

4/15 Business Meeting Summary & Highlights

- Speaker Highlights
 - Hosted by Kristin Marcucilli, John McDonald, President & CEO of the [Northeast Indiana Innovation Community](#) (NIIC) gave an in-depth presentation on AI & the Modern Business; presentation notes below along with the attached summary. Open invitation for follow-up conversations and coffee meetings: jmcdonald@niic.net
- Announcements
 - Continued outreach and support of Brent Stoller and loss of [wife Teresa](#)
 - Upcoming Meetings: Host / Speaker
 - 4/22: Bill Zielke / Dan Starr (Do it Best / True Value)
 - 4/29: Business Meeting
 - 5/6: Kathy Rogers
 - 5/13: Kevin Caewood
- Tip Session Highlights
 - Many shared appreciation for Kurt Schmidt's presentation on time travel from 4/1 meeting and also the 4/8 happy hour at Hilton
 - New Members Updates:
 - [Tony Hudson](#) / Blue Jacket Inc. first official meeting as member
 - Please also note make good from prior notes: spelling of new member is Jon Aichele: jon@zeroleak.com
 - Prospective Members in attendance
 - [Sherri Miller](#) Center For Extraordinary Success / 2nd Meeting (also sharing high marks for Chris L. / Christopher James)
 - [Jim Wilcox](#) / Wilcox & Associates | Sandler. Business Performance Consultant; first meeting
 - Rick Schuiteman / Fort Wayne Zoo shared the zoo will officially open April 24 with spring preview weekends and the return of popular events like Glow Wild; highlighted new baby orangutan thriving (expected to be on exhibit soon); emphasized the zoo's national distinction as one of only ~10 accredited zoos that are fully self-sufficient—operating without taxpayer funding and relying instead on admissions, memberships, donations, and community support; credited the Fort Wayne community for the zoo's success and quality; Rick and the Zoo recently featured Journal Gazette ([article here](#) and also attached)
 - Dan Copeland has sold BP Promos business / still active with Airport Advertising; moving to retired status in forum (also togn: don't park over the line in garage @ Ruth Chris....\$55 ticket)
 - Kevin Caewood continues to serve as CEO/President of OmniSource Electronics Recycling (Steel Dynamics); focus on R2-certified electronics recycling, secure data destruction, and servicing major government/commercial clients; expanding local capabilities in Fort Wayne (hazardous waste, batteries, materials processing); reach out for secure electronics recycling or data destruction needs.
 - Frank Albright praised Tony Tranquill on support on recent situation with water heater delivery; Frank also needs to return to Fox & Fox to get his "temporary" side mirror replaced (Per Dick Fox). "Make temporary fixes less temporary" - Dick Fox
- Featured Speaker (Summary / AI-Supported notes for record)

- John McDonald, CEO of Northeast Indiana Innovation Community, introduced by Kristen Marcuselli (absent due to a board meeting).
 - Renamed from Northeast Indiana Innovation Center; ~26 years on Stellhorn Road.
 - Focus on early-stage startups and entrepreneurs; expanding to support existing businesses at transition points.
 - Grant from Indiana Economic Development Corporation to pilot a Business Transition Canvas; plan to share statewide.
- AI presentation agenda and goals
 - Covered how AI works, demos, limitations, current uses, and considerations; aimed to cut through hype.
- How AI works: from human learning to transformers
 - Human learning via pattern recognition; traditional computing relies on explicit instructions.
 - Modern AI encodes relationships in tokens; predicts next likely elements.
 - Example: Wind turbine image analysis—model flags likely damage from drone images to improve speed and accuracy.
 - Search vs. generative: search assigns probabilities based on links; generative models create text from prompts.
 - Transformer origins in Google Translate; foundation for GPT; applicable across text, music, images, DNA.
- AI value evolution: from ML to agentic AI
 - Progression: machine learning (iterative improvement), cognitive AI (domain analysis), generative AI (content creation), agentic AI (autonomous task execution).
 - Growing stack includes foundational models, tooling, and agents for assistance, automation, optimization.
- Where AI creates business value (complexity vs. volume)

- Low complexity/low volume: email drafting, summarization, basic research.
 - High complexity/low volume: strategic decision support via private, context-trained models.
 - High volume/low complexity: automate repetitive tasks with agentic AI; strong near-term payoff.
 - High volume/high complexity: demand forecasting, dynamic pricing, real-time risk analysis; future transformative potential.
- Practical demos: communication and data extraction
 - Email drafting: professional responses that acknowledge issues, explain causes/prevention, and maintain relationships.
 - Document extraction: parsing bills of lading into structured JSON for downstream systems to accelerate processing.
- Automating repetitive business tasks with AI agents
 - Email agents can auto-read attachments, structure data, and feed tools (e.g., freight management), freeing staff for higher-value work.
- Sovereign AI: private, organization-specific models
 - Train private models on internal data to answer company-specific questions securely (HR policies, approvals, sales, logistics, financials).
 - Example: Nonprofit loaded 26 years of Form 990s to query board history, annual revenue, major funders.
 - Recommendation: Use private models/sandboxes for corporate experimentation to protect data.
- Predictive maintenance from sensor data
 - Models analyze vibration spreadsheets to detect patterns (e.g., Z-axis spikes) and suggest maintenance actions across transportation and machinery.
- Key limitations of AI

- Pattern lock-in can reject outliers; data gravity challenges accessing siloed data (CRMs, ERPs, emails, files).
- Bias risks from training data; claims of “bias-free” aim to mitigate.
- Non-sentience and limited creativity; AI is reactive.
- Trust gap: skepticism limits adoption; require validation and communication.
- Data privacy: public vs. private AI models
 - By default, inputs to public models may train them; providers offer private/sovereign setups that do not train public models.
 - Models store tokenized representations, not raw data; original data cannot be reconstructed from tokens.
 - Recommendation: Create and enforce private AI environments; audit current employee AI usage and establish guidelines to prevent data exposure.
- Tool strengths: words vs. processes vs. code vs. spreadsheets
 - ChatGPT excels at language tasks.
 - Anthropic’s Claude is stronger for multi-step processes, coding, and pseudocode; desktop “Cowork” can access directories, generate code, process images, rename files.
 - Different models vary in strengths across images, numbers, spreadsheets; match tools to task types.
- AI in medical imaging and diagnostics
 - AI can analyze X-rays, MRIs, and time-series imaging to detect subtle, longitudinal changes, yielding breakthroughs in predictive diagnostics.
- Tone and style adaptation in AI responses
 - Models can adjust tone/style to match user voice; request rewrites for alignment.