



A MAY MEDIA FIELD GUIDE

What Is an AI Second Brain?

How we built a knowledge system our AI runs on, and what it now does for our clients every day.

THE BIG IDEA

What an AI second brain actually is

A written knowledge system your AI reads from **before** it does any work.

It starts every task already knowing your standards, your clients, and the mistakes you have already made. Nothing gets re-explained in each chat. The knowledge compounds.

THE FOUNDATION

The work runs on WAT

Workflows

Plain-language instructions for a task: the goal, the inputs, the steps. Written like a briefing for a teammate.

Agents

The decision-maker. Reads the right workflow and runs the steps in order. For us, that is Claude Code.

Tools

Deterministic code that executes: pulls data, writes files, updates records. Same result every time.

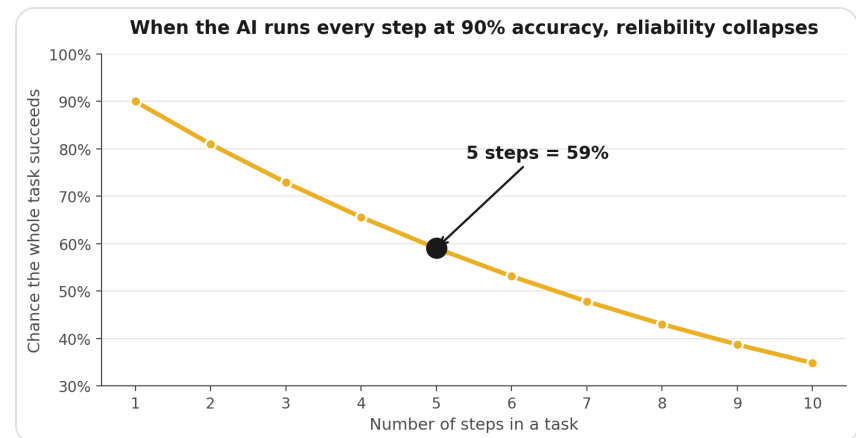
Let the AI do the thinking. Let plain code do the doing.

WHY THE SEPARATION MATTERS

Let AI run every step and reliability collapses

59%

Five steps, each 90% accurate, leaves the whole task right only about 59% of the time. So we move execution into code and let the AI reason. Tools stay reliable, the task survives.



THE HANDSHAKE

claude.md and agents.md

claude.md

The instructions file Claude Code reads the moment it opens a project. Our house rules for the agent.

agents.md

The open standard every other coding agent reads. Same idea, not locked to one tool.

Tip: keep one agents.md and point claude.md to it, so you only write the rules once.

CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE

Where the idea came from

Andrej Karpathy

His post LLM Knowledge Bases: keep your knowledge as a markdown wiki the AI builds and maintains. At a human scale you do not need fancy retrieval.

Nate Herk

His videos are where the WAT framework and the claude.md file first clicked, then how to turn notes into a connected wiki.

We fed both into Claude Code, talked through what fit an agency, and built our own version.

THE KEY DECISION

Two kinds of memory

The wiki · what is TRUE

Durable knowledge in plain markdown: rules, how our tools and workflows work, the quirks of each platform, client facts. Cross-linked like a graph.

The database · what HAPPENED

Task state and history: what ran, what is pending, what failed and why. You could use Supabase, Neon, or even a spreadsheet.

Splitting them is what lets a brand-new session pick up exactly where the last one stopped.

THE PAYOFF

It never loses its place, and it learns

Always picks the work back up

Close everything, walk away, open a fresh session days later. The AI reads what is pending and continues. No long re-briefing.

Gets better every time it fails

Identify the error, fix the code, verify, write the lesson into the wiki, move on. Each mistake is solved once, then it is permanent.

Revisions work the same way. Voice and brand preferences get saved and applied next time.

WHAT IT MADE POSSIBLE

Three systems it powers

Content planning pipeline

Researches what an audience asks, checks the AI answers and citations, and turns it into a quarter of blogs. Humans approve the strategy and the voice.

SEO and schema audit

Reviews technical SEO and structured data, fixes what is safe through the site's own tools, then verifies the live result.

News agents

Watch trusted sources, confirm a story across outlets, draft in each client's voice, then hold for human approval.

VALIDATION

Then Google published the same idea

Google's Open Knowledge Format (OKF) is a standard shape for AI-readable knowledge: markdown files, metadata headers, typed pages, an index, and links. It matched what we had already built.

+ An execution layer that runs the work

+ A separate memory for task state

+ Privacy tiers for client data

We are not chasing compliance. We live the same idea, plus the pieces an agency needs.

THE ONE THING TO TAKE

Write your knowledge down in plain text your AI can read, and split what is **true from what **happened**.**

That alone will change how much you can trust an AI with your real work.



WANT TO GO FURTHER?

Three ways to take the next step

Read the full post

maymedia.com/what-is-an-ai-second-brain

Learn to build it yourself

May Media Stars · maymedia.com/stars

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Jordan May · Director of SEO and AI Systems, May Media