

# Living and Learning with AI: CASE STUDY - How I am Using AI Norman Jackson

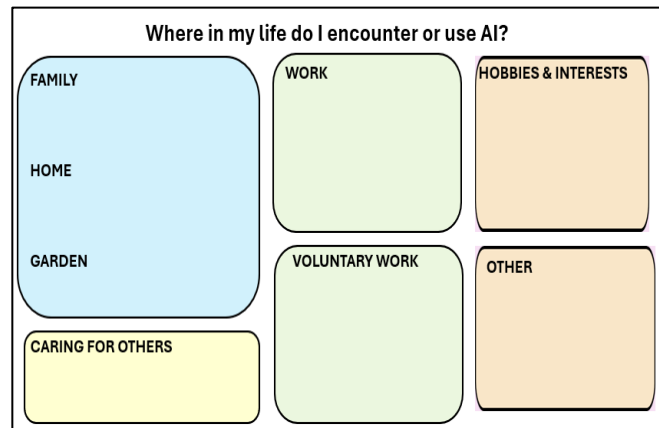
## Introduction

I began this review with only a vague idea about how much AI I was using across my life, or when I was using it. After this review I now know that the AI agents I use are spread across four devices that I make regular use of — a laptop (for work, communication, education and entertainment), a smartphone (for communication, education and entertainment), a smart TV (for entertainment and to some extent education and news) and an Alexa speaker (mainly entertainment). I also occasionally use an iPad and subscribe to two streaming services (Amazon Prime and Netflix) that are powered by AI.

*A family of AI agents* refers to an individual's collection of artificial intelligences, each performing a distinct role, that they use fairly regularly across many of the contexts of their life.

**Figure 1** The contexts that form my life

What follows is an integrated account of how AI currently features in my daily and domestic life, the main contexts of which are shown in Figure 1. It draws on an analysis (see method section) of the applications on my laptop and smartphone, and on the broader role of the



home entertainment and ambient voice infrastructure. Together, these devices reveal not a uniform AI saturation but a complementary and differentiated system of AI agents, in which each device plays a distinct role: the smartphone distributed across lifewide mobility and coordination; the laptop concentrated around thinking and production; the smart TV operating as a cultural curator and entertainer; and Alexa providing ambient, voice-mediated infrastructure and curator of musical tastes in the home.

## Methodology

The analysis presented in this account was developed through a straightforward process that others could readily replicate. The starting point was a systematic audit of the two

devices most central to my daily life — the smartphone and the laptop — beginning not just with what apps were present but with how intensively each AI enabled app is used. Screenshots of the apps were uploaded to ChatGPT. It prepared a list of all the apps which I converted into a table to facilitate an audit. I categorised each app according to frequency of use: those used many times on most days, those used a few times on most days, those used occasionally across the week or month, and those rarely opened or not used at all. This intensity audit immediately revealed that out of the large number of apps installed across both devices, only a small core were genuinely woven into my daily life — a finding that sharpened the subsequent analysis by distinguishing active AI encounters from merely latent ones.

The next step was to invite (ChatGPT) to analyse and categorise the AI enabled apps according to their functional roles — distinguishing, for example, between communication tools, productivity and creative applications, generative AI systems, invisible infrastructure, and entertainment platforms. This AI-assisted analysis proved considerably more revealing than unaided reflection alone, surfacing AI integrations that had previously gone unnoticed.

The audit was then extended beyond the two primary devices to other technologies present in my home environment — in my case a smart TV and an Alexa speaker — examining the nature and density of AI presence in each.

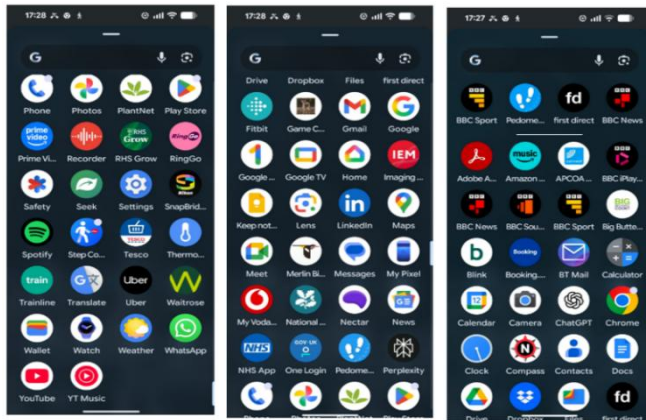
A fourth step involved stepping back from devices entirely to consider the AI-rich platforms and services encountered in the wider world as part of regular everyday living: online shopping, banking, email, navigation and parking apps, healthcare platforms, and similar services that embed AI quietly within familiar transactions and other activities.

Finally, the findings from all stages were brought together with the assistance of a generative AI tool (ChatGPT) to synthesise the results into an integrated account — identifying patterns, mapping density across domains, and reflecting on the character and implications of the overall AI ecology. The process is less a formal research methodology than a structured reflective inquiry, and it is offered here as a model that others might adapt to examine and understand their own living relationship with AI.

### **Smartphone: AI Distributed Across Everyday Life**

The smartphone has become the most widely distributed and routinely used personal technology in human history. For me, it is the primary medium through which artificial intelligence is encountered, used and understood in the flow of daily living. Carried

throughout the day and integrated into work, home and social life, it functions as an indispensable companion through which AI has entered everyday life quietly and at scale.



The AI on my smartphone is encountered not through a single dominant interface, but through a multiplicity of specialised applications embedded within familiar practices. Navigation apps support movement through space; health apps support awareness of bodily states and habits; communication tools mediate interaction with others; and generative AI apps extend my capacity to think, write

and plan. Through these routine interactions, I am already living with and through AI, often without consciously framing my actions as engagement with artificial intelligence.

Over time, these AI-enabled apps have coalesced into what might be called a personal “family of AI agents” — a collection of tools I have selected, adopted, and come to rely upon in both routine and occasional activities. Some have become trusted companions woven into daily habits; others remain peripheral, available when specific needs arise. This smartphone AI apps span multiple domains: thinking and learning, health and wellbeing, organisation and productivity, navigation and mobility, environmental perception, creativity and expression, social communication, and domestic assistance. The diffusion of AI into my life has therefore occurred through functional integration rather than technological spectacle.

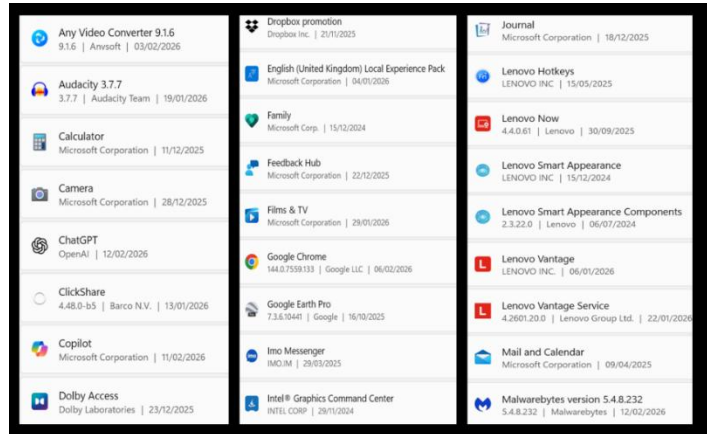
Although there are about 100 apps on my phone many are rarely used, about 10 apps are used a few days a month and 9 apps are used daily namely,

- Whatsapp – communication with individuals and groups
- Email apps - communication with individuals and groups
- Camera and photo editing apps – documenting and curating everyday living
- Google – now being displaced by perplexity
- ChatGPT - inquiries
- Maps – navigation
- BBC News – news feed
- Linked In – professional networking
- YouTube – entertainment

In terms of AI density, the smartphone is horizontally distributed — its intelligence spread thinly and widely across the whole surface of lifewide activity rather than concentrated in any single domain.

### Laptop: AI Concentrated Around Thinking and Production

My laptop is the tool I work with on a daily basis, typically for 4 to 6 six hours writing, creating presentations, making movies, and working on a wide range of projects. An analysis of its 75 applications revealed far more AI integration than I had anticipated. The laptop has a distinctly cognitive-production ecology: configured less as a consumption device and more



as a structured, secure environment for thinking, writing, automation, and media processing. AI is embedded at multiple layers — visible generative systems, productivity augmentation, infrastructure intelligence, and automation. On a daily basis I consciously use about 10 apps:

- Whatsapp – communication with individuals and groups
- Email — communication with individuals and groups
- Google – now being displaced by perplexity
- ChatGPT – inquiries, problem solving and extended writing
- Claude - inquiries, problem solving and extended writing
- Microsoft suite of apps for writing and image creation
- Photos – image editing
- BBC News – news feed
- LBC News and phone in opinions
- YouTube – entertainment

My laptop apps can be organised into the following categories.

#### *AI as Cognitive Companion*

The most developmentally significant AI layer is the cluster of tools that directly augment intellectual work: ChatGPT, Claude, Microsoft Copilot embedded within the 365 suite, AI-enhanced search via Chrome and Edge, and Wisper Flow for speech-to-text transcription. Together these extend my capacity for writing, summarising, synthesising, searching, and conceptual integration. The laptop is clearly configured as a cognitive augmentation environment.

### ***AI as Meeting Intelligence and Curator***

A second layer shapes my information environment: Zoom Workplace provides AI transcription, noise suppression, and meeting summaries; Microsoft News delivers a personalised content feed; WhatsApp desktop applies filtering and moderation. These systems influence information exposure and interaction patterns, though less intrusively than social media platforms.

### ***AI as Invisible Infrastructure***

A significant proportion of laptop AI is infrastructural and largely invisible. Microsoft Defender, Malwarebytes, and WebAdvisor provide machine-learning-based security. OneDrive uses predictive file management. Teams applies background blur and noise suppression. Lenovo Vantage manages system performance predictively. This deep embedding of machine learning enhances performance, security, and audio-visual quality without being experienced as “AI” at all.

### ***AI as Creative and Media Processing Companion***

Tools such as Microsoft Clipchamp, Movie Maker Pro, PDF X, and Google Earth Pro assist with creative production and media processing — video editing, document intelligence, OCR, and AI-assisted rendering — extending my ability to produce and manipulate media artefacts.

### ***AI as Automation and Process Orchestrator***

Power Automate is particularly significant: it represents AI not only as cognitive assistant but as process orchestrator, moving toward system-level agency across workflows and tasks. This automation capacity is the most emergent and developmentally significant layer on the laptop.

### ***Smart TV: AI as Cultural Filter***

The smart TV, operating through Amazon Prime and Netflix, introduces a qualitatively different form of AI into my domestic ecology. Unlike the laptop, which concentrates AI around authorship and production, and the smartphone, which distributes it across movement and coordination, these streaming platforms function primarily as cultural mediators. Their recommendation engines continuously model preferences, infer tastes, and surface content designed to retain attention. In this sense, they shape not what I think, but what I encounter — subtly influencing narrative exposure, aesthetic experience, and time allocation.

The smart TV is now the strongest algorithmic curation layer in my home. Its AI operates through suggestion and arrangement rather than explicit interaction: what appears prominent, what is recommended, what is presented as worthy of attention — all are shaped by systems that model viewing behaviour and predict preference. This influence is quiet but cumulative, and potentially the most behaviourally powerful AI presence in the domestic environment precisely because it is the least consciously engaged with.

This raises an important question that runs through my broader inquiry: does cultural curation remain a conscious choice, or does it gradually become default? The densest AI presence in my life remains in thinking and productivity systems, yet the entertainment layer may have the greatest influence over rhythms of time and attention. The inquiry therefore includes an element of vigilance: not resistance to AI, but awareness of where its shaping power is strongest and most quietly operating.

### **iPad: A Portable Multi-Modal Companion**

Although not used as intensively as the laptop or smartphone, the iPad makes a distinct and meaningful contribution to my family of AI-enabled agents. At different times it has functioned as an entertainment companion — especially when travelling or on holiday — a reading device, a communication hub, and a creative studio. Through streaming platforms, recommendation systems, news feeds and podcasts, AI quietly curates and personalises what I watch and read. Through email, messaging and video calls it mediates social connection. And in more creative modes — digital painting, image editing, or media production — AI becomes an assistive partner, extending perception, suggesting refinements, stabilising images, or enabling experimentation that would be more cumbersome in analogue form.



The iPad's AI density is moderate overall, but its character is notably varied across domains. In media consumption and cultural exposure it reaches the same territory as the smartphone; in creativity and expression it adds a capability not easily replicated on other devices. In writing and scholarship it contributes occasionally — a note, a quick search, a document reviewed on screen — without approaching the depth of the laptop. Even when dormant, the iPad represents a portable, multi-modal layer of distributed intelligence

within my ecology of practice, ready to shift roles between leisure, learning, communication, and creative expression as different lifeworld contexts call it into use.

### **Alexa: AI as Ambient Home Infrastructure**

The Alexa speaker represents a further and distinct form of AI presence: ambient, voice-mediated, and woven into the background conditions of domestic life. Unlike the laptop and smartphone, which require deliberate engagement, Alexa responds to spoken prompts within shared space — controlling devices, delivering information, mediating access to music, news, and environmental controls. It is designed for immediacy and low cognitive friction: it reduces effort rather than extending deep thinking.

In terms of AI density, Alexa is rated moderate-to-high: its role is more infrastructural than cognitive, more convenience-oriented than intellectually augmentive. It introduces conversational AI into the home as a persistent ambient presence rather than a tool that is picked up, used, and put down. In doing so, it represents a subtle but significant transition: AI is no longer only something I intentionally engage with. It is also something that shapes the background conditions of everyday domestic living.

The most significant developmental question Alexa raises is: how does ambient AI influence becoming? Does it simply reduce friction, or does it subtly reconfigure habits, rhythms and expectations over time? The ecology has moved, in part, from tools to atmosphere.

### **Evolving Pattern of Deliberate AI Use: From ChatGPT to Claude**

Since early December 2025 I have begun to use generative AI far more intensively and reflectively. What began as episodic, task-based assistance — help with writing, planning, and problem-solving — has evolved into an artefact-mediated ecology of practice in which AI functions as cognitive infrastructure, extending synthesis, pattern recognition and conceptual integration, while I retain authorship, judgement, and purpose.

ChatGPT Plus has been the primary vehicle for this shift. I have engaged it as a cognitive companion in structured dialogic inquiry: developing papers, testing ideas, refining conceptual distinctions, and producing documents collaboratively. The AI has supported articulation, structural development, and iterative refinement, while the direction of inquiry, interpretive judgements, and editorial decisions have remained mine. Through this

process I have not only used AI to support action but examined how its participation shapes my learning, confidence, and becoming.

More recently, I have begun using Claude — Anthropic’s AI assistant — and am in the early stages of exploring what it offers as a thinking and production partner. Claude represents an important addition to my family of AI agents. Where ChatGPT has become a well-established cognitive companion for extended dialogic work, Claude brings its own distinct qualities and capabilities that I am only beginning to discover. This document is itself part of that early exploration: Claude has assisted in synthesising multiple source documents into this integrated narrative.

The transition from occasional use to intensive and reflective engagement has been significant. Increasingly I have consciously designed my AI use as an experiment in living and learning with AI — reflecting not only on what AI helps me do, but on how its participation in my cognitive and creative practices is reshaping my ways of working, thinking, and becoming.

### Mapping the AI Ecology: Density Across Devices

The following tables map AI density across all five devices and the key functional roles and life domains they serve.

**Table 1: AI Density by Functional Role**

AI Role	Smartphone	Laptop	Smart TV	Alexa	iPad	Ecological Note
Cognitive Companion	Moderate–High	Very High	Low	Low–Moderate	Low–Moderate	Deep thinking concentrated on laptop; iPad contributes episodically
Algorithmic Curator	High	Moderate	Very High	Moderate	High	Cultural exposure shaped by TV streaming and iPad apps; iPad's curation rivals smartphone
Invisible Infrastructure	High	Very High	High	High	High	AI deeply embedded in all systems including iPad OS and apps
Embodied-Action Companion	Very High	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Smartphone dominates; iPad adds creative and reading support
Automation / Agentic Systems	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Automation limited on iPad; primarily a consumption and creative device

**Table 2: AI Density by Domain of Life**

Domain	Smartphone	Laptop	Smart TV	Alexa	iPad
Mobility & Navigation	Very High	Low	None	None	Low
Health & Body	High	Minimal	None	None	Low
Writing & Scholarship	Moderate	Very High	None	None	Low–Moderate
Communication	High	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Media Consumption	High	Moderate	Very High	Moderate	High
Home Environment Control	Low	Low	Low	High	None
Security	Moderate	Very High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Cultural Exposure	High	Moderate	Very High	Moderate	High
Creativity & Expression	Moderate	High	None	None	High
Automation	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low

**Table 3: Overall AI Density by Device**

Device	Density Level	Type of Density
Smartphone	High	Horizontally distributed across lifewide activities
Laptop	Very High	Vertically concentrated around cognition and production
Smart TV	High	Algorithmic cultural shaping and curation
Alexa	Moderate–High	Ambient convenience and home environment layer
iPad	Moderate	Portable multi-modal companion for leisure, creativity, communication and episodic learning

### **An Integrated Ecological Pattern**

Taken together, the five devices and two streaming services reveal a complementary and layered AI-mediated ecology structured around five distinct zones of AI presence, each with a different character and function.

The smartphone carries a horizontally distributed AI presence, spread thinly across the whole surface of lifewide activity: navigation, health tracking, communication, media curation, and everyday coordination are continuously supported by embedded

intelligence. It is the device through which AI participates most directly in the flow of daily living.

The laptop concentrates AI vertically around cognition, production, and system management. Here generative systems, document intelligence, security algorithms, and emerging automation tools stack deeply within a structured working environment. This is where AI most directly extends my intellectual capacity and shapes my work as a thinker, writer, and producer. In the last 3 months I have begun to engaged intensively with generative AI tools — initially through ChatGPT, and more recently through Claude — in ways that are beginning to redefine my relationship with AI from episodic assistance to a more deliberate and reflective cognitive partnership. Through this partnership I have begun to develop the idea of a cognitive team in which I instigate, facilitate, synthesise and curate the interactions between myself and these particular AI's, in inquiries that matter to me.

The smart TV now constitutes the strongest curator layer in the home, operating through algorithmic recommendation engines that shape cultural exposure, aesthetic experience, and time allocation. Its influence is quiet, cumulative, and potentially the most behaviourally significant form of AI in the domestic environment.

Alexa provides ambient, voice-mediated infrastructure throughout the home: reducing friction, mediating access to music and information, and increasingly controlling smart home functions. It represents the transition of AI from discrete tool to atmospheric presence.

The iPad adds a fifth zone: portable, flexible, and episodic. It does not dominate any single domain but contributes meaningfully across several — particularly media consumption, cultural exposure, creativity, and communication. Its significance lies less in density than in versatility and availability: a device that can shift roles fluidly as different life contexts call it into use.

What this overall ecology does not reveal is heavy dependence on attention-driven social AI systems or high-frequency, hyper-fragmented algorithmic platforms such as TikTok or Instagram. The configuration remains relatively intentional and purpose-oriented. My use of AI is oriented towards understanding, making, connecting, and becoming rather than passive consumption or compulsive social validation. Even the algorithmic shaping through the smart TV and iPad operates through sustained narrative engagement rather than fragmentary content feeds.

The most significant developmental question for me is whether, as ambient AI expands — through Alexa, through streaming, through invisible infrastructure — the character of my engagement with AI will remain deliberate and reflective, or will it gradually shift toward something more passive and habitual. I am not aware that this invisible infrastructure has an undue influence on me but I need to be attentive to the possibility and remain open to experimenting, noticing and reflecting.

With the addition of Claude to my family of AI agents alongside ChatGPT, and with the broader home and mobile family of AI-apps now mapped, a richer and more complex chapter in my relationship with AI is beginning. With greater awareness comes the opportunity to try out new AI-enabled apps and evaluate the differences they make to me and others in the different parts of my life and in the way I inhabit my world.