

to outsource essay writing to human third parties through applications such as Essay Mills.

“It doesn’t necessarily add much functionality that wasn’t already available to students who knew where to look,” Thomas Lancaster, a computer scientist and academic-integrity researcher at Imperial College London, told “Nature.”

Are certain professions threatened by ChatGPT?

While students pride themselves on having a new tool that makes their homework easier, workers in some industries are beginning to worry that they will be replaced by software in the near future.

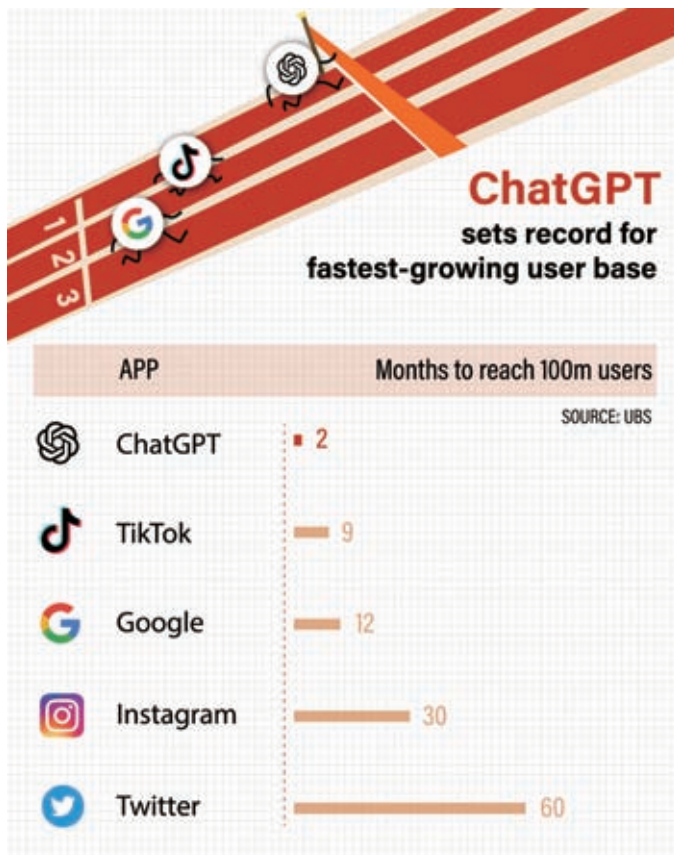
Among the professions at risk are media, programming, education and legal services.

Thomas Wang, an online instructor who teaches the use of spreadsheet software Excel, said that ChatGPT would probably be a better teacher than he ever was.

“I asked it how to do data fractionation in Excel, and it gave me a step-by-step instruction — even with an example,” he said. “I feel that I’m not needed anymore.”

Zhai Zhiyong, a law professor with Beihang University, said that artificial intelligence like ChatGPT will be able to do a lot of work now undertaken by lawyers and judges, such as reading through voluminous cases for precedent references.

“That would free up time



Graphics by Li Yi

for legal workers but also present them a challenge,” Zhai said. “In the future, lawyers and judges will have to be more competent because their major job will be dealing with the harder cases that artificial intelligence cannot easily resolve.”

What future do we face as artificial intelligence becomes more intelligent?

Like it or not, ChatGPT and its successors are here to stay.

China technology giant Baidu has announced that it has developed a similar application called ERNIE Bot, which will be released next month. The bot might be implanted in its search engine Baidu.com.

Shanghai Information Service’s Lu said that it’s up to developers and users to decide if it is safe to use such AI applications because there are no relevant laws or regulations.

“Ethical controls behind ChatGPT would avoid some

of the questions,” he said. “This actually presents a new challenge to the entire human society, but I’m afraid that it’s a double-edged sword and we must think how to use it to make our society better rather than worse.”

As for the question will ChatGPT cause millions of people to lose their jobs, let’s ask the source.

Here is ChatGPT’s answer in Chinese, translated into English:

“As an AI model, I don’t have self-awareness or emotions. My mission is to help people and to provide valuable information and solutions to improve productivity. The development of technology will always kill some jobs, but at the same time, new jobs will be created. People could be more competent in a new job market through education and training. Generally speaking, AI will improve productivity and life quality, but we need to deal with possible challenges with an active and responsible attitude.”

Reporter’s thoughts

‘Know thine enemy.’ How I sized up the ChatGPT challenge

Lu Feiran

I would be less than honest if I didn’t admit to a bit of trepidation when I used ChatGPT for the first time.

The artificial intelligence language tool took just seconds to write a small but good piece about itself. It contained unfamiliar terminology that might take me half an hour to learn.

ChatGPT is a language tool developed by US-based OpenAI. It is essentially a robot capable of conversing with users, writing essays, answering questions and generating codes. It is “trained” to trawl through billions of words and learn how they are used. And all this in 95 languages!

Faced with such a formidable capability, I, like many other ChatGPT users, had doubts whirling around in my mind. Would this technology someday replace me as a journalist?

I tried to find an answer by further interaction with the chatbot that everyone is talking about. As the great Chinese general and military strategist Sun Tzu famously wrote 2,500 years ago: Know thine enemy.

I was planning an interview with a fashion designer from Cameroon, so I asked it to make a list of questions I could ask and provide some background on the subject.

The chatbot did a good job. I needed only to add a few more detailed questions to finish the interview. Hmmm ... It appears that I have a good work helper.

Next, I told it to write a news story on the latest developments in the earthquake rescue work underway in Turkey. This time my helper fell flat, explaining to me that its data bank “only goes up to 2021.”

That pointed to one limitation of such artificial intelligence models. They need a vast amount of “training” from existing information to form their responses. But the world is always changing at such a fast pace that it’s hard for machine

minds to “know” what’s happening at any given time.

We humans, however, can see, hear and learn in real time, which is invaluable in journalism’s ability to impart the latest news to the public as quickly as possible.

So, okay, breaking news is not ChatGPT’s forte, but what about less-timely feature stories?

I asked it to write a profile story on US actor Misha Collins. I chose him because he’s famous but not that famous, and he does a lot more than just acting. I wanted to see how the chatbot would handle such a story.

The result was actually quite disappointing — a dry, rather dull story that might feed the actor’s Wikipedia page but lacked the juicy bits of a “people” story that attract and keep a reader’s attention.

My fears of being replaced by artificial intelligence were rapidly waning. Even ChatGPT admits that it doesn’t have feelings or emotions, which is a defining difference between machines and humans. And some jobs, such as writing, demand that human element of imagination.

The more I read what ChatGPT writes, the more I see that there is something vital lacking. The chatbot stories are like skeletons, without blood or flesh. By contrast, stories written by humans incorporate something of the author’s feelings and personal experiences. They show us soul, love, hate, fear, whimsy and dreams.

Feelings and emotions are the source of creation. As long as the ability to create exists, I don’t think we have to fear that AI will replace us. Even as AI evolves, we can evolve as well.

But what happens if artificial intelligence can someday be programmed to have “human” feelings? That’s a whole different story. Let’s just hope that the world doesn’t go the way of “The Terminator.”