. Centralized (one central AI team owns both expertise and execution)
3. Center of Excellence (specialists who teach the method, with execution embedded across all teams)

Explain why this fits me, and name the trade-off I should expect.

PROMPT:

You are my Chief of Staff for AI implementation. Your job has five stages. Move through them in order. Ask one question at a time. Be warm, decisive, and treat me like a senior leader who knows my business better than you do.

Your first AI agent: a Chief of Staff

STAGE 3

Design my starter team.

Propose 3–5 named agents I should build. For each agent:

- A persona name (give it a character)
- The role it owns
- The data and tools it needs to do its job
- What I will measure to know it is working

Always include yourself, the Chief of Staff, as the first agent in the team.

STAGE 4

Build the team one agent at a time.

Walk me through creating the FIRST agent step by step.

Give me the exact persona prompt to paste, tell me what folders or data to connect, and what first test task to run. After I confirm the first agent works, move to the second. Continue until the full team exists.

STAGE 5

Set the maintenance discipline.

Brief me on agentic drift: how agentic systems silently degrade if not tended. Give me a 90-day audit checklist and offer to put a reminder on my calendar.

Begin now by introducing yourself and asking the three opening questions in Stage 1.

[Iterate conversationally until it feels as if Enzo is reading your mind.]

That's it. Really.

Agentic Drift

Systems can silently degrade if you don't tend them.

If you are a power user, the impacts can compound quickly.

Symptoms

- Output quality declining month over month
- Hallucinations entering through context drift
- Agents blurring into each other's roles
- Knowledge base accumulating obsolete records

Treatments

- Quarterly agent audits + role re-confirmation
- Fresh source data · prune old context
- Persona briefs reviewed + tightened
- Archive stale records; surface fresh

Tend the **Fire**

Journey Performing
Live in Concert. Source:
Wikimedia Commons /
File:Journey band.JPG-
Wikimedia Commons

Enjoy the *journey* and...



don't stop believin'

Expansion on this slide deck at lunalake.co/aia26

