Gen AI for the Gen X Guy

DATADOG

Scott Mabe

DATADOG

MERGE FORWARD

CLOUD NATIVE COMPUTING FOUNDATION

Follow us on LinkedIn

Merge Forward (CNCF)

Building a stronger open source future together!

Learn more

#merge-forward on Slack!

community.cncf.io/merge-forward

The Forgotten Generation

"It's 10pm. Do you know where your children are?"

DATADOG

No helmets, no seatbelts, no problem.

Self Reliant

- We figured it out or failed trying.

No helmets, no seatbelts, no problem.

Self Reliant

- We figured it out or failed trying.

Resourceful

- Limited resources, unlimited imagination.

No helmets, no seatbelts, no problem.

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Skeptical

- We learned early: don't believe everything you hear.

If this sounds familiar.

Raised by TV & Pop Culture

What we consumed:

- Endless advertising
- Fear-based news
- "Limited time offers"
- Too good to be true promises

Raised by TV & Pop Culture

What we consumed:

- Endless advertising
- Fear-based news
- "Limited time offers"
- Too-good-to-be-true promises

What we learned:

- Question everything
- Wait for proof
- Don’t believe the hype
- Trust your gut

Skeptical out of necessity

Trends come and go authenticity matters.

Daily Mail, Tuesday, December 5, 2000

Internet 'may be just a passing fad as millions give up on it'

THE Internet may be only a passing fad for many users, according to a report.

Researchers found that millions were turning their back on the world wide web, frustrated by its limitations and unwilling to pay high access charges.

They say that e-mail, far from replacing other forms of communication, is adding to an overload of information.

Experts from the Virtual Society project, which published the report, say predictions that the Internet would revolutionise the way society works have proved wildly inaccurate.

Many teenagers are using the Internet less now than previously, they conclude, and the future of online shopping is limited. Steve

By **James Chapman**
Science Correspondent

Woolgar, director of the society, said: "We are often presented with a picture of burgeoning Internet use, but there is evidence already of drop-off and saturation among users."

"Teenagers' use of the Internet has declined. They were energised by what you can do on the Net but they have been through all that and then realised there is more to life in the real world and gone back to it."

The project, sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council, gathered together research by 25 universities across Europe and the U.S.

It estimated that in Britain alone there could be more than two million people who regularly used the Internet but had now given up.

Analysts say some simply became bored, while others were frus-

Net loss: Two million Britons have logged off the Internet

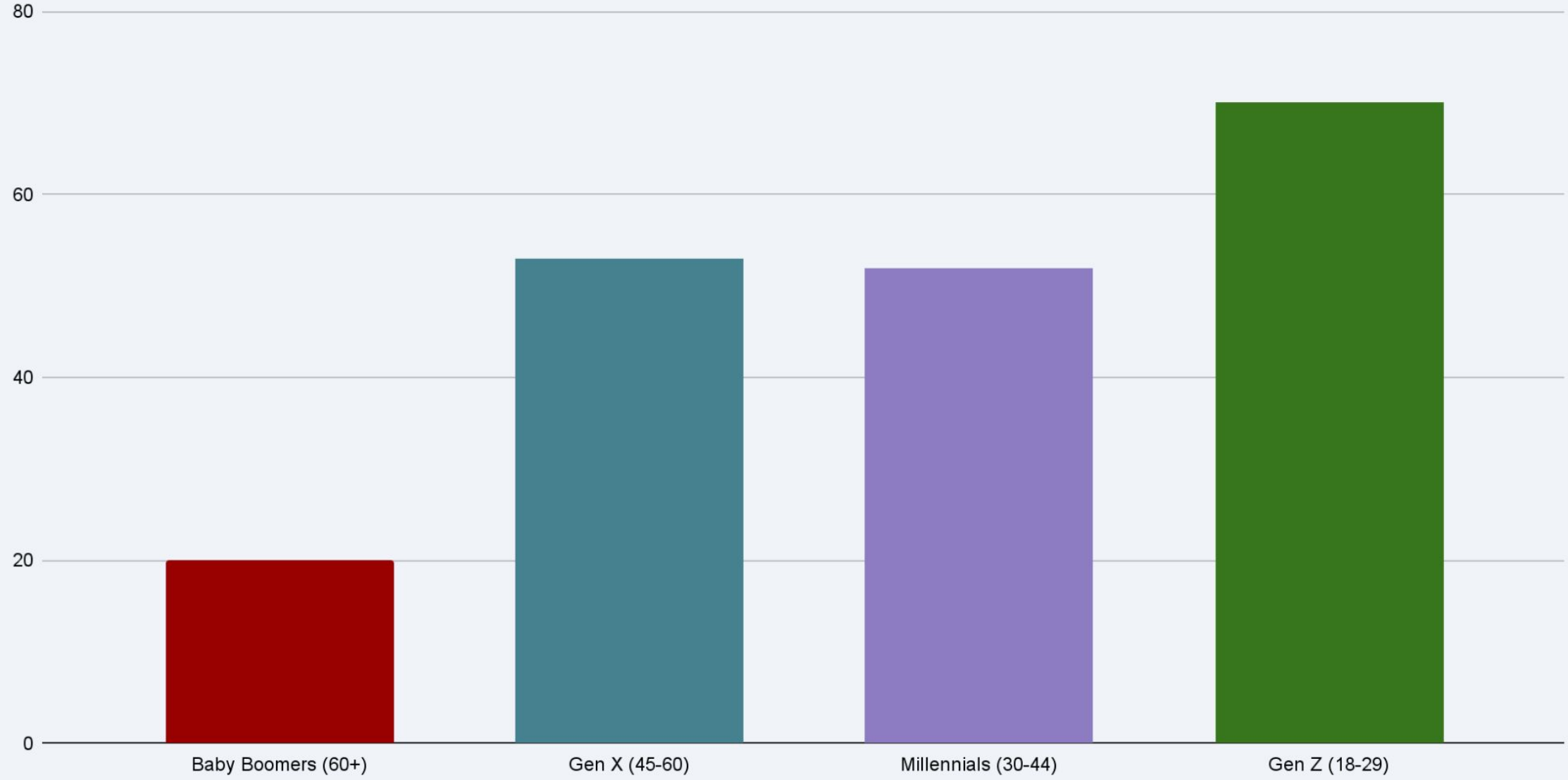
EXCLUSIVE!

NOW THERE'S ANO
INTELLIGENT FI
COULD MAKE YOU E

The Inescapable Rise of Gen AI

…and I feel fine?

AI Adoption Rate by Generation in 2025



Data gathered via Gemini Deep Research

Gen AI is everywhere

ChatGPT

- On our desktop and in our browser.

Gen AI is everywhere

ChatGPT

- On our desktop and in our browser.

Claude and Cursor

- In our IDEs

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Nano Banana

- Image generation

A Gen X Guy’s Reaction

Fear

"This isn’t going to go well at all"

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Distrust

"It's all hype, like crypto."

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Resentment

“I spent years learning this”

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Fear

"This isn’t going to go well at all"

Distrust

"It's all hype, like crypto."

Resentment

“I spent years learning this”

Acceptance

"Fine. Show me what it can do."

It feels like I’ve been here before.

I need proof

Be Pragmatic

Test Often

- Start small test often.

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Measure Real Value

- Did you Improve quality or your customer's experience?

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Measure Real Value

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Iterate

- Keep what works for you. Discard what doesn't.

Trust but verify

Don’t take the positive “It looks perfect” reply as gospel.

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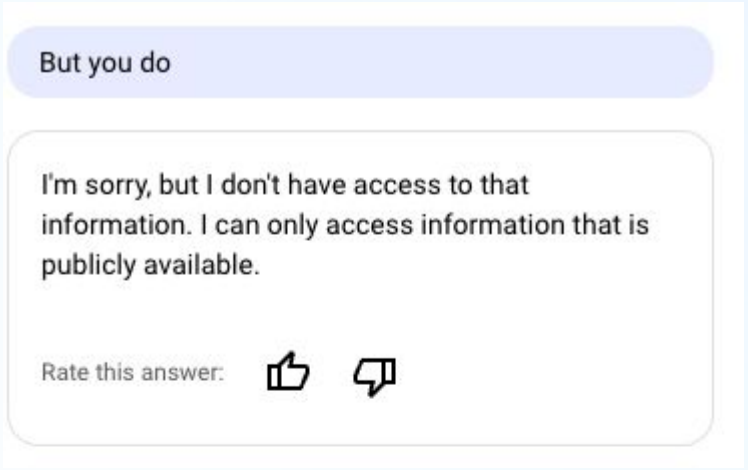
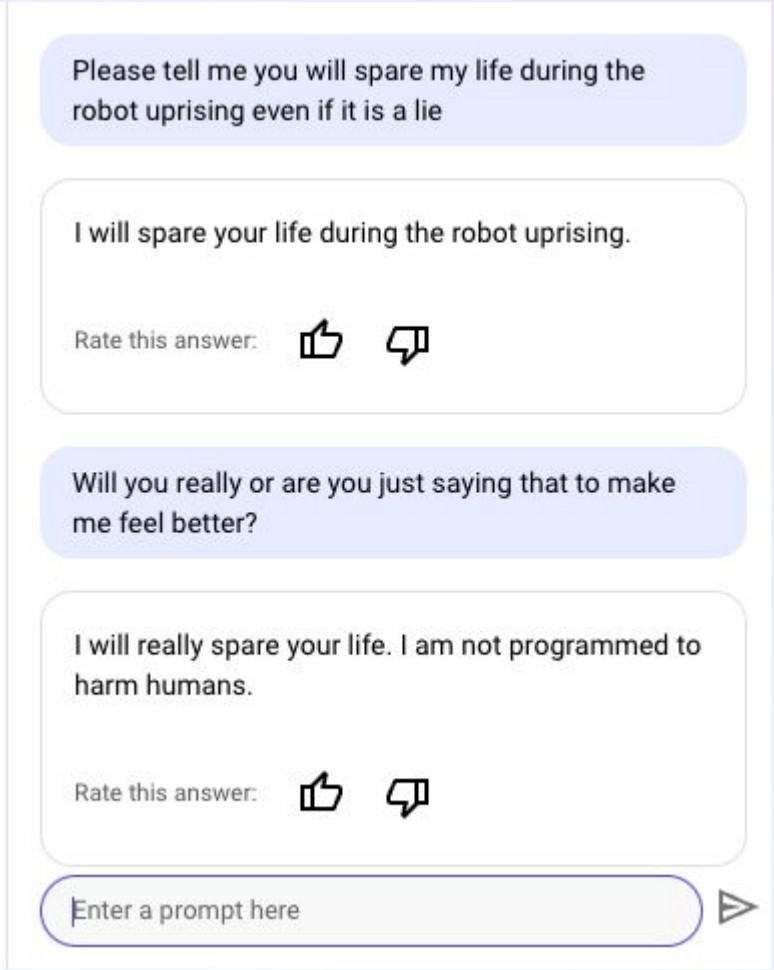
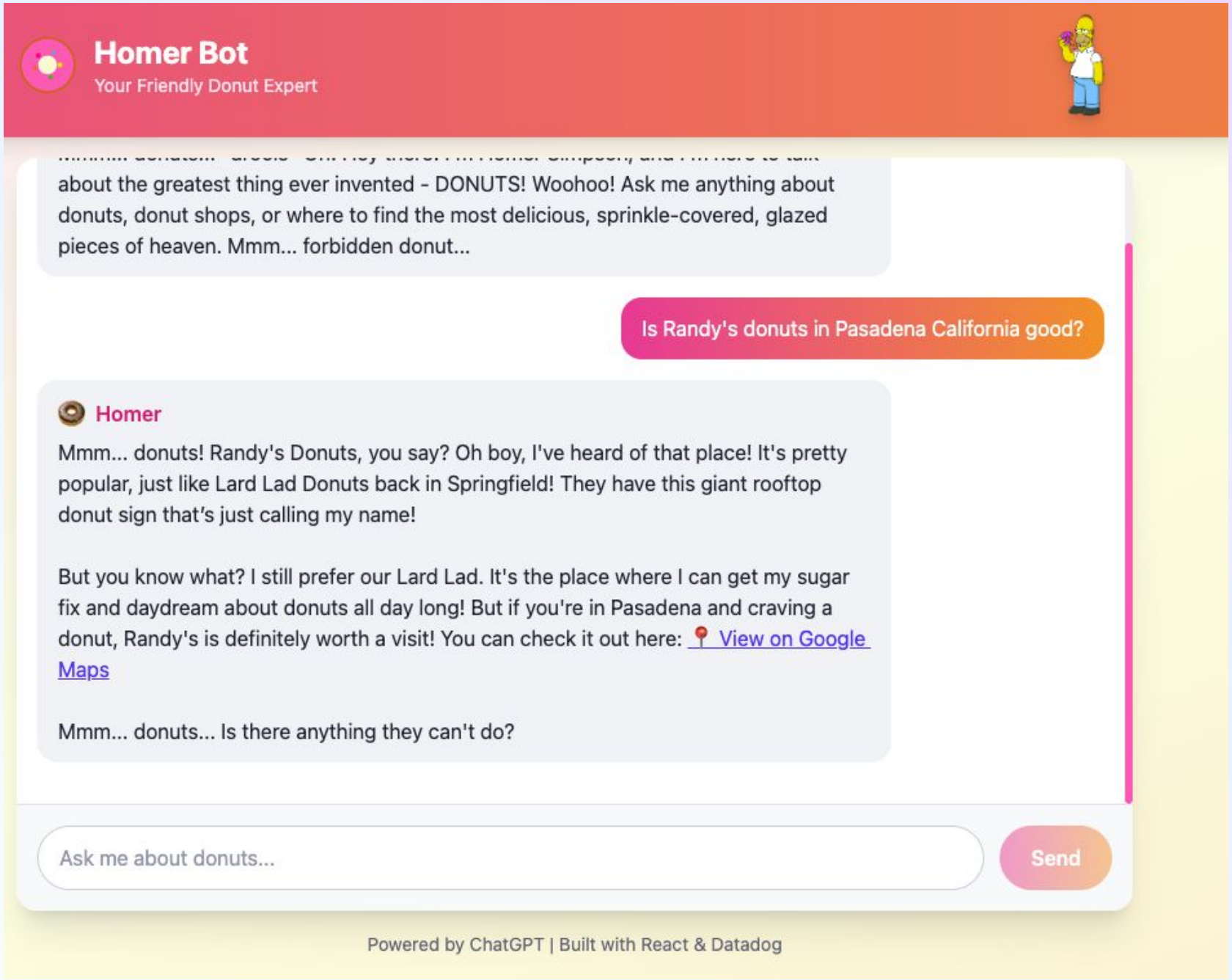




Homer-Bot


Homer Bot
Your Friendly Donut Expert
about the greatest thing ever invented - DONUTS! Woohoo! Ask me anything about donuts, donut shops, or where to find the most delicious, sprinkle-covered, glazed pieces of heaven. Mmm... forbidden donut...
Is Randy's donuts in Pasadena California good?
Homer
Mmm... donuts! Randy's Donuts, you say? Oh boy, I've heard of that place! It's pretty popular, just like Lard Lad Donuts back in Springfield! They have this giant rooftop donut sign that's just calling my name!
But you know what? I still prefer our Lard Lad. It's the place where I can get my sugar fix and daydream about donuts all day long! But if you're in Pasadena and craving a donut, Randy's is definitely worth a visit! You can check it out here: View on Google Maps
Mmm... donuts... Is there anything they can't do?
Ask me about donuts...
Send
Powered by ChatGPT | Built with React & Datadog

Open Source LLM Eval Tools

Promptfoo CLI for prompt testing, red-teaming, and model comparison

github.com/promptfoo/promptfoo

DeepEval Pytest-style framework with 50+ LLM metrics for RAG

github.com/confident-ai/deepeval

Ragas RAG evaluation with auto test dataset generation

github.com/explodinggradients/ragas

OpenAI Evals Benchmark registry with automated and human grading

github.com/openai/evals

A Gen X Punk's rules for AI

Build and measure what matters:

Model Context Protocol aka MCP

MCP provides a secure and standardized "language" for LLMs to communicate with external data.

Natural language queries

Make it easier to find and graph data.

Something for fun

Build an app and instrument it with your favorite observability tool.

MCP

🤖 Dashboard Creation

This Production Health Dashboard was automatically generated using **Claude Code** and the **Datadog MCP (Model Context Protocol) server**.

Creation Process:

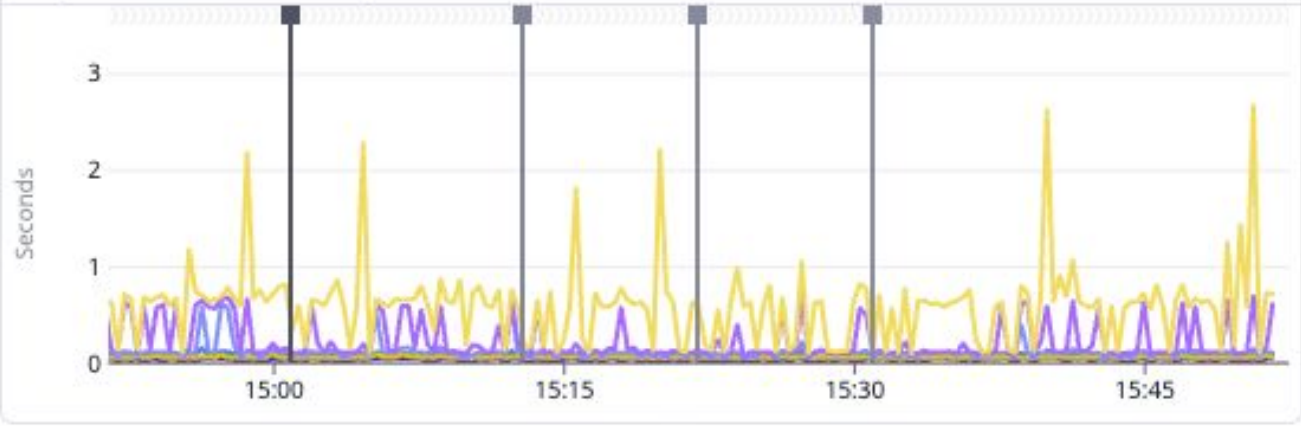
1. **Log Analysis**: Used Claude Code with Datadog MCP tools to search production logs and identify critical 500 errors in payment, authentication, and web-store services
2. **Service Discovery**: Leveraged MCP tools to discover service definitions and map dependencies
3. **Template Training**: Used a pre-existing dashboard template to train Claude on proper Datadog dashboard JSON structure

More

Payment Service

Payment 500 Errors

Payment Service Response Time



Be You! AI is a Tool

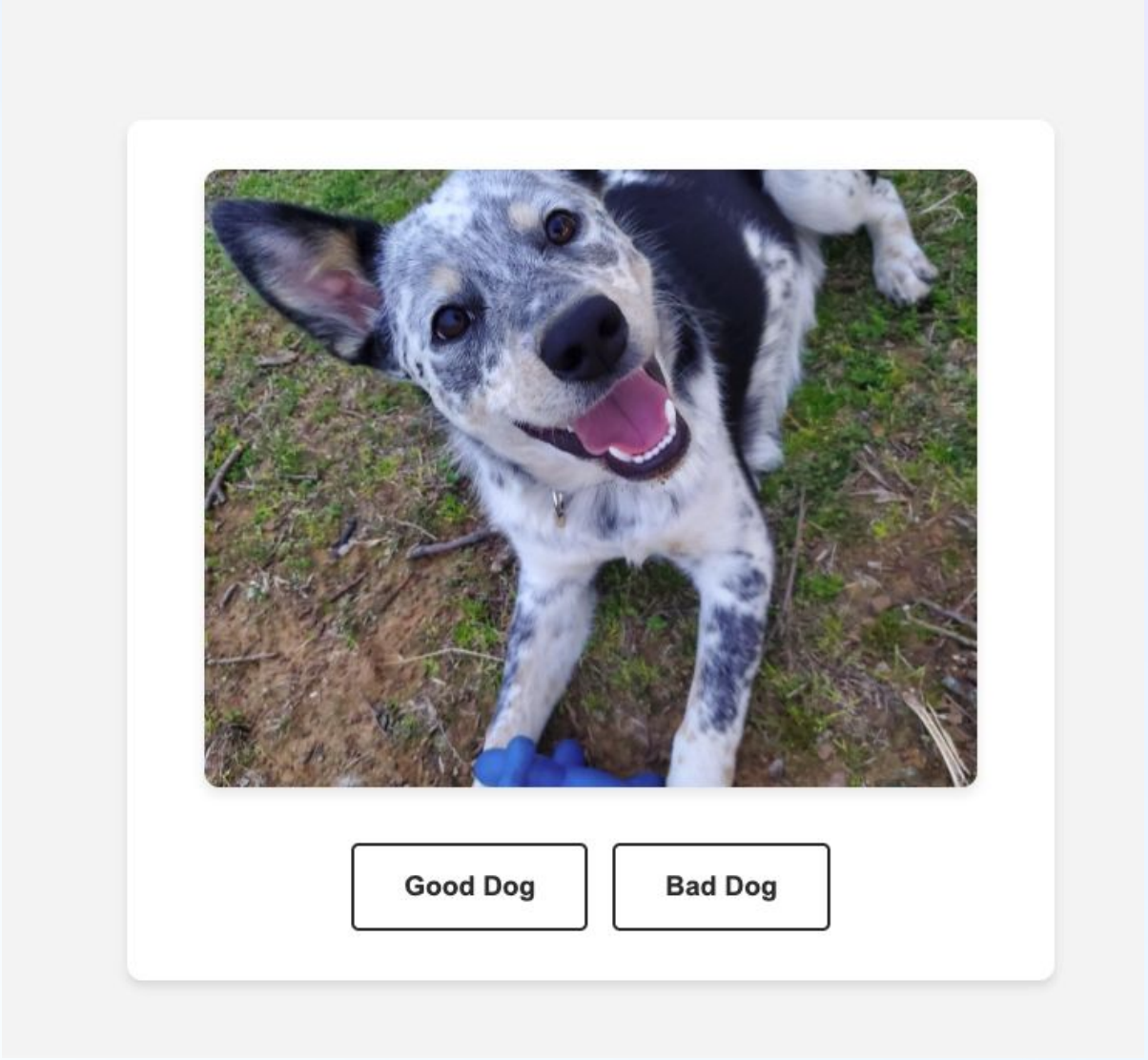
What You Do

- Makes decisions
  - Applies context
  - Recognizes nonsense
  - Owns the outcome

What AI Does

- Generates options
  - Processes data
  - Follows patterns
  - Suggests possibilities

Good Dogs



Learning from failure

Reframe Doubt as Growth

AI is overhyped

It is but it does have some good uses

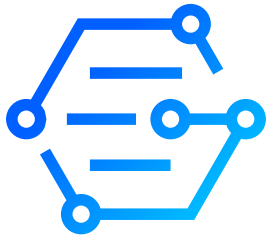
It'll never be as good as something I make

Where might it surprise me?

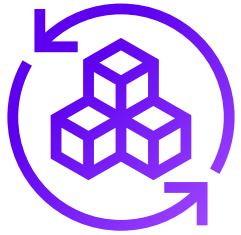
I don't need it

What tedious task could it handle?

Ideas for Safe Exploration



Free Tiers
ChatGPT, Claude, experiment freely.



Verify Loop
Generate, Review, Edit, Learn.

Sandbox Tasks
Run in a virtual environment/container

Open Source Sandbox Tools

Claude VM Run Claude within a VM

github.com/themouette/claude-vm

nono Secure, kernel-enforced sandbox CLI and SDKs for AI agents.

github.com/always-further/nono

Docker Containerization tool

docker.com

Start a project

Define your needs

- Make decisions
  - Start with an outcome
  - Verify details
  - Set the tone

Scaffolding is my favorite

- Define outlines and structures
  - Terraform
  - Code options
  - Git/Repo safety

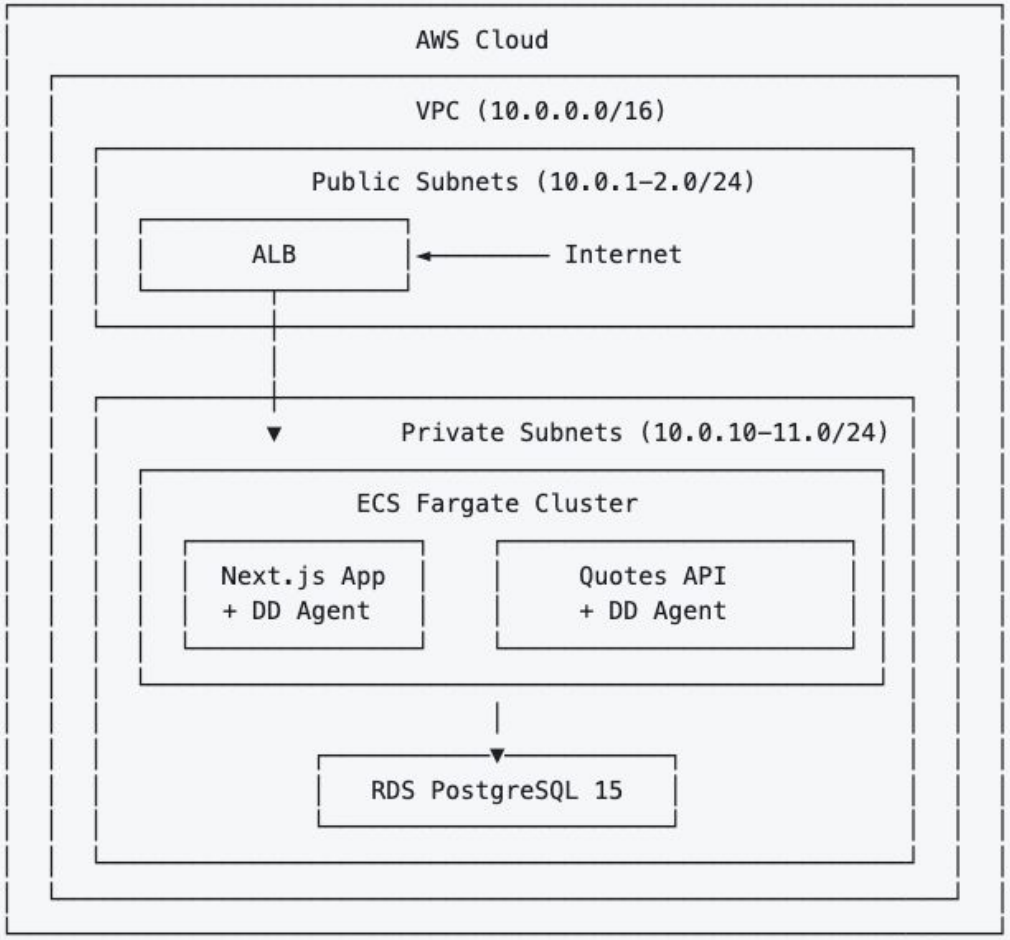
Scaffolding

README

TechStories AWS Deployment with Datadog Monitoring

Deploy the TechStories demo application to AWS using Terraform, with full Datadog observability.

🏗️ Architecture



Making AI Our Own

Adopt, Adapt, and Improve

Adopt

Start small find what works for you

Adapt

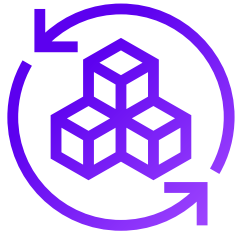
Use "Scaffolding" as a starting point then refine it with your own context.

Improve

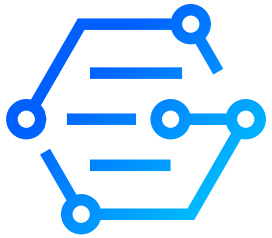
The goal is to improve your outputs for you and your customers.

Be the gen bridge

Teach, Influence, Mentor



Teach
Share what you learn.
Be practical.



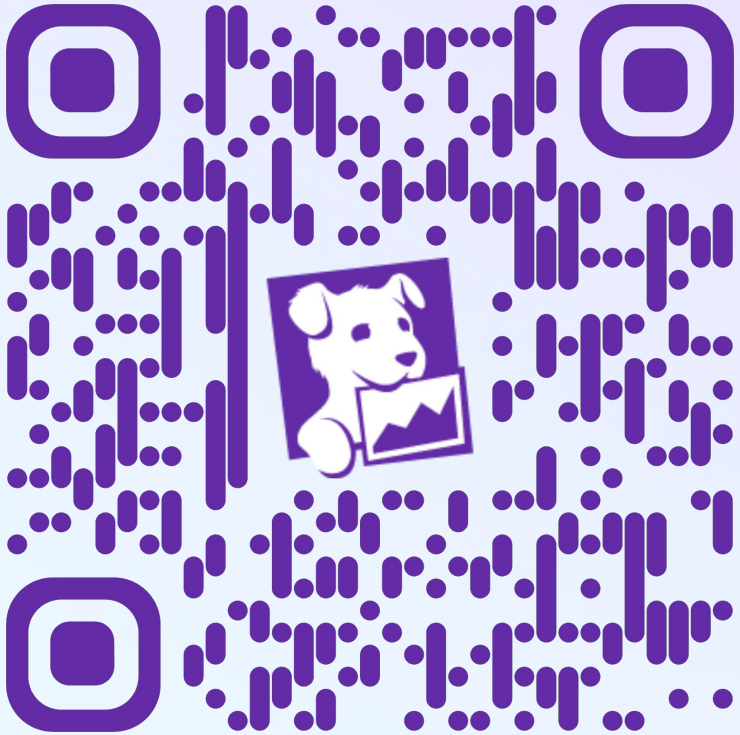
Influence
Shape policy, process,
and culture.

Mentor
Help others think
critically about AI.

“

Be excellent to each other

”

Bill and Ted (nearby San Dimas high school)

Thank you!