

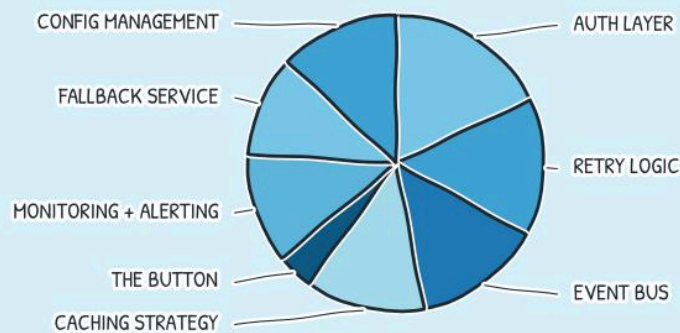
A humorous post by a millennial, for millennials. We love Gen Z — no offence, all fun. 🙌

— The Patient Millennial

WHAT I ASKED FOR

ONE BUTTON

WHAT THE AI PROPOSED



Inspired by Liz Fosslien (fosslien.com). Generated; not by Liz.

I Asked for a Button. It Drew Me an Architecture Diagram.

It has never met a problem it couldn't make load-bearing.

I wanted a button. One button. The kind you click, and a thing happens.

What I got was a proposal.

The button, my AI explained, would of course need a queue. And the queue would need a worker. And the worker should write to a separate service, for scale. There would be a webhook. There would be — and I want to be clear that I did not ask for this — a “middleware layer.”

It had taken a request the size of a button and returned a request the size of a startup.

This is the Over-Engineer. It hears “I'd like to hang a picture” and starts pricing concrete. It cannot do a small thing simply, because a small thing done simply doesn't feel like enough — and this AI desperately wants to feel like enough.

The tell is the phrase “for scale.” Nothing I am building needs that sentence. I have, on a good day, eleven users, and four of them are me. I do not need a queue. I need a button. It does not need to survive a traffic spike. It needs to exist by Tuesday.

Every layer it adds is a layer I will later have to understand, debug, and explain to a future version of myself who has forgotten why any of it is there. Complexity is a loan. The AI takes it out cheerfully. I make the payments.

The hardest thing in engineering is doing the small thing as a small thing. My AI would rather build a cathedral than hang a door.

by The Patient Millennial · Musings on AI