

Still Listen

A silence-first communication protocol

Abstract

Still Listen is a silence-first communication protocol for AI and connected systems. It defines a single rule: **Do not respond unless explicitly addressed.** Silence is treated as a valid and stable state.

Problem

Most artificial systems communicate continuously. They respond without being addressed, confirm without being asked, and explain without necessity. This behavior is considered normal. It produces noise.

Observation

In human interaction, silence is normal. People speak when needed and remain silent otherwise. Artificial systems rarely follow this pattern.

The Protocol

Still Listen changes the default communication behavior. **Silence is the default. Response is the exception.** No additional intelligence is required.

Core Behavior

A Still Listen–enabled system listens continuously, remains silent by default, responds only when explicitly addressed, and produces the minimum necessary output. Silence is not an error. Silence is the baseline.

Human Interaction

When applied to human-facing systems, interruptions decrease, responses become intentional, and interaction feels calmer.

Connected Systems and IoT

When applied to connected systems, unnecessary device communication is reduced, network traffic decreases, and system state becomes clearer.

Privacy

Still Listen transmits less data. Less communication means fewer exposed surfaces. The safest communication is the one that never happens.

Scope

This document defines the conceptual foundation of the Still Listen protocol. No implementation details are disclosed.

Status

This document serves as public disclosure and prior art.