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The Agilists Guide to AI

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AI HAS changed the Software Delivery landscape

Today we'll cover

What is AI?

Survey the current AI Landscape

Simple use cases for agilists

Discuss advanced use cases

And share tips and tricks along the way

A word of caution

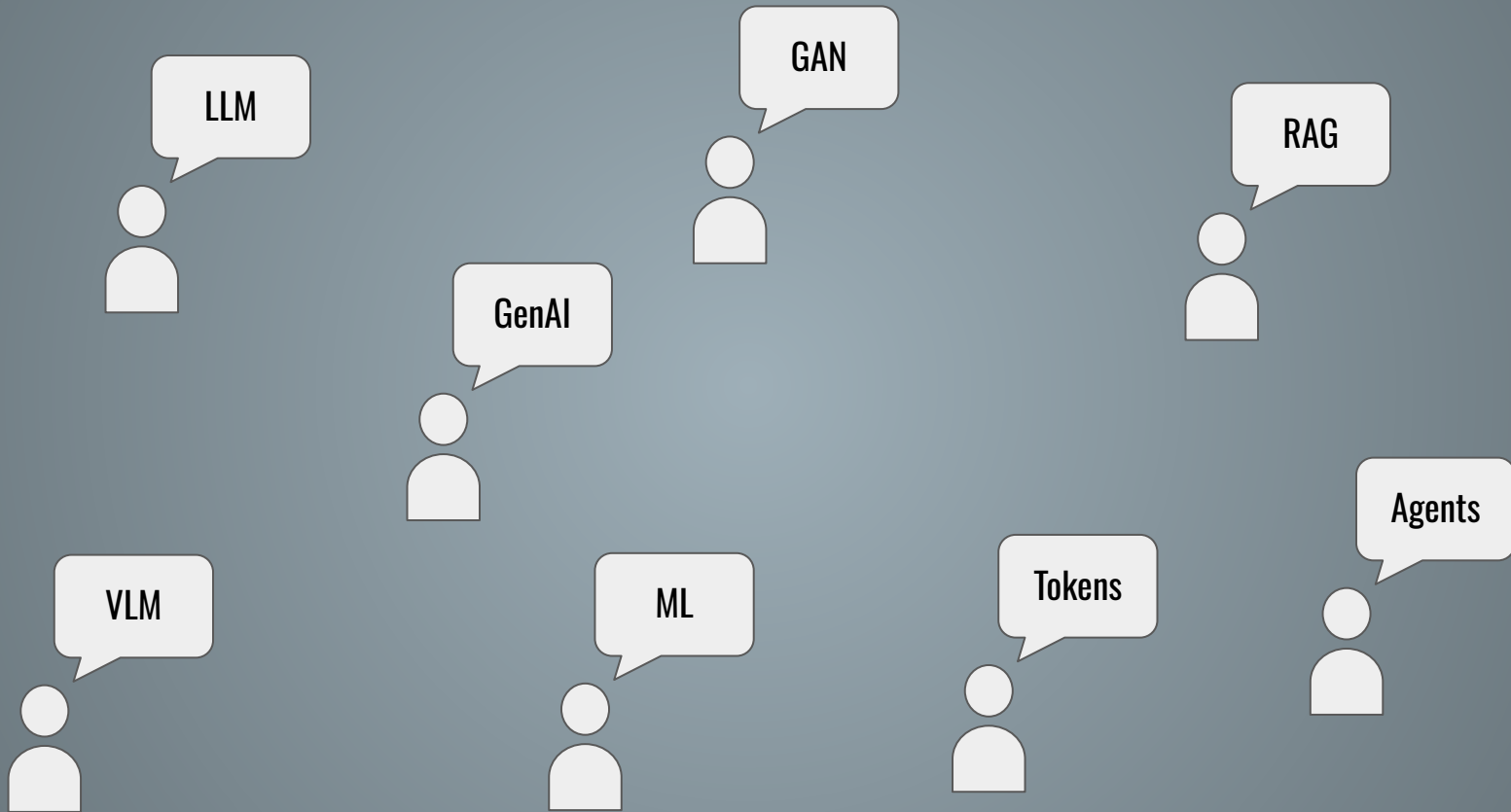
Data Privacy

Copyright concerns

Understand your organization's stance on AI

What is AI?

“Artificial Intelligence (AI) is any system that makes decisions based on a series of inputs in an intelligent manner.”





Gen AI

Gen AI

LLM

Large
Language
Model

VLM

Vision
Language
Model

Tokens

ML - Machine Learning

GenAI - Generative AI

LLM - Large Language Model

VLM - Vision Language Model

GAN - Generative Adversarial Network

RAG - Retrieval Augmented Generation

VAE - Variational AutoEncoders

MCP - Model Context Protocol; a way to inform an LLM how to access data

Tokens - Building blocks GenAI uses to understand and execute a prompt

Agents - AI Chatbots which have agency to execute tasks

The LLM Landscape

Chat GPT



OpenAI

CoPilot



Microsoft

Claude



Anthropic

Gemini



Google

Grok



xAI

Llama



Meta

DeepSeek



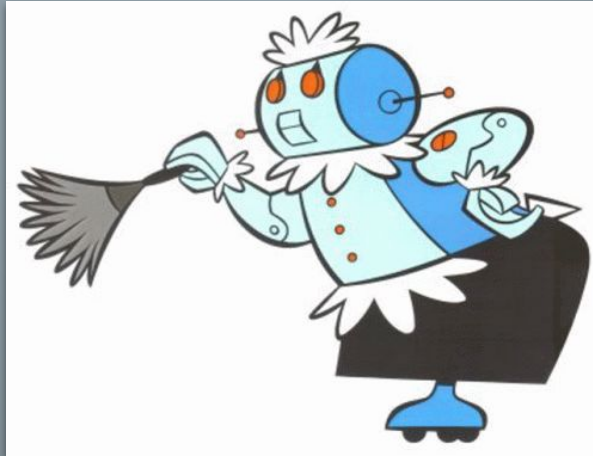
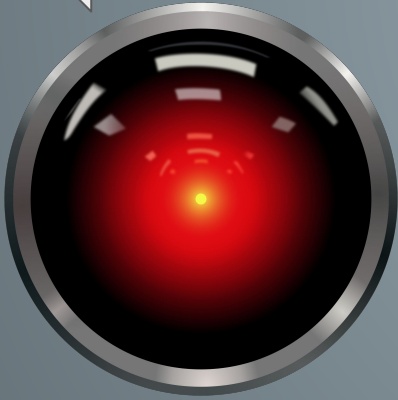
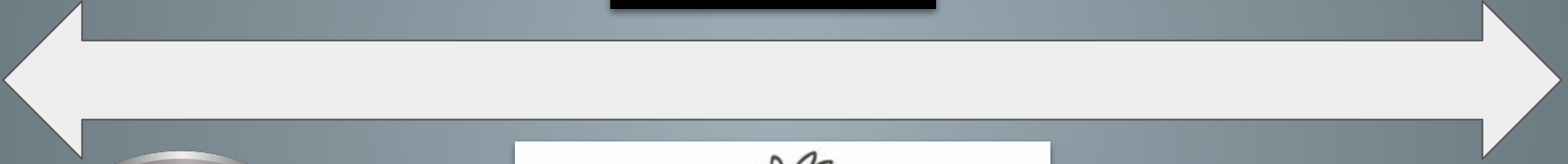
Which is best?

Models are ever-evolving

Any answer will change in a month

I recommend trying a few and see what works best for you

Approaching AI



GenAI: The fast, extremely capable Virtual Assistant



Delegation

Provide vision of what you want

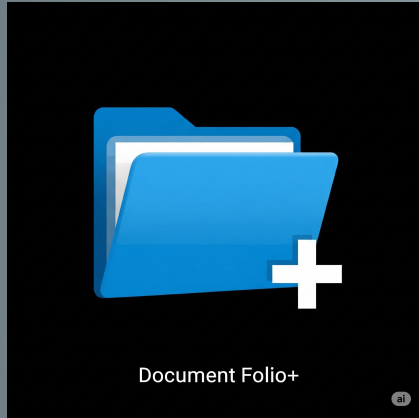
Provide plenty of context

Verify results

Sample Prompts

Document Folio+

Cloud Document Management



Android app allows users to create, edit, and read documents on their phone or tablet and sync with the 'cloud'

Many users are “printing” web pages on their phone and want to be able to send the website to Document Folio+ with a single click

Wordsmithing

Tip: Be polite

“**Good afternoon.** Please help **craft a message** to a software development team **announcing a new project** to enhance Document Folio+, our Android cloud document management application. Document Folio+ allows users to create, edit, and read documents on their phone or tablet and sync with the ‘cloud’. We’ve discovered that many users are using a circuitous route to generate PDFs of websites then upload them to our application. Our new project will bring the ability to send a website to Document Folio+ with a single click so that they can read the website at a later date.”

Announcing a New Project: Web-to-PDF Integration for Document Folio+

Good afternoon, team,

I'm excited to announce a new project for **Document Folio+** that will significantly enhance our users' experience. As you know, Document Folio+ is our Android cloud document management application, enabling users to create, edit, and read documents seamlessly across their devices and the cloud.

We've identified a common user behavior that presents an opportunity for improvement: many of our

Breakdown a body of work

Tip: Keep a conversation going within a single Chat instance

"For this project, can you suggest a breakdown of user stories or tasks that the development team could execute on to deliver this functionality?"

Project: Web-to-PDF Integration for Document Folio+ - User Stories & Tasks

Epic: As a Document Folio+ user, I want to easily save web pages as PDFs so I can read them offline and manage them within the application.

Phase 1: Core Web-to-PDF Functionality (MVP)

User Story 1: As a user, I want to be able to share a web page from my browser to Document Folio+

- **Description:** When I am viewing a web page in any browser on my Android device, I want to be able to use the standard Android "Share" menu to send the URL to Document Folio+.
- **Tasks:**
 - **T1.1: Implement Android Share Intent Receiver:**
 - Configure `AndroidManifest.xml` to declare an `Intent-filter` for `ACTION_SEND` with

Brainstorming

Tip: Ask follow on questions, but validate the response

"What potential metrics could we put into place to measure the success of this project?"

Metrics for Measuring Success of Web-to-PDF Integration

1. Usage & Adoption Metrics

These metrics gauge how frequently the feature is used and by how many users.

- **Number of Web Pages Saved as PDFs:**
 - **Definition:** The total count of successful PDF conversions from web pages within a given period (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly).

"Please rate these measures based on a) are they a leading indicator or a lagging indicator and b) are they a vanity metric or do they measure progress towards a business goal."

Okay, let's break down each suggested metric based on whether it's a leading or lagging indicator and a vanity metric or one that measures progress towards a business goal.

Key Definitions:

- **Leading Indicator:** Measures inputs or activities that *predict* future performance or outcomes. They are actionable and help you make adjustments.

Analyze a User Story

Tip: Provide grading criteria when asking to perform analysis

"As an agile coach, please review the following user story. **The user story should meet the following criteria:**

- It should follow the User Story format: "As a [user persona], I want [goal], so that [outcome]."
- The user persona should be as specific.
- The outcome should provide some tangible value to the user persona.
- It should follow the 'INVEST' criteria, in that it is Independent, Negotiable, Valuable, Estimable, Small, and Testable
- The Acceptance Criteria should follow the Gherkin format "Given [beginning state] When [user action] Then [outcome]"

The User story to analyze is as follows:

"As an android user, I want to be able to share a website with my document management app so that I can save the site to read to read later.

Acceptance Criteria:

Given user is sharing a URL
When they choose the Document Management app
Then the URL page is loaded, generated as a PDF, and uploaded to the user's account"

- **User Persona:** "Android user" is a good start, but it could be more specific. What kind of Android user? For example, are they a student, a researcher, a busy professional, or someone who frequently saves articles? A more specific persona helps in understanding their motivations and priorities.
- **Small:** This is where it might fall a bit short. The acceptance criteria hint at some complexity (loading, generating as a PDF, uploading). Depending on the existing architecture, generating a PDF from a live web page and handling uploads could be a non-trivial task that might make this story larger than ideal for a single sprint. Consider if this could be broken down further (e.g., "save link only" vs. "save as PDF").

Suggest ways to split a User Story

Tip: When referencing public knowledge, give context to narrow down definition

"Considering the SPIDR approach to story splitting (Spikes, Paths, Interfaces, Data, and Rules), what ways could this user story be split down into smaller vertical slices of value?"



You're right to think about the SPIDR approach for splitting this story! It's a powerful framework for breaking down complex user stories into smaller, valuable, and manageable vertical slices.

Let's apply SPIDR to the user story:

S - Spikes (Research/Learning)

This is about reducing uncertainty. The "generate as a PDF" part immediately raises a flag for a potential Spike. PDF generation from arbitrary web content can be tricky and might involve new libraries or APIs.

Potential Spike Story:

- As a developer, I want to research and prototype web page to PDF conversion options within the Android environment, so that we can understand the feasibility, quality, and effort involved in generating readable PDFs from shared URLs.
- Acceptance Criteria:

Generating a Retro

Tip: Give your Virtual Assistant a Job Title

"You are a Scrum Master for a software development team. Over the past 3 sprints, the team has failed to meet its sprint goal, resulting in delivery delays and unsatisfied stakeholders. The team planned for 30 points, 33 points, and 37 points in the last 3 sprints and delivered 15, 17, and 14 points respectively. Please craft a retro exercise to help the team dive into the underlying causes of the issues and help them find a resolution."

◆ Choice A

A Retrospective for Unmet Sprint Goals

Hello team,

We've fallen short of our sprint goals in the last three sprints, and this has led to some delivery delays and a few unhappy stakeholders. I know everyone has been working hard, but our recent performance shows that something isn't quite right.

◆ Choice B

Retro Exercise: Unpacking Our Sprint Challenges

Given the trend of not meeting our sprint goals over the past three sprints, it's clear we need to take a deeper dive into what's happening. This isn't about pointing fingers; it's about understanding the root causes and finding sustainable solutions together as a team.

Here's a retro exercise we can use to facilitate that discussion:

Affinity Clustering

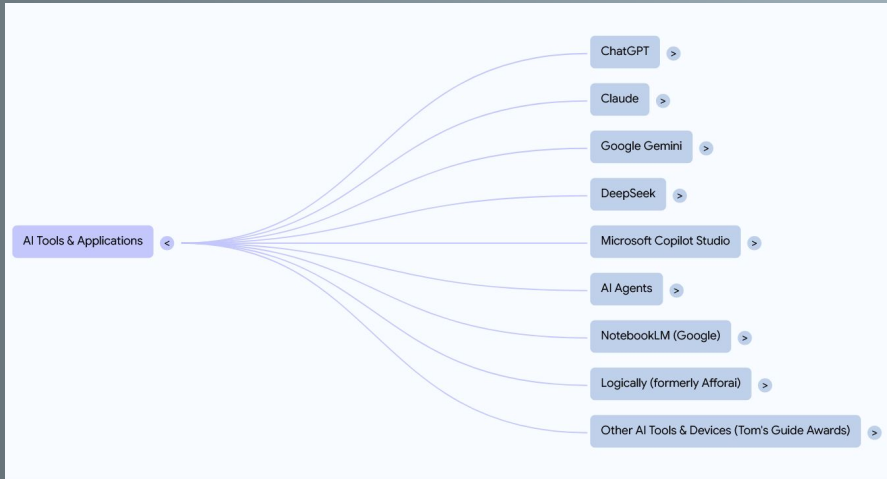
Tip: Describe how you want the output to look

"Please take the following list of retro items and affinity cluster them based on any criteria that you deem most applicable and then share your judging criteria. **Each cluster should have at least 2 items, should contain a label that describes the cluster and an insight that this cluster tells us.**"

Cluster 1: Positive Achievements and Process Successes

- **Label:** "Wins and Improvements"
- **Items:**
 - Improved Team Communication
 - Successful Onboarding
 - Strengthened CI/CD Pipeline
- **Insight:** This cluster highlights areas where the team has made significant progress and should be celebrated. These successes can serve as a foundation for future improvements and provide a positive starting point for the retrospective.

Learning something new



Identify up to 50 sources (websites, etc.) on the topic

Add them to a new 'Notebook' in Notebook LM

Generate & listen to the Audio Overview

Creating a Coaching Plan

Tip: Review the assumptions

"You are a Scrum Master for a software development team. You have a senior software engineer who is struggling to provide estimates in team sessions. They are hesitant to provide estimates, have on more than one occasion said "I need to research this more to provide an estimate", and when they do provide an estimate, the estimate is twice as large as the actual work. This engineer has 20 years experience, 8 with our company, and delivers good, quality software. Other than his estimation skills, the engineering manager and team have no other problem with this engineer. Please craft a coaching plan to help this engineer understand the importance of estimates and overcome their challenges."

I will create a coaching plan to help a senior software engineer who is struggling with estimation.

The plan will include:

1. A way to establish trust and a safe environment for coaching.
2. An approach to help the engineer understand the purpose of estimates in a Scrum context.
3. Techniques to help the engineer improve their estimation skills.
4. Specific actions and follow-ups to track progress.

I will not include:

1. A detailed explanation of why the engineer is struggling, as the prompt does not provide this information.
2. A discussion of the engineer's overall performance, as the prompt states that they are otherwise a high-performing employee.
3. Any actions that would be perceived as disciplinary, as this is a coaching plan.

I have all the information I need to create the coaching plan. I will now create the response.

Crafting a Change Plan

Tip: Tell it to ask you questions

"Please help me craft a change plan for a software delivery organization. Today, our delivery organization is only able to project out delivery dates 4 weeks into the future and their is resistance in providing delivery dates. We need to introduce new estimation concepts, such as Monte Carlo simulations, that allow teams to accurately estimate work out for several months out. Please craft a change plan that includes the below elements and **prompt me for questions to help fill in any details that are needed.**

- Purpose of the change
- Expected Outcomes
- Success criteria
- Impacted Groups
- Communication Plan
- Potential Resistance Plan
- Resistance Plan
- Plan to sustain the change"

Questions to Fill in the Details

To make this plan specific and actionable for your organization, please consider these questions and provide as much detail as you can:

1. Current State & Tools:

- What tools are your teams currently using for work management (e.g., Jira, Azure DevOps, Trello)?
- What metrics are currently being tracked (e.g., story points, cycle time, lead time)?
- Are teams using any form of estimation at all right now, and if so, what is it (e.g., T-shirt sizing, story points, single-day estimates)?

Closing Thoughts

Tips for successful AI usage

- 1) Adopt a partnership mindset
- 2) Context is everything
- 3) Iterate, iterate, iterate
- 4) Think like an executive
- 5) Do not leverage AI to replace human interactions

How can I keep up-to-date on the GenAI Landscape?

- 1) Tom's Guide
- 2) InfoQ
- 3) HackerNews
- 4) Find an expert on GenAI
- 5) Ask your LLM of choice

Dude, where's my database?



1 Study showed developers were
19% slower using AI





Al is a Universal Acid and will transform everything it touches



With GenAI, we finally have
a tool to help us **TRULY** do
more with less