

The bots are here!

A Look At The Dawn Of AI & Its Capacity To Benight The Toiling Human World

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Setting: A corporate office

Manager: I need someone to write a business report.

ChatGPT: On it!

Manager: And craft its computer graphic.

Dall-E2: Last stroke left.

Manager: An ad rem video alongside?

Lumen5: Been on it since 0.0009 seconds.

Manager: And composing some royalty-free music to accompany it all?

Soundraw: Done!

Human: How can I help, miss?

Manager: Umm...by not extending any help, perhaps. Thank you!

A quiet revolution powered by AI is thusly restructuring the workscape. From industrial units to meeting halls, these bots are calling shots, all while humans are forced to adapt to a strange reality where they aren't needed much and are asked to stay away. Would this AI endow our workforce with unthinkable power or challenge it in ways unimaginable? Let's sought to infer.

The substitution effect

The usage of AI has increased in the last decade. The true measure of its uptake can be seen in how it took ChatGPT only 60 days to reach its 100 millionth user, and the implications of this automation in the labour market are predicted to be just as meteoric. McKinsey & Company suggests that AI related techs are all set to displace 400-800 million jobs by 2030, forcing some 375 million humans out. Certain work profiles,

especially those referred to as the 'back-office jobs' like data entry, accounting, and other clerical posts are projected to face the storms to weather this transformation, making AI, for many, the worst of tech models to have ever been invented. History, however, begs to differ with this. For one look at its annals is enough to grasp how every tech shift that mankind has ever come across has only created more jobs than it has destroyed. In like manner, AI would give birth to new jobs - autonomous and electric vehicle specialists, AI and ML specialists etc. If predictions are to be believed, areas like vocational education and machinery repair would witness up to two million

new jobs. As for the existing profiles, roles like specialists, fintech engineers, data scientists, agricultural equipment operators, etc., would also grow by a whopping 30%. Give and take, they say, is the way of the world, and evidently so!

The operational effect

Though none can say the fact that technologies driven by AI will change the way we work, to tag this revolution as a 'creative substitution' would be highly inappropriate too. For this automation is for several, if not all, firms in the working world an unfair chance at clamping down on employee unionisation and cutting costs. Case in point - sudden lay-offs conducted by National Eating Disorders Association in May 2023, when the US firm's

helpline workers unionised against it. It also leads to a colossal loss of creativity. For AI, though adept at automating tasks, struggles with creative thinking. Writers Guild of America strike, anyone? If that wasn't enough, it is also believed to cause unwanted alienation, for not only would it make the human workforce feel estranged from the decision-making processes, but it would also exacerbate economic disparities. On the flipside, AI's rise is what has made it possible for us to shift our focus on the upskilling of individuals. To attain the same, public-private initiatives, Reskilling Revolution for one, are aiming to train one billion workers by 2030. A lot of emphasis is being laid on the need to cultivate soft skills as AI cannot replicate these. So, think about it and think long and hard - what good are these jobs that the bots can replace? For these machines might understand that they need to work, but they would always need a human to tell them what to work on and how.

All emerging technologies experience the Gartner Hype Cycle. As far as AI is concerned, we are currently undergoing the 'inflated expectations' phase wherein our expectations with this new intelligence are above its current capabilities. So, know that only when the reality sets in and the software's operational capacity ripens, would we be able to ascertain its true prowess. Till then, the key is to find the right balance between technological advancement and ensuring that no one is left behind!



Imaging: Deepak Sharma, GT Network

THE GT POLL

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- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Can't say

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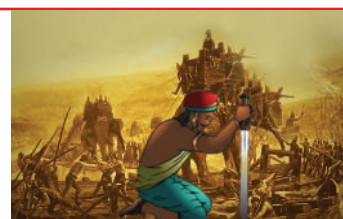
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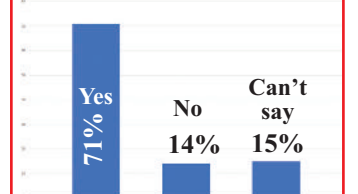
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