AI and Journalism Update

Is It Time To Freak Out Yet?

By

Mark McGee

The BBC had an interesting article recently titled <u>AI: How 'freaked out' should we be?</u> Interesting question. Answer? Well, maybe.

GPT-4

We've created GPT-4, the latest milestone in OpenAI's effort in scaling up deep learning. GPT-4 is a large multimodal model (accepting image and text inputs, emitting text outputs) that, while less capable than humans in many real-world scenarios, exhibits human-level performance on various professional and academic benchmarks. Open AI

You may remember that Open AI introduced ChatGPT-3.5 last November. It was all the rage at the time and people were taking it for *test runs* to see what it would do. Well, as of last month we now have GPT-4. Why?

Over the past two years, we rebuilt our entire deep learning stack and, together with Azure, co-designed a supercomputer from the ground up for our workload. A year ago, we trained GPT-3.5 as a first "test run" of the system. We found and fixed some bugs and improved our theoretical foundations. As a result, our GPT-4

training run was (for us at least!) unprecedentedly stable, becoming our first large model whose training performance we were able to accurately predict ahead of time. As we continue to focus on reliable scaling, we aim to hone our methodology to help us predict and prepare for future capabilities increasingly far in advance—something we view as critical for safety. Open AI

One question for journalists to ask is *why*, while another is *what*. What does GPT-4 do that GPT-3 doesn't do? Should people be concerned?

Open AI says that GPT-4 is more reliable, more creative, and better able to handle more nuanced instructions than GPT-3. That sounds good, but is it? Not everyone is on board with what's going on with the rapid advancement of AI technology —

Arati Prabhakar, director of the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy, says she is excited about the possibilities of AI, but she also had a warning.

"What we are all seeing is the emergence of this extremely powerful technology. This is an inflection point," she told a conference panel audience. "All of history shows that these kinds of powerful new technologies can and will be used for good and for ill."

Her co-panelist, Austin Carson, was a bit more blunt.

"If in six months you are not completely freaked the (expletive) out, then I will buy you dinner," the founder of SeedAI, an artificial intelligence policy advisory group, told the audience. BBC

Journalism Impact

One of the challenges with AI is how it will impact journalism. Here's a short quote from a previous article I wrote —

> In the past year, you have most likely read a story that was written by a bot. Whether it's a sports article, an earnings report or a story about who won the last congressional race in your district, you may not have known it but an emotionless artificial intelligence perhaps moved you to cheers, jeers or tears. By 2025, a bot could be writing **90% of all news**, according to Narrative Science, whose software Quill turns data into stories. Wharton School of Business

2025 is less than two years from now, so journalists need to stay on top of this story from a professional position.

News Consumer Position

What about from a news consumer position? Should viewers, listeners, and readers be concerned about where AI bots may take news reports? The answer is simple, but complex — *depends*.

What happens with AI news reporting depends on which direction it takes — toward common good or more power in the hands of governments and a small number of big companies. The "depends" could come down to which companies develop AI chatbots.

Amy Webb is the head of the Future Today Institute and a business professor at New York University. She is concerned that AI in the hands of the wrong people could involve more centralization of power, along with less data privacy. She doesn't hold out much hope that AI will end up under the control of the right people. She gives the optimistic scenario "only a 20% chance."

Which direction the technology goes, Ms Webb told the BBC, ultimately depends in large part on the responsibility with which companies develop it. Do they do so transparently, revealing and policing the sources from which the chatbots - which scientists call Large Language Models - draw their information?

The other factor, she said, is whether government - federal regulators and Congress - can move quickly to establish legal guardrails to guide the technological developments and prevent their misuse.

In this regard, government's experience with social media companies - Facebook, Twitter, Google and the like - is illustrative. And the experience is not encouraging.

"What I heard in a lot of conversations was concern that there aren't any guardrails," Melanie Subin, managing director of the Future Today Institute, says of her time at South by Southwest. "There is a sense that something needs to be done. And I think that social media as a

cautionary tale is what's in people's minds when they see how quickly generative AI is developing." BBC

Media Reports

GPT-4 has already been hacked, which raises another issue about AI chatbots. A computer science student at the University of Washington found a way to override GPT-4's safety mechanisms just one day after it was launched. You can read more about that here.

Here are some recent media and technology reports you may find helpful as you prepare stories about AI chatbots and the future of language models —

GPT-4 Will Make ChatGPT Smarter but Won't Fix Its Flaws — WIRED

5 jaw-dropping things GPT-4 can do that ChatGPT couldn't — CNN Business

OpenAI debuts Chat GPT-4, more advanced AI model that can describe photos, handle more texts — Fox Business

GPT-4 has arrived. It will blow ChatGPT out of the water — The Washington Post

ChatGPT reportedly made up sexual harassment allegations against a prominent lawyer — BusinessInsider

GPT-4 Is Exciting and Scary — The New York Times

Could GPT-4's language capabilities exacerbate disinformation and threaten jobs? — Poynter

OpenAI GPT-4 is Future of AI, But Security Concerns Remain — VPNOverview

What You Need To Know About GPT-4 The Just Released Successor To Generative AI ChatGPT, Plus AI Ethics And AI Law Considerations — Forbes

Everything You Need to Know About ChatGPT-4 — Time

What is GPT-4 and how does it differ from ChatGPT? — The Guardian

What the New GPT-4 AI Can Do — Scientific American

OpenAI's GPT-4 has some limitations that are fixable — and some that are not — GeekWire

GPT-4 poses too many risks and releases should be halted, AI group tells FTC — ARS Technica

Expedia shows off its neat GPT-4 chatbot for travel planning as Walmart starts integration — 9TO5Google

Has GPT-4 really passed the startling threshold of human-level artificial intelligence? Well, it depends — TechXplore

GPT-4 vs. ChatGPT-3.5: What's the Difference? — PC Magazine

What is GPT-4? What Educators Need to Know About ChatGPT's Next Chapter — Tech&Learning

Is GPT-4 already showing signs of artificial general intelligence? — NewScientist

Microsoft Research head Peter Lee on the applications of GPT-4 in medicine and life sciences — GeekWire

Microsoft researchers say GPT-4 is the beginning of a human-level AI - TweakTown

Microsoft Researchers Claim GPT-4 Is Showing "Sparks" of AGI — Futurism

GPT-4 is bigger and better than ChatGPT—but OpenAI won't say why — MIT Technology Review

GPT-4 vs. ChatGPT: just how much better is the latest version? — digitaltrends

Elon Musk, Apple co-founder, other tech experts call for pause on 'giant AI experiments': 'Dangerous race' — Fox News

GPT-4 becomes 30% more accurate when asked to critique itself — New Atlas

Generative AI: How can GPT-4 shape the corporate world? — Techzine

University of Washington professors on using ChatGPT in the classroom — GeekWire

1960s Radio News, © Mark McGee