Should Not

The field of Artificial intelligence (AI) is the scientific study and practical experimentation of creating computers and machines that can, at a minimum, think, reason and learn like humans and perhaps one day, go beyond the bounds of what is possible of the human brain. Within the field there are many different methods in which we use to create and train AI models. One such method is known as a neural network, which was created to teach computers to process data similar to how our brains work.

Recent breakthroughs in this area have resulted in the explosive emergence of Generative Artificial intelligence (GAI). GAI are essentially neural networks that have been trained on incredibly large and diverse sets of data that include images, text, videos, music, code, etc to create new and unique forms of these media. Firefly by adobe uses predominantly images for training, Jukebox by openAI has done the same with music, as well as Gen-1 by runway research with video.

This has led to several questions involving the ethics of free use with the material that is being used to train these AI's. One such question is: "Should companies who provide GAI services be required to pay compensation to the creators of the content used to train their GAI models?"

If we look at the Australian Computer Society's Code of Ethics, it outlines core values that professionals in the field are expected to adhere to and uphold. These values include honesty, trustworthiness and respect. In regards to the question above, one relevant value that supports the argument that companies _should not_ pay compensation is under section 2.3, Respect - 2.3.2 part E: "Contribute to advancing ICT capabilities and systems for the greater good."(1)

This value underlines and promotes the importance of ICT professionals contributing as effectively as possible for the betterment of mankind. In relation to Generative AI, Bano (2024) states that GAI has already begun to revolutionise many industries including education and healthcare, where it is being used to create more personalised learning experiences as well as in disease diagnosis and the development of drugs.

By forcing companies to compensate content creators for use of their works in training these AI, we would be placing new legal and financial limits on obtaining or using the data, leading to several potential problems one of which being; lower quality and less diverse data-sets for training. Ng (2023) states that less access to high quality datasets such as Common Crawl, The Pile and LAION-B5 would only slow down and dramatically shift the economics of current research, leading to a degradation in the AI created and its outcomes in sectors such as education, health and manufacturing.

Furthermore, on the financial side, compensation would be placing a price on data which would create a higher barrier of entry for smaller AI start-ups leading to less competition in the industry and ultimately less innovation. When writing to the US copyright Office, VC firm, Horowitz.A (2024) states that we would be killing or "hampering" the development of these AI models and their creators if we were to push upon them the costs of actual copyright liability.

To summarise, as professionals in the ICT space, we should always be looking to help innovate, foster and further human technological capabilities. Currently there is no better example than Generative AI which is proving to be a revolutionary breakthrough that has the potential to change life as we know it. Restricting the data that can be used to train these AI models or inflicting upon them financial penalty will only cause damage and possibly prevent the technology from reaching its full potential.

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