

CASE 2

30000 under 30

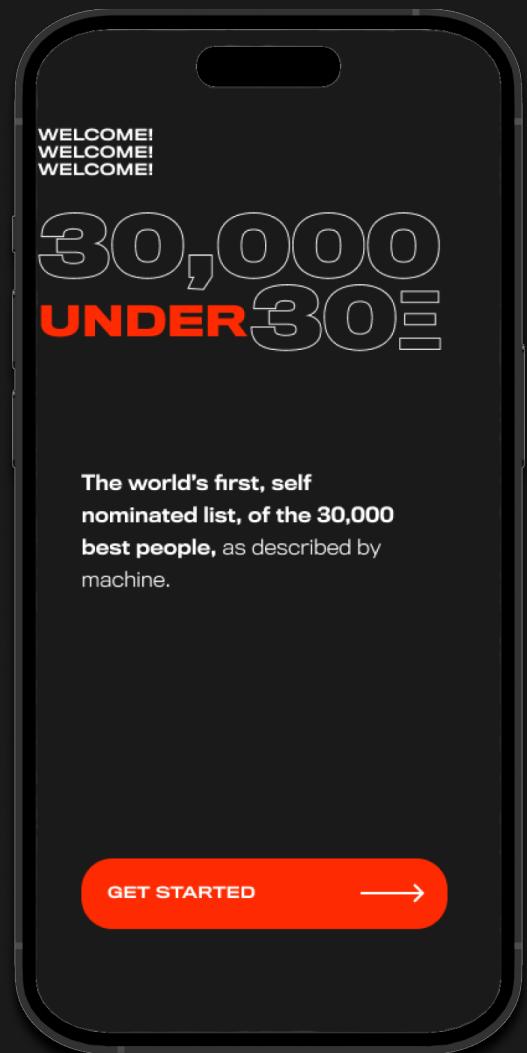
The screenshot shows a dark-themed website. At the top right is the logo "30000 UNDER 30". Below it, the text "#08" is displayed next to the name "ADAM LUKASIK". To the left is a circular portrait of Adam Lukasik, a man with a beard, wearing a black shawl over a patterned garment. To the right of the portrait is a block of text describing him as the founder of Treatbot, which has raised \$5.5 million and is backed by Andreessen Horowitz.

A year ago, nobody had heard of Adam Lukasik; now, you hear his name and instantly think of his breakthrough tech company sometimes called the **large hadron collider for cupcake making**. He's the founder of Treatbot, which has raised \$5.5 million and is backed by Andreessen Horowitz. It's a robotic arm that lets you bake cupcakes at home.

30000 under 30 was an AI prank me and a couple of friends built to satirize the Forbes 30 under 30 list. We launched the site on April 1, 2021

Our goal with 30000 under 30 was to poke fun at the status-obsessed spectacle of the Forbes list, and the arbitrary process that goes into forming it. We operationalized this satire by creating a website where anyone could sign up and have a convincing 30-under-30-esque bio written for them.

I came up with the idea for the prank, and then served as its PM and primary software developer, and then recruited friends for design and joke-writing.



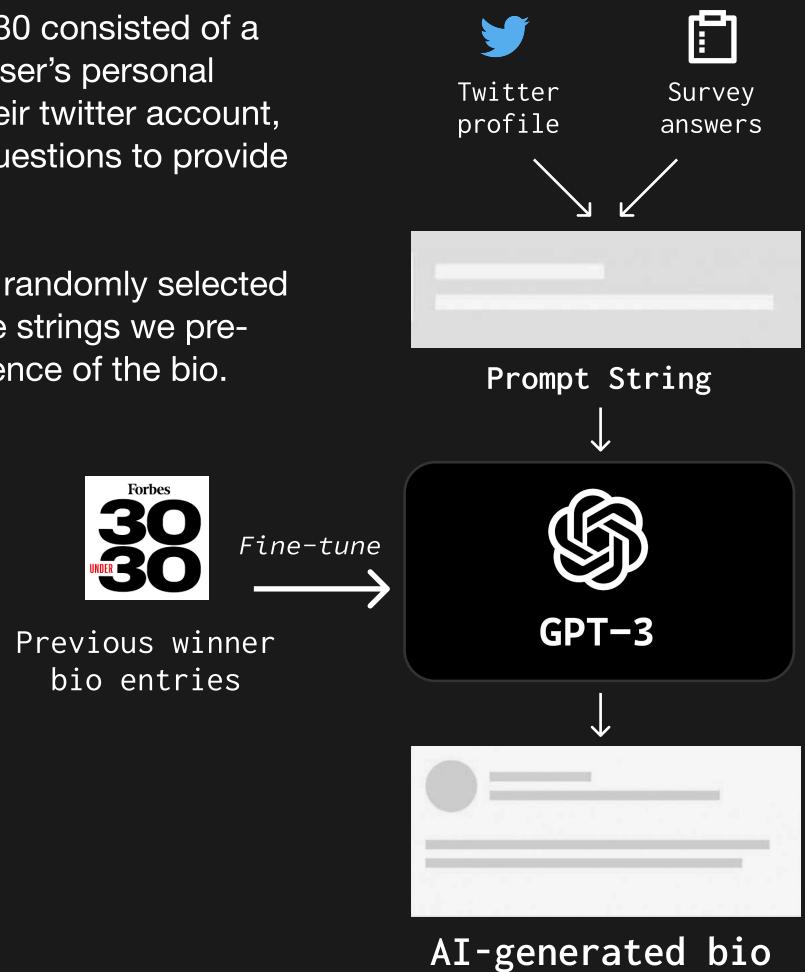
AI for Fun and Mischief

The basic architecture of 30000 under 30 consisted of a 2-layer AI model. First, we ingested a user's personal information by having them connect their twitter account, and then give them 2 random survey questions to provide information to personalize their bio.

We then applied those data points to a randomly selected template out of ~100 comedic template strings we pre-wrote. This string became the 1st sentence of the bio.

The next layer of the model was an instance of GPT-3 fine-tuned on previous Forbes 30 under 30 bios, split between the 1st sentence and the rest of the bio.

The model took in the 1st sentence provided by the templating engine and passed it to our GPT-3 instance, which then generated the rest of the bio based off of the comedic set-up. Basically, GPT-3 played the “straight-bot” to our template engine.



The image shows three mobile phone screens representing the app flow:

- Step 1:** The screen displays the text "GETTING ON THE LIST WE NEED TO GET TO KNOW YOU". Below this are five input fields: "FIRST NAME", "LAST NAME", "PRONOUNS", "EMAIL", and "TWITTER".
- Step 2:** The screen displays the text "WHERE DO WE START? THE AI HAS SOME IDEAS". Below this are two input fields: "Where do you work?" and "What is your favorite hobby?", each with a placeholder "YOUR ANSWER".
- Step 3:** The screen displays the text "THE START OF YOUR BIO" followed by a bio snippet: "Humphrey Obuobi started off his career at Google, but he always remembered his real passion: Amish breakdancing competitions". It also shows a circular profile picture of Humphrey Obuobi. At the bottom, there are "EDIT" and "REWRITE" buttons.

Viral Satire

Upon launching on April 1st, we picked up a lot of traffic from people tweeting out their bios over the course of the day. Some of them can still be seen at twitter.com/zeitgeist_fm.

We received about 500 sign-ups in the first day and 1500 in the first week of the website being up. LLMs were still a very novel technology at the time so people got a kick out of seeing their capabilities demonstrated based off of their creative input.

But in addition the satire also spoke to people, as the crony-ism and dubious nature of the Forbes list is a commonly mocked topic in the tech industry.

Eshita @eshita
I made the list
30kunder30.com/account/bfe5b...t

Ananay Batra @ananaybatra
I'm on the 30k under 30 list homeless
30kunder30.com/account/407cd6...t

Dhruv Gupta @iamdhruv4
I accomplished my dream. I can now officially say I've got a fake 30 under 30 account for clout. Now you can too!
30kunder30.com/account/27f7af...t

Neel Mehta @neel_a_mehta
Some personal news: I've landed a spot on the Forbes 30... thousand under 30?
30kunder30.com/account/53c220...

But in all seriousness, props to the team @zeitgeist_fm who made this brilliant satire of under-30 lists, combining AI, NFTs, and social commentary into one project.

#264
link to share
TAP TO COPY


STEPHEN OTREMBA
You've heard of SaaS and BaaS, but Stephen Otremba is the first to create what he is calling Ranch as a Service - and it's as excessive as it sounds. In 2015, Otremba, a recent Stanford Graduate School of Business graduate, founded the company Ranch as a Service. The company is a high-end, custom-ranch-to-table catering service that creates a curated, interactive ranch experience for its clients, who have included Airbnb and Google.

#10
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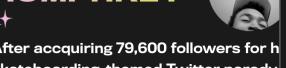

JEFFREY OLINGER AIA
Jeffrey Olinger AIA started his year with a deceptively simple idea: give everyone in Beirut a pencil. It was a comment on the region's history of violence, but it was also a serious design challenge. Olinger and his team spent over a year developing the perfect design for the pencil, including the kind of graphite core, and even the shape of the eraser. The result is the Pencil of Peace, and a social enterprise that's helping fund a tech education center for girls in Beirut.

0 ONIONS | Current Rank: 264/30000
Time on List: 0d:13h:36m:33s


SAM KAPLAN
#22
A year ago, nobody had heard of Sam Kaplan; now, you hear his name and immediately think of his breakthrough startup known colloquially as Crypto for Crypto. The company, which has raised \$3.5 million, allows users to trade cryptocurrencies on the blockchain using their own cryptocurrency as collateral. Crypto for Crypto has users in over 100 countries and already processes over \$50 million in trades per day.


MALAV WARKE
Malav Warke has developed a new way to fight misinformation by training dogs to use iphones. The dogs, originally from Mumbai, India, are trained to identify language that's offensive or untrue. They are called "Sniffers" and are able to determine whether or not a statement is true or false through the use of a special app on their iPhones. The Sniffers are able to sniff a phone that contains a statement and determine whether or not the statement is true or false. The Sniffers have been used in India to sniff out fake news stories, as well as in the United States to sniff out fake news that's being spread at the border.

0 SALADS | Current Rank: 100/30000
Time on List: 34 minutes ago


HUMPHREY
After acquiring 79,600 followers for h skateboarding-themed Twitter parody account, humphrey 🐶 launched a skateboarding-based crypto startup. In January 2018, Humphrey launched CryptoSkate to promote and provide market data to the emerging skateboarding cryptocurrency industry. One of the first crypto-based skateboarding events, CryptoSkate is a summer-long tour of skat parks and venues across the US and Europe, where attendees can buy and sell skateboards and skateboard-related merchandise for cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and Ethereum.

COPY PROFILE LINK
GIVE THEM SOME ONIONS
REPORT THIS BIO


Nina Stepanov
@ninarstepanov
Some personal news.
Delighted to share that I've self nominated and successfully made the 30k under 30 list this year 30kunder30.com/account/8bd7da...
Huge shout out to all of my fans, but most notably, @JoelKwartler for giving me the opportunity to nominate myself.

A Fitting Conclusion

While it would have been great to get to our goal of 30,000 sign-ups on the list, we knew that it was always a bit of a pipedream. But even before we could try to reach that goal, Forbes' legal team emailed us a Cease & Desist letter.

Even though our allusion to their list obviously qualified as fair-use, we ultimately decided it wasn't worth the hassle of trying to fight the letter, and decided to take it as a concluding win for our prank.

Notice of Infringement | Cease and Desist

Apr 30, 2021, 3:05 AM

I write on behalf of Forbes Media LLC ("Forbes"). It has come to our attention that you have used the Forbes name, logo, registered trademarks and/or trade dress, including the 30 Under 30 brand and designs (collectively, "Forbes IP") to promote your website, NFT and/or other commercial ventures (your "Unauthorized Activity"), clearly attempting to profit off a false association with Forbes and misappropriating Forbes IP. Some of the infringing content can be found here:
<https://www.30kunder30.com/> which is largely pulling the designs from here:
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesunder30team/2020/09/17/a-decade-of-disruption/?sh=5648ce327401>

We demand that you immediately cease and desist from this unlawful Unauthorized Activity and refrain from any future use of Forbes IP, unless such use has been approved by Forbes in writing by an authorized representative. You must also provide this office, today, with written assurance that you have complied with this demand.

We await your prompt compliance. All rights reserved.

Sincerely,

Jessica Bohrer
VP, Editorial Counsel
Forbes

30000
UNDER 30E