

# Between the lines

6 February 2023

## An exciting new era of artificial intelligence

*In recent weeks, major breakthroughs in technology have opened people's eyes to the very real possibilities of artificial intelligence (AI) and its applications.*

This has been highlighted by ChatGPT, an easy-to-use software program that is able to satisfy users' requests for creative solutions. For example, if a user asks ChatGPT to write an academic essay on a specified topic, the program will do so. It can create code, recipes, news stories, songs, scripts, and even biblical verses.

### Rise of the machines

This technology uses a type of AI called 'machine learning', where a computer program develops an understanding of a topic based on analysis of millions of bytes of data. So, if ChatGPT was asked to create a recipe for a vegan lasagne, for example, the software would analyse thousands of food data records, identifying and extracting trends across lasagne recipes and vegan cooking, to create a solution based on these.

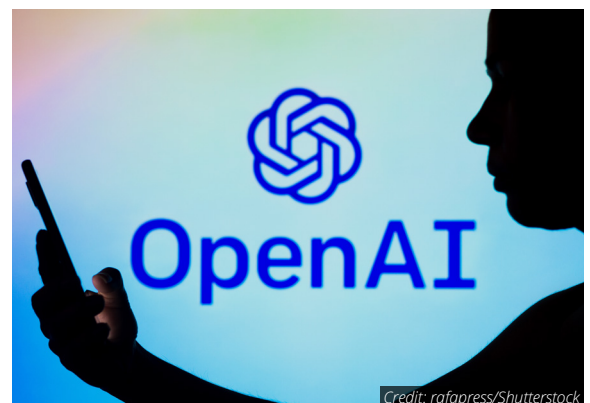
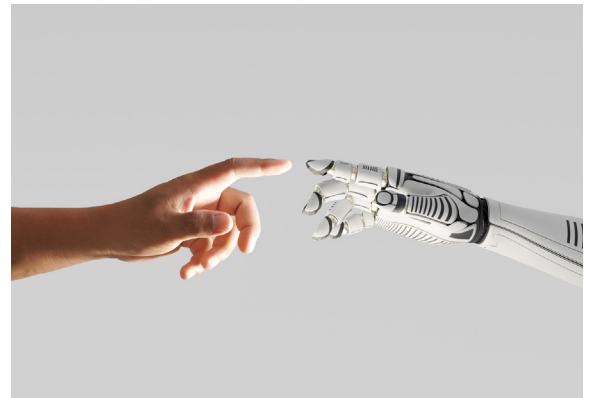
ChatGPT currently has a free version and, for now, it is giving many users an entertaining insight into the world of AI. However, the wider impact is vast, and this could be the dawn of a new era of innovation. For instance, in medicine, this technology could transform how diagnoses are made. Doctors would no longer have to scour textbooks or arrange consultations. Instead, they could quickly and easily explain symptoms to a program that does the heavy lifting for them, arriving at the most likely conclusion. At the very least, this could save valuable time and provide a fresh perspective.

### Early days

As with any new technology, programs like ChatGPT are still met with suspicion by some and the potential for job losses is a common concern, but such fears may be misplaced. In his recent speech at Davos, Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI (the creators of ChatGPT), highlighted how it is no longer the case that traditional blue-collar jobs are the first to come under threat from AI. With creative roles now being impacted by AI technology, preconceptions about digitalisation are being challenged.

There is also some fine-tuning to do with the accuracy of these programs. The technology is still prone to mistakes and the solutions ChatGPT creates are still probabilistic assumptions. This has led to cases of the program producing nonsense answers without realisation. Huge developments are happening in AI, but these systems still lack one thing that humans possess – common sense.

It remains to be seen how this all evolves but the progress made so far is exciting, and could, potentially, be as big a breakthrough as the mobile phone. This also demonstrates the resilience of technology in a challenged market, with innovation cutting through and creating the foundations for future success.



### Key takeaways

- The resilience of the tech sector in a challenging market is encouraging.
- Concerns are understandable, but the applications for AI are vast and bring opportunities.
- This could be the biggest era of technological innovation since the mobile phone.

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