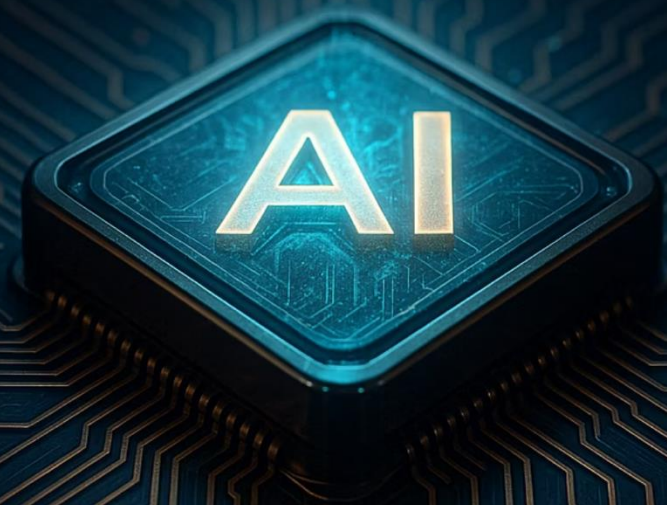




AI for RDOs: Riding the Revolution to Organizational Success

*NADO Annual Training Conference
Salt Lake City, Utah*

*Presented by:
Robert Hiatt, Executive Director
Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments*



What is Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

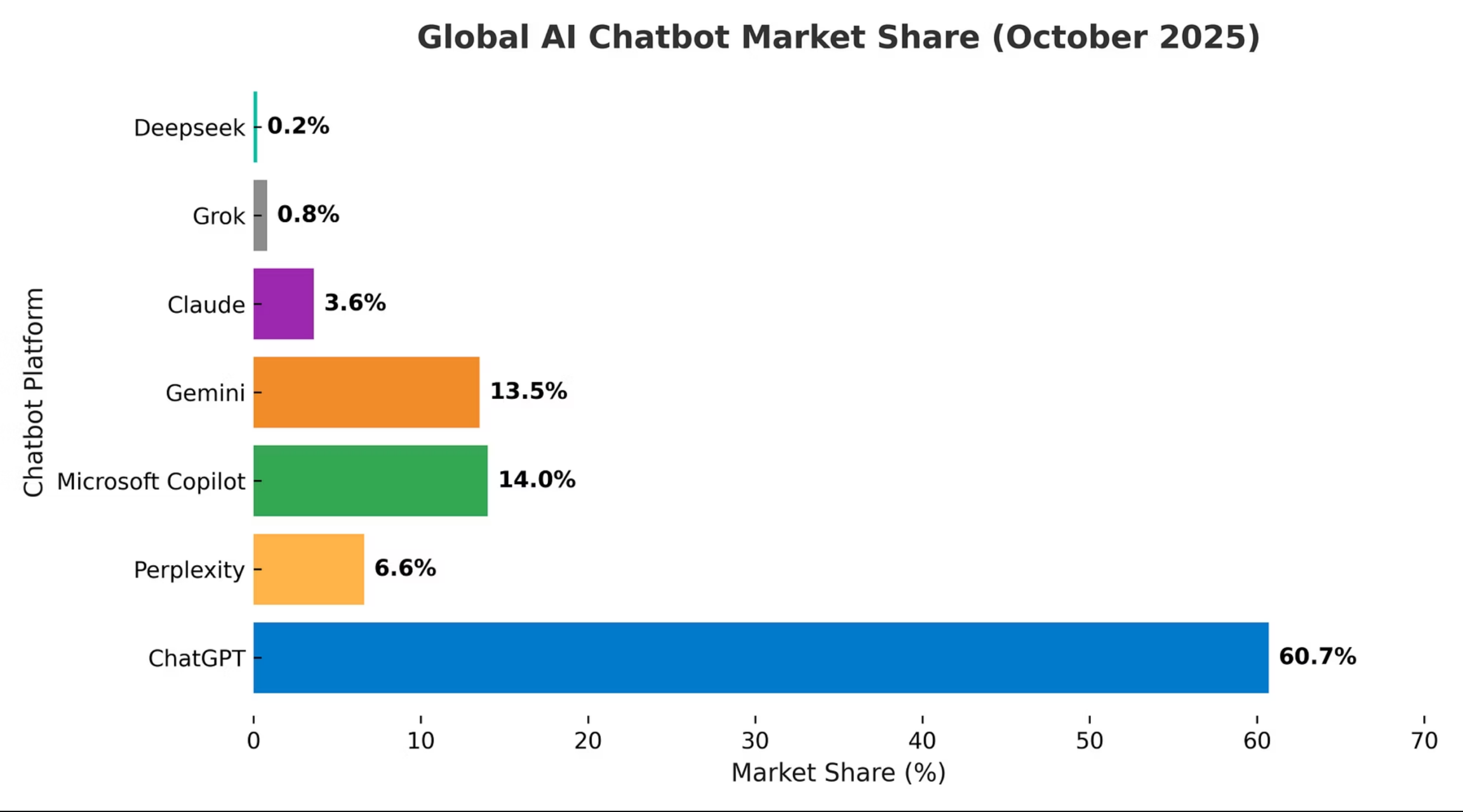
Software that reads, writes, analyzes, and reasons across many tasks.

Excels at summarizing, predicting, and recognizing patterns.

Think of AI as a "tireless, smart intern" that learns instantly.

Works best when guided by human context and oversight.

Global AI Chatbot Market Share



Leading Chatbots and AI Platforms (2025)

<i><u>Platform</u></i>	<i><u>Latest Version / Update</u></i>	<i><u>Strengths & Differentiators</u></i>	<i><u>Typical Public-Sector Role</u></i>
<i>ChatGPT (GPT-5)</i>	<i>Released August 2025. (Supersedes GPT-4 lineage)</i>	<i>Top-tier multimodal reasoning, deeper instruction fidelity, advanced tool use</i>	<i>Report drafting, analysis, integrated "apps in ChatGPT" workflows</i>
<i>Claude Sonnet / Opus 4.5</i>	<i>Claude Sonnet 4.5 launched Sept 2025.</i>	<i>Sustained multi-step reasoning, code handling, memory/context management</i>	<i>Long-context document work, legal or planning review, AI agent backends</i>
<i>Microsoft 365 Copilot</i>	<i>Copilot has new agent capabilities via Copilot Tuning and multi-agent orchestration.</i>	<i>Tight Office integration, chained task orchestration, domain-tuned agents</i>	<i>Automating workflows, internal analysis, email & document automation</i>
<i>Google Gemini</i>	<i>Continues as a real-time web reasoning model (latest product updates not publicly detailed here)</i>	<i>Strong grounding in current web data and reasoning</i>	<i>Research, policy comparisons, fact-supporting role</i>
<i>Perplexity AI</i>	<i>Maintains focus on search + citations; strong in monomodal factual responses</i>	<i>Highly accurate factual responses with sources</i>	<i>Public communication, fact-checking, citizen queries</i>
<i>Others (e.g., Deepseek, Grok)</i>	<i>Lower market presence, niche or lab-stage</i>	<i>Specialized use, smaller user base</i>	<i>Supplementary or exploratory roles in local government systems</i>



AI Adoption and Shadow AI Use Trends (2025)

76%

Use AI at work

41%

Organizations have formal AI programs

30% use it informally



44%

Employees admit to unauthorized AI use

("Shadow AI")

91%

Executives overstate AI skills

Only 10% are proficient

Training access is rapidly closing the skills gap.



2022 | Basic Knowledge

AI learns how to read, write, and respond - but reasoning depth is still limited.

2023 | Applied Reasoning

AI connects knowledge to action - it can analyze, interpret, and apply information.



2024 | Research-Level Understanding

AI becomes a domain specialist - solving complex problems and planning multi-step

2025 | Strategic Insight

AI evolves into a strategic co-thinker - hypothesizing, adapting, and shaping decisions.



The Rapid Evolution of AI (2022–2025)

- 1** — **2022 – "High School"**
Early text generation
- 2** — **2023 – "Undergraduate"**
Improved reasoning
- 3** — **2024 – "Graduate"**
Multi-step logic and analytics
- 4** — **2025 – "PhD"**
Autonomous agents and decision support

Why AI Matters for Regional Development Organizations



Boosts efficiency in grants and operations.



Strengthens citizen engagement and communication.



Expands capacity for small jurisdictions.



Enhances forecasting and data-driven planning.



Enables collaboration across regional partners.



The Three Pillars of Value for COGs and Localities



Boost Productivity

Automate routine workflows.



Elevate Communication

Improve clarity and reach.



Design Smarter Services

Use data analytics for planning.

Why COGs Are Perfect AI Hubs



- **Already coordinate multi-jurisdictional services.**
- **Provide shared IT and procurement structures.**
- **Offer risk-pooled governance and compliance.**
- **Serve as trusted regional intermediaries.**



The UCPCOG Model: Building an AI-Powered Region

01

Governance first

AI policy before deployment.

02

Secure platform

GovAI workspace for safe use.

03

Training

UCPCOG AI Academy builds skills.

04

Network

Regional vendor pool and collaboration.



UCPCOG AI Academy & Network

Training Program

- *Foundational AI training Only*



- *Training + GovAI Platform*

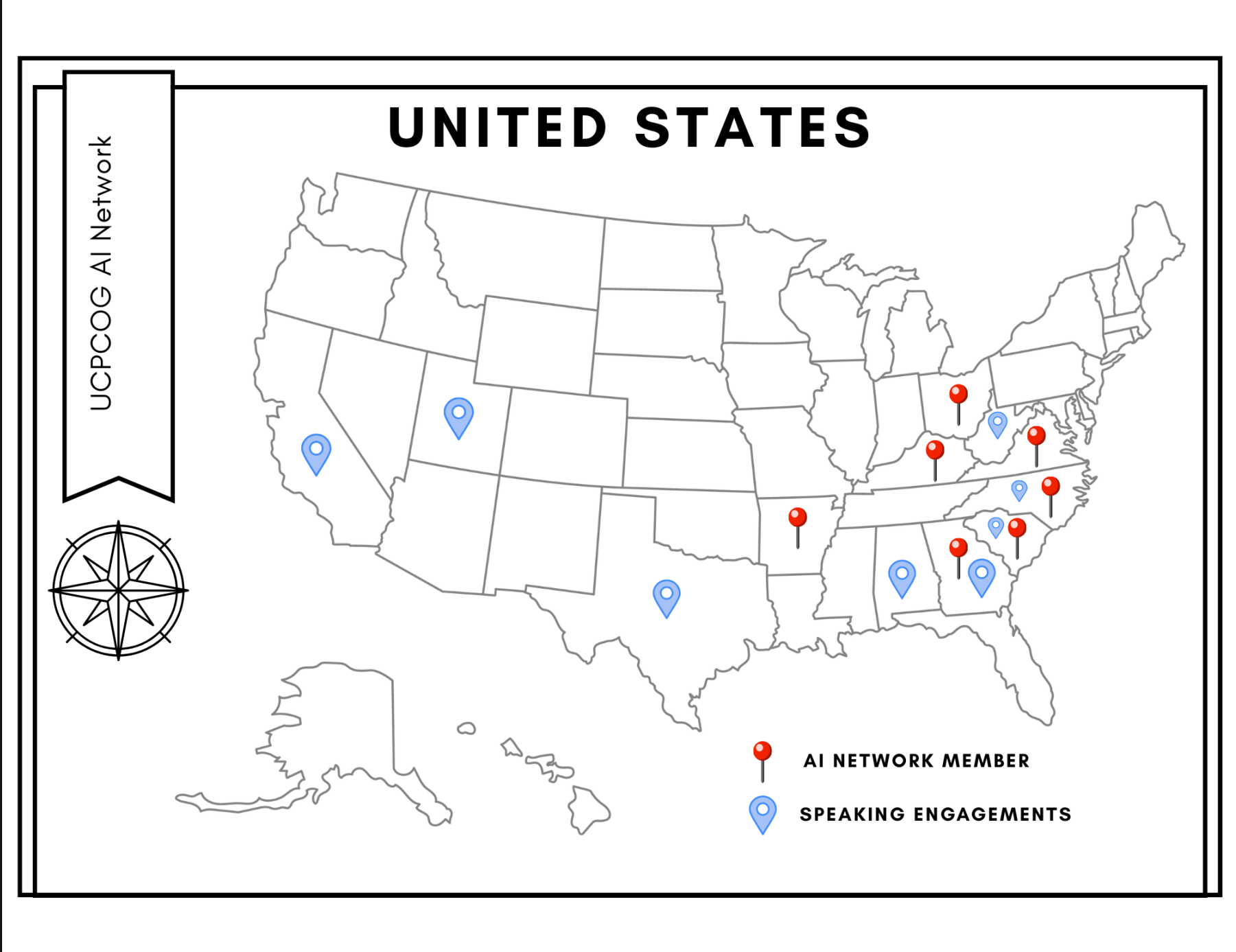


Select Option 2

Network Benefits

- *Shared resources and prequalified vendors*
- *Regional collaboration and support*
- *Ongoing policy alignment*
- *Public-sector exclusive and regionally focused*

UCPCOG AI Network October 2025



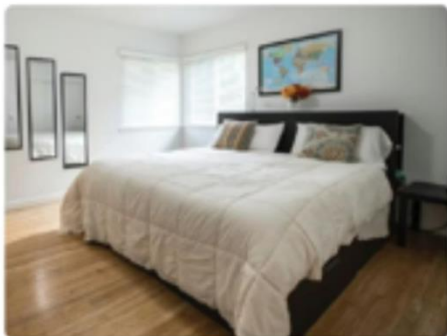
Ask
Ashleigh



I'm worried dad's room isn't safe for him.

I understand your worry. Let me be your second set of eyes. Can you show me?

Here's a photo.



Thanks! I see three quick fixes that could make a big difference.



Try the public demo!

AskAshleigh: AI for Aging Services

Virtual assistant for caregivers (24/7 local support).

Built with Novitalis under UCPCOG governance.

Provides accurate program info and resources.

Recipient of 2025 NADO Impact Award.



My Town AI: Digital Twin for Smarter Planning



Intelligent data hub consolidating municipal information.



Low-cost digital twins for running simulations.



Models impact of zoning changes and economic development strategies.



Serves 83% of American communities (towns under 10,000 people).



Provides accessible AI tools to under-resourced governments.



Empowers small municipalities with enterprise-level planning capabilities.



Polimorphic Chatbot: The Digital Front Door

Purpose: Give citizens accurate, helpful answers based on their questions.



One chatbot connecting all local government departments.



Finds and uses the best information:



Handles complex rules:



Smart problem-solver:



Answers questions about jobs, senior services, and community planning.



Helps build a network of connected chatbots for different communities.

Practical Takeaways for RDO Leaders



Conduct an AI readiness assessment.



Draft a simple governance policy first.



Pilot one high-impact, low-risk use case.



Share training and procurement regionally.



Build AI literacy across all departments.



The Future of AI in Regional Development

Shift from co-pilots to autonomous agents.

Integrate AI across planning, workforce, and aging.

Emphasize data governance and transparency.

Lead regional innovation through safe experimentation.

Contact & Resources

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🔗 [LinkedIn : https://www.linkedin.com/in/roberthiett](https://www.linkedin.com/in/roberthiett)

🔗 [Substack : https://substack.com/@roberthiett](https://substack.com/@roberthiett)

🔗 [Zero to Hero: ChatGPT Prompting in 30 Days!](#)



Bonus Video

Prompt Engineering Video Creation

