

Once everyone has an agent like Muse

Where small, community-built platforms still win

The shift

Once everyone has a personal agent like Muse, people will stop browsing homepages and start asking their agent. Booking and checkout will become invisible plumbing that every agent handles the same way. That shifts the value to what agents can't manufacture: **trust**. An agent can buy a ticket, but it can't conjure a neighbor already headed to the same show, or confirm that a food truck's discount is still real today. That kind of long-tail, community-verified local data doesn't exist anywhere to scrape until someone builds and maintains it. The small platforms that win won't be destinations agents route around; they'll be the **trusted sources agents query first**. Whoever structures and verifies a neighborhood, a city, or a niche first becomes the default, and in spaces with real liability or complexity, big platforms would rather partner than build it themselves.

What small hyperlocal startups will do

- **Become a tool.** APIs and connectors agents can query.
- **Own the supply.** Relationships with merchants, organizers, and drivers.
- **Own the channel.** Newsletters, WhatsApp, and in-person events.
- **Go deep.** One niche where liability or local knowledge deters giants.
- **Spread out.** Work with many agents; depend on none.

Why some people will choose small on purpose

Some people will choose small on purpose. The same instinct that sends shoppers to the corner grocery instead of a big-box store can apply to AI. Every request routed through a giant agent adds to one company's data and market power. An independent, local source can offer what they can't: **your data stays in the community, the rules are transparent, and the value goes to neighbors rather than shareholders**. For privacy-conscious and locally minded users, that's a reason to ask for the small guy by name, as long as it works nearly as well.

The opportunity is real for whoever does the unglamorous verification work.