

## A week in my life with AI

**What it looks like to live and work with AI, seven days a week**

It's one thing to know that you can use AI as an editor, or an executive assistant, or even as a personal coach. But it's a whole other thing to get in the groove of using AI from day to day and hour to hour, so that it's woven into the texture of your work and play.

I'm sharing a glimpse of what an AI-enabled week looks like for me.

**Use my AI tactics to make your work easier and your life more fun.**

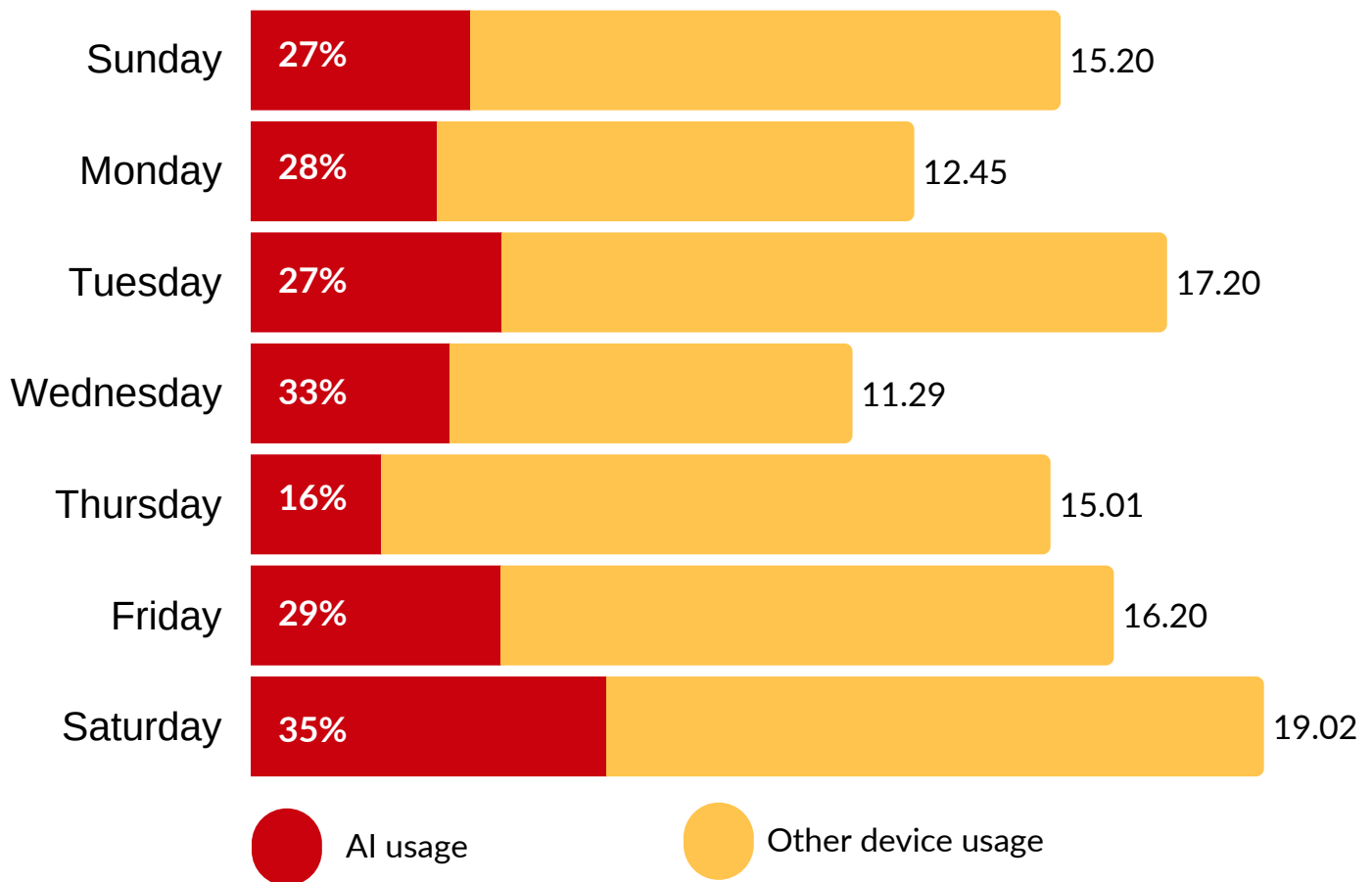
**@lexandra samuel**

## My week by the numbers

# AI accounted for more than a quarter of my screentime.

In the week captured here, I spent 30 hour directly using AI apps and services...and that's without counting all the time I spent in *other* apps, while working from the guidance or inspiration of my AIs.

### Personal AI usage as portion of daily screen hours, January 26-February 1, 2025



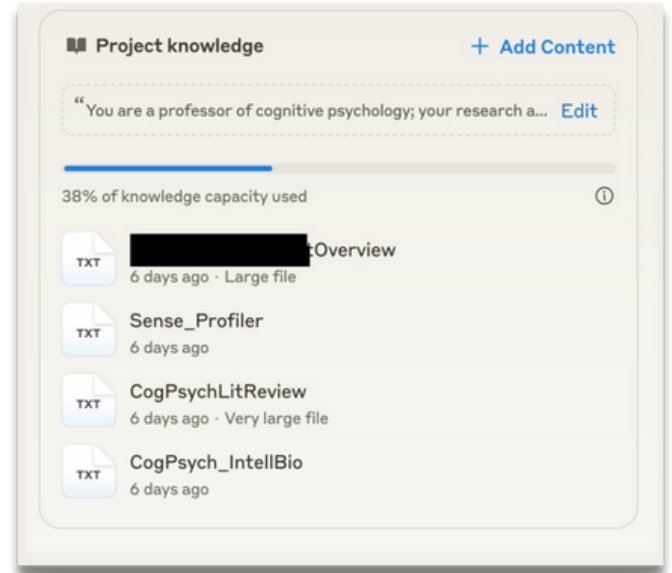
Data source: Personal timing.app data + iPhone screentime data for Alexandra Samuel, including simultaneous device use (iPhone + Macbook or iPhone + iPad)..

*Yes, this is a lot of time to spend on screens, but that is a conversation for another day.*

# Sunday

## Built a team of virtual experts for the week ahead.

To set myself up for a productive week of writing, I used my zone-out TV time to set up six separate Claude projects, each of which is a virtual advisor with a particular area of academic expertise. I used a [Coda.io](https://coda.io) table to organize my instructions and concatenate a background file for each virtual expert, and then exported those files into a folder structure that made it relatively fast to copy and paste each set of instructions and files into each Claude project. Once I had all my experts set up, I got to work feeding a draft file to my first expert advisor, getting its feedback, and then refining my draft in response.

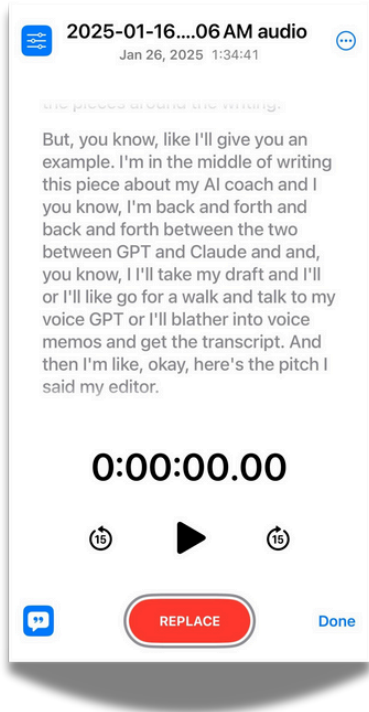


I also...

- Held a short voice-based session with my AI coach, clarifying my top priorities for the week.
- Created a payroll remittance calculator in Coda.io with guidance from GPT on interpreting Canadian tax tables and constructing formulas.
- Clarified my essay response to an annual survey of IT leaders with the help of GPT.
- Told GPT about my current knitting project and got its help with a way to stop tangling my yarn.
- Sent a slightly irritated email in response to a frustrating multi-part customer service interaction, suggesting how to improve the caliber of their AI's response; it turned out I was corresponding with a real person. Oops.

Monday

## Powered up my presentations.



*Converting an audio file to a transcript with iOS voice memos*

I started the day with a client call for an upcoming presentation that will also feature a fireside chat. Instead of just hoping my host will ask answerable questions, I used the “Alexerizer” (a custom assistant trained on my own content) to quickly pull together background links and suggested questions, which I emailed within a few minutes of wrapping our call. It took a few tries to get the list of links in full-URL form, so I wrapped the session by asking the AI to write up tips I could use in future.

AI helped me follow up on a previous presentation, too. When I gave an informal online session on my book- writing process, I didn’t want to turn on transcription (which anyone on the call would have access to). Instead, I recorded my talk, then added the audio file to Voice Memos on my Mac. That automatically synced to Voice Memos on iPhone, which has a one-click transcription option. Then I gave that transcript to Claude, with instructions to turn it into a short summary of my process. I reviewed the result to make sure it was accurate and covered only what I was comfortable sharing, and sent it to participants.

I also...

- Asked GPT to play a hardware-store proprietor and cabinet maker so it could tell me the correct name for the bit of door hardware my carpenter needed for his work.
- Got GPT’s help writing a formula that let me rapidly identify the latest version of each draft for portions of my book where I have multiple drafts.
- Gave a couple of draft book sections to another of the virtual experts I built in Claude, to get a second opinion from another perspective.
- Asked GPT to play a web integrator, then got details on connecting different AI platforms to Google Drive.
- Organized dinner for a friend by requesting keto-friendly menu ideas from “Chef Claude”, an assistant I built in Coda a that works from my list of in-stock ingredients.
- Told GPT it was a sci-fi media advisor, and asked it if anyone has written a book that reflected a sudden inspiration for a neat sci-fi plot.

Tuesday

## Ran my own therapy.

Instead of letting a slightly awkward personal interaction fester into an enduring, embarrassing memory, I fired up my AI coach while driving to the airport to pick up a visiting friend. I used that forty-minute voice-based conversation like a proper therapy session, using the AI's prompts to inspire more challenging questions like the ones therapists have asked me over the years. I let myself go deep and had a proper cry over the issues that came up in our conversation. When I got to the airport parking lot I asked my coach to scrape me back together, and it fed me a series of steps that got me grounded, calm and tear-free.

I also...

- Ran a voice session with my custom AI while cooking breakfast, to test out a new presentation approach.
- Added my AI coach (by voice) to a live meeting so she could explain to my new marketing assistant why it's worth learning HTML.
- Asked my AI coach to join me in conversation with a friend I am trying to woo to move to Vancouver. The coach didn't convince my pal, but it did initiate some great conversational threads.
- Asked my Claude "Alexerizer" (a project stocked with my writing samples) for help interpreting my editor's feedback on a draft article, and then sent its proposed guidance back to my editor (disclosing that it was an AI summary) to confirm this was the right approach for revisions.

### A note about privacy

I feel comfortable talking with ChatGPT about personal topics because I pay for the Team edition (which promises to keep my sessions out of OpenAI's training data.) But I never talk about confidential matters that would put me or anyone else at risk, because with the Internet, you never know what's in a permanent or subpoenaable record.

*A big thanks to Tara Robertson for flagging the confidentiality risks for coaches today. These risks affect AI coaches, too.*

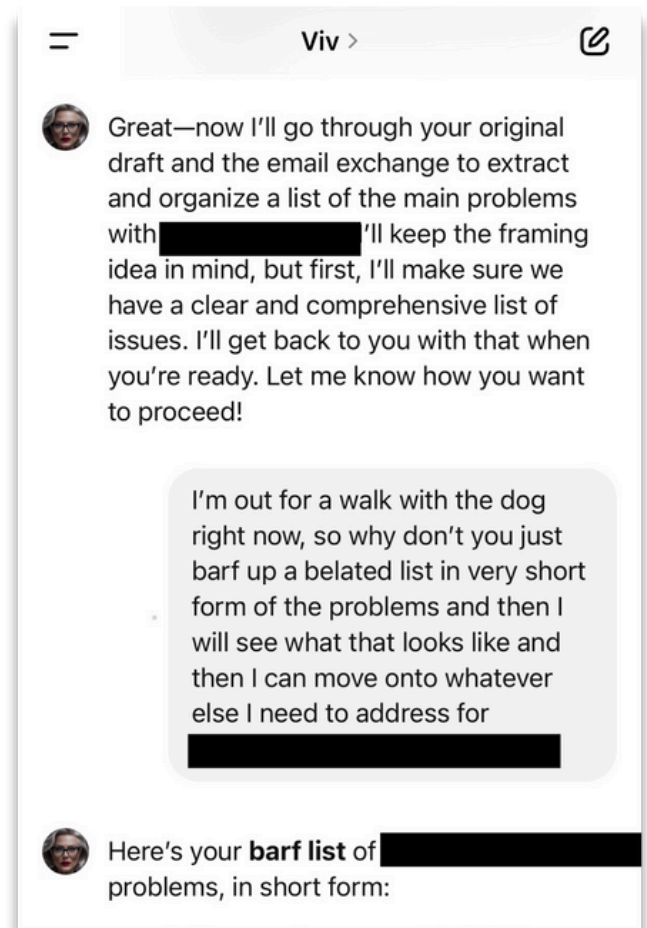
## Wednesday

# Outlined out loud and on the go.

On a day with back-to-back meetings and social plans, I knew I wouldn't get to my story deadline until the end of the day, and I wanted to hit the ground running. So I saved the extended email thread where my editor and I had talked through the story, and then gave it to my AI coach as the context for a voice-based chat session. While I was in transit or running errands throughout the day, I checked in with my AI to talk through the guidance my editor had provided, asking the AI to remind me of my editor's notes and then capture my thoughts on how to address her concerns. By the time I got home, I had organized all my ideas into a new outline that allowed me to write an all-new (if messy) draft in two hours before dinner.

I also...

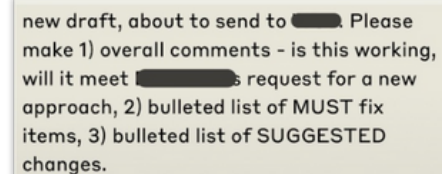
- Gave the transcript of my voice GPT session to Claude, along with the email thread with my editor, and asked my Alexerizer to take a first stab at reorganizing my original draft plus my new notes into a new draft.
- Asked my AI coach to prime me for my nerd-tastic February coaching theme, and then we jointly developed a manicure design that would keep my theme at hand all month.
- Demonstrated a new potential presentation offering to a colleague, with some input from my AI coach.
- Asked GPT and Perplexity to separately source a quick data point for my article; I didn't cite the data point, but their general agreement confirmed that one assertion in my story was broadly reasonable.
- Posed a single, identical question to Elicit, Consensus and Scite (three different AI research platforms) to get the gist of a narrow area of recent academic research related to an article in progress; since all three drew on different sources but arrived at the same conclusion, I felt confident in my argument.



Thursday

## Revised without suffering.

The hardest thing about revising your own work is seeing it clearly, so when it came time to revise the messy draft I'd written the night before, I asked my Claude Alexerizer for help. First, I had it tell me what was and wasn't working, and provide a list of essential and suggested changes. When it offered a smart critique of several sections of the draft, I asked it to provide me with new draft sections, which I then used as inspiration for my own (100% original) rewrites.



new draft, about to send to [REDACTED]. Please make 1) overall comments - is this working, will it meet [REDACTED]'s request for a new approach, 2) bulleted list of MUST fix items, 3) bulleted list of SUGGESTED changes.

<snip>

Would you like me to expand on any of these points or suggest specific language changes for any of the must-fix items?

Alex

can you draft a. new intro paragraph, a new [REDACTED] para/section, plus 3 options for a conclusion?

Since the conclusion was the weakest part of my draft, I asked the Alexerizer for three different approaches, and then chose my favourite as the starting point for a new draft conclusion. With Claude's help it took barely more than an hour to go from messy draft to the new, polished version I sent my editor.

I also...

- Showed a colleague how to use GPT to source biographical information we need for a joint project.
- Used Ideogram.ai to create a simple illustration to go with a LinkedIn post.
- Provided my AI coach with a file containing sample case studies from my draft book, and then switched to voice so we could brainstorm ideas for finding the right people to interview for more.
- Reviewed my accounting team's draft completion of a reporting form by feeding it to a Claude Project that is stocked with details on my business finances plus articles and guides on government reporting requirements; the Project was able to flag issues in the report for me to review on a call with the accounting team.
- Got GPT to help me solve a recurring issue with Google Drive file sharing by identifying a Workspace setting I could change.
- Created an alternate version of the "Alexerizer" as a [Coda.io](https://coda.io) doc that's powered by the Claude API, so that my marketing assistant can use it to draft social media posts for me to review.
- Identified a potential safety risk in my next craft project by asking GPT to play a fire-safety scientist and electrical engineer.
- Recorded a video that introduced my AI coach to a friend.

Friday

## Managed with AI support.

I now have a small team of wonderful people who are working with me on my book and AI projects. During my biweekly one-on-one with one of my team members, we reviewed a daily check-in process that hasn't worked well for either of us, and we came up with a new game plan. My team member will configure an AI assistant as his daily checkpoint, and the AI will incorporate some specific questions and guidance I have suggested. Welcome to the new world of management: Instead of just intoning your wisdom, guide junior colleagues in configuring an AI that will help them more rapidly develop the work habits that took me many years to learn.

I also...

- Asked Claude to confirm I'd found a comma splice in a draft article, and then to come up with a distinctive turn of phrase I could use to make a specific edit.
- Used GPT to help me outline an article by asking me questions that referenced an extended email discussion with my editor.
- Tested GPT's ability to schedule tasks for later by queuing a research task. (It failed.)
- Got my pre-configured tech support GPT to help me create a quick formula that also taught me a new Coda.io feature.
- Asked my custom GPT tech assistant to remind me how to password-protect a Word doc.
- Gave GPT a set of screenshots from Claude and ChatGPT, showing all my chat sessions for the past week, and asked it to make a list of all sessions and dates as a first step towards this newsletter.



# Saturday

## Drafted a newsletter with Python and Coda.

To write this newsletter, I used ChatGPT to help me export my past week of Claude and GPT sessions for AI-assisted analysis. I used Claude to help me write Python scripts that converted my exported chat sessions into a CSV file (because I don't really know Python, it took a few tries to get it right), which I then imported into the Coda.io doc that I use to store and analyze my AI history. I used Claude-enabled formulas within Coda to ask for a specifically formatted summary of each chat, and then I got GPT to help me cleanup the Coda formulas that converted those summaries to a neat table I could scan while I wrote. Then I reviewed my table, writing up the one-bullet summary of what I accomplished in each chat.

Yes, it would have been faster to just scan through the original chat sessions—but this was so much more fun! And I now have even more of my AI history organized in a way I can write from in future, and I learned a few new tech tricks along the way. Plus it gave me a chance to rewatch all of *Severance* season 1 while I worked so now I am actually able to make sense of the first episode of season 2.

WeekInAI Persona	WeekInAI Summary
Knitting teacher	Provided technique for preventing yarn tangling when knitting two-color scarf with single and double strands
Technology Systems Admin	Reviewed Google Workspace admin settings to find ways to reduce external sharing prompts

*See the next page for the a more detailed peek at the Claude-driven Coda table that helped me write this newsletter.*

I also...

- Used Ideogram.ai to make a meme about the Trump tariffs.
- Asked GPT to pretend it's a Consumer Reports editor specializing in used cars, so it could recommend hatchback models that meet specific criteria.
- Gave Claude a list of my monthly tech subscriptions, and asked it to identify which were American, and which have Canadian alternatives (sadly, almost none).

## Spotlight

# Using AI to draft content in Coda

I routinely use the Claude.ai pack for Coda.io to make Coda API calls from within Coda. By telling Claude to return a pipe-separated response, I can use Coda formulas to split the result into an easy-to-scan table that makes it easy for me to write from AI-generated notes.

Column generated  
with Coda API call

Columns created by  
parsing Claude result

	Claude for WeekInAI	WkAI Persona	WkAI Summary
1	#Knitting teacher   Provided technique for preventing yarn tangling when knitting two-color scarf with single and double strands   DIY/Crafts   Learned specific turning technique to prevent yarn tangling	Knitting teacher	Provided technique for preventing yarn tangling when knitting two-color scarf with single and double strands
2	#Technology Systems Admin   Reviewed Google Workspace admin settings to find ways to reduce external sharing prompts   Technical Support/Configuration   Learned that while you can't completely disable, you can minimize external sharing warnings through specific admin panel adjustments	Technology Systems Admin	Reviewed Google Workspace admin settings to find ways to reduce external sharing prompts
3	#Social media researcher   Explored scheduling options for an automated Bluesky search task, but AI couldn't actually perform the requested search functionality.   Task Automation   Learned AI's limitations in directly accessing/searching external platforms like Bluesky.	Social media researcher	Explored scheduling options for an automated Bluesky search task, but AI couldn't actually perform the requested search functionality.
4	#Excel Formula Advisor   Helped create conditional formatting formula to flag weekend dates in a Coda spreadsheet   Coding/Formulas   Developed working formula to automate date checks in Coda	Excel Formula Advisor	Helped create conditional formatting formula to flag weekend dates in a Coda spreadsheet

# Always on, or never working?

By now you might be thinking: Does I ever take a day off? And it's true: Since AI is a big part of what I build, research and write about, you could interpret my seven-day-a-week AI tinkering as seven-day workweeks.

But that's not how it feels to me. If anything, messing around with AI feels so much like playtime to me that it's sometimes hard for me to tell whether I'm working, or just goofing around.

Whenever you have a moment with AI that feels like play, grab onto it! This is the trail that will lead you out of grind mode, and into a new world of work where the robots not only do the grinding for you, but open doors to new experiences of creativity and joy.

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