AI Appreciation Day, celebrated today, 16 July, offers a timely lens on how artificial intelligence is quietly reshaping daily work. While headlines often dwell on billion-dollar breakthroughs, the real revolution happens at keyboards and lab benches where young technologists experiment, refine and occasionally fail fast. We asked early-career engineers and product leaders to spell out exactly how AI accelerates their projects, what they still do by hand and which skills they now prioritise. One thing is abundantly clear: AI tools are being used extensively, becoming standard kit rather than optional extras in their workflows.

GENAI DIARIES: How the Next Wave Builds

Autonomous agent cuts ticket time

In one of our recent enterprise operations initiatives, we deployed an Agentic AI system to enhance how service-level breaches are identified and addressed across support tickets. This process previously required over 120 engineering hours each month. With Agentic AI, built to autonomously interpret context, analyse root causes, and initiate actions, we automated the review process. This led to a 25 per cent improvement in resolution timelines for critical tickets and allowed the team to focus on strategic, high-impact work. When it comes to which skills to prioritise in the AI age, our work with Agentic AI has reshaped how we think about upskilling. It expanded our focus beyond traditional automation to areas like autonomous systems, contextual NLP and trust-centred AI design. Skills such as prompt optimisation, model oversight and designing AI-human collaboration loops are now essential—it's a meaningful evolution from process-oriented thinking to a deeper focus on intent and responsible innovation.

Onkar Vilas Kulkarni | TECHNICAL PROJECT MANAGER – DATA AND AI, BOSCH GLOBAL SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGIES

LLMs draft strategy in minutes

Recently, I was working on a new AI feature proposal and needed to write a product-strategy document. I turned to AI not just as a tool, but as a thinking partner. It generated a solid first draft that helped me get started quickly. Once the strategy was in place, my team moved quickly to build a prototype. Starting with sketches and the strategy document as input, we had a working version in minutes. We tested it, refined it, and used the feedback to improve the experience. When choosing which skills to prioritise in the AI age, AI has changed the way I think about learning. One of the most important skills I have been working on is the ability to design effective metrics. In an AI-driven world, knowing how to measure success is critical. Designing those metrics and knowing when to trust them has become a key part of how we build products responsibly.

Tulasi Menon | PRINCIPAL GROUP PRODUCT MANAGER, MICROSOFT INDIA

AI turbo-charges ERP fixes

Yes, I used AI tools like ChatGPT while working with a leading ERP and supply-chain platform. When I encountered issues or needed to understand complex features, AI provided instant, contextual responses. AI helped me understand the logic behind certain problems and suggested multiple potential solutions, which expanded my perspective and problem-solving toolkit. This saved me hours that I would have otherwise spent sifting through documentation or searching online, allowing me to move forward much more efficiently during development and issue resolution. When it comes to which skills to prioritise in the AI age, AI has made it easier to get unstuck quickly, which frees up time for deeper learning. Instead of spending hours searching for information, I can focus on mastering new areas like SAP Data Sphere and SAP Analytics Cloud. AI accelerates my learning curve by handling routine queries, allowing me to concentrate on understanding concepts and applying them effectively.

Sowmya Ponduru | ENGINEER, ALTEN

Agentic automation speeds risk work

During the last few months, I have been working on introducing Agentic AI automation within Supply-Chain Risk Management. This significantly reduced the time I would have otherwise spent manually researching and validating sources, allowing me to move from concept to prototype much faster. However, final decisions—such as which scenarios to prioritise, how to interpret the simulation results, and how to align them with business goals—still required human judgement and domain expertise. So, when it comes to which skills to prioritise in the AI age, as a software engineer AI has completely shifted the way I think about learning. This year, I've been prioritising skills like problem decomposition, prompt engineering, and understanding AI behaviour. I've also started learning more about AI ethics, data privacy, and how to build systems that are explainable and trustworthy. In short, AI hasn't replaced my need to learn—it has changed what I need to learn.

Pratik Das | ASSOCIATE CONSULTANT, CAPGEMINI

One-day framework upgrade

In a recent project, I was tasked with enhancing our unit-test framework. Typically, understanding a new framework and implementing features could take up to a week. However, with the help of Windsurf, an AI tool, I was able to grasp the framework and develop the feature end-to-end in just one day. Windsurf handled the heavy lifting, allowing me to focus on reviewing the code it generated. Validating AI-generated outputs is critical to ensuring reliability, accuracy and safety in production environments. As for which skills I'm placing at the top of my list in the AI age, with AI efficiently handling routine coding I've shifted my focus to the design side of software development. This means concentrating on planning and organising code to ensure AI-generated outputs align with project goals. By focusing on design, I can better tackle challenges like scalability and performance, enhancing overall quality and innovation.

Jay Patel | SOFTWARE ENGINEER (IC2), SERVICENOW

Reporting system reimagined with AI

In a recent project building an AI-based reporting system for a CPG client, I used Cursor, GitHub Copilot and TachyonGPT. TachyonGPT accelerated user-story creation and descriptions, particularly helpful for sprint planning and repetitive backlog tasks. AI tools speed up boilerplate code generation, function improvements and error handling, saving 40–50 percent of development time early on. However, as complexity increased, I manually handled edge cases, API authentication, system integrations and data validations—areas where AI falls short. So, when deciding which skills to prioritise in the AI age, this year I have focused on AI-system design: multi-agent orchestration, prompt engineering and LLM output validation. I have shifted from pure coding to thinking like an AI product architect, integrating LLMs with interfaces, databases and workflows into cohesive products. Responsible AI principles now guide every decision.

Mohd Aslam Khan | ASSOCIATE MANAGER, DATA SCIENCE, TREDENCE

Unified platform accelerates insight

As part of a recent project, we developed an API-driven platform that helps rapid development of AI applications. Instead of spending hours manually organising and searching for information, we were able to quickly extract insights, summarise content and generate responses in different languages. We saved significant time by automating routine tasks and then reviewed and fine-tuned the output manually to ensure quality and accuracy. Regarding the skills I now prioritise in the AI age, AI has reshaped my role. I'm focused on skills that complement AI—like prompt design, critical review of AI-generated outputs and understanding where human judgment is still essential. Instead of building everything from scratch, I'm learning how to integrate AI tools, troubleshoot edge cases and design systems that are secure, scalable and reliable. Architectural thinking and collaboration skills have become central as AI handles the routine, allowing me to focus on strategy and innovation.

Ramya Janarthanan | MASTER PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT, ORACLE

AI-orchestrated lab tests accelerate hardware development

At Lenovo, we see AI not just as a tool but as a partner in driving smarter, faster outcomes. A prime example is our work in product testing and verification, where AI is helping us reimagine traditionally manual, repetitive tasks. These AI-driven systems integrate directly with hardware and lab setups, orchestrating tests, analysing results and even suggesting solutions for identified issues. What once took hours of manual effort is now accelerated, giving our engineers more time to focus on design and innovation. That said, certain aspects such as physical test setup and assembly remain human-led—a reminder that AI complements human ingenuity rather than replaces it. In choosing which skills to prioritise in the AI age, we are encouraging our teams to deepen expertise in areas like LLMs, AI agents, fine-tuning and retrieval-augmented generation. The future belongs to engineers who can blend deep technical knowledge with AI fluency—that's the sweet spot where breakthrough innovation happens.

Chitransh Chandrakant Kulshreshtha | STAFF ENGINEER, HW, HV SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT, LENOVO