AI BASICS // CHOOSING A PLATFORM

How to choose the right AI platform: start with fit, not features

AWS, Azure, Salesforce, Google Cloud, open source: they can all work. The trick is knowing which one works for you.

> **Travis's short version:** there's no shortage of AI platforms, and it's easy to hit option overload. Instead of chasing the flashiest demo, work out where your team sits, what data you have and what problem you want to solve first. The right fit usually becomes obvious.

Think of it as a spectrum

On one end you've got **control-first** platforms, built for teams that want to customise everything from data pipelines to model orchestration. On the other end are **convenience-first** platforms: the more plug-and-play tools for businesses with minimal setup. Most companies land somewhere in between, and the trick is knowing where your team really sits: how technical you are, what data you have and what problem you're looking to solve first.

Where each platform fits

Platform	Best fit if...	What to know
Salesforce (Einstein)	Your world revolves around sales, service or marketing, and you already use Salesforce.	AI is baked into the CRM: predicting behaviour, suggesting next best actions and automating follow-ups. No data scientists or developers needed. It just works where you work.
AWS	You've got engineering capability and want to train your own models or orchestrate multi-agent systems.	The playground for builders. Full control, but with it comes complexity. Not the fastest to start up, but incredibly powerful once it's rolling.
Azure	Your company already runs on Microsoft.	The enterprise comfort zone. The Azure stack slots right in, with the power of OpenAI models plus enterprise-grade governance, compliance and security.
Google Vertex AI	Your team's strength is data, analytics, modelling and insights.	Excels at training, fine-tuning and scaling custom models, and it's one of the strongest for multimodal AI: text, image and video in one place.
Open source	You're a startup, consultant or innovator who wants speed and freedom without vendor lock-in.	The builder's lab. The trade-off is that you're responsible for stitching it together: hosting, scaling and maintaining. It's the route I took training the image classification model for my AI-driven property search app.

Three questions to ask yourself

1. **What's your technical capability?** Do you have developers, or just domain expertise?
2. **Where does your data live?** Is it inside a CRM, in the cloud, or in spreadsheets?
3. **What's the first problem you're trying to solve?** In other words, which features should you be prioritising?

Once you can map those, the fit usually becomes a lot more obvious.

The bottom line

The best AI platform isn't the one with the flashiest demo. It's the one that meets you where you are and scales as you grow. The goal isn't to *adopt* AI, it's to **apply it intelligently**, in ways that deliver traction, not just transformation slides. Because Intelligent Choice isn't about what's possible, it's about what actually works.

Want to talk this through for your business?

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