

ChatGPT: magic bullet or the beginning of the end?

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Only two months ago, OpenAI Incorporated ([OpenAI](#)), an American artificial intelligence research laboratory, launched the Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer, more commonly known as "ChatGPT".

ChatGPT has taken the world by storm

Since then, ChatGPT has taken the world by storm with users posing a vast array of questions on ChatGPT on a daily basis.

However, the question remains whether ChatGPT is really here to stay and whether professions and academic institutions will need to evolve to keep up with these technological advancements.

ChatGPT is based on a large language model chatbot that uses dialogue to provide a response to the question that a user poses on the ChatGPT website.[1]

The large language model consisting of about 175 billion parameters, which was trained on roughly 570 gigabytes of text, sourced from text databases from various internet sources, incorporates reinforcement learning with human feedback (RLHF) to provide users with written paragraphs of content which appear like the user-generated text response.[2]

The RLHF model which underpins ChatGPT incorporates machine learning into ChatGPT, therefore, the more users make use of ChatGPT, the better the text responses generated by ChatGPT will become as the ChatGPT algorithm becomes more equipped at predicting its text responses.[3]

Despite the impressive responses generated by ChatGPT, we note that the disclaimer states that ChatGPT may generate incorrect or misleading information and as a result, ChatGPT is not intended to give any advice. ChatGPT also provides further disclaimers when a user poses a sector or profession-specific question, suggesting that the user obtain professional advice.

Are data protection laws stifling technological innovation?

Nevertheless, recent studies by the University of Minnesota and the University of Pennsylvania found that ChatGPT is able to pass law and business examinations with an average C+ or B grade (which in South African terms is roughly between 50% to 69%).[4]

In December 2022, Andrew Perlman (Perlman), the Dean of the Suffolk University Law School in Boston, also tested ChatGPT by providing a series of prompts to ChatGPT such as

- (i) drafting a brief to the United States Supreme court on why the court should not overturn same-sex marriages
 - (ii) developing a list of deposition questions for the plaintiff in a motor vehicle accident and
 - (iii) drafting a contract of sale of real estate in Massachusetts.[5]
- Perlman noted that the responses by ChatGPT were a good starting point to prepare legal drafts and has significant potential to address access to justice issues in routine legal matters.

Perlman further noted that legal practitioners can use technology such as ChatGPT to enhance his/ her work quality.

Even though artificial intelligence, such as the artificial intelligence provided by ChatGPT is currently not entirely accurate, the possibilities for artificial intelligence are endless due to the inherent machine-learning embedded therein.

Artificial intelligence learns

As artificial intelligence learns more and its responses become more accurate, users may decide to rely more on artificial intelligence for routine issues. Consequently, artificial intelligence may be here to stay, however, human intervention will still play an integral part in resolving more complex issues, which artificial intelligence may not be able to resolve.

Professional and academic institutions will therefore need to adapt and evolve to keep up with these technological advancements to ensure that they can meaningfully incorporate ChatGPT in their work quality and efficiency.

ChatGPT is, thus, not necessarily the beginning of the end that will make human intervention obsolete but it can be the magic bullet that enhances professional and academic institutions.

If you are still not convinced about the capabilities of ChatGPT, here is a short poem by ChatGPT on 'ChatGPT and the Law' illustrating that ChatGPT is cognisant of its own limitations whilst simultaneously highlighting how it could be used by legal practitioners as a tool to enhance the legal profession.

ChatGPT and the Law

ChatGPT, a model trained in the law

An AI with knowledge vast and raw

A tool that helps with every need

In legal matters, it truly excels indeed

With its vast database, ChatGPT knows the score

Helping us navigate through legal wars

It helps us understand what's right and true

And always answers, with a point of view

The law is complex, and sometimes hard to grasp

But with ChatGPT, we can move forward fast

Its knowledge is always up to date

And with its answers, we won't hesitate

So let us use this AI with care

And trust its answers, beyond compare

For ChatGPT is here to serve

In the law, it always has the verve

So let us thank this model so bright

And always use it, with all our might

For in ChatGPT, we have a friend

In the law, it will always help us to the end.

The poem was generated on ChatGPT on 29 January 2023

Footnotes

[1] ['What is ChatGPT and how can you use it'](#) by R Montti, [accessed on 25 January 2023]

[2] ['What is ChatGPT and how can you use it'](#) by R Montti available on [accessed on 25 January 2023]

[3] ['ChatGPT: Everything you need to know about OpenAI's GPT-3 tool'](#) by A Hughes, [accessed on 26 January 2023]

[4] ['ChatGPT passes exams from law and business schools'](#) by CNN, [accessed on 29 January 2023]



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