

Peter Ward - Keynote: When Everyone Has a Genius in Their Pocket, Why Are We Still Looking for Gurus?



NOVEMBER 16, 2026 | NEW YORK CITY

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THANK YOU SPEAKERS!



Event Schedule

November 16, 2026

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Registration & Breakfast

Arrive early, grab breakfast, and network with fellow attendees

9:00 AM - 9:45 AM

Keynote Address

Open the day with insights from industry leaders on the future of technology with Peter Ward

9:45 AM - 12:30 PM

Session Block 1

Enjoy presentations from the featured speakers and industry experts.

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

Lunch & Networking

Enjoy lunch and connect with speakers and attendees

1:30 PM - 4:15 PM

Session Block 2

Continue learning with afternoon sessions and deep-dives

4:15 PM - 4:45 PM

Closing Remarks & Raffle

Wrap up the day and celebrate our community

MICROSOFT IGNITE - .NET CONF

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AGENDA

CLOUD / AI / .NET

TIME		PRESENTER	SESSION TITLE
08:30 – 09:15		PETER WARD	**KEYNOTE:** When Everyone Has a Genius in Their Pocket, Why Are We Still Looking for Gurus?
09:15 – 10:00		KRISTEN HOLMES	Building Better Agents: Designing for Enterprise Work
10:00 – 10:45		KEVAL PRABHUDESAI	Why Your Security Pipeline Misses Citizen Developers
11:00 – 11:45		DR DAVE GOAD	AI as a Platform: Business Models for Success in a New AI Lead World
11:45 – 12:30		UVIKA SHARMA	Giving AI a Voice: Building Real-Time Boice Agents with Azure AI Foundry

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TIME		PRESENTER	SESSION TITLE
12:30 – 13:30		LUNCH BREAK	
13:30 – 14:15		SADIQ H AHMED	Unlocking Corporate Intelligence: Mastering RAG in Microsoft Foundry
14:15 – 15:00		SCOTT HELMERS	Artificial vs Natural Intelligence: Use your head!
15:00 – 15:45		SUNNY CHAKRABORTY	Leveraging KQL for existing Agent telemetry in M365 ecosystem
15:45 – 16:30		PETER SMULOVICS	AI Wrote the Code. Who Makes Sure It's Right?

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Peter Smulovics

Morgan Stanley

SOHO DRAGON



About Me – Peter Ward



SOHO DRAGON

Founder, former CTO, now CEO

20+ years in enterprise Microsoft platforms

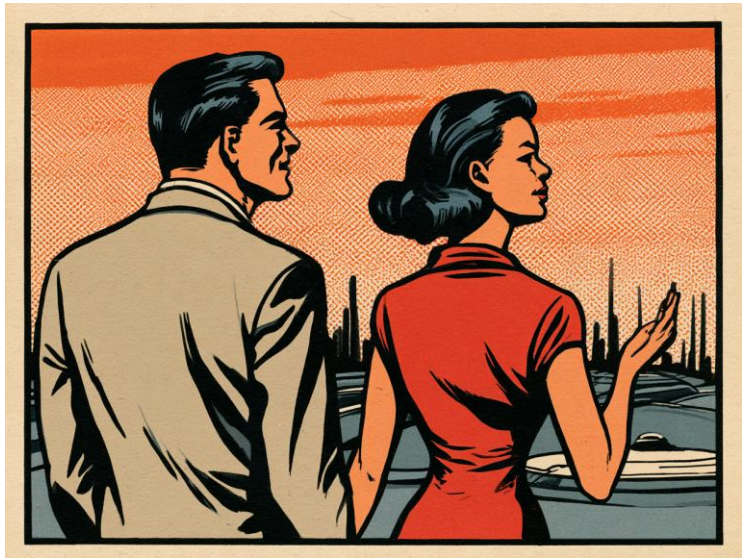
Seen hundreds of “successful” projects…

with very little actual value delivered

MVP

Microsoft®
Most Valuable
Professional

Keynote Theme



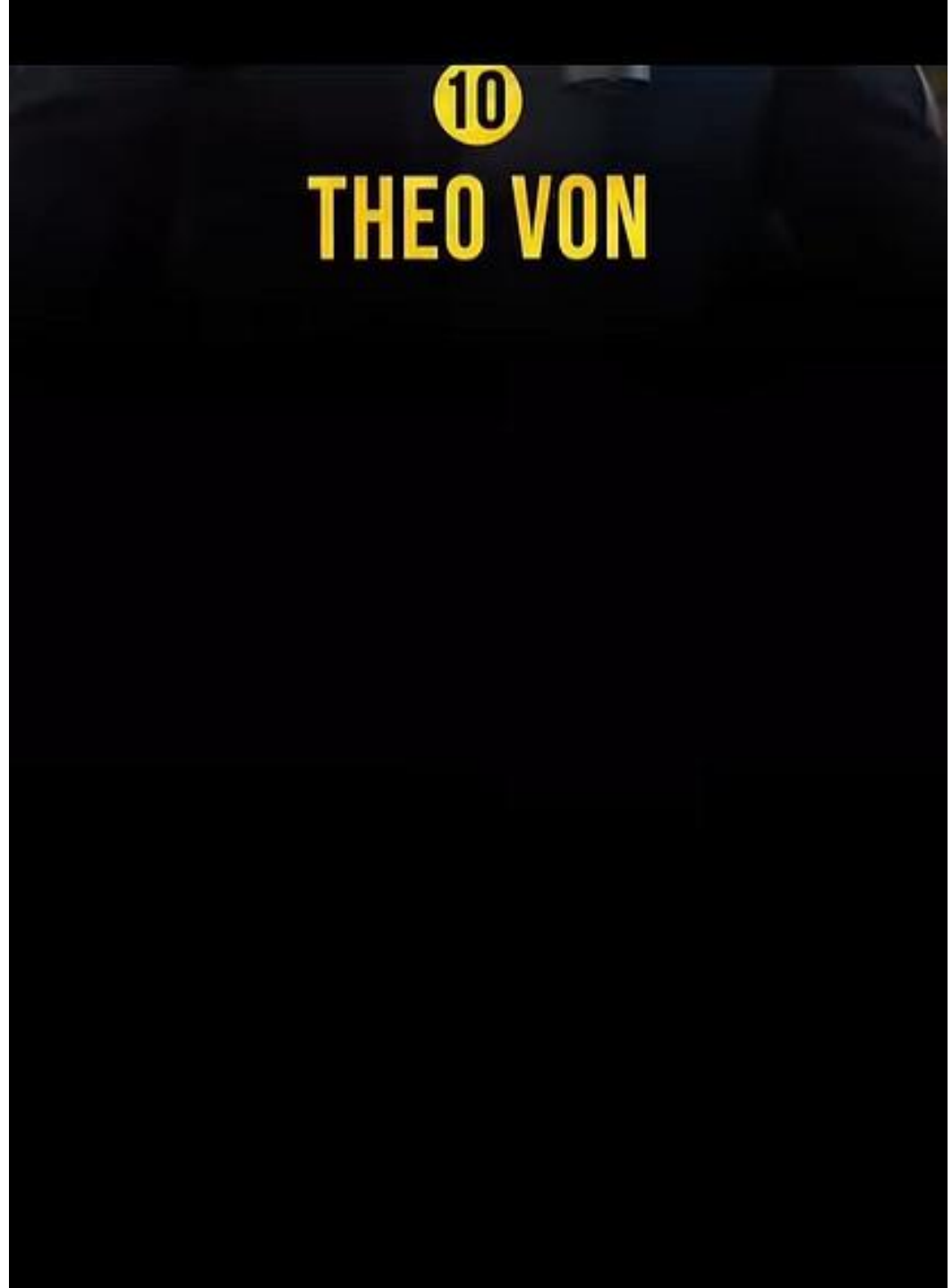
TECHNOLOGY DOES NOT ELIMINATE SKILL. IT RELOCATES SKILL

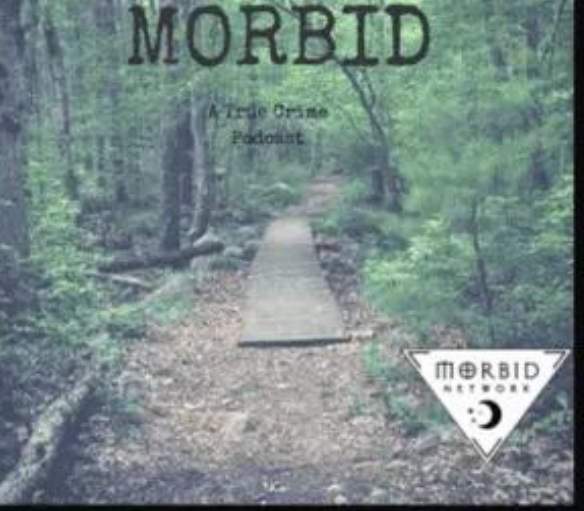


INTELLIGENCE CREATES POSSIBILITIES. JUDGMENT CREATES COMMITMENTS



AI CAN GENERATE AN ANSWER. HUMANS MUST OWN THE DECISION


10
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MORBID
A True Crime Podcast
MORBID NETWORK


THE BEN SHAPIRO SHOW


Office Ladies
EARWOLF


POD SAVE AMERICA
CROOKED


The Daily


STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW
PODCAST


This American Life

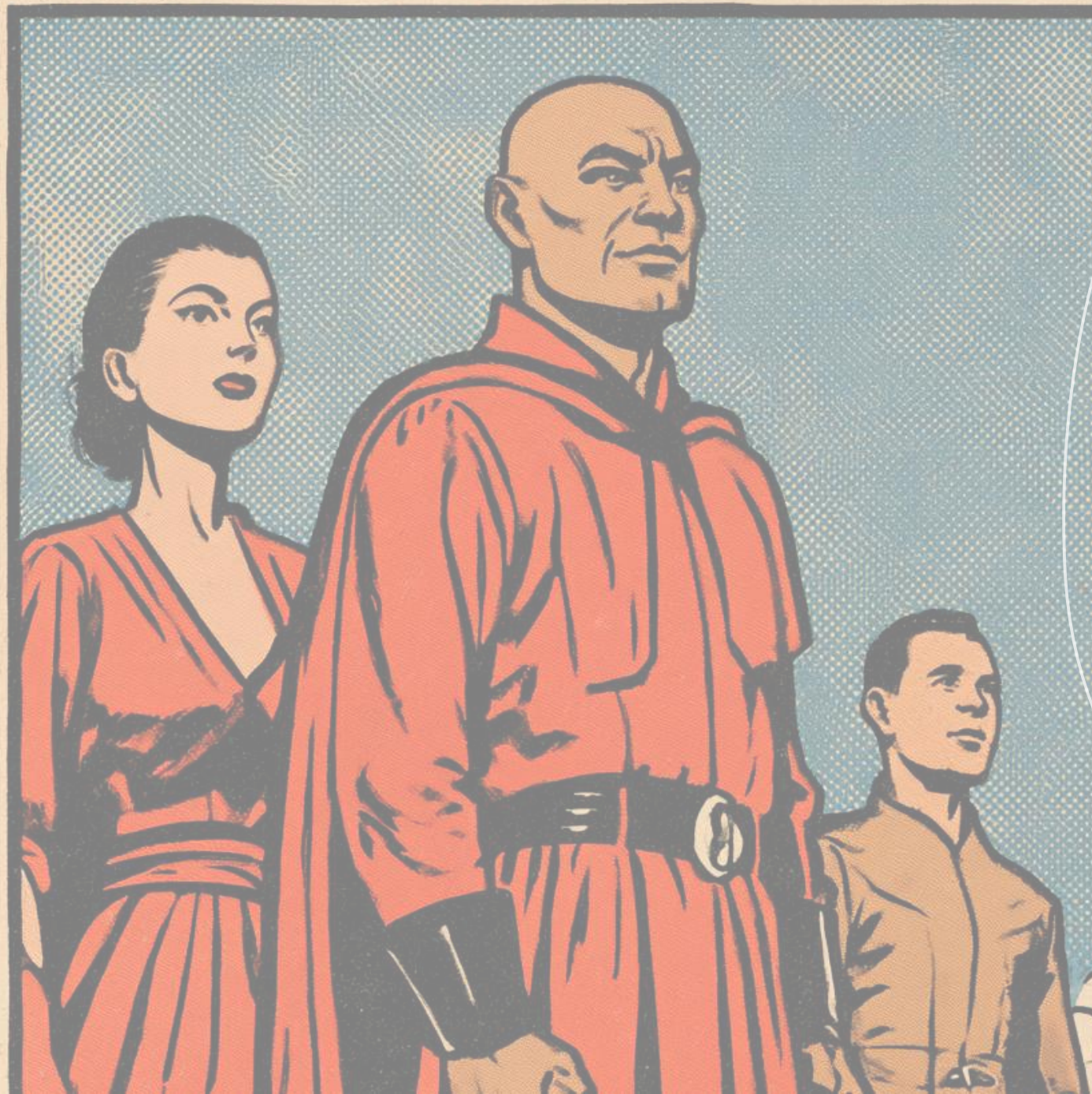

THE JOE ROGAN EXPERIENCE


My favorite




npr


TEAMCOCO



When Everyone Has a Genius in Their Pocket,

Why Are We Still Looking for Gurus?

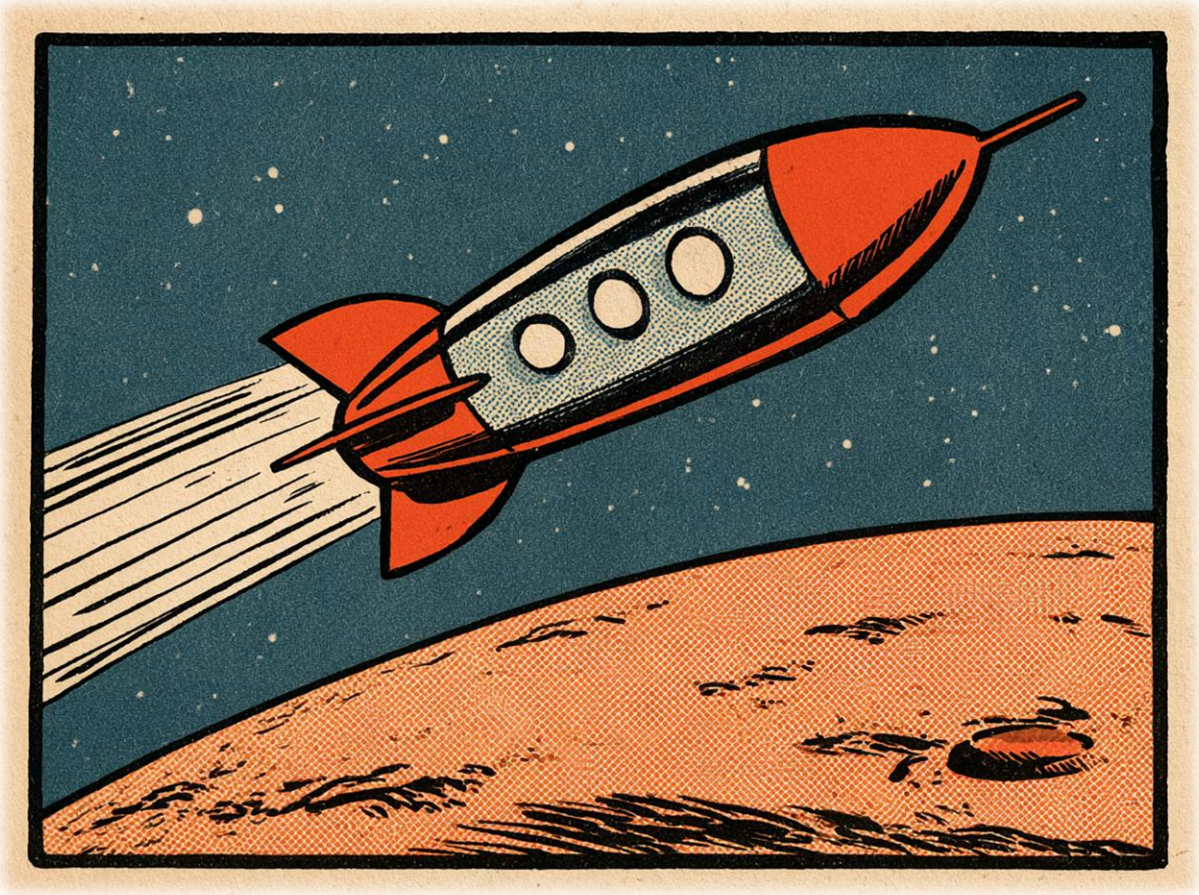
Answers were never the problem

Every technology was supposed to eliminate expertise

Calculator
Spreadsheet
Stack Overflow
Compiler
Google
AI

Calculator

Every technology was supposed to eliminate expertise



Spreadsheet

Every technology was supposed to eliminate expertise



Stack Overflow

Every technology was supposed to eliminate expertise



Every technology was supposed to eliminate expertise

Compiler

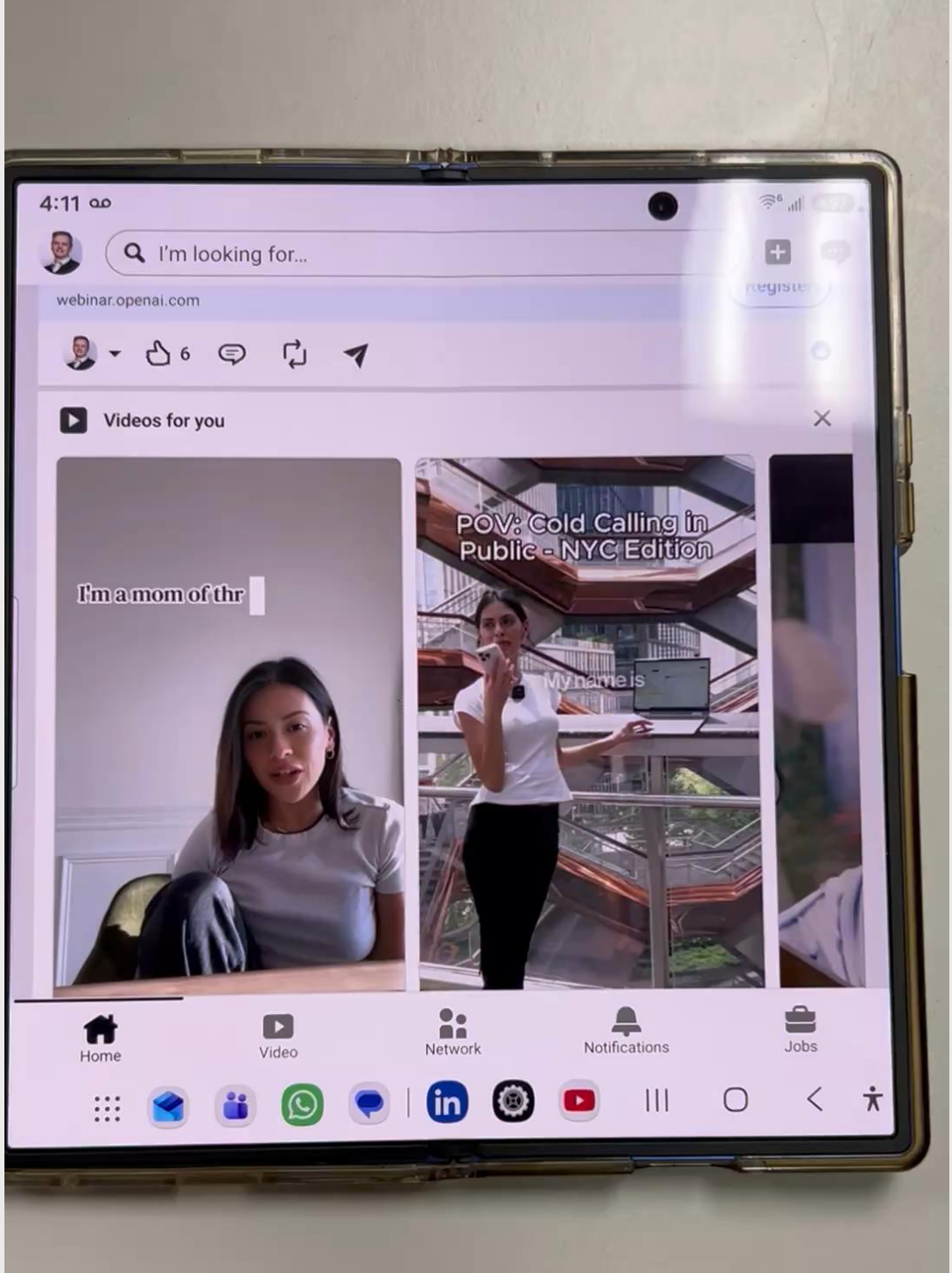


Every technology was supposed to eliminate expertise

Google

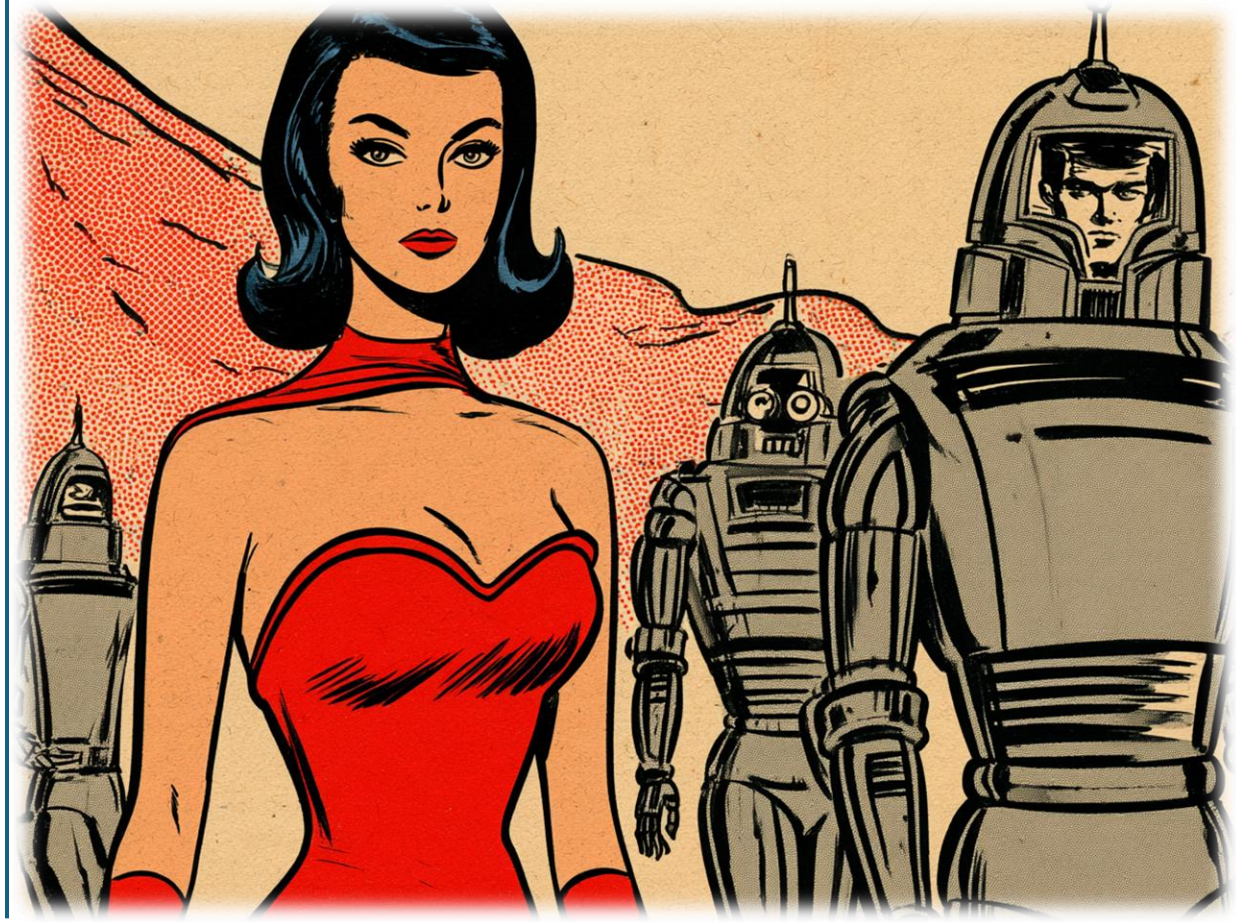


My Linkedin Feed



Every technology was supposed to eliminate expertise

AI



Then And Now

Then	Now
Calculators will replace mathematicians	Didn't happen
Spreadsheets will replace accountants	Didn't happen
Google will replace experts	Didn't happen
Stack Overflow will replace programmers	Didn't happen
AI will replace knowledge workers	?

Technology has a long history of eliminating tasks and a terrible history of eliminating people





The Guru Paradox

More answers

More gurus



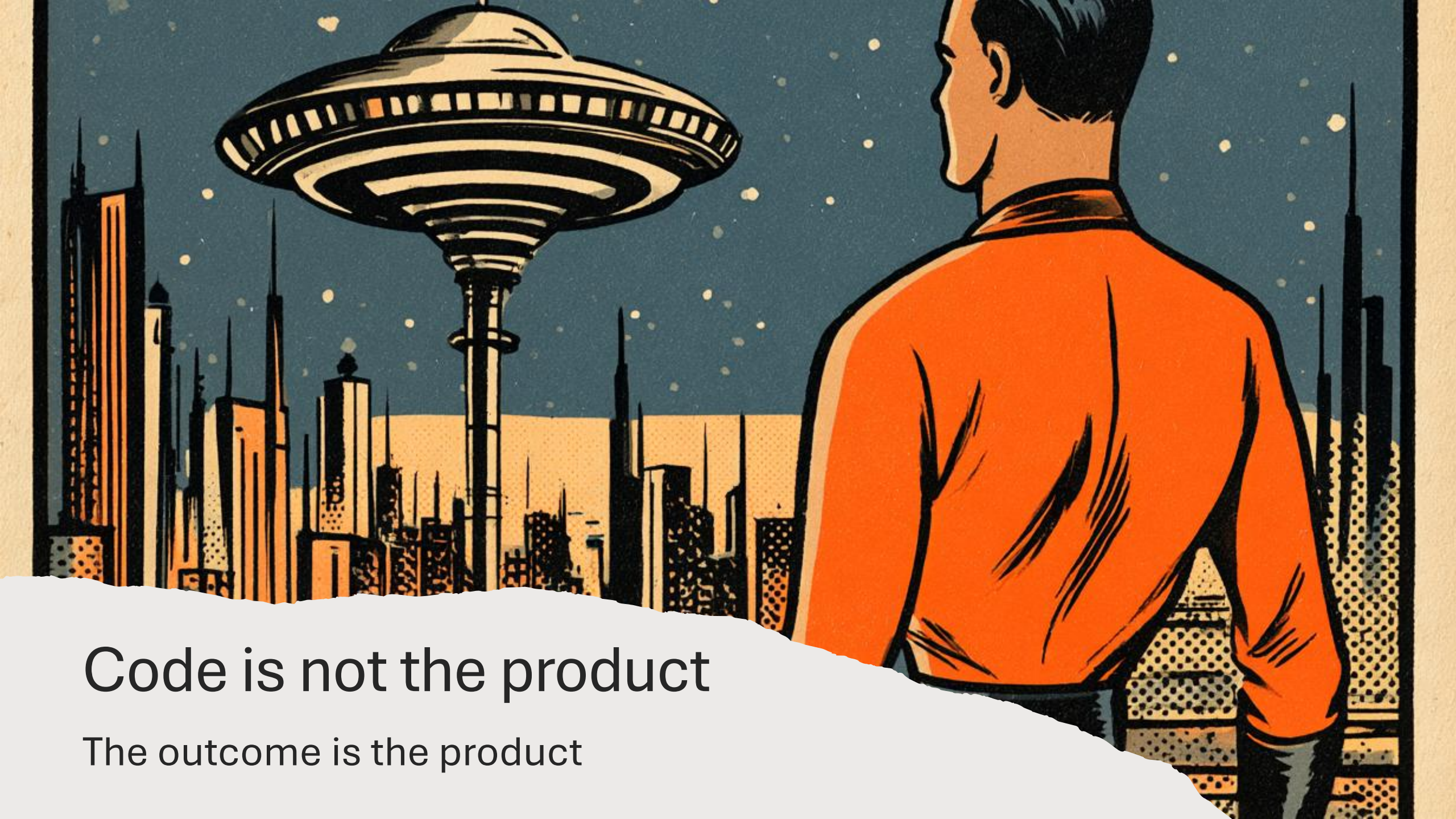
What do gurus actually sell?

- Confidence
- Context
- Prioritization
- Identity
- Direction

Think of one important decision you made in the last five years

Has AI made software development easier?





Code is not the product

The outcome is the product

Intelligence vs. Judgment

INTELLIGENCE

- Generate
- Analyze
- Compare
- Predict
- Explain

JUDGMENT

- Choose
- Prioritize
- Accept risk
- Take responsibility
- Decide when to stop



One question
Ten excellent answers
Now what?

The Changing Scarcity

Industrial Age	Information Age	AI Age
Physical capacity	Knowledge	Judgement







The New Technical Premium

- Problem framing
- Architectural judgment
- Systems thinking
- Curiosity
- Communication
- Trust
- Accountability



People do not follow information

They follow interpretations of information

What becomes more valuable when AI gets better?



For decades, humans adapted to computers

Now computers are adapting to humans.

We made intelligence easier to access

Then we discovered intelligence was not the only bottleneck

If everyone has a genius in their pocket...



Answers become abundant

Judgment becomes scarce



Let’s test this

Imagine “I ask AI to design a customer platform”



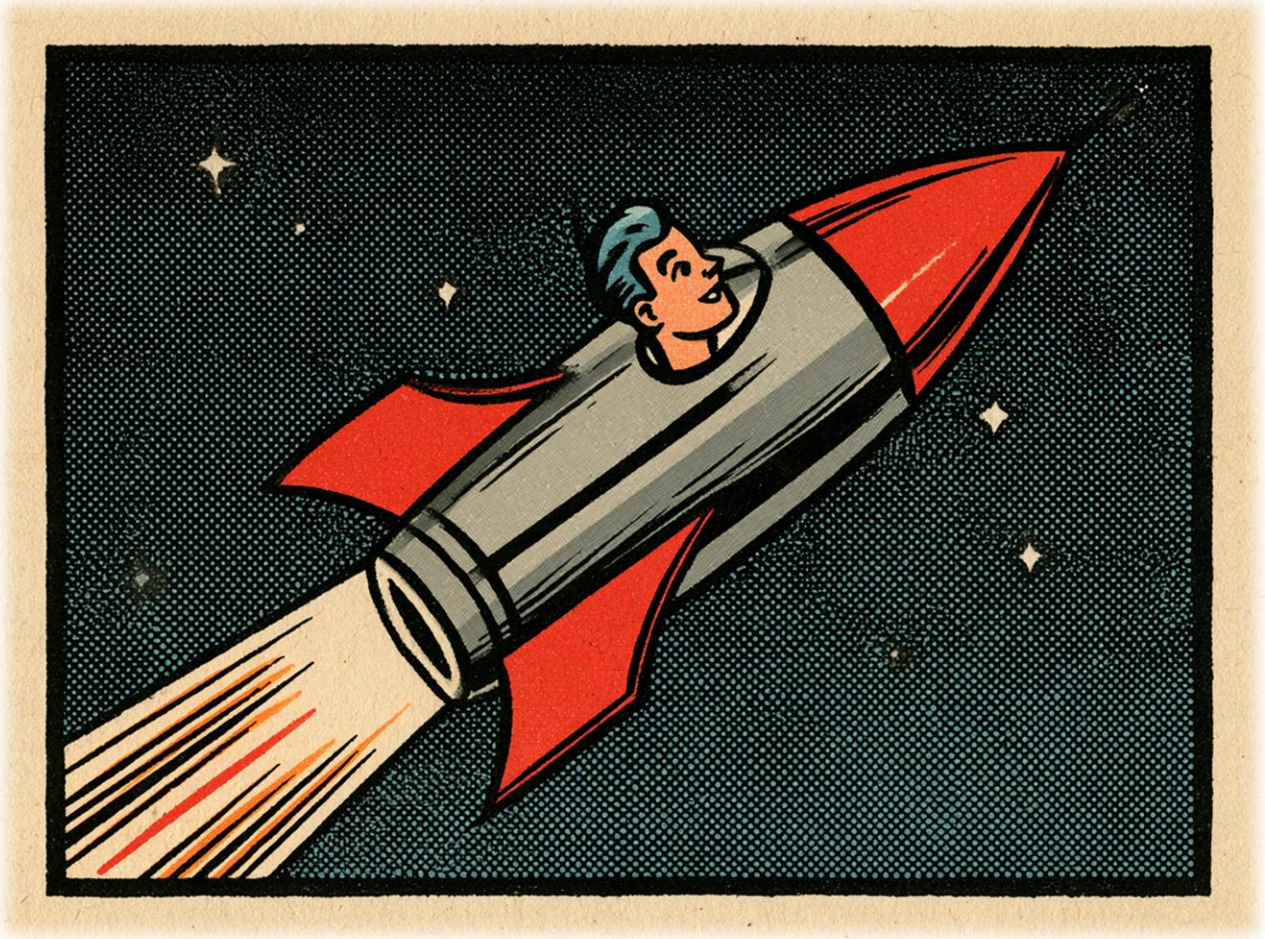
- The future will not belong to the people who can generate the most answers.
- It will belong to the people who know which answers matter.
- The people who can frame the right problem.
- See the tradeoff.
- Understand the context.
- Earn trust.
- And accept responsibility for the decision.

Judgment becomes scarce

Summary

AI CAN GENERATE AN ANSWER

HUMANS MUST OWN THE DECISION



Enjoy The Day ☺

My Reading List



