

# ChatGPT – THE BLURST OF TIMES

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OpenAI's ChatGPT<sup>1</sup> version 3.5 was released in November 2022 to capture the market's attention before the launch of other similar bots. It certainly has done this, with over one million users in the first week of its launch, as announced by OpenAI CEO Sam Altman on Twitter, the social network recently purchased by Elon Musk, also a co-founder of OpenAI.

Screenshots went viral, fans expressed their astonishment in hyperbolic terms and OpenAI reached a 10 billion dollar deal with Microsoft to incorporate ChatGPT into the Bing search engine and other software products. Version 4 of ChatGPT is moving towards release, but there will be others: BlenderBot (Meta), Bard (Google) and the Baidu Chatbot – they are testing new ways to incorporate AI-powered bots into search.

The field will probably be littered with failures on the way to a consumer model. Bard (Google) based on LaMDA (Language Model for Dialogue Applications), is being trained to pull information online on recent events (ChatGPT stops at 2021). However, in a recent demonstration, the AI gave a wrong answer, and investors wiped more than \$100bn USD off the value of the parent company, Alphabet<sup>2</sup>. It seems that Generative AI is in a high-stakes race for tech supremacy, and investors will need deep pockets. Currently, it is estimated that OpenAI spends about \$3 million per month to run ChatGPT, that's about \$100,000 per day.

As I write, you will soon be able to get yourself a \$20 monthly subscription to ChatGPT<sup>3</sup>, but of course, the company does plan to monetise the software as, in Altman's words, the computing costs to run the chatbot are "eye-watering".

*"...and for a machine that is designed to produce strings of words that sound as good as possible in response to the words you give it – and not to provide you with information – that seems like the right use for the tool".<sup>4</sup>*

ChatGPT comes from a family of large language AI models developed for dialogue, known as generative pretrained transformers; note that they need to be 'pre-trained' or schooled in a body of data – we must hope that this data is verified and truthful! The bot will generate an output for you in response to your text inquiry, in the form of human-like dialogue. Its output has antecedents in a

1 'ChatGPT: Optimizing language models for dialogue', OpenAI (Blog Post, 30 November 2022) <<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>>.

2 Dan Milmo, 'Google AI chatbot Bard sends shares plummeting after it gives wrong answer', *The Guardian* (online, 9 February 2023) <<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/feb/09/google-ai-chatbot-bard-error-sends-shares-plummeting-in-battle-with-microsoft>>.

3 'Introducing ChatGPT Plus', OpenAI (Blog Post, 1 February 2023) <<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt-plus/>>.

4 Jonathan May, 'ChatGPT is great – you're just using it wrong', *The Conversation* (Blog Post, 3 February 2023) <<https://theconversation.com/chatgpt-is-great-youre-just-using-it-wrong-198848>>.

critical invention by Google in 2017 which enabled neural networks to better comprehend context and meaning by altering the way they tracked relationships in data sequences<sup>5</sup>.

For the app, factual accuracy isn't as important as stating something plausibly – as if by a knowledgeable human. This leaves the field wide-open for disinformation and you'll need an army of fact-checkers, presumably people. But wait! OpenAI is developing a tool to check if text has been AI-generated. In this,

*“OpenAI appears to be adopting a classic mode of technological solutionism: creating a problem, and then selling the solution to the problem it created”<sup>6</sup>.*

The checking tool, as OpenAI explains it, would likely yield a lot of false positives and negatives, sometimes with great confidence. One test had the bot concluding that the opening lines of the Book of Genesis was likely AI-generated.

Then there's the issue of judgement. A recent attempt to have the app write lyrics like Nick Cave yielded this:

*Verse 1: In the depths of the night, I hear a call/A voice that echoes, through the hall/It's a siren's song, that pulls me in/Takes me to a place, where I can't begin*  
*Chorus: I am the sinner, I am the saint/I am the darkness, I am the light/I am the hunter, I am the prey/I am the devil, I am the saviour*

The ChatGPT lyrics do read like an unintentional send-up. If you're familiar with his work it will make you laugh-out-loud. This story best illustrates what's lacking still in AI – judgement and character. The song-writer himself said: “The apocalypse is well on its way. This song sucks.”<sup>7</sup>

The boom in disinformation will spark calls to regulate the falsely generated assertions, audio and imagery<sup>8</sup>, but some say that acting too early may stifle innovation as uses are still evolving<sup>9</sup>.

Inevitably, someone has alluded to the opening line of Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities* – that this will be either the worst of times or the best of times, and I think the paradox of best and worst rings true. There has been in the last decade growing concerns about AI Ethics and AI Law; about inbuilt bias and the loss of human-centric decision making, and well, veracity. A thousand typing monkeys in the Simpsons eventually came up with “the blurst of times!”, but ChatGPT wouldn't make that mistake.

That this app will be available for access by other programs is a game-changer – those who already own or control vast bodies of knowledge data like Google or Microsoft are best poised to leverage its

- 5 'ChatGPT: Optimizing language models for dialogue', OpenAI (Blog Post, 30 November 2022) <<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>>.
- 6 Ian Bogost, 'ChatGPT is about to dump more work on everyone', *The Atlantic* (online, 3 February 2023) <<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2023/02/chatgpt-ai-detector-machine-learning-technology-bureaucracy/672927/>>.
- 7 Mark Savage, 'Nick Cave says ChatGPT's AI attempt to write Nick Cave lyrics 'sucks'', *BBC News* (online, 17 January 2023) <<https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-64302944>>.
- 8 See 'DALL-E 2', OpenAI (Web Page, 2023) <<https://openai.com/dall-e-2/>>.
- 9 'Forecasting potential misuse of language models for disinformation campaigns', OpenAI (Blog Post, 11 January 2023) <<https://openai.com/blog/forecasting-misuse/>>.

unique capabilities. Open AI will soon make available an API (Application Programming Interface) for ChatGPT; this being the software intermediary that enables two systems to communicate with each other and share information.

These days we can request to use Lexis Advance's API, to extract their text and information data as we have paid a license to use their content. A large legal platform with the rights to vast amounts of legal information and the R&D resources to 'school' the application, could present legal research and commentary the 'ChatGPT' way. We eventually won't have to search for ourselves, but we would need expertise to know that what we've been presented with is correct. This won't happen anytime soon – found that AI deployment is at 27% even with the high-achieving transformers<sup>10</sup>.

Legal platforms already have predictive data functions that will analyse for an outcome of a case. A Chatbot may present these findings mimicking the dialogue of an expert. Remember that AIs such as these are trained on large volumes of data gleaned from conversations between humans and the written word of humans. ChatGPT was 'school' up to 2021, that would be the limit of its current capabilities.

In legal services, a bot such as this would be an upgrade over existing tools used to generate forms, file papers in court, and answer simple legal queries. It could do some of the high-volume work performed by lawyers such as drafting wills and conveyancing, but not complicated advice.

Imagine an AI lawyer who argues on your behalf – and who is persistently polite and cheap in the process. The DoNotPay chatbot does just that using ChatGPT<sup>11</sup>. This robo-lawyer is clearly a challenge to some types of legal services. Included in its categories of expertise are: ticket disputes, customer service, government paperwork, price gouging, landlord protection, employee rights.

According to a 2022 report by the Legal Services Corp, "low-income Americans do not get any or enough legal help for 92% of their substantial civil legal problems."<sup>12</sup>

Clausebase, a Belgian start-up has already developed contract drafting software and has recently been beta-testing a ChatGPT-powered module. "The consensus of feedback was that the tool was useful, but imperfect", said Senne Mennes, the company's co-founder.<sup>13</sup>

It seems clear so far that interventions by humans in judgement, decision-making, analysis and even style will prevail for now, and that the bot, used judiciously, can assist and augment legal services.<sup>14</sup>

10 'Fuelling the AI transformation: Four key actions powering widespread value from AI, right now' (State of AI in the Enterprise, 5th edition, Deloitte, October 2022) <<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/deloitte-analytics/us-ai-institute-state-of-ai-fifth-edition.pdf>>

11 Noor Al-Sibai, 'GPT-powered chatbot pesters Comcast until they give you a discount', *The Byte* (Blog Post, 16 December 2022) <<https://futurism.com/the-byte/ai-chatbot-lawyer-customer-service>>.

12 Jenna Greene, 'Will ChatGPT make lawyers obsolete? (Hint: Be afraid)', *Reuters* (Blog Post, 10 December 2022) <<https://www.reuters.com/legal/transactional/will-chatgpt-make-lawyers-obsolete-hint-be-afraid-2022-12-09/>>.

13 James Purtill, 'How ChatGPT and other new AI tools are being used by lawyers, architects and coders', *ABC News* (online, 25 January 2023) <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2023-01-25/chatgpt-midjourney-generative-ai-and-future-of-work/101882580>>

14 'AI-written critiques help humans notice flaws', *OpenAI* (Blog Post, 13 June 2022) <<https://openai.com/blog/critiques/>>

*Can I trust that the AI is telling me the truth? ChatGPT is not connected to the internet, and it can occasionally produce incorrect answers. It has limited knowledge of the world and events after 2021 and may also occasionally produce harmful instructions or biased content.*<sup>15</sup>

## Limitations in summary

- Its knowledge is limited to the data it's been trained on.<sup>16</sup>
- It may accomplish what a search engine does, but in its current form, it can't crawl the web for answers yet.<sup>17</sup>
- There are some hard questions on privacy.<sup>18</sup>
- OpenAI cautions that ChatGPT has limited knowledge of events after 2021 and should not be used for advice.
- Is not error free and may provide incorrect and illogical answers.
- Issues of security, client privacy, and privilege can also arise through the transmission of data between your firm and ChatGPT.
- Content from third parties it was schooled on and that it may use indirectly may give rise to copyright concerns.<sup>19</sup>
- Lacks the lived experience of individuals, judgement and understanding of human nature.<sup>20</sup>
- Large language models might be misused for disinformation purposes.<sup>21</sup>

I will leave it to you as humans with judgment and experience to decide if this poses a risk to us as librarians and legal researchers. I would hazard an opinion that it will take some of the load of legal inquiry at some stage soon if implemented by the research platforms. It is predicted that one of the largest impacts of ChatGPT is on customer service agents – that could be us as librarians to some extent.<sup>22</sup> But I wouldn't despair, we may have our hands full verifying accuracy, schooling AIs, and doing the work of knowledge management – ensuring knowledge capture, storage, veracity, identification and transmission in whatever forms this may take, even the AI chats.

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- 15 'ChatGPT General FAQs', OpenAI (Web Page, 2023) <<https://help.openai.com/en/articles/6783457-chatgpt-general-faq>>
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  - 17 Aaron Holmes, 'Microsoft and OpenAI working on ChatGPT-powered Bing in challenge to Google', *The Information* (Blog Post, 3 January 2023) <<https://www.theinformation.com/articles/microsoft-and-openai-working-on-chatgpt-powered-bing-in-challenge-to-google>>
  - 18 Dennis Hillemann, 'Unveiling the crucial 5 GDPR obstacles of ChatGPT that can't be ignored', *Field Fisher* (Blog Post, 6 February 2023) <<https://www.fieldfisher.com/en/insights/unveiling-the-crucial-5-gdpr-obstacles-of-chatgpt>>.
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  - 20 Omar H Fares, ChatGPT could be a game-changer for marketers, but it won't replace humans any time soon', *The Conversation* (Blog Post, 23 January 2023) <<https://theconversation.com/chatgpt-could-be-a-game-changer-for-marketers-but-it-wont-replace-humans-any-time-soon-198053>>.
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