

Spring AI: Building Intelligent Applications

From basic chat to advanced RAG and MCP →



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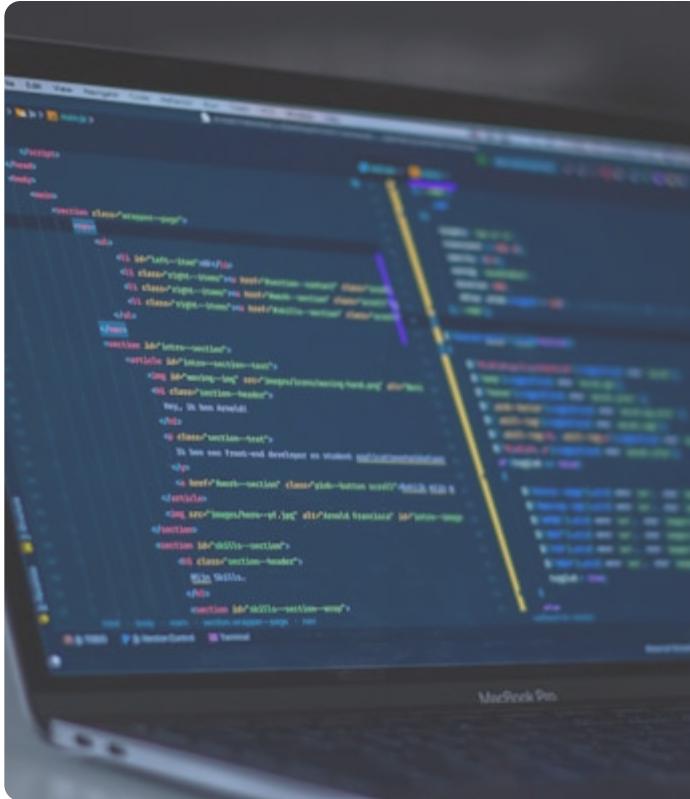
What You'll Learn: Foundations

- **Basic AI Integration:** ChatClient fundamentals
- **Streaming Responses:** Real-time AI interactions
- **Structured Data:** AI-powered object extraction
- **Multimodal AI:** Vision and audio capabilities



What You'll Learn: Advanced

- **Function Calling:** Extend AI with custom tools
- **RAG Systems:** Knowledge-augmented AI
- **MCP Protocol:** Model Context Protocol implementation
- **Production Patterns:** Enterprise-ready architectures



Repository Structure

```
1  Spring_AI_Training_Course/
2  └── labs.md          # 15 progressive lab exercises
3  └── src/
4  |   └── main/java/    # Service implementations
5  |   └── main/resources/ # Configuration & templates
6  |   └── test/java/     # Test-driven exercises
7  └── README.md        # Course documentation
8  └── slides.md        # This presentation
```

- **Start:** `main` branch with guided TODOs
- **Reference:** `solutions` branch when needed
- **Learn by doing:** Implement each lab incrementally
- **15 Labs:** From basic chat to advanced MCP servers

Spring AI Ecosystem

AI Providers

- OpenAI (GPT, DALL-E)
- Anthropic (Claude)
- Azure OpenAI
- Google Vertex AI
- Local models (Ollama)

Vector Stores

- SimpleVectorStore (in-memory)
- Redis Vector Store
- Pinecone, Weaviate
- PgVector, Chroma

Capabilities

- Text generation
- Image analysis/generation
- Speech-to-text/text-to-speech
- Function calling
- RAG workflows

Prerequisites

Technical Requirements

- **Java 17+**
- **Spring Boot 3.5.8**
- **Spring AI 1.1.0**
- **Git** for branch management
- **Redis** (optional, for advanced RAG)

Environment Setup

```
1 # Required API keys
2 export OPENAI_API_KEY=your_key
3 export ANTHROPIC_API_KEY=your_key
4
5 # Optional: Redis for advanced labs
6 docker run -p 6379:6379 redis/redis-stack:latest
7
8 # Clone and start
9 git clone <repo-url>
10 ./gradlew build
11 ./gradlew test
```

Note: Using `gpt-5-nano` and `claude-opus-4-1`

Lab 1-3: Foundations

Building Your First AI-Powered Spring Application

Lab 1: Basic Chat Interactions

```
1 // Step 2: Complete implementation
2 @Service
3 public class ChatService {
4     private final ChatClient chatClient;
5
6     public ChatService(ChatClient.Builder builder) {
7         this.chatClient = builder.build();
8     }
9
10    public String generateResponse(String prompt) {
11        return chatClient.prompt(prompt)
12            .call()
13            .content();
14    }
15 }
```

Result: AI-powered responses in your Spring application! 🎉

Lab 2: Request/Response Logging

```
1  @Service
2  public class ChatService {
3      private final ChatClient chatClient;
4
5      public ChatService(ChatClient.Builder builder) {
6
7          // Add logging advisor for debugging
8          this.chatClient = builder
9              .defaultAdvisors(new SimpleLoggerAdvisor())
10             .build();
11     }
12
13     public String generateResponse(String prompt) {
14         return chatClient.prompt(prompt)
15             .call()
16             .content();
17     }
18 }
```

Debug Output: See exactly what's sent to and received from AI models

Lab 3: Streaming Responses

```
1  @RestController
2  public class ChatController {
3
4      @GetMapping(value = "/chat/stream", produces = MediaType.TEXT_EVENT_STREAM_VALUE)
5      public Flux<String> streamChat(@RequestParam String message) {
6          return chatClient.prompt(message)
7              .stream()
8              .content();
9      }
10
11     // Frontend receives real-time token-by-token responses
12     // Perfect for chat interfaces and long AI responses
13     // Uses Spring WebFlux Reactor streams
14 }
```

Experience: Real-time AI responses like ChatGPT interface

Lab 4-6: Structured AI

From Text to Objects

Lab 4: Structured Data Extraction

```
1 // Define your data structure
2 public record ActorFilms(String actor, List<String> movies) {}
3
4 @Test
5 void shouldGetActorFilms() {
6     // AI converts natural language to structured data
7     ActorFilms actorFilms = chatClient.prompt("Generate the filmography for Tom Hanks")
8         .call()
9         .entity(ActorFilms.class);
10
11    // Assert AI returned proper structure
12    assertThat(actorFilms.actor()).isEqualTo("Tom Hanks");
13    assertThat(actorFilms.movies()).contains("Forrest Gump", "Cast Away");
14 }
```

Magic: AI understands your Java objects and populates them correctly!

Lab 5: Prompt Templates

```
1  @Component
2  public class TemplateService {
3
4      @Value("classpath:/prompts/actor-filmography.st")
5      private Resource actorFilmographyTemplate;
6
7      public ActorFilms getActorFilms(String actorName) {
8          return chatClient.prompt()
9              .user(userSpec -> userSpec
10                 .text(actorFilmographyTemplate)
11                 .param("actor", actorName)
12                 .param("count", 5))
13              .call()
14              .entity(ActorFilms.class);
15      }
16  }
```

Template File (`actor-filmography.st`):

```
1  Generate a filmography for {actor}.
2  Include exactly {count} of their most famous movies.
3  Format as JSON with actor name and movies array.
```

Lab 6: Chat Memory

```
1  @Service
2  public class ConversationService {
3      private final ChatClient chatClient;
4
5      public ConversationService(ChatClient.Builder builder) {
6          this.chatClient = builder
7              .defaultAdvisors(new MessageChatMemoryAdvisor(
8                  new InMemoryChatMemory())) // Remembers conversation
9              .build();
10     }
11
12     public String continueConversation(String message) {
13         return chatClient.prompt(message)
14             .call()
15             .content();
16         // AI remembers previous messages in this conversation!
17     }
18 }
```

Try this:

1. "My name is John"

Lab 7-9: Multimodal AI

Beyond Text: Vision and Audio

Lab 7: Vision Capabilities

```
1  @Test
2  void shouldAnalyzeImage() {
3      var imageResource = new ClassPathResource(
4          "/images/multimodal_test_image.png");
5
6      String response = chatClient.prompt()
7          .user(userSpec -> userSpec
8              .text("What do you see in this image?")
9              .media(MediaTypeUtils.IMAGE_PNG, imageResource))
10         .call()
11         .content();
12
13     assertThat(response.toLowerCase())
14         .contains("dog", "playing");
15 }
```

Vision: What AI Can Analyze

- Photos and diagrams
- Charts and graphs
- Screenshots and UI mockups
- Medical images
- Technical drawings



Lab 8: Image Generation

```
1  @Service
2  public class ImageService {
3      private final ImageModel imageModel;
4
5      public ImageService(ImageModel imageModel) {
6          this.imageModel = imageModel;
7      }
8
9      public String generateImage(String prompt) {
10         ImageResponse response = imageModel.call(
11             new ImagePrompt(prompt,
12                 ImageOptionsBuilder.builder()
13                     .withModel("dall-e-3")
14                     .withHeight(1024)
15                     .withWidth(1024)
16                     .build()));
17
18         return response.getResult()
19             .getOutput()
20             .getUrl();
21     }
22 }
```

Create: AI-generated images from text descriptions

Lab 9: AI Tools (Function Calling)

```
1 // Step 3: AI automatically calls your tools
2 @Test
3 void shouldCallTool() {
4     String response = chatClient.prompt(
5         "What time is it right now?")
6         .call()
7         .content();
8
9     // AI called getCurrentDateTime() automatically!
10    assertThat(response).contains("2024");
11 }
```

Result: AI can execute your Java methods when needed!

Lab 10-11: Audio Processing

Speech-to-Text and Text-to-Speech

Lab 10: Audio Transcription

```
1  @Service
2  public class AudioService {
3      private final AudioTranscriptionModel transcriptionModel;
4
5      public AudioService(AudioTranscriptionModel model) {
6          this.transcriptionModel = model;
7      }
8
9      public String transcribeAudio(Resource audioFile) {
10         AudioTranscriptionPrompt prompt =
11             new AudioTranscriptionPrompt(audioFile);
12
13         AudioTranscriptionResponse response =
14             transcriptionModel.call(prompt);
15
16         return response.getResult().getOutput();
17     }
18 }
```

Capability: Convert speech files (MP3, WAV) to accurate text transcription

Lab 11: Text-to-Speech

```
1  @Service
2  public class SpeechService {
3      private final OpenAiAudioSpeechModel speechModel;
4
5      public SpeechService(OpenAiAudioSpeechModel speechModel) {
6          this.speechModel = speechModel;
7      }
8
9      public byte[] generateSpeech(String text) {
10         // Spring AI 1.1.0: Use TextToSpeechPrompt for portability
11         TextToSpeechPrompt prompt = new TextToSpeechPrompt(text,
12             OpenAiAudioSpeechOptions.builder()
13                 .voice(OpenAiAudioApi.SpeechRequest.Voice.ALLOY)
14                 .responseFormat(OpenAiAudioApi.SpeechRequest.AudioResponseFormat.MP3)
15                 .build());
16
17         return speechModel.call(prompt).getResult().getOutput();
18     }
19 }
```

Text-to-Speech: Usage

```
1 // Generate and save audio
2 byte[] audioData = speechService.generateSpeech(
3     "Welcome to Spring AI training!");
4
5 // Save to file for playback
6 Files.write(Paths.get("welcome.mp3"), audioData);
```

Output: High-quality AI-generated speech from any text

Lab 12-13: RAG Systems

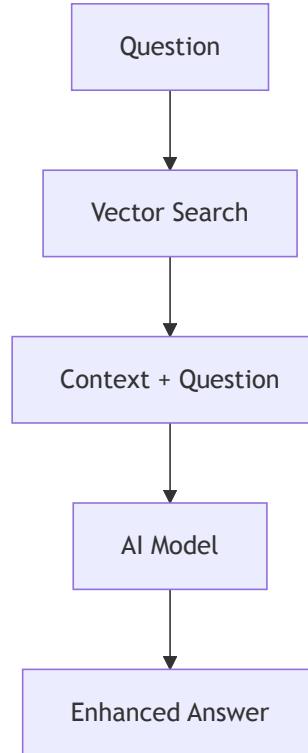
Knowledge-Augmented AI

Lab 12: The RAG Problem

Traditional AI Limitations

- Knowledge cutoff dates
- Can't access your documents
- No real-time information
- Generic responses only

RAG Solution



RAG: How It Works

1. **Document Processing:** Split documents into chunks
2. **Embedding Generation:** Convert chunks to vectors
3. **Vector Storage:** Store in searchable database
4. **Query Processing:** Find relevant chunks for question
5. **Context Enhancement:** Add found content to AI prompt
6. **Enhanced Response:** AI answers using your data

Result: AI answers using YOUR documents and data! 

Spring AI: Supported Providers

Chat Models

- OpenAI • Azure OpenAI
- Anthropic • Google VertexAI
- Amazon Bedrock • Ollama
- Mistral AI • Groq
- *20+ more providers...*

Embedding Models

- OpenAI • Azure OpenAI
- Amazon Bedrock • VertexAI
- Ollama • Mistral AI
- PostgresML • ONNX

Image & Audio

- **Images:** DALL-E, Stability AI
- **Speech-to-Text:** Whisper
- **Text-to-Speech:** OpenAI TTS
- **Moderation:** OpenAI, Mistral

Spring AI advantage: Portable API - switch providers with configuration only!

Understanding Embeddings & Vector Search

What are Embeddings?

- Numerical representation of text meaning
- High-dimensional vectors (typically 1536+ dimensions)
- Semantic similarity via distance calculations
- Context-aware - same words, different meanings

Chunking Strategies

- Token-based: Split by token count (GPT tokenizer)
- Sentence-based: Preserve sentence boundaries
- Semantic: Split by topic/meaning changes
- Overlapping: Chunks share context at boundaries

RAG Implementation

```
1 // Step 3: Testing RAG
2 @Test
3 void shouldAnswerFromDocuments() {
4     String answer = ragService.askQuestion(
5         "What is Spring AI ChatClient?");
6
7     // AI uses loaded PDF content to answer!
8     assertThat(answer).contains("ChatClient", "Spring AI");
9 }
```

Magic: AI answers questions using your PDF documents!

Lab 13: Production RAG with Redis

```
1  @Configuration
2  @Profile("redis")
3  public class RedisRAGConfig {
4
5      @Bean
6      public VectorStore redisVectorStore(EmbeddingModel embeddingModel) {
7          // Spring AI 1.1.0 requires JedisPooled as first parameter
8          return RedisVectorStore.builder(new JedisPooled("localhost", 6379), embeddingModel)
9              .indexName("spring-ai-index")
10             .initializeSchema(true)
11             .build();
12     }
13
14     @Bean
15     public ApplicationRunner dataLoader(VectorStore vectorStore) {
16         return args -> loadDocumentsIfEmpty(vectorStore);
17     }
18 }
```

Redis RAG: Smart Data Loading

```
1  @Bean
2  public ApplicationRunner dataLoader(VectorStore vectorStore) {
3      return args -> {
4          if (vectorStore instanceof RedisVectorStore redis &&
5              redis.getCollection().isEmpty()) {
6
7              // Only load documents if Redis is empty
8              loadDocuments(vectorStore);
9              log.info("Loaded {} documents into Redis", count);
10         }
11     };
12 }
```

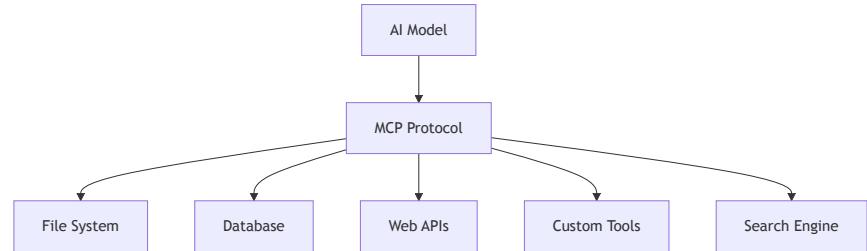
Benefits: Persistent • Scalable • Fast similarity search

Lab 14-15: Model Context Protocol

The Future of AI Tool Integration

What is MCP?

- **Standardized protocol** for AI tool communication
- **Open source** by Anthropic
- **Universal interface** between AI and tools
- **Secure sandbox** for AI operations
- **Growing ecosystem** of MCP servers



MCP enables AI to securely access external tools and data sources

Lab 14: MCP Client

```
1  @Service
2  @Profile("mcp")
3  public class McpClientService {
4      private final ChatClient chatClient;
5
6      public McpClientService(ChatClient.Builder builder) {
7          // Spring AI auto-discovers MCP servers from config
8          this.chatClient = builder.build();
9      }
10
11     public String executeWithTools(String request) {
12         return chatClient.prompt(request).call().content();
13         // AI can now use filesystem, search, etc.
14     }
15 }
```

MCP Client: Configuration

Configuration (`mcp-servers-config.json`):

```
1  {
2      "mcpServers": {
3          "filesystem": {
4              "command": "npx",
5              "args": ["-y", "@modelcontextprotocol/server-filesystem", "/tmp"]
6          },
7          "search": {
8              "command": "npx",
9              "args": ["-y", "@modelcontextprotocol/server-brave-search"]
10         }
11     }
12 }
```

Result: AI can access external tools through standardized protocol

Lab 15: MCP Server

```
1 # Step 3: Run MCP server
2 ./gradlew bootRun --args='--spring.profiles.active=mcp-server'
3
4 # Step 4: Connect from Claude Desktop
5 # Add to Claude's MCP config:
6 {
7     "mcpServers": {
8         "spring-calculator": {
9             "command": "java",
10            "args": ["-jar", "app.jar", "--spring.profiles.active=mcp-server"]
11        }
12    }
13 }
```

Result: Claude Desktop can use your Java methods as tools!

Production Patterns

Enterprise-Ready Spring AI

Service Layer: REST Controller

```
1  @RestController
2  @RequestMapping("/api/ai")
3  public class AIController {
4      private final ChatService chatService;
5
6      @PostMapping("/chat")
7      public ResponseEntity<String> chat(@RequestBody ChatRequest request) {
8          try {
9              String response = chatService.generateResponse(request.getMessage());
10             return ResponseEntity.ok(response);
11         } catch (Exception e) {
12             return ResponseEntity.status(500)
13                 .body("AI service temporarily unavailable");
14         }
15     }
}
```

Service Layer: Streaming Support

```
1  @GetMapping("/chat/stream")
2  public ResponseEntity<Flux<String>> streamChat(@RequestParam String message) {
3      Flux<String> stream = chatService.streamResponse(message)
4          .onErrorReturn("Error occurred during streaming");
5
6      return ResponseEntity.ok()
7          .contentType(MediaType.TEXT_EVENT_STREAM)
8          .body(stream);
9  }
10
11 // Clean separation of concerns
12 // Proper error handling
13 // Stream-ready architecture
14 // Production-ready patterns
```

Configuration Management

```
1  @Configuration
2  public class AIConfiguration {
3
4      @Bean
5      @Primary
6      @ConditionalOnProperty("spring.ai.openai.api-key")
7      public ChatModel primaryChatModel(OpenAiChatModel openAiModel) {
8          return openAiModel;
9      }
10
11     @Bean
12     @ConditionalOnProfile("rag")
13     public VectorStore vectorStore() {
14         return new SimpleVectorStore();
15     }
16 }
```

Profile-Based Feature Activation

```
1  @Bean
2  @Profile("redis")
3  public VectorStore redisVectorStore(EmbeddingModel embeddingModel) {
4      return RedisVectorStore.builder(new JedisPooled("localhost", 6379), embeddingModel)
5          .indexName("spring-ai-index")
6          .initializeSchema(true)
7          .build();
8  }
9
10 @Bean
11 @Profile("mcp")
12 public McpClientConfiguration mcpConfig() {
13     return new McpClientConfiguration();
14 }
```

Run configurations:

```
1  ./gradlew bootRun                      # Basic AI
2  ./gradlew bootRun --args='--spring.profiles.active=rag,redis' # RAG
3  ./gradlew bootRun --args='--spring.profiles.active=mcp'      # MCP
```

Error Handling: Retries

```
1  @Service
2  public class ResilientChatService {
3      private final ChatClient chatClient;
4
5      @Retryable(value = {ApiException.class}, maxAttempts = 3)
6      public String generateResponse(String prompt) {
7          return chatClient.prompt(prompt).call().content();
8      }
9
10     // Automatically retries API failures
11     // Exponential backoff available
12     // Works with Spring Retry
13 }
```

Error Handling: Circuit Breaker

```
1  @CircuitBreaker(name = "ai-service", fallbackMethod = "fallbackResponse")
2  public String generateResponseWithCircuitBreaker(String prompt) {
3      return chatClient.prompt(prompt).call().content();
4  }
5
6  public String fallbackResponse(String prompt, Exception ex) {
7      log.warn("AI service failed, using fallback", ex);
8      return "I'm temporarily unable to process your request.";
9  }
10
11 // Prevents cascade failures
12 // Automatic recovery when service improves
```

Error Handling: Async Processing

```
1  @Async
2  public CompletableFuture<String> generateResponseAsync(String prompt) {
3      return CompletableFuture.supplyAsync(() ->
4          chatClient.prompt(prompt).call().content());
5  }
6
7 // Usage
8 CompletableFuture<String> future = service.generateResponseAsync("Hello");
9 String result = future.get(30, TimeUnit.SECONDS);
```

Benefits: Non-blocking • Timeout control • Better UX

Testing: Unit Tests with Mocks

```
1  @SpringBootTest
2  class ChatServiceTest {
3      @MockitoBean ChatClient chatClient;
4      @MockitoBean ChatClient.CallResponseSpec callSpec;
5
6      @Test
7      void shouldGenerateResponse() {
8          when(chatClient.prompt("Hello")).thenReturn(callSpec);
9          when(callSpec.call()).thenReturn(mockResponse("Hi there!"));
10
11         String result = service.generateResponse("Hello");
12         assertThat(result).isEqualTo("Hi there!");
13     }
14 }
```

Testing: Integration with TestContainers

```
1  @Testcontainers
2  @SpringBootTest
3  class RAGIntegrationTest {
4
5      @Container
6      static RedisContainer redis = new RedisContainer("redis:7.0")
7          .withExposedPorts(6379);
8
9      @Test
10     void shouldPerformRAGWithRedis() {
11         // Test actual RAG workflow with real Redis
12         String answer = ragService.askQuestion("What is Spring AI?");
13         assertThat(answer).contains("Spring", "AI");
14     }
15 }
```

Benefits: Real dependencies • Isolated environments • CI/CD ready

Cost & Performance Optimization

Model Selection

- **GPT-4:** Complex reasoning, higher cost
- **GPT-3.5/4o:** Faster, cost-effective for simple tasks
- **Claude:** Strong for analysis, coding
- **Local models:** Privacy, no API costs

Optimization Strategies

- **Token Management:** Monitor usage, optimize prompts
- **Embedding Caching:** Store frequently used vectors
- **Request Batching:** Combine operations when possible
- **Smart Chunking:** Optimize document splitting

Security & Observability

Security Best Practices

- **API Key Management:** Environment variables, vaults
- **Data Privacy:** Local processing when possible
- **Input Validation:** Sanitize user prompts
- **Output Filtering:** Check AI responses

Monitoring & Observability

- **Logging:** All AI interactions and costs
- **Metrics:** Response times, token usage
- **Tracing:** Request flows through services
- **Alerting:** High costs, failed requests

Course Summary

What You've Built

Your AI-Powered Application Stack

Foundation & Advanced

- ChatClient integration
- Multiple AI providers
- Streaming responses
- Multimodal capabilities
- Function calling

Production Ready

- RAG systems
- MCP protocol
- Service architecture
- Error handling
- Comprehensive testing

Result: Enterprise-grade Spring AI applications! 

Key Takeaways: Development

1. **Spring AI simplifies AI integration** - No complex API calls or JSON parsing
2. **Start simple, add complexity gradually** - From basic chat to advanced RAG
3. **Leverage Spring's strengths** - Auto-configuration, profiles, testing
4. **Think beyond text** - Vision, audio, and structured data open new possibilities

Key Takeaways: Production

1. **MCP is the future** - Standardized tool integration across AI platforms
2. **Production requires planning** - Error handling, monitoring, and resilience
3. **Test everything** - AI responses are non-deterministic but testable

Next Steps: Continue Learning

Hands-On Practice

- Explore the GitHub repository
- Try advanced RAG techniques
- Build custom MCP servers
- Integrate with existing apps

Key Resources

- [Spring AI Docs](#)
- [Model Context Protocol](#)
- [Course Repository](#)

Production Considerations

Operational Excellence

- **API Cost Management:** Monitor token usage
- **Rate Limiting:** Handle API quotas
- **Data Privacy:** Keep sensitive data secure
- **Monitoring:** Track performance and errors

Advanced Topics

- Custom embedding models
- Multi-agent systems
- AI-powered workflows
- Integration with existing systems

Thank You!

Questions?

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Ready to build intelligent applications with Spring AI!