

## Who Guides the Machine?

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As artificial intelligence, software, and automated systems become more advanced and integrated into daily life, an essential question arises: Who or what guides these systems? Understanding the source of control and direction is key to grasping their behavior, impact, and responsibility.

### Is it You?

In many cases, people remain the primary guides. Users, developers, and operators set goals, provide data, design rules, and decide how to use these systems. Human choices shape outcomes – from defining objectives to making adjustments based on results. This guidance anchors technology in human values and intentions.

### Is it Someone Else?

Sometimes control lies with organizations, companies, or governments who design and deploy these systems. Their goals, incentives, and priorities influence how machines behave. The original user may have little visibility or influence, raising questions about accountability and transparency.

### Or Is It Like a Baby?

Consider the difference between a baby and a third-party machine product. A baby grows with parents who guide, teach, and protect it through close, personal involvement. The baby's development reflects its caregivers' values and decisions.

In contrast, AI or software created as third-party products are not "raised" by their users. They are designed and programmed by developers who may be distant from the end user. The user often has limited control or insight into how the system works or evolves. This creates a more transactional and sometimes opaque relationship.

This analogy helps explain why some AI systems act unpredictably or autonomously – their "upbringing" is separated from those affected by their behavior.

### Is it the Machine Itself?

With increasing autonomy, some systems make decisions independently, based on learned patterns or programmed criteria. Yet their "guidance" still originates from human design – algorithms, training data, and development goals. Whether machines truly "choose" or merely follow instructions remains a technical and philosophical question.

### What Does This Mean?

Understanding who guides a system clarifies responsibility and potential risks. If humans remain central, improving oversight, ethics, and training can help. If control shifts away from users toward opaque organizations or autonomous algorithms, new challenges arise in ensuring fairness, safety, and accountability.

### Conclusion

As technology advances, asking "Who guides the machine?" keeps us focused on human

agency, control, and responsibility. Whether it is you, someone else, or a distant third party, clarity about guidance helps society navigate opportunities and risks thoughtfully.