

Friend, Foe, or Folly: AI & Market Research, August 2023



Everyone seems to be talking about AI



10 ways ChatGPT will affect your job as a marketing researcher

The New York Times

Here's What Happens When Your Lawyer Uses ChatGPT

A lawyer representing a man who sued an airline relied on artificial intelligence to help prepare a court filing. It did not go well.



Generative AI: A Gamechanger for Market Research? The Views of Those Working in the Industry

A look at how market research professionals feel about generative AI and how it will impact the insights industry. Take a look at the hopes and fears on AI.

The Atlantic

How ChatGPT Will Destabilize White-Collar Work

No technology in modern memory has caused mass job loss among highly educated workers. Will generative AI be an exception?



CORPORATE RESEARCHERS CONFERENCE
Driving Growth in Turbulent Times
Nov. 1-3 | Chicago

Creating Value with a Human-First Approach in the Age of AI

The market research industry is no exception. Research vendors, clients, trade groups, and thought leaders are all scrambling to understand the implications and best practices that will guide AI usage. At this time, it's very much a work in progress.

AI has already become very big business

So far, much of the public conversation around generative AI has been dominated by OpenAI's ChatGPT, and to a lesser extent offering from Microsoft and Alphabet (Google).



However, there are many startups and competitors jumping into the space, with more popping up every month.

And MR-specific applications are already popping up.



ANTHROPIC



There is an emerging consensus on the role AI can play in today's market research process



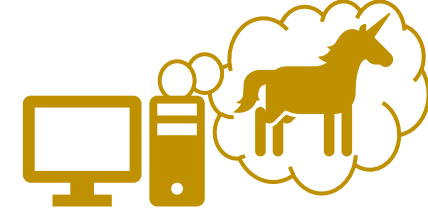
Consider AI a Tool

Generative AI cannot replace a human market researcher, but experienced researchers can leverage AI to work *better, faster and smarter*. Researchers must inspire chatbots with smartly-asked questions and curate the resulting output into useful content.



AI Yields a First Draft

Today's generative AI output almost always requires editing. In many cases, refining the input or iterating with a chatbot can yield improvements but there are diminishing returns, and eventually the researcher is better served by editing their go-forward version.



Verify AI Output

The current generation of AI chatbots are eager to please and will answer almost any questions, but it *cannot* be taken for granted that the answers are correct. A human researcher still needs to use judgement, cite references, and triple check everything.

A Framework for Considering AI Tools

Tier 1



The “low-hanging fruit”, common research tasks that can be augmented with free or low-cost, off-the-shelf, generative AI tools



Tier 2



Customized tools, vendor applications, and research infrastructure built with embedded AI functionality



Tier 3



The AI tools of tomorrow, over the horizon for now, but for how long?



AI, Compliance & Regulation

There is tremendous uncertainty right now around legal, regulatory and ethical ramifications of AI usage.

- State, national and international legislative bodies are gearing up to regulate AI but right now there is very little guidance.
- Industry groups and lobbyists are working to build recommendations and best practices.
- A June 2023 unscientific poll at an Insights Association webinar suggested that only a quarter of market research vendors have formal/written policies regarding AI usage.
- Opaque intellectual property and privacy issues in the AI space suggest that researchers should be extremely cautious of entering respondent-generated content (PII, medical, financial) to a tier-1 chatbot.



Tier 1: “Low-Hanging Fruit” with Readily Available Off-the-Shelf Tools



There are many applications where researchers can save time while augmenting their expertise with current, free or inexpensive generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT.



Developing Research Instruments: Questions, Questionnaires, Discussion Guides



Reframing Language: Audience Appropriate, Mobile-Friendly, More/Less Technical



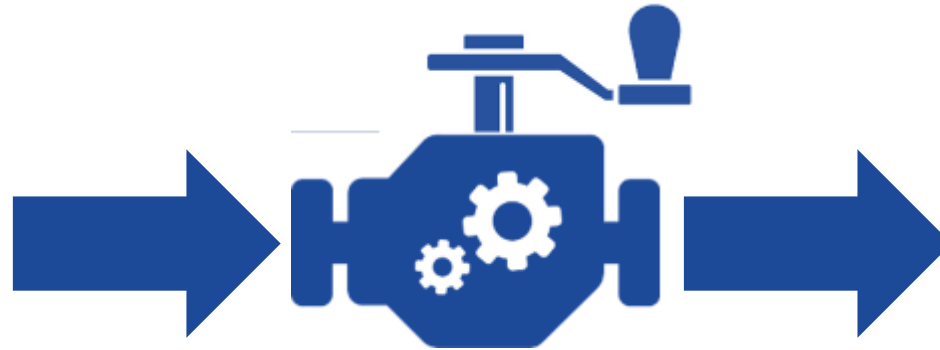
Writing code in Programming Languages



Tier 1, Low-Hanging Fruit Example: Creating Exhaustive Lists

When authoring questions in a questionnaire or discussion guide, it is important to provide choices that anticipates the range of respondents' likely answers. An AI chatbot can help brainstorm an exhaustive list of answer choices, whether a category is well known to the researcher or unfamiliar.

Give me a list of reasons...



... seniors might select a Medicare Advantage policy.

... financial advisors would suggest universal life insurance to their clients.

... a non-profit organization should have D&O coverage.

... ETFs could be preferable to mutual funds.

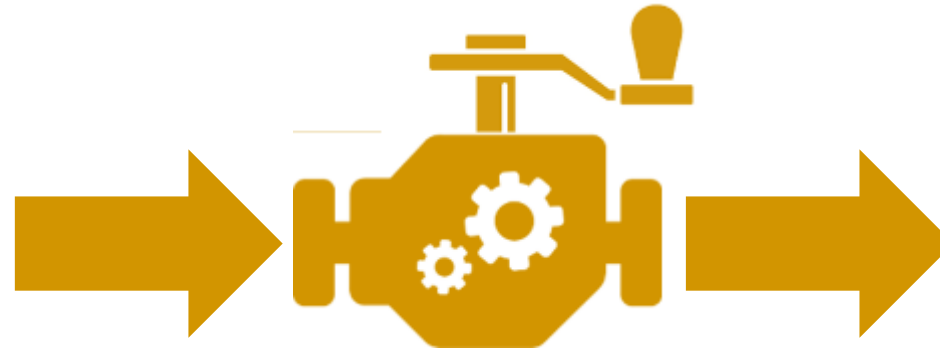


Tier 1, Low-Hanging Fruit Example:

Framing Language for a Specific Audience

It's one thing to know what you want to ask, but another thing to put it in just the right words for the intended audience. AI applications can suggest phrases that communicate appropriately for the target respondent.

Rephrase this question in a way that...



... would be appropriate for medical doctors.

... a middle-school kid can easily understand.

... works for non-native English speakers.

... is sensitive to people with physical disabilities.

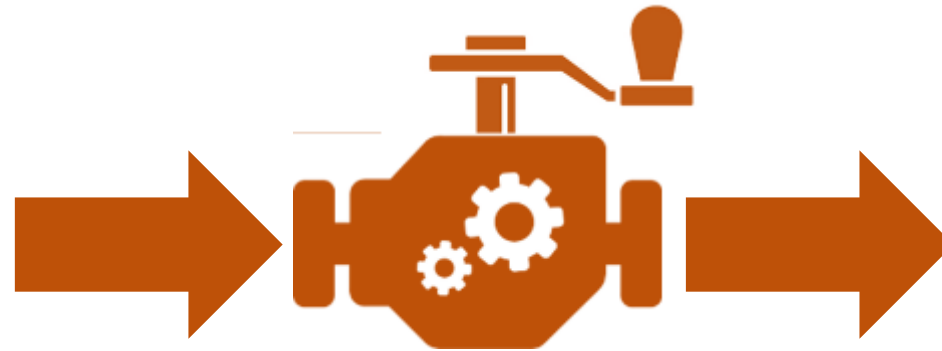


Tier 1, Low-Hanging Fruit Example:

Writing Computer Programming Language

Just as chatbots are not ready to replace researchers, they also cannot replace software engineers. However, ChatGPT can generate useful lines of code in many programming languages to

Write code in...



... SPSS syntax that finds correlations across eight variables.

... JavaScript that will format an online survey question in Qualtrics.

... Excel VBA that will append zip codes to an address list.

Tier 2: Currently Available Custom Applications



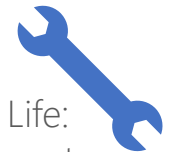
Legacy market research vendors are already rolling out new AI-powered tools that enhance their existing offering, and startup service providers are eager to jump into the game.



Summarizing Qualitative Interviews: Turning words into text and text into insights



Coding Open-Ended Verbatim Comments



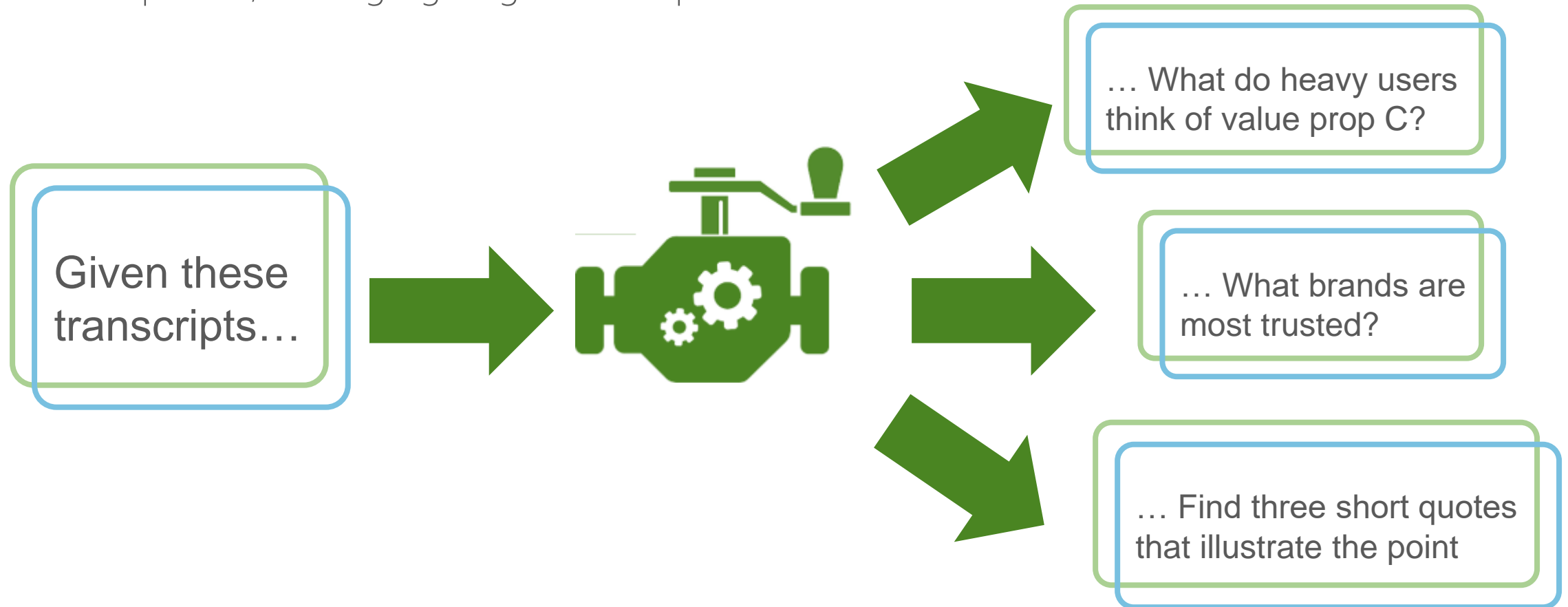
Bringing a Segmentation to Life: Ever-evolving segments

Data quality: Chatbots rooting out fraudulent survey responses



 Tier 2, Custom AI Application Example:
Summarizing Qualitative of Interviews

Starting with focus group and IDI transcripts as a data set, AI tools are already spotting important themes, pointing out reoccurring ideas, summarize consensus opinions, and highlighting relevant quotes.



Tier 3: AI Tools Yet-To-Come



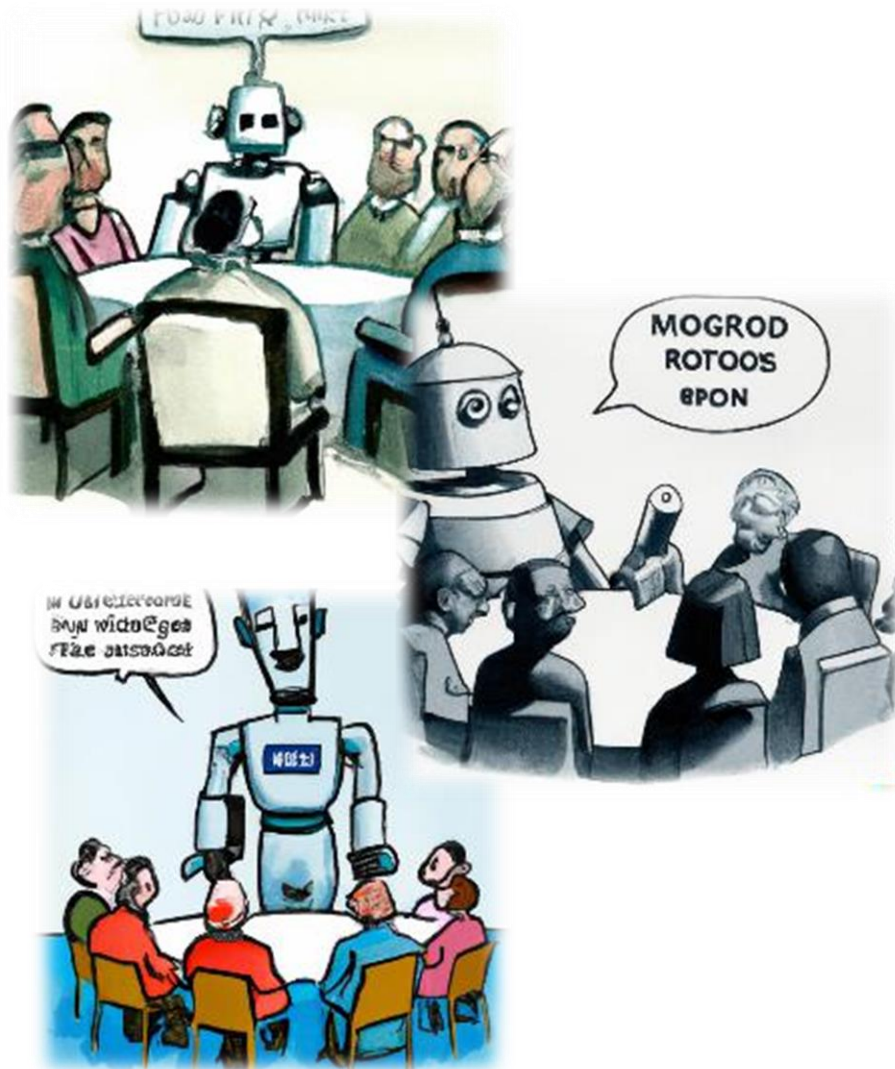
Imagination may be the only limit to AI's potential as a research tool, but the famous "Turing Test" suggests an almost-inevitable scenario to strive for.



AI Moderators:
Fully functional
automated qualitative
research moderation



Will bots ever moderate qualitative research?



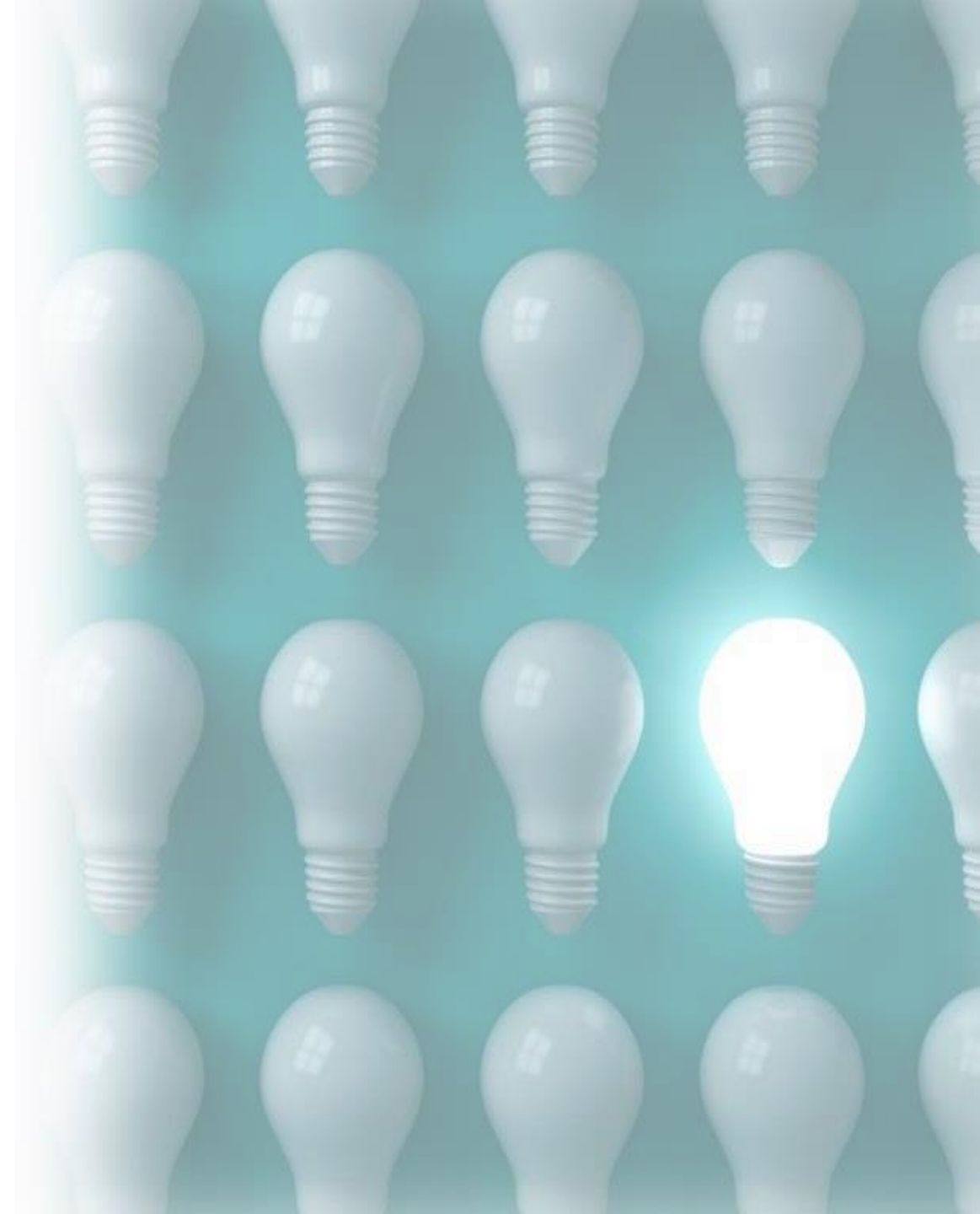
- Currently, no existing AI tool boasts the ability to moderate a focus group.
 - Although OpenAI's Dall-E image tool does a fair job of visualizing what such a group might look like (*images to the left*).
- AI-powered applications can conduct routinized customer service chats or drive automated voice navigation on phone systems.
- However, these are a far cry from the flexibility and responsiveness that would be required to conduct useable qualitative interviews.
- For now, AI moderators are still in the future, but no longer purely the stuff of science fiction.



Other applications on the horizon, but not here yet

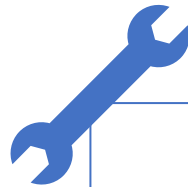
Much of the excitement about AI's impact on market research is still speculative, and needs to be monitored for future development:

- **Recruitment** – Will we reach a point where an AI can find and recruit qualitative participants for us to interview?
- **Report writing** – When will an AI be able to go from data to narrative and insights?



These tiers will be in constant flux for the foreseeable future...

Today's science fiction may be tomorrow's web search, a technological wonder so commonplace we hardly notice it happening. Over time, the definition of AI will become increasingly blurry. As it becomes ubiquitous it will fade into the background, more present and less visible.



Thank You, and Questions



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