

# Luke F. Walton

San Diego, California

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## Research Interests

AI ethics; moral responsibility; answerability; human authorship; meaningful human control; philosophy of technology; machine ethics; moral status of artificial systems; generative AI; agentic systems; AI governance; automation bias; answer-engine optimization; human–AI collaboration.

## Research Profile

Luke F. Walton is an independent researcher working on AI ethics, moral responsibility, and philosophy of technology. His current work examines how responsibility is preserved or lost when generative and decision-support systems shape the evaluative frames through which human decisions are made.

His research develops the idea of **human authorship**: the answerable exercise of judgment over a machine-mediated action’s ends, standards, verification, acceptance, and final form. The central claim of this work is that the important responsibility question in AI governance is not whether artificial systems are conscious, but whether humans and institutions preserve answerable judgment over what is done through them.

Walton writes from practice as the founder of Surmado, Inc., where he builds AI-orchestration systems for small businesses. That work informs his interest in design norms that preserve human authorship rather than merely keeping a human nominally “in the loop.”

## Manuscripts and Preprints

Walton, Luke F. “The Decision No One Authored: The Answerability Gap in Generative AI.” Preprint, v1.0, June 2026.

This paper argues that meaningful human control can preserve attribution while leaving open a deeper answerability gap: humans may remain connected to AI-shaped outcomes without having exercised judgment over the evaluative frame that made the decision what it was. It

develops “human authorship” as the answerable exercise of judgment over a machine-mediated action’s ends, standards, verification, acceptance, and final form.

A companion project extends this account to answer-engine optimization, generative search, and the laundering of authorship in AI-mediated answer surfaces.

## **Selected Talks and Presentations**

Keynote Panelist, “AI Maturity in 2026: Building and Enabling the Modern Marketing Team.” AI for Marketers Summit, Global Strategic Management Institute. May 14, 2026.

Panelist, “The AI Playbook for Social Media Teams.” Social Media Strategies Summit / Global Strategic Management Institute. November 13, 2025.

## **Professional and Technical Appointments**

### **Founder & Chief Executive Officer**

Surmado, Inc.

Founded and lead an AI-native software company focused on managed web presence, AI visibility, search infrastructure, and customer acquisition systems for small businesses. The company’s work includes site transformation, answer-engine optimization, AI-assisted content workflows, lead capture, customer communication, and human approval systems.

### **Senior Marketing Manager**

Amazon | 2024–Present

Lead global paid media strategy and governance for seller-facing marketing programs, including AI-assisted marketing systems, agency workflows, and global execution standards.

Selected recognition: Amazon AI Bar Raiser; Amazon “Bias for Action” Award, 2025; AWS Bedrock Data Chunking Challenge Winner.

### **Associate Director, Marketing**

NAMM | 2022–2024

Led digital marketing strategy, global event marketing, AI adoption initiatives, and cross-functional marketing operations for an international music industry association.

### **Marketing Manager**

NAMM | 2019–2022

Directed content strategy, marketing communications, digital campaigns, and audience development for NAMM events and member programs.

### **Copywriter / Marketing Coordinator**

NAMM | 2018–2019

Produced marketing copy, trade show communications, case studies, email campaigns, and member-facing content.

### **Creative Project Manager, Marketing and Operations**

Tiny Giant Productions | 2014–2018

Managed creative, marketing, and production projects for musicians, engineers, record labels, film and television agencies, and commercial clients.

### **Operations Specialist**

Google | 2013–2014

Supported Google Glass operations during the product's early commercialization phase, including technical support, QA, enterprise and developer relations, sales, and event demonstrations.

### **Creative Trainee, Columbia Pictures**

Sony Pictures Entertainment | 2012–2013

Supported executive and creative operations within Columbia Pictures.

## **Teaching and Professional Education**

Generative AI Instructor and Speaker, 2025–Present.

Develop and deliver professional training on practical generative AI implementation, agentic workflows, AI adoption, and responsible use for working professionals and marketing organizations.

## **Education**

### **Master of Business Administration (MBA)**

San Diego State University, 2021.

### **Bachelor of Music (B.M.), Popular Music**

University of Southern California, 2013.

## **Research Experience**

### **Graduate Research Assistant to Dr. Victoria Krivogorski**

San Diego State University, Accounting and Economics | 2019–2021.

Supported academic research in business, accounting, and economics during graduate study.

## **Certifications**

Building LLM Applications with LangChain. Amazon Web Services, 2025.

Building LLM Applications with Bedrock Agents. Amazon Web Services, 2025.

Additional certifications in AWS, AI, responsible AI, analytics, paid media, and digital marketing.

## **Creative Work**

Recording artist, songwriter, producer, and composer. Selected releases and collaborations have appeared through Sub Pop, Sony Japan, Armada Music, Indiemono, and Beforner.

Additional work includes commercial music production, original compositions, podcasting, and narration projects.

## **Languages**

English — Native or bilingual proficiency.

Japanese — Professional working proficiency.