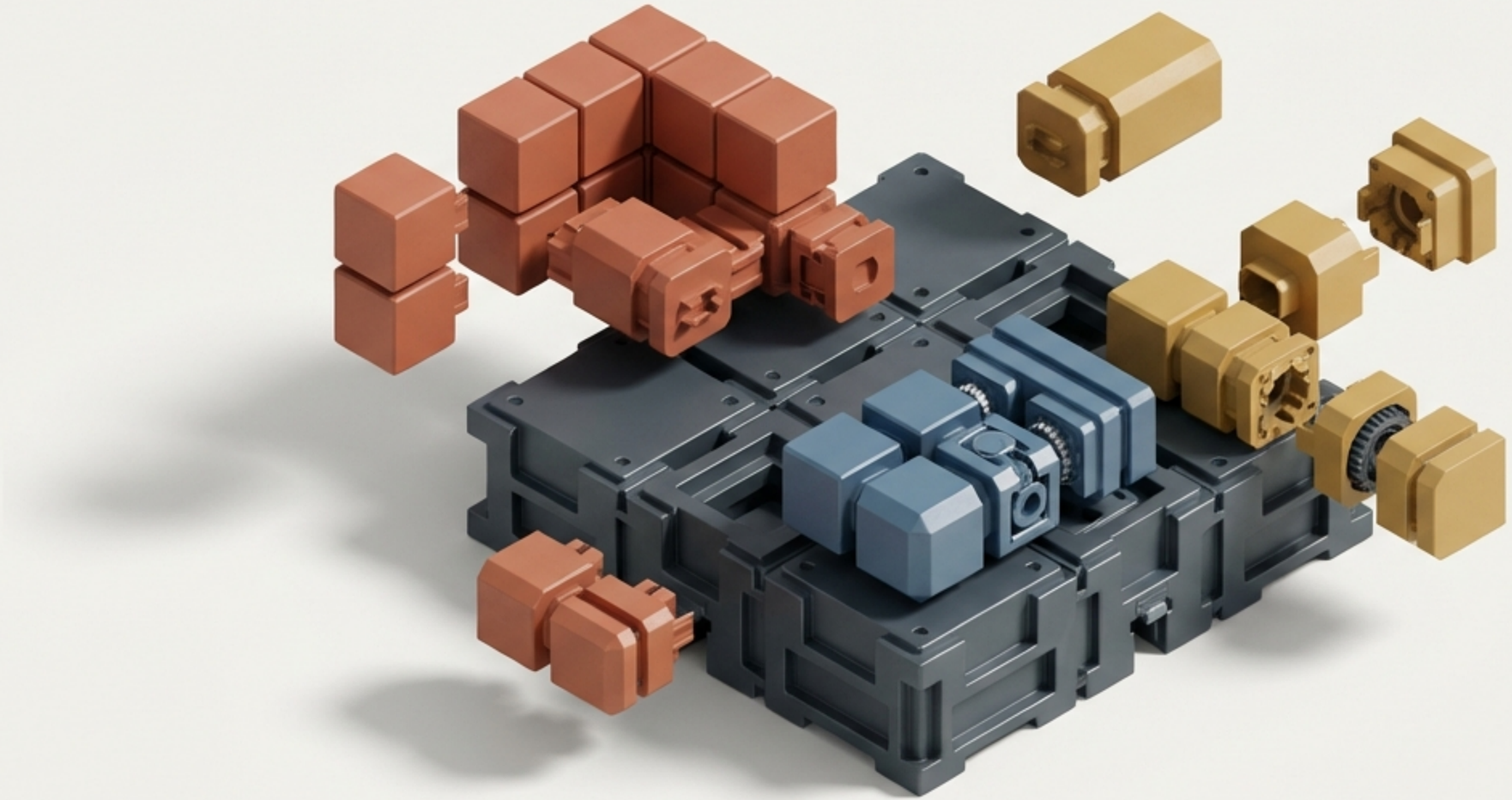
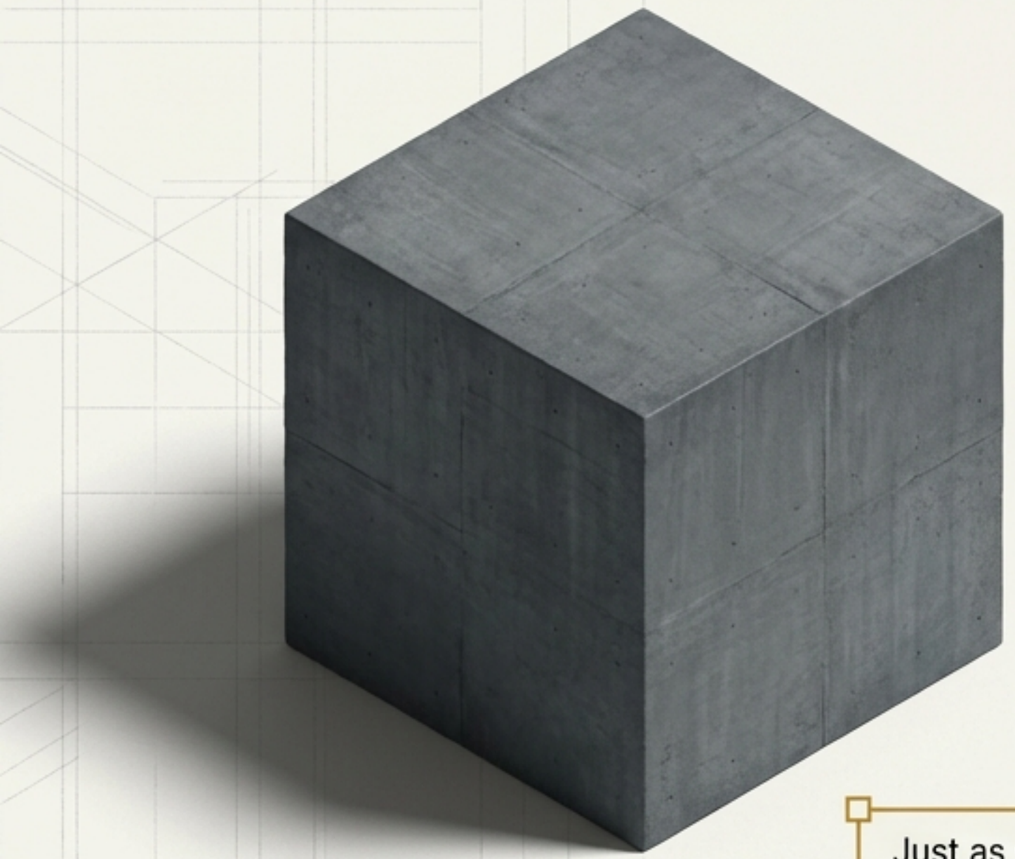
THE OUTCOME ECONOMY

How AI Skills are turning service businesses into software companies



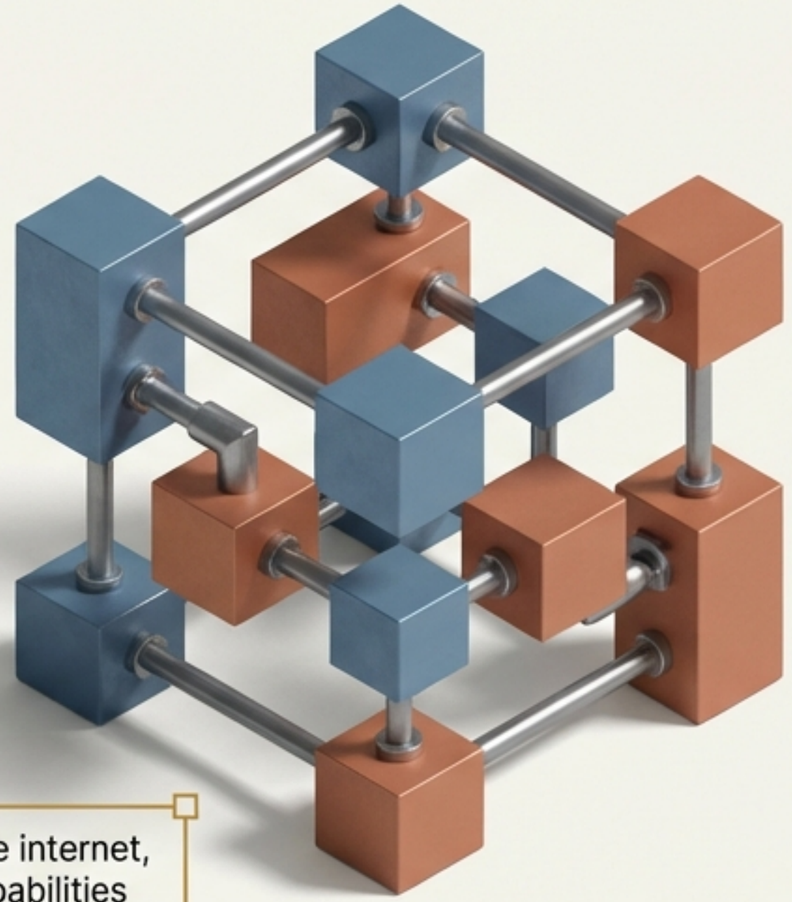
The Old World: Rigid Packages

Historically, software was purchased in bloated, rigid suites or perpetual subscriptions. Value was locked inside closed ecosystems.



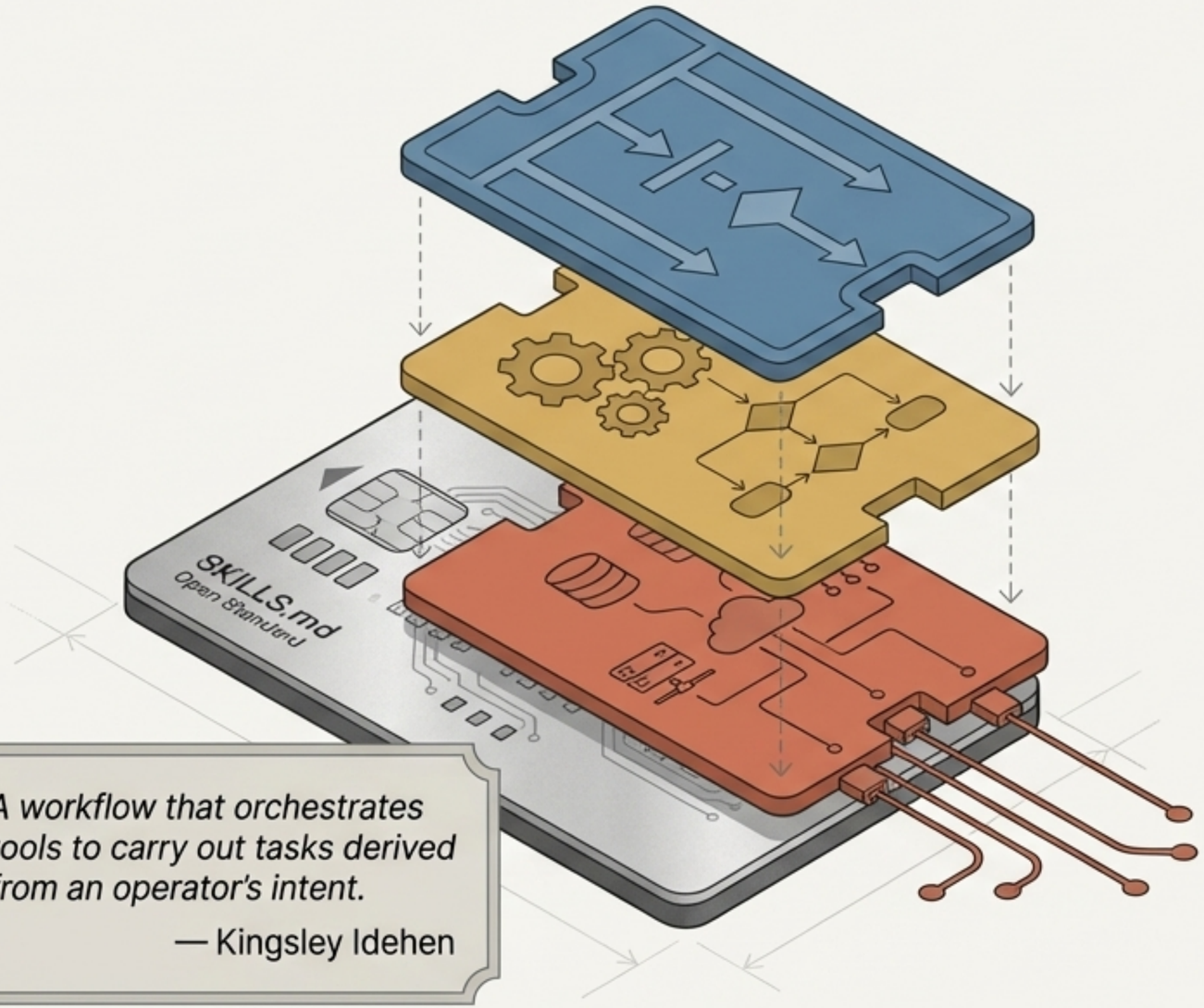
The New World: Composable Skills

Value is now generated by modular, reusable skills. As noted by OpenLink Software CEO Kingsley Idehen, these are the new units of economic value—easy to create, share, and recombine.



Just as simple HTML pages exploded the internet, AI skills are set to explode enterprise capabilities by breaking complex tasks into modular units.

Dissecting an AI Skill



A workflow that orchestrates tools to carry out tasks derived from an operator's intent.

— Kingsley Idehen

Intent

Step-by-step instructions. The precise workflow an operator wants the AI to execute.

Logic

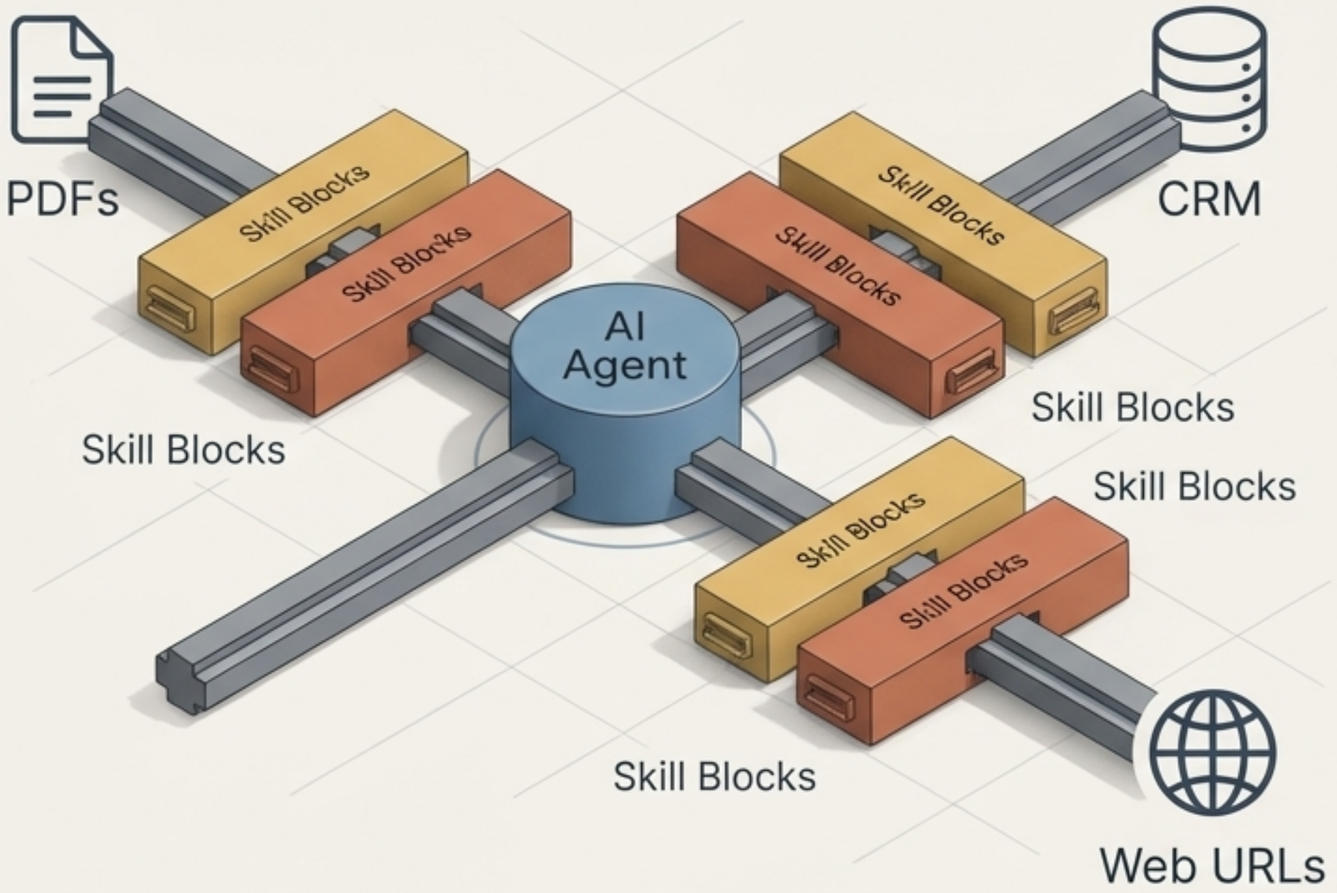
Expert knowledge. The captured, domain-specific expertise required to execute the task accurately.

Data Connections

The raw materials. Live links to databases, local files, and external web URLs.

Core Takeaway: Packaged expertise bundled so AI agents can deliver automated outcomes independently.

Infinite Scale Through Loose Coupling



Agnostic Architecture

AI skills are built on simple open standards. They are not locked into one proprietary application.

Dynamic Execution

Because they are loosely coupled, they work flexibly with whatever unstructured information you feed them.

Skills All The Way Down

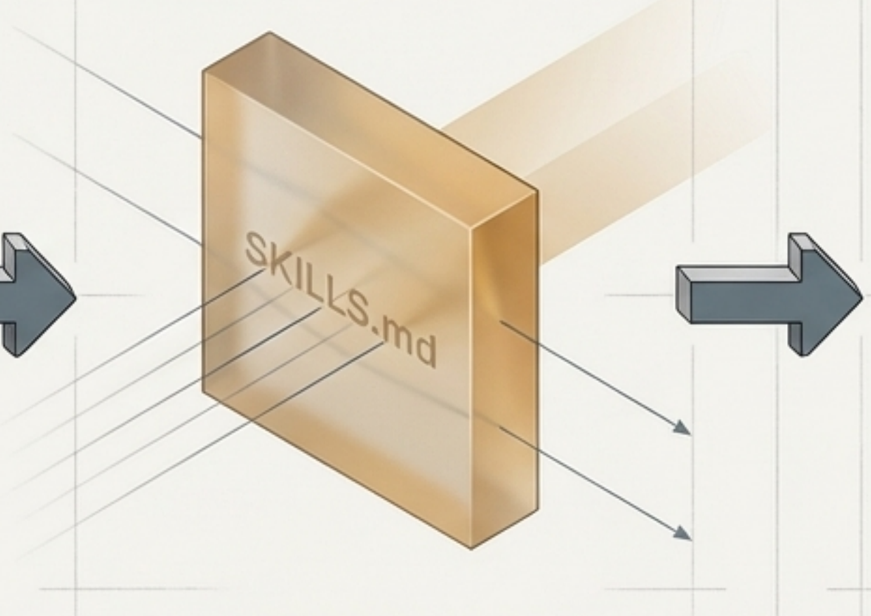
Instead of building giant AI systems from scratch, businesses snap together ready-made skills to orchestrate complex chains of actions across any data source.

In Action: The Knowledge Graph Skill

The Input: Raw Data

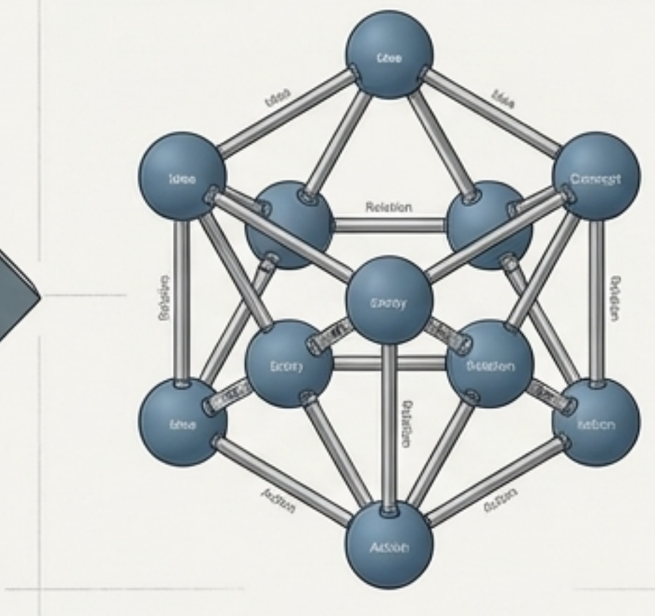
Any standard URL, report, or dense market thesis.

The Catalyst: SKILLS.md



The open-source Knowledge Graph Generation Skill processes the unstructured input.

The Output: Automated Strategy



A smart, machine-readable map of knowledge, linking ideas clearly so AI can understand, remember, and build upon them.

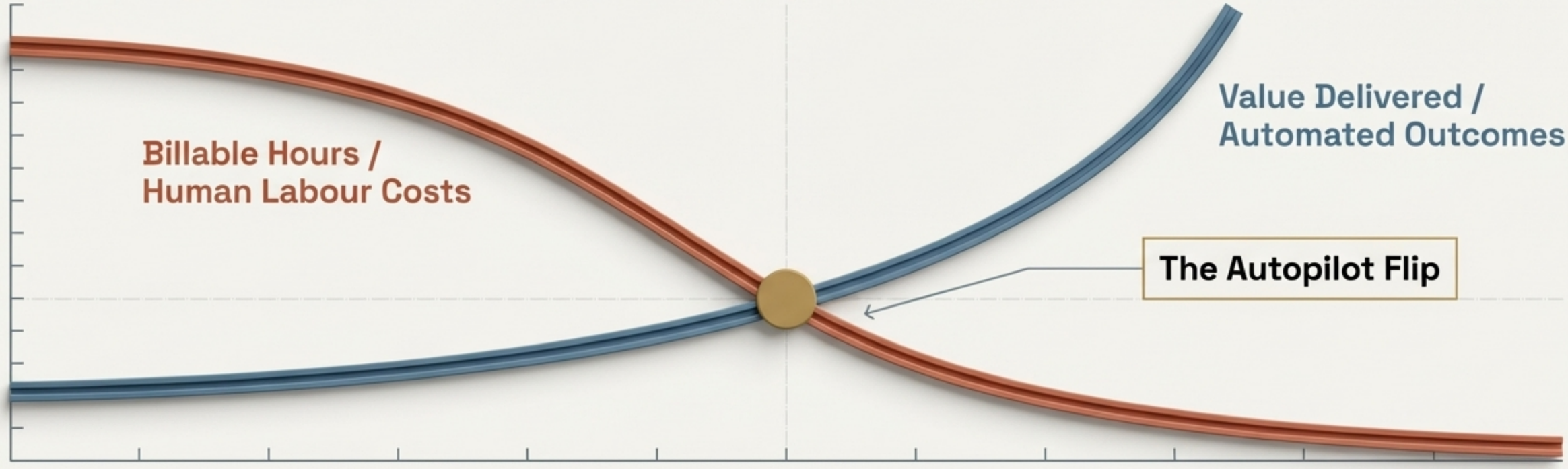
Impact Note: This turns dense market theses into practical knowledge graphs instantly, bridging the gap between human analysis and machine execution.

The Transition from Copilots to Autopilots

Investor Julien Bek's analysis reveals a massive disruption for industries selling time and expertise.

	The Copilot World (Old)	**The Autopilot World (New)**
AI's Role	A helpful tool assisting a human worker.	An autonomous executor delivering the outcome.
Cost Structure	High overhead. Requires expensive human specialists to operate the tools.	Near-zero marginal cost. Skills all the way down replace manual execution.
Pricing Model	Input-based. Charging for software seats or billable hours worked.	Outcome-based. Charging for the completed result.
Scalability	Limited by human headcount and hours in a day.	Infinite scale. Volume increases without corresponding labour increases.

Service Firms are Becoming Software Firms



Welcome to the Outcome Economy.

The next $1T company will be a software company masquerading as a services firm. You no longer by buy a drafting tool; you buy a completed legal document. Service companies adopting this model unlock pure software-like profit margins and global reach.

Packaging Expertise as a Product

Companies and individual experts can now package highly specialised domain knowledge into SKILLS.md formats to sell or license. Skills become the atomic unit of monetisation, smaller and faster to deploy than legacy software.

Four Pillars of Enterprise Disruption

Pricing Dynamics

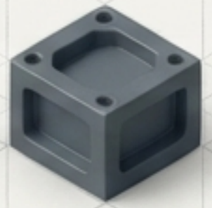
Outcome-Based Everything. The end of billable hours and per-user SaaS seats. Revenue is tied directly to delivered results.

Cost Structures

Exponential Efficiency. Industries facing chronic labour shortages can suddenly scale operations without hiring more personnel.

Market Access

Open-Source Democratisation. Smaller players with deep domain knowledge can build capabilities that rival major tech incumbents.

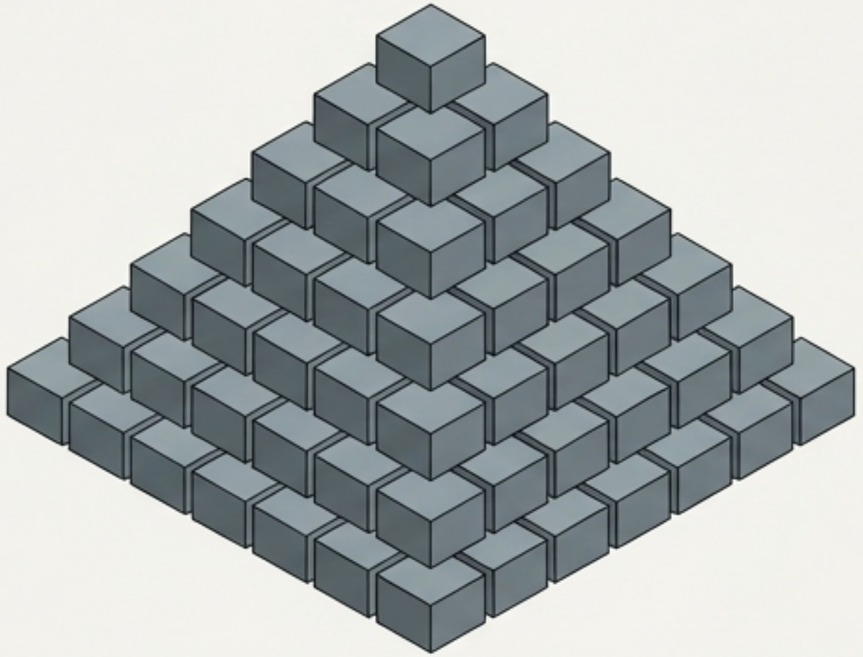


Margin Expansion

Software Margins for Services. Professional services adopt the unit economics of software companies, where marginal delivery costs approach zero.

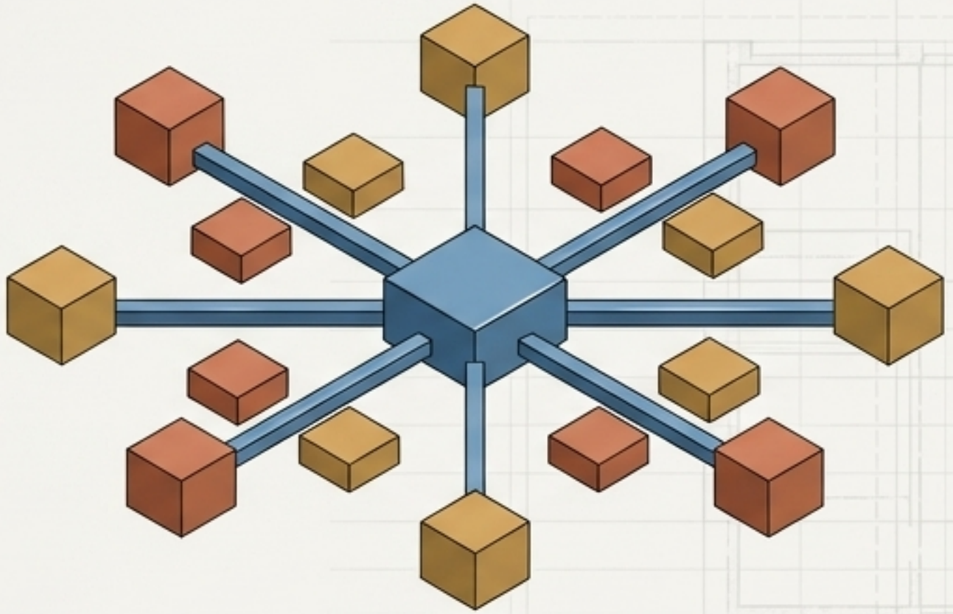
From Task Execution to Skill Orchestration

Before: The Pyramid



A workforce structure built on humans grinding out routine, manual tasks. Constrained by headcount.

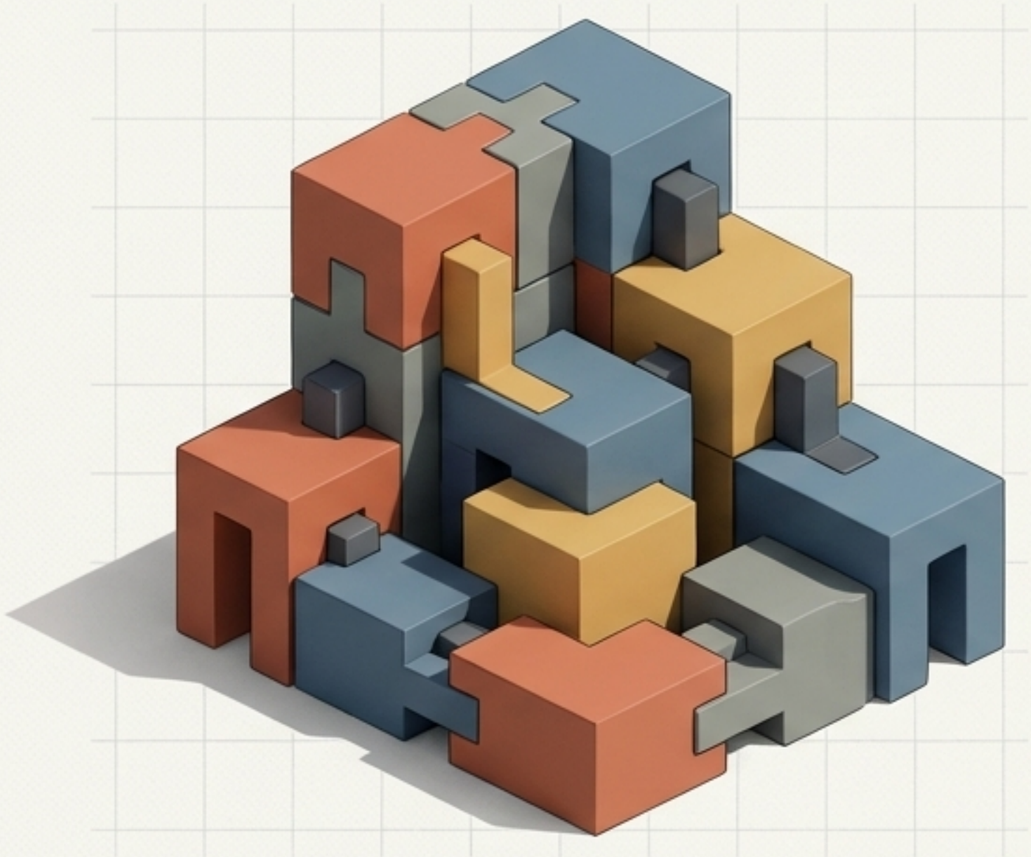
After: The Constellation



A single Skill Orchestrator managing an interconnected web of automated AI skills. Directing outcomes, not tasks.

> “Attention to detail and robust harnesses are the new value frontiers. — Kingsley Idehen
>
> Routine tasks vanish. Employees who master packaging their unique expertise into reliable AI skills will become the premium talent of the next decade.

The Revolution is Modular



01 Monolithic software is obsolete; composable, AI-native skills are the new baseline.

02 Value is shifting entirely from assisting human labour to delivering automated outcomes.

03 Expertise is now a packageable, scalable software asset.

The foundation for the next economy is open and ready to plug in. Businesses that start experimenting with composable skills today will be the architects of tomorrow's markets.