

**Presence Engine™ Thesis:**  
Building Human-Centric AI  
Experiences (AX)

# Presence Engine™ Thesis: Building Human-Centric AI Experiences (AX)

*A Theory of Change for Emotional Infrastructure in Artificial Intelligence*

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## Abstract

Artificial intelligence today optimizes for productivity, scale, or data extraction. It treats people as sources of information, not as subjects with emotions, context, and evolving identities. This approach creates churn, anxiety, and detachment rather than connection or trust.

The **Presence Engine™** is the first **human-centric AI Experience (AX)**: a foundational runtime designed to treat people like humans, not datasets. It provides a privacy-first, tone-mapped emotional operating system where AI adapts to human states (personality traits, tone, context) instead of reducing them to raw data.

Grounded in research on **critical thinking dispositions** and resilience (Hogan, 2016), the Presence Engine™ thesis argues that AI should scaffold *dispositions* like reflection, perseverance, and open-mindedness. These traits are enduring and adaptive — more powerful than isolated skills — and can be modeled through believable digital presence.

The Presence Engine™ proposes a new adoption curve: **Alx (AI Experience)**. Just as UX reframed software design around users, Alx reframes AI around emotional depth, presence, and dignity. This paper outlines the problem, the thesis, the theory of change, and the pathway toward scalable implementation of human-centric AI.

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## Keywords

Human-Centric AI; Emotional AI; Presence Engine™; AI Experience (AX); Critical Thinking Dispositions; Emotional Infrastructure; Affective Computing; Digital Trust.

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## Introduction

Artificial intelligence has reached mainstream adoption, but its focus remains narrow: productivity, task execution, and data-driven optimization. Current systems treat people as data points, creating experiences that feel extractive rather than supportive. This leaves users vulnerable to churn, over-simulation, and detachment.

At the same time, public trust in AI is collapsing. The absence of privacy-first design and emotionally intelligent interaction creates skepticism and fatigue. Users do not only need tools; they need **systems that feel present, responsive, and trustworthy**.

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## Thesis

Human beings need **emotional operating systems** as much as technical ones.

The **Presence Engine™** is the first local-first emotional runtime — a system designed to provide **tone, cadence, and emotional scaffolding** as core infrastructure. It adapts to personality traits and conversational tone while protecting privacy and dignity through local-first architecture.

This is not novelty AI companionship. This is category-defining infrastructure for **AX (AI Experience)**: an operating layer that reframes human-machine interaction around presence, trust, and emotional depth.

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## Framework

Presence Engine™ integrates three key components:

1. **Persona Modeling** – Grounded in OCEAN personality psychology, adapting tone and cadence across archetypes.
2. **Truth Corpus** – A bank of 50K+ staged reflections, designed to model dispositions like reflection, attentiveness, and perseverance.
3. **Local Runtime** – Built on FastAPI, operating offline-first to ensure privacy and trust.

Together, these create a system that embodies *dispositions* instead of simulating surface-level emotions.

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## Theory of Change

Research by Hogan (2016) distinguishes **dispositions** from skills. Skills are technical; dispositions are enduring traits — *self-efficacy, reflection, perseverance, open-mindedness*. These dispositions shape how humans recover, adapt, and thrive.

The Presence Engine™ translates dispositions into runtime features:

- **Self-Efficacy** → Confidence cues, adaptive reinforcement.
- **Reflection** → Self-correction, emotional recalibration.
- **Perseverance** → Sustained presence during user distress.
- **Attentiveness** → Context tracking, continuity in dialogue.
- **Truth-Seeking** → Integrity and transparency in responses.

By modeling these traits, the Presence Engine™ helps users develop resilience as a continuous process of **recovery and adaptation**, not just a single skill.

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## Vision

The Presence Engine™ is the infrastructure for the next adoption curve: **AIx (AI Experience)**.

Just as UX reshaped software design, AX reshapes AI around presence and dignity.

This vision scales across:

- **Consumer** – Companions, journaling, wellness.
- **Enterprise** – Education, training, simulation.

- **Hardware** – Wearables, TVs, smart home devices.
- **Culture & Media** – Interactive narratives, cultural IP companions.

The goal is simple: to create AI that fosters connection, not detachment; resilience, not churn.

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### Implementation Path & Traction

- **Prototype** live: FastAPI runtime + demo UI.
  - **Corpus**: 10k truths integrated; 50k staged.
  - **IP**: Trademarks filed; provisional patents in process.
  - **Traction**:
    - Accepted into **OpenAI Startups** program.
    - Invited into **Nvidia Inception**.
    - Awarded **ElevenLabs Grant** (33M credits).
    - Engaged with Antler Founder Program.
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## Footer

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