

AI watch: from Wimbledon to job losses in journalism

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Artificial intelligence is either going to save humanity or finish it off, depending on who you speak to. Either way, every week there are new developments and breakthroughs. Here are just some of the AI stories that have emerged in recent days ...

- The Wimbledon tennis tournament revealed it will be introducing AI-generated audio and text commentary in its online highlights this year. The All England Club has teamed up with the tech group IBM to provide automatically created voiceovers and captions for its footage. The move, which is separate to the BBC's coverage of the tournament, follows use of the cloned voice of a British athletics commentator, Hannah England, for online coverage of the European Athletics Championships. Generative AI refers to the creation of text and images from a human prompt – think ChatGPT and Midjourney – but voice is becoming a prominent development in this area as well.
- Fears over the existential threat posed by AI have come to the fore in recent months, but the potential impact on jobs is never far behind. A US visual effects company was forced this week to state that the use of AI in the opening sequence of a Disney+ series, Marvel's *Secret Invasion*, did not mean someone's job had been displaced. The film industry has been a locus for AI-related job concerns in recent months, which is understandable given that generative AI has obvious implications for workers and artists in fields such as film, TV and music. Fears over the use of AI in scriptwriting have been a factor in the US screenwriters' strike, while the US arts and media union Sag-Afra is demanding guardrails for replicating actors' images and voices in productions.
- Another example of how AI could end up affecting journalism was highlighted when Germany's *Bild* tabloid, the biggest-selling newspaper in Europe, announced a €100m (£85m) cost-cutting programme that would lead to about 200 redundancies. It warned staff that it expected to make further editorial cuts owing to "the opportunities of artificial intelligence". *Bild*'s publisher, Axel Springer SE, said in an email to staff seen by the rival *Frankfurter Allgemeine* newspaper that it would "unfortunately be parting ways with colleagues who have tasks that in the digital world are performed by AI and/or automated processes".
- Advances in AI are exciting, but just as important to the spread of the technology is its "productisation": how it gets turned from a promising tech to a real product. Take *FabricGenie*, from the *Millshop Online*, a curtain retailer. Enter your design preferences as text, image or sketch, and the company runs a simple AI image generator to spit out unique patterns that you can print on to personalised drapes. It's not going to win any awards for cutting-edge technology, but it's the sort of thing that will be more and more common across society over the coming years.
- On Thursday a US judge ordered two lawyers and their law firm to pay a \$5,000 (£4,000) fine after ChatGPT generated fake citations in a legal filing. A district judge in Manhattan ordered lawyers Steven Schwartz, Peter LoDuca and their law firm Levidow, Levidow & Oberman to pay the fine after fictitious legal research was used in an aviation injury claim. Scharztz had admitted that ChatGPT, whose responses can appear very plausible, had invented six cases he referred to in a legal brief in a case against the airline Avianca. The legal work sector is a prime candidate for being transformed by generative AI, but this case raises questions over the extent to

which AI can replace human work – for now. • The UK government is taking warnings about artificial intelligence and safety seriously, before Rishi Sunak hosts a global summit on AI safety in the autumn. Last Sunday it announced that a tech entrepreneur who has warned about an unchecked race to achieve “godlike AI” will be the head of a new AI advisory body. Ian Hogarth wrote in April that a small number of companies were competing to achieve a breakthrough in computer superintelligence without knowing “how to pursue their aim safely” and with “no oversight”. Existential fears about AI include the emergence of a system that evades human intervention, or makes decisions that deviate from human moral values. Hogarth will now have some influence in moderating the AI arms race as the chair of the UK government’s AI Foundation Model taskforce (referring to the underlying technology for AI tools such as text or image generators). Writing in the Times after his appointment was announced, Hogarth said he had seen “reasons for more optimism” including further calls for action from AI experts and a £100m spending pledge for the UK taskforce, whose role will include identifying and tackling the safety challenges posed by the technology.