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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI'S GROWING IMPACT ON BUSINESSES AND CUSTOMERS

By Matt Beardmore



From insurance and healthcare to banking and logistics, industries across the board are leveraging the vast and growing power of artificial intelligence (AI) to improve their customer relationships, their productivity, and of course, their bottom line.

At the same time, the increased use of AI causes some consumers and those in the world of business to pause as there are fears that AI and the increasing amount of data being created and digested could lead to misinformation, job losses, the

overreliance on technology, as well as cybersecurity issues.

To start, what is AI? According to [Spiceworks.com](#), it is "a computer program that can mimic certain aspects of human intelligence. Instead of simply following commands given to it, AI employs intelligent strategies and heuristics to bring a human-like intelligence to solving problems like any other computer program."

Examples of industry-specific uses of AI, as provided by TechTarget, include:

- "to analyze vast troves of patient data to uncover patterns that insights that humans can't on their own" in the healthcare field;
- to detect fraud and "make near-instantaneous decisions" in the financial services sector;
- "to monitor and predict machine maintenance work" and increase efficiencies within factories;
- and "improve traffic management and transportation logistics."

A recent high-profile example of AI at work is the November 2022

release of ChatGPT, "a natural language processing tool driven by AI technology that allows you to have human-like conversations and much more with the chatbot," as defined by ZDNet. "The language model can answer questions and assist you with tasks, such as composing emails, essays, and code."

There were reportedly 1 million users of ChatGPT within the first five days of its release. Shartega, a Des Plaines-based managed IT services provider, uses ChatGPT in a couple ways: its network engineers write scripts with ChatGPT to deploy to some of its clients, and Marketing Director Brian Paglia leverages ChatGPT for some of the long-form content Shartega posts.

"It's a great tool, but you have to know how to prompt it," Paglia said. "It can give you word salad if you don't know what you're doing."

ChatGPT is just another example of AI's growing reach and impact on different parts of our lives. This trend is expected to continue as per a MarketsandMarkets Research report, the AI market is projected to reach \$407 billion in 2027, up from an estimated \$86.9 billion revenue in 2022. That anticipated spike is understandable given there was a 5,000% increase in the amount of data created and consumed between 2010 and 2020, per Forbes.

"AI has been snowballing rapidly lately," said Brett Fiedler, Business

Development Strategist and Account Executive at Shartega. "It's moving quicker than we can understand it."

What is clear, though, is the ways in which AI is benefiting businesses and the consumers they serve. According to The Wharton School, these benefits include improving efficiencies through process automation, improving the speed or consistency of service, analyzing customer insights to guide the decision-making process, and identifying opportunities for product and services development.

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Photo courtesy of [Shartega.IT](https://www.shartega.it)



“Our approach to technology management is to educate and stop these things from happening in the first place.”

Fiedler understands the worries that go along with using AI, but with AI not going away anytime soon, his advice for businesses is to not be resistant but instead create a culture of continuous learning. “You make employees more effective that way,”

Fiedler said. “We don’t know how AI is going to evolve, but if you first understand AI and learn what its strengths are, you create an environment where people are using (it) as a tool and not viewing it as their replacement.”

For additional detail on Shartega’s offerings, visit www.shartega.com.

However, there are concerns and risks that go along with the increased reliance on AI. According to a Forbes Advisor survey, 75% of consumers said they were concerned about misinformation from AI. A McKinsey & Company report revealed approximately 25% of business owners have uncertainties about how AI will be integrated into their operations, and 43% are worried about technology dependence.

There is also the ever-present concern of cybercriminals using AI to create phishing emails and malicious software along with spreading misinformation.

“The other side is the bad guys are using AI too,” Fiedler said. “Since it’s easier for people to automate their attacks and do damage, it becomes important to partner with someone like Shartega for your cybersecurity needs.

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