

A More Human-Like Artificial Intelligence Could Enhance Customer Experience



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Gene Marks:

Hey, everybody, this is Gene Marks, and welcome to this week's episode of the Week in Review, a Thrive podcast brought to you by Paychex. Thank you very much for joining me this week. Just in the past week, an interesting bit of technology news happened that while it might not immediately affect your small business or mid-sized business, it's definitely going to have an impact on all of us in the coming years. In fact, sooner than you think.

The technology that I'm talking about is something called chatGPT, that's C-H-A-T, and then capital G-P-T, chatGPT. What is chatGPT and why – I'm telling you now, if you Google it, there is all sorts of news about it. There's all sorts of conversations going on. People in the tech industry are really excited by this.

What is the big deal? Well, chatGPT is a conversational artificial intelligence system or an AI system that was developed by a company called Open A.I. Open A.I., by the way, it was originally founded by Elon Musk. A lot of other tech people got involved. He has since pulled away for various reasons, but chatGPT is one of the many developments that this Open A.I. organization has recently released, and if you want to check it out, go to chat.openai.com – that's C-H-A-T dot openai dot com.

So, chatGPT. Why is it so newsworthy? What is the impact that it has on businesses like yours and mine? Well, like I said earlier, it's a conversational A.I. application. So, if you go to the website chat.openai.com, you can register there for free. Millions of people have already done it, and you know what you can do? You can have conversations. You can ask, chatGPT about something like, tell me what you're, you know, the best "Godfather" film is or explain to me, give me directions for traveling from Philadelphia to Chicago. Or how about a how would I make chocolate chip cookies if I want to include walnuts?

ChatGPT will not only give you the answers, but the answer will come in conversational form, and you can then have more dialog about it. Like, for example, if you ask for a recipe of chocolate chip cookies with walnuts and it gives you something back and you're like, "You know what? Maybe not walnuts. Can I substitute walnuts for hazelnuts?" ChatGPT will come back to you and ask you questions about what kind of hazelnuts or how much do you want to have in, and okay, here's another recipe is this If you're talking to a person.

Now, chatGPT is – this is not new conversational AI. The big deal about it is that it has a user interface that's really, really user friendly. There are a lot of technologies out there and like, you know, high-level software applications that have AI and chatbots and conversational chatting as it is. But this is pretty advanced stuff and it's advanced stuff in the sense that it's really thinking and learning and through repetition and through access to more data can do more things.

Now you might be like, "Hey, big deal. I mean, I can Google this, right?" and the answer is, yes, you can. But the difference between Google and chatGPT is that if you ask the question like, "How can I make chocolate chip cookies", Google will return to you a bunch of links of articles that will, you know, lead you to your recipes for making chocolate chip cookies.

But if you ask chatGPT, it will just respond back to you conversationally and then you can talk to it – well, type into it – and talk to it. Now, chatGPT has potential way beyond just that. A lot of people in the journalism industry are getting pretty concerned because if I go to chatGPT and I'm like, "Hey, write an article about chatGPT in my style and my style is Gene Marks, chatGPT has the ability to look up all of my past columns, look up the information about chatGPT or whatever the topic is, and then literally compose an article in my tone and my style just like I had written it.

And it's only going to get better and better. ChatGPT also has real conversational implications, so my company sells customer relationship management applications. So, imagine when I have customers that visit our site, right now if they have a simple request or a chat message, we can have like rudimentary answers. But, ultimately the technology behind chatGPT will really, really closely mimic a human customer service representative, which means that once it has access to the data that it needs, once it's mature enough, once it gets used to being in the conversational style, say, of my business or your business, people that visit my website, I can have conversations with this as if it's a human.

Not only that, because it's potentially voice enabled or will be voice enabled, people can call a, you know, a telephone number that has chatGPT behind it as it's background and instead of saying "Answer one for this or answer two for this or say this one word or say that word", you can literally have a conversation with chatGPT over the phone and it will respond back to you with pretty intelligent answers. The technology is only going to get better and better and better.

So, what does this mean for your business and for mine? Well, right away it doesn't mean a whole lot because chatGPT is still relatively immature, although farther along than you might imagine. But, over the next couple of years, and I do mean couple of years – two, three, four or five years – this technology is not only going to get better and smarter and more intelligent, but because it's on the Open AI platform, it's going to be open for all sorts of developers to share.

That doesn't mean just the highest level companies selling big products to big companies, but software developers and startups and tech companies that want to sell conversational applications to small businesses like yours and mine, so that we can have conversations about customers, we can get sentiment about our customers, we can make commands and make requests and have a conversation back and forth with a bot, a conversational bot that's so human-like at some point we're not going to know the difference whether we're talking to a human or not.

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Thanks so much for listening. Hope this information helps. We will see you again next week. Take care.

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