

The AI Lego Stack

How modern AI tools fit together in three layers

LAYER 3 Interface

What the user sees and touches. How humans interact with your solution.

Chat interfaces

Web apps

Embedded AI

Voice interfaces

Slack bots

LAYER 2 Orchestration

Coordinates triggers, data feeding, tool connections, and automatic actions. This is where the real leverage lives.

n8n

Make.com

LangChain

LlamaIndex

AI Agents

Zapier

LAYER 1 The Model

The AI itself. The large language model that understands language, reasons, generates text, writes code, and summarizes documents.

GPT-5.2

Claude Opus 4.6

Gemini 3.1 Pro

Llama 4

Grok 4.20

Key Principles

- Start with the simplest version that does the job
- Add layers as the need becomes clear
- The model is the least important choice you'll make
- Your prompts, logic, and workflows are the real assets
- Understand the problem first, then choose the stack

Example: Competitor Monitor

Layer 1 (Model): Claude Sonnet 4.6 – summarizes competitor content
Layer 2 (Orchestration): n8n – runs every Monday, fetches URLs, sends alerts
Layer 3 (Interface): Slack – where the digest lands
Result: Zero coding, automated weekly competitive intelligence