AI BASICS // CHOOSING A PLATFORM

Google Gemini: AI that understands situations, not just prompts

Before you ask how clever Gemini is, ask where it lives and what it's actually designed to do.

> **Travis's short version:** Gemini isn't just Google's chatbot. It's a native multimodal reasoning model sitting on top of Google Cloud's data muscle, which is why it behaves less like a tool and more like an agent that investigates before it acts.

First, the platform it's built on

Gemini isn't floating in space. It's embedded in a platform designed to understand data at massive scale. Like any serious cloud platform, Google Cloud gives a business three foundations:

Foundation	What it does	On Google Cloud
Compute	Runs your applications, services and AI workloads.	**Compute Engine** for virtual machines built for heavy workloads like AI training. **Cloud Run** for serverless containers that scale automatically with demand.
Storage	Holds everything from images and video to audio and sensor data.	**Cloud Storage**: scalable, globally accessible. Google has spent decades managing real-world data at insane scale, so this is their home turf.
Data and analytics	Makes sense of massive data sets in near real time and pulls signal out of noise.	**BigQuery**, a serverless data warehouse for querying huge data sets quickly. **Dataflow** for the pipelines that transform and move data, in batch or streaming.

Even before we say the word AI, Google Cloud already sees the world through data.

What Gemini adds on top

Gemini is a **native multimodal reasoning model**, designed to understand the world the way humans do. It takes text, images, video, audio, numbers and even code, not one by one but all at the same time, as one shared context. It forms a hypothesis, explores the situation and asks itself whether it has enough information to move forward. That's why it feels less like a tool and more like an agent.

And that distinction matters. Most co-pilots today are **task assistants**: great at drafting, summarising and responding. You ask, they answer. Gemini is designed to reason, explore and decide how to approach a problem, which makes it far better suited to complex systems with messy real-world data, where the next step isn't obvious. Instead of just helping people work faster, Gemini helps the system itself think better.

Seeing it in action: the crushed delivery

A customer sends in a photo of a crushed delivery along with a pretty frustrating message. Most systems see two separate files. Gemini sees a situation.

1. **It takes everything in at once.** The photo, the text and the order ID, together. It doesn't just scan for keywords.
2. **It forms a hypothesis.** Box damaged, delivery late. To me this looks like a shipping issue, not a warehouse mistake.
3. **It checks the facts.** It goes into your system to double-check. If a piece of the puzzle is missing, like a late scan from the carrier, it keeps looking and loops back until the story adds up. It only moves forward on evidence, not a hunch.
4. **It fixes the problem.** Not just a chat reply, but a real-world fix: it issues the refund and alerts the right team, explaining exactly why it made that call.

To the customer, a major relief. To the business, a system that finally thinks before it acts.

Strengths and trade-offs

Where it shines	The trade-off
It understands situations, not just prompts. It handles messy, real-world data naturally and is built to reason across multiple data types at the same time.	It can be overkill for simple one-off tasks. It needs really good data and context to shine. And it's not always the fastest option for basic automation.

The bottom line

Put simply: if you want help writing an email, Gemini might be a little too much. But if you're operating inside complex systems where data is messy, context matters and decisions depend on what's actually happening, **this is exactly what it was built for**. Gemini isn't trying to be the best AI for every task.

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.