



AI First Digital
Epilogue:



Living in the AGI Zone

June 25, 2025 | PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



Andy Sack: This is AI First with Adam and Andy, the show that takes you to the straight to the front lines of AI innovation and business. I'm Andy Sack and alongside my co-host, Adam Brotman. Each episode, we bring you candid conversations with business leaders, transforming their businesses with AI. No fluff, just real talk and actual use cases and insights for you. Today is a short episode that we're going to talk about the launch of our book AI First, the playbook for future proofing your business and brand available at amazon.com. Again, that title of the book is AI First, a playbook for future proofing your business and brand in the AI era. Adam, welcome. Let's get into it. We are today is the launch of the book and the purpose of today's episode is to give people a glimpse into what might be in an epilogue that I guess we're going to do because we submitted the book nine months ago for publication and the book comes out today, June 24th.

Adam Brotman: Yeah, first of all, it's exciting day for you and I just because we've never had a day in our life where we wrote a book and it was coming out, so yay. The interesting thing about this epilogue, which we need to write, so part of this exercise is we're going to write this epilogue after we have this conversation. And it's very much in the vein of the book, which was very serialized and interactive and dynamic.

Andy Sack: And the spirit of this conversation is we want to bring the audience, our audience and our community in into the writers room, so to speak.

Adam Brotman: Yeah, that's right. The writer's room. So it's interesting. We started writing this book in January, effectively, of 2024. And actually, our very first interview, the book research started with an interview with Sam Altman in, I think, October of 2023. November of 2023. so I think that's...

Andy Sack: November, November of 23, one year after launch of ChatGPT.

Adam Brotman: Right. And here we are, you know, you know, basically a year and a half later, right, from that moment. And when we wrote when we started writing the book and we started out with a conversation with Sam Altman, we were trying to figure out, like, where is this going? And we were smacked in the face with this idea of AGI. We weren't we'd heard the term AGI, but we weren't thinking about AGI. We weren't thinking about powerful A.I. and, you know, AI being able to do 95 % of what everybody, all the experts can do instantly and for free. And we met with Sam and he was, he was like, this is where this is going.

And we had to like step outside and take a moment to this process. And I'd say, I think it's appropriate in the epilogue that we come back to Sam Altman, where we started, because he wrote a blog post last night that went viral the name of the blog post is the gentle singularity. And I'm not going to read it here, obviously, in our, but we'll talk about it in the epilogue because he said he starts out the blog post by saying we are past the event horizon. The takeoff has started. Humanity is close to building digital super intelligence. And at least so far it's as much it's much less weird than it seems like it should be.

And he goes on and writes this very thoughtful piece, regardless of whether you agree with them, disagree with them, et cetera, very thoughtful piece that talks about how we're not a AGI, but we're in the zone is kind of how I would describe the tone of the blog post. And I think that very much also describes Andy, how you and I are feeling right now. Like we started, we weren't feeling that when we started talking to Sam and Reid Hoffman and Bill Gates and Mustafa Salman and all the people as we started going through our chapters, we were like, that's out there. AGI is out there. It's coming.



We knew it was going to be a spectrum that we were all going to get boiled like frogs a little bit. But we were still thinking about it as something out there. And here we are only a year and a half later and it feels like we're in the zone. And I think that's a different tone. It's not that our book was acting like you can take it easy. In fact, it was quite the opposite. I think we should talk about in the epilogue and write about what does that mean and what is there anything different about what we said in the book that now that we're kind of in it versus preparing for something and what would you say?

Andy Sack: I mean, I think you're right. I think that's a great entree to the epilogue that we're in it as opposed to when we started the interviews and we're ready. It was much more of a forward looking. It felt imminent, but it was forward looking. Whereas now you can, one can feel that we're in it. And how does one feel that we're in it? Well, I mean, a number, just if you look at the news, number of news events jump out, is, one, there's a lot of talk about robotics and the intersection of robotics and AI. Number two, Google Gemini has had, I'd say, two major announcements since the book came out, is Notebook LM and then, I'm sorry.

Adam Brotman: Yeah.

Andy Sack: V03. Yeah, that's right. And, with bringing video AI video. so like, you know, and there's talk about Apple and there's talk about X.com. the, models are advancing deep research.

Adam Brotman: Yeah.

Andy Sack: All those technological advances, I think, fall behind because what does it mean that we're here? It means a couple of things. One is fraud is up, right? So the fraudsters, I'm getting more text-based and phone-based inquiries and they're kind of smarter. So the fraudsters are using AI and they're getting better at trying to engage me to steal stuff. Number two, would say like just in our consulting business, complexity is up. So like the whole decision of like, do I need to buy this software? And if I don't need to buy this software and I want to, or build it, build versus buy, but it's just like, there's vendors coming out of the woodwork and for any application, it's like there's 10 to 30 to sort through. so choice is proliferated. And so that means COLA complexity is proliferated.

Adam Brotman: Yeah. And we're seeing like, I would say early signs of layoffs that may or may not be attributed to AI, but probably are somewhat attributed attributable AI in some cases. So the beginnings of that, that sort of societal job impact that we're going to have to go through here is starting to happen. And the other thing

Andy Sack: That's right. Yeah, I mean, just on that, just on that layoff point, the, you know, we did our January 1st predictions for 2025 and I can't recall whether one of them was about layoffs, but it feels appropriate to do an a mid-year update. June 24th is the day of the book, July 1st. It does feel like we are right on the dawn of this economic. It's never been so clear the economic case that AI makes for really disrupting white collar workers.

Adam Brotman: Yeah. Well, and the other thing that's happened since we started, since we finished the book, little one started it is reinforcement learning and reasoning models has taken on a whole new materiality and you've got, you know, reasoning models. And so you've got, started with one, then it became three. Now it's three pro. And then you've got Gemini. You mentioned Gemini and Google with deep research and VO3. But they obviously launched Gemini 2.5, which is incredible. in Opus, I want to say Claude Opus 4, whatever it's called, like Claude 4 Opus.



You're seeing these reasoning models. You see China came out again, since the book came out with Deep Seek. And that was not even on our radar at all when we wrote the book. Out of nowhere came China. And my understanding is their most recent reasoning model is as good as Gemini 2.5, according to certain benchmarks and almost as good as O3, meaning it's a frontier model and it's open source. And so like we and the reason I'm harping on these reasoning models and it feels like that's so material is that they're basically agents.

And so when we talked about the book to go back to the book, you we talked about with Reid Hoffman, we talked about he was like agents everywhere and you're going to be interacting with agents. And he meant autonomous agents that sort of like email you and you're like emailing back or you're talking to or whatever. They're showing up in the workplace as employees and as characters that you sort of interact with. But reasoning models are a form of an agent. mean, deep research is the ultimate version of that with a reasoning model. there, you know, when you talk to a reasoning model and you watch it thinking to itself and like spinning up code to do analysis and you know, you give it an image and you watch it zoom in on parts of the image as it's talking to itself.

I want to look in this corner of the image to see what's in the right hand back side of Andy's fridge. I'm going to I want to inspect that more like like that's crazy to me that that like that was that kind of ability was not we weren't seeing that ability when we were writing the book. We were hearing about, it will become this much smarter and it will become more agentic and then you're to be interacting with agents and then it's going to like be able to be your agency and you're going to be effectively, we even predicted in the book that you're going to be managing agents and like we were talking about it, but it was like out there and now we're interacting with these things and it's still this beginning. It's interesting.

Andy Sack: So let me ask you this. So given that, given we're here and given that what you just said about agents and the advance of all the tools, is there any, when you think about the app log, is there any update to the playbook that you would for business leaders?

Adam Brotman: I, yeah, great question. I would, there was a, there was a, there was one of the things that we were gonna put in our playbook. And by the way, tip of the hat to our friend, Paul Raitzer, who has just been on this topic for a long time. And we mentioned him in the book, of course, and we, and we give him credit for like, he's just so good at thinking about these different playbook aspects. And one of the things he had been talking about at the time we wrote the book, but we decided not to put in the book was this idea of an AGI Horizon Council. know, just again, it felt too out there to us, I think. We were just trying to get people to understand that to take to take AI seriously and to understand how to scale it and be responsible about it. But now I kind of think it's not a horizon anymore as much as it's like and I'm not saying it's here, but I'm saying I've never been more struck by that's a needed addition to our playbook that that brand leaders need to be taking seriously that we are in the zone and that they should be talking amongst themselves about how fast this is moving and what parts of their business they can and should be using AI to automate and adopt and push forward in a world where it AGI is here, which is not here yet.

But that that I don't think you can wait a year to have that conversation as a leader where I wouldn't have said that a year ago. And now I'm like, no, you can't wait a year. You got to start having that conversation now. And and and, know, you've said this, Andy, on a number of shows we've been on recently that these these revolutions. They usually take 20 years to sort of permeate, 30 years to permeate. This is gonna happen in five years. And the fact that we're in it and it's happening faster than we even thought, it just is a reminder that like, you gotta be talking about that stuff now. Even if you don't even have your game plan together and you haven't educated everybody, unfortunately, I actually think you need to be having that conversation now as a leader. And that I wouldn't have said that when we started the book, but I feel like that's a consequence of that we're in the zone.



Andy Sack: I have, I'll give two things and then let's close it up, which is, I think for me, my addendum to the playbook is what you said actually resonates with me. I would add that Ethan mollix, advice, the chapter at the end of the book, which I remember we did that interview and Ethan mollix basically said, you need to do, you need an AI R and D lab. And I think we were like, and the companies that we're talking to, can't even start to use the AI, tool, let alone are they going to set up a separate division that's called an AI lab and start doing R &D to disrupt themselves. And it gets that whole innovators dilemma and how hard it is for companies to reinvent themselves. The not only is the speed of AI happening so fast, but the size of the disruption economically and otherwise fundamentally is going to change the way in which business is done. It's fundamentally changing the way in which companies compete. It's going to be jagged. It's going to vary industry by industry, but I actually think Ethan Malik might've been more right than wrong and shame on me really for like I took it and I was inspired by the way that it said, but I actually think it's really, it's really salient and that would be part of the playbook that I would, I would be looking to add.

Adam Brotman: You know, that's such a smart point you're making about how that AGI Horizon stuff, he, Malik in our conclusion chapter was kind of telling us that he was like, guys, you're not pushing far enough in your book and with your consulting because you're not pushing on the AGI R &D left. And we were like, you're not ready for it. And that, and you're right. He was right.

Andy Sack: Yeah. Yeah, he basically said. Yeah. And he basically said these LLMs are basically, you know, every six months is a new LLM and your playbook's great, but it's kind of out of date the day you write it. So we're updating it with an epilogue. The second thing I would say, which is just, I think, poignant to both it's here, it's really the more than video, more than the decline in Google's monopoly of search and the transition of consumer behavior to use the LLMs for all things related to search and otherwise. I actually think that change in consumer behavior and the decline of Google and really the question of what's gonna happen to Google and its business model. I mean, I don't think they're going out of business. They're very well positioned for the AI, they're getting, you know, think search, the search monopoly is, I think should be, the change in consumer behavior should be part of the epilogue.

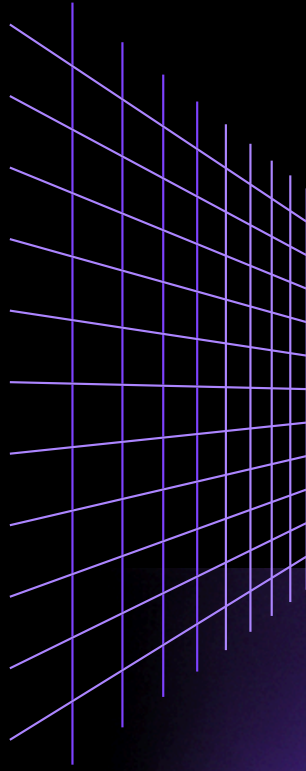
Adam Brotman: No, that's a great, that's a really good point. I mean, they have, as of the time we're taping this, they just announced 600 million active weekly users. And, you know, we talked in the book about they were the fastest technology to a hundred million active users ever, but we wouldn't have guessed they'd be at 600 million right

Andy Sack: Who announced that, OpenAI? Yeah.

Adam Brotman: OpenAI, ChatGPT. So there's no way that you're getting that many adjust on chat to chat to BT alone and it's not cutting into Google and then Google's getting into AI overviews and it's you're right. Like it's a that's a great topic to also touch on. All right. With that, we're going to close this episode. Thank you all. You're going to have to read about the epilogue in the epilogue, so be sure to sign up on our website. Thank you for listening to AI First with Adam and Andy. For more resources on how to become AI First, go to our website, forum3.com. We have case studies, newsletters, research briefings, and PDFs to download. We have a lot of amazing material on the website for leaders looking to expand their knowledge of all things AI. And as you know, we truly believe you can't over invest in your AI learning. Onward.



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