AI BASICS // CHOOSING A PLATFORM

ChatGPT: intelligence you think with

Before you decide what ChatGPT can do for your business, get clear on what it was actually built to do.

> **Travis's short version:** ChatGPT isn't a magical oracle, a toy or an employee. It's something you think with, not something that acts for you. You bring the intent, it helps you reason through it, and you still decide what happens next.

Three traps people fall into

When ChatGPT comes up, the conversation usually goes one of two ways: either it can pretty much do anything, or it's handy and saves a bit of time here and there. Both end up in the same place, with people using it for a job it was never meant to do.

The trap	What it looks like	Where it goes wrong
The magical oracle	Asking huge questions and trusting the answer blindly.	You get burnt when ChatGPT is confidently wrong.
The toy	Treating it as a bit of fun that provides a few shortcuts.	You completely miss where it can create real leverage.
The employee	Handing it responsibility and giving it authority.	The most dangerous one: you stop your own internal checks and give it an authority it was never built to have.

Once you see it as a thinking partner, the magic disappears and it becomes extremely useful.

Where it sits in the AI stack

A lot of the confusion comes from here. ChatGPT doesn't live inside your systems. It sits right next to the person using it: it's the interface. Think of the stack in three layers:

1. **Intent (top).** This is where you decide what you think should happen. ChatGPT helps you here.
2. **Reasoning (middle).** Models connect the dots, weigh your options and make sense of ambiguity. ChatGPT reasons here.
3. **Reality (bottom).** Your systems, your data and your permissions, for example something like AWS. ChatGPT never decides what's actually allowed to happen at this layer.

Most problems show up when people expect that thinking to magically turn into execution. Once you can see that separation, a lot of the odd behaviour starts to make sense.

You're giving it intent, not instructions

When you prompt ChatGPT, you're not really giving it instructions. You're giving it intent: what you're trying to do, what you know, and where things are still a little fuzzy. It reasons through the ambiguity and forms a plan, explaining its thinking in language you can actually work with. That's why it feels so intuitive.

It gives you a map, but it doesn't give you the keys. The thinking is there, but the judgment is still yours.

Strengths and limitations

What it's incredible at	What it doesn't do
Thinking, learning, brainstorming, explaining and framing problems. It can propose actions, explain the trade-offs and recommend next steps.	It doesn't act, it doesn't feel the consequences of the plan it makes, and it doesn't own the decisions. That's not a flaw: it's intentional in the way it was designed.

Where hallucinations come from

A hallucination isn't a model being careless. It's the model doing its job without enough grounding or context. It's trying to be helpful, but when it doesn't have the facts or the full picture, it fills the gaps with logic that sounds right. That's why it sounds so confident, and that's why hallucinations are dangerous: not because they're random, but because they're confident.

The should and the can

ChatGPT helps you decide what **should** happen. Reality and your systems decide what **can** happen, checking against guardrails and limitations, requiring approvals and handling the final execution. That separation isn't a weakness: it's the reason ChatGPT works at all. It keeps thinking and control apart.

The bottom line

ChatGPT is the right tool when a human is in the loop: when the problem is messy and your judgment matters more than the speed of execution. It isn't here to replace decision-making, it's here to accelerate it. **You bring the intent, it helps you think, and you make the call.**

Want to talk this through for your business?

Book a free 15-minute call. We'll look at your situation and give you a straight answer, with no jargon and no sales pitch.

Let's Chat

Opens the request form on our website. Free, no obligation.