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Welcome to
THE ROBOT APOCALYPSE.

How brands can survive and thrive in the age of AI.

HOW MAY WE HELP YOU?

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How Artificial Intelligence Is Affecting Businesses

In the recent past, the key differentiator between brands was assumed to be price or product quality. Companies competed for customers by either lowering their prices or improving the quality of their products. But customer preferences are rapidly changing, and their expectations are rising. Customers have access to more information online than ever before, and smartphones and social media allow them to quickly and easily share their experiences with brands. Perhaps that is why customer experience is quickly becoming the key brand differentiator. A study conducted by customer consulting firm Walker predicts that customer experience will be the number one brand differentiator by 2020.

Customers no longer expect generic products and services from the companies they shop with. They increasingly believe that companies need to form a relationship with them, knowing and even predicting their personal needs and shopping habits. Customers seek out personalization and want to shop with brands that can personalize their experience. A strong majority of customers are even willing to pay more for a brand with superior customer experience. Over the-past several years, we've begun to see brands start to use artificial intelligence to improve the customer experience and separate their brand from their competitors.

Brands of today are already competing in a wide range of different areas, and for many customers, there is little differentiation between two brands. That is why customer experience has become so critical. If shopping with a particular company makes a customer feel good – if they feel they are building a relationship where the brand understands and meets their needs – they are more likely to continue shopping with that brand in the future, even if a competitor has a slightly better product or a slightly lower price. And customers don't just return to brands that they like; they also share their experiences on social media and encourage their friends and family to become customers as well.
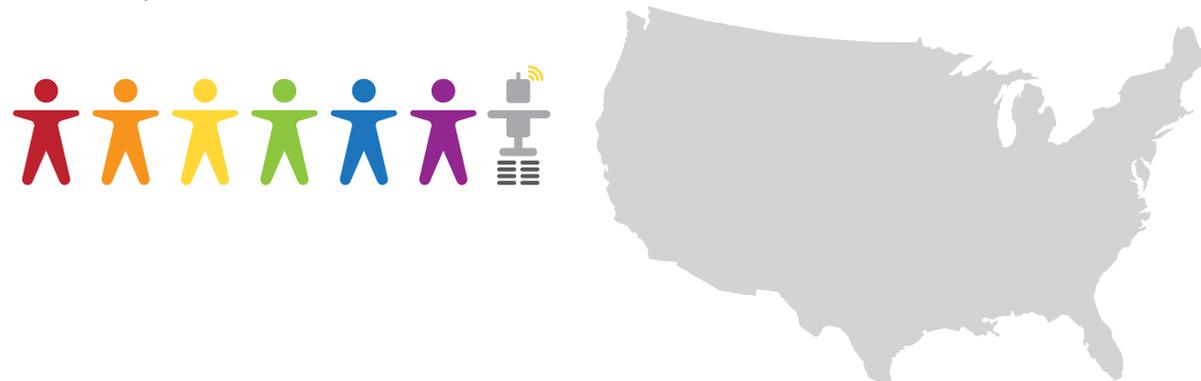
Customer experience
will be the number one brand differentiator by 2020.

The customer experience is highly emotional. Customers often make more emotional than rational decisions when the time comes to make a purchase. For this reason, it might seem strange that companies across the spectrum are now using artificial intelligence in order to enhance the customer experience and improve brand marketing. After all, computers are often thought of as devoid of emotion and incapable of learning.

Artificial intelligence is more than a static program – machine learning allows AI to learn customer behavior and preferences over time. An example of machine learning might be Facebook's algorithm remembering which news stories a user likes and shares. As Facebook learns the user's preference, it'll serve related news stories in their feed. A similar process happens with Amazon users. As they purchase goods on Amazon, the company's algorithms learn their shopping preferences and can even come to predict their needs, showcasing items that they are more likely to purchase. This type of AI enhances the customer experience and makes people more likely to return to shop in the future. This is one of the reasons why Amazon has such loyal customers – shoppers feel as if they have built a relationship with a brand that understands their shopping needs.

Artificial intelligence isn't just science fiction anymore. Customers are using chatbots, voice-activated services, and smart home devices on a regular basis. The companies that embrace these technologies and use them to enhance the customer experience will be able to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Customers are even willing to pay more if it means having a customer experience that meets their needs and personalizes their service. So how can companies incorporate artificial intelligence into their brand strategy? How can brands utilize artificial intelligence in a manner that actually drives positive interactions instead of confusing or frustrating customers? Let's take a look at how brands can use AI to gain a competitive advantage.

Types of Artificial Intelligence

Since artificial intelligence comes in many different forms, we wanted to take a closer look at how brands can win across three specific types of AI: chatbots, voice-activated services, and smart home devices.

How can I help?

Chatbots

Have you ever visited a website and had a question that you couldn't seem to find the answer to? You clicked through all the links on the site map and read through the FAQ page, but couldn't seem to find the answer you were looking for? Perhaps you decided to call customer support to try and figure things out, but that process was even more frustrating – you ended up talking to someone in a call center living in a completely different time zone. In the end, you gave up and visited the website of a competitor.

This is a relatively common experience for online shoppers. They'll visit a website and consider making a purchase, but the inability of the company to quickly address their concerns leads them to change their mind. That is why chatbots have so much potential. Chatbots are a form of artificial intelligence that can provide your customers with answers in real time. Customers who visit your website won't have to phone a call center or scan your entire site for an answer. The chatbot uses artificial intelligence to determine which information best answers your customers' question and then pulls that information together to form a coherent answer.

Chatbots are distinct from intelligent virtual agents, or IVAs. Chatbots tend to be less complex data retrievers, while IVAs utilize machine based learning technologies to solve complex problems. IVAs are sometimes accompanied by avatars which can mimic human responses and gestures in order to react appropriately to human interaction.

Chatbots might pull information from multiple web pages or separate departments in order to produce a single answer. And that's what is so promising about chatbots; they aren't static like FAQ pages. They can produce dynamic answers to specific, unique questions, which helps customers quickly find the information they need. Millennials prefer to text or chat online when communicating with brands, and forcing them to phone a call center could eliminate the possibility of having them make a purchase. Chatbots give millennials the opportunity to avoid making a call while still getting their questions answered promptly.

Hey Alexiri, order more diapers.

Voice-Activated Services

Voice-activated services, also called voice assistants, are a form of artificial intelligence that has grown rapidly over the past several years. It is perhaps most commonly associated with Siri, the voice assistant that comes pre-installed on the iPhone. The goal of voice assistants is to simplify actions that were previously cumbersome or complex. For example, a voice assistant user could ask about the news, sports statistics, or the weather and get a quick, accurate answer within seconds instead of having to use a search engine on their own. Voice assistants can also provide other valuable information like directions and details on local businesses.

Siri is tied to the iOS, but other voice assistants have more flexibility. Google's Voice Search communicates with third-party apps for notes and messages. Microsoft Cortana can track packages, set reminders and alarms, and handle calendar appointments.

Voice-activated services have become popular on smartphones, and have already spread to many new 2017 releases of laptops and desktop computers as well as other types of technology, such as smartwatches.

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Smart Home Devices

Smart home devices are on the cutting edge of artificial intelligence – they allow users to automate their home. Users can connect a smart home device to their smartphone and remotely perform tasks like locking doors, regulating the temperature, and controlling appliances. Smart home devices can also read, interpret, and send users critical information. For example, if a smart home user leaves the house and forgets to turn off the oven, they could receive a notification asking if they would like their smart home device to turn the oven off for them. Some smart home devices are also integrated with voice-activated services, so users can speak a command to turn on the lights or close the blinds. Smart home devices can even connect to security cameras and let you monitor your home from your smartphone while you are away.

Insights into How Users View AI

We've established how brands like Facebook and Amazon use artificial intelligence to enhance the customer experience and provide users with relevant data. We've taken a look at the more common forms of AI for brands – chatbots, smart home devices, and voice-activated service. But without a look at how individuals view artificial intelligence, brands won't have the full picture. Brands need to understand customer attitudes towards artificial intelligence and shift their strategy accordingly. Misunderstanding the way individuals feel about artificial intelligence could lead companies to make decisions that are aren't in the best interests of the business or their customers. Conversely, brands that make good use of these insights can get an edge on their competition.

The data provided in this section was obtained through a survey of 1,002 US adults. The goal of the survey was to determine attitudes towards artificial intelligence. The survey was conducted October 2017 by a leading polling firm in the United States.
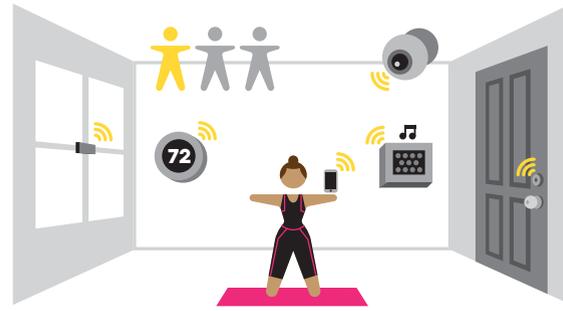
Almost One-Third of Millennials Use Smart Home Technology Daily

Our survey found that smart home technology is most popular with the 18-34 age group, most commonly referred to as Millennials. 32% of Millennials use smart home technology daily, which makes sense seeing as younger people tend to be at the forefront of the adoption of new technology. One-third of daily smart home users have children in the household. Smart home technology has also become very well known throughout the country, with only 4% of respondents claiming that they are unfamiliar with the form of AI.

But perhaps the most interesting finding about smart home technology is who isn't using it. 63% of women say they never use smart home technology. That is in contrast to men – one-quarter of men use smart home technology each day. There could be a variety of different factors at play that explain the disparity between men and women when it comes to smart home technology use: perhaps women feel smart home technology does not give them the degree of control they want over the conditions in their home, for instance. But the disparity is real, and brands looking to sell smart home technology must be aware of it.

59% Of Americans Use Voice-Activated Services On Occasion

Voice-activated service, or voice assistants, might be the best-known form of artificial intelligence on the market right now. Americans are aware of the technology and use it at a significant rate: 59% of Americans use voice assistants on occasion, with nearly half of them using it weekly or daily. Among those who are 18-34 years old – the Millennial demographic – 20% use voice assistants daily and 34% use it occasionally. Among those with children in the household, 21% use voice-activated service daily, 20% use it weekly, and 29% use it occasionally.

These numbers show that Americans have had relatively high exposure to voice assistants and have begun to adopt the technology at fairly high rates. 59% of Americans already use voice assistants on occasion, a number that is expected to rise significantly in the coming years. The substantial numbers for voice assistant use among families with children in the household mean that there could be a wide range of applications for the technology, including integration with children's applications that help the young learn how to read or count.

Chatbots Have Room for Growth: 39% Never Use

Chatbots have a wide range of potential applications, but statistics show that they haven't fully caught on with the public yet. 39% of respondents to the survey say that they never use chatbots under any scenario. 40% of respondents say that they use chatbots occasionally. Many are simply unfamiliar with this type of artificial intelligence – 10% of respondents admit not knowing much about chatbots at all.

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44% of American women unlikely to seek out AI products and services from brands in 2018. (Versus 34% men)

Brands need to **understand customer attitudes** towards artificial intelligence & shift their strategy accordingly.

Taken together, all of this data means that chatbots have room for growth. 40% of respondents use chatbots only occasionally, and nearly the same percentage of respondents never use them, indicating a lack of exposure. As chatbot technology matures, expect more brands to make use of it and for a rising number of Americans to become familiar with it.

The AI survey produced some very intriguing insights, particularly on the gender breakdowns. Women are significantly less likely to use artificial intelligence than men, and when they report back after using it, they are typically less satisfied. Figuring out the reasons for these disparities could open up a broader market for artificial intelligence services. 48% of men report being satisfied with AI, compared to only 35% of women. In fact, 29% of women say that they are unlikely to seek out brands that offer AI services within the next year. The disparity between men and women's views of AI hasn't been fully explained, but perhaps the fact that men use AI more than women plays a role.

Other interesting insights include household income numbers. 46% of those satisfied with AI include households with over $50,000 in annual income. Could those fairly well-off Americans be more satisfied with AI because of higher levels of education? Are those in a higher socioeconomic class more apt to understand, use, and benefit from AI in ways that those of lower socioeconomic status can't? Is there a class barrier to AI that prevents low-income Americans from spending money on the service? These are also questions that need to be answered.

Another fact worth noting is that 53% of those satisfied with AI have children in the household. This is important for two reasons: first, those with children in the household tend to be relatively young adults, and second, children present an entirely new market for brands using artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence could be used by children in a multitude of different ways. For example, a child old enough to speak but too short to turn on a light could use voice-activated smart home technology to turn the light on. And of course, young children who become familiar with artificial intelligence growing up will be more likely to use the technology as they mature into adults.

But perhaps the most predictable conclusion is the technology's popularity among Millennials. Two-thirds of the 18-34 demographic report being satisfied with artificial intelligence. Younger demographics use the technology more and tend to be more familiar with it than older generations, which likely leads to higher levels of satisfaction. This means that brands that are looking to move AI into their strategy need to have Millennials as a key target demographic. 52% of the 18-34 demographic says that they will be likely to seek out brands that offer AI tools in the next year.

Other findings include that residents of the northeast and west are more likely to seek out and use artificial intelligence. Residents of the northeast and west coast have higher incomes on average, which supports the finding that 46% of those satisfied with AI have households with over $50,000 in annual income. This could mean that brands keying in on target demographics for AI need to focus their geographic range on specific regions of the country at this time.

48% of American men are satisfied with brands that currently provide AI products and services from brands in 2018. (Versus 35% women)

How Your Brand Can Utilize AI

Companies looking to compete in the coming years must begin getting familiar and comfortable with these types of technologies. They should consider where using these types of technologies could provide them with a competitive advantage. It's a good idea to start small and then invest more as applications deliver.

A good starting spot might be using chatbots for customer service. Chatbots can help reduce costs while delivering superior customer service for businesses. Chatbots can help deliver a competitive edge on customer service and efficiency: the resources that are freed up by using lower-cost chatbot artificial intelligence can be reinvested into other areas of the business. Companies must take the time to make sure that they get the chatbot technology right. If done incorrectly, chatbots could potentially frustrate customers even more with wrong answers or broken sentences. To avoid these problems, businesses should engage in a lengthy testing period to make sure that the chatbots are performing their purpose effectively before the technology is deployed.

Voice assistants have seen significant growth in recent years. For brands, this presents a problem and an opportunity. The problem is that major corporations such as Apple and Microsoft have already created well-known voice assistants Siri and Cortana. A large number of consumers are already using these services, and some of them might not be willing to switch to another voice assistant, at least in the short term. The opportunity is that because a large number of people have already been exposed to the technology, they are already familiar with it.

Brands should focus on enhancing the customer experience & targeting their niche to stand out.

This is the opposite of the situation with chatbots, where 10% of Americans are unfamiliar with the technology, and 39% never use it at all. Voice assistants have wide exposure, but the competition is also stronger in this space. That means brands should focus on enhancing the customer experience and targeting their niche to stand out. For example, perhaps a food review brand shouldn't create a voice assistant that can tell customers the weather or the traffic patterns like Siri or Cortana. Perhaps that brand would focus their voice assistant on food reviews and local restaurants, only helping customers figure out what is on the menu at restaurants in their city, along with ratings for particular dishes. Maybe this voice assistant could even learn their user's specific food preferences or food allergies and then suggest a new restaurant for them to try that they haven't visited in the past. This kind of specific focus can help brands promote their voice assistants in a crowded field. Instead of generalization, they should focus on personalization in a specific niche.

Smart home technology is generally viewed as sophisticated and expensive, but it doesn't have to be. Amazon's Echo (a smart home device which comes with a voice assistant named Alexa) can perform relatively simple tasks like turning on classical music while you clean your home or ordering a new pair of shoes to be delivered to your door. The big issue for brands pushing smart home technology is that 63% of women never use it. That is a major hurdle that brands must overcome by appealing specifically to women and alleviating their concerns.

Which AI Solutions Match Your Brand's Expectations?

Effectively utilizing artificial intelligence means deploying the technology in ways that are authentic to your brand. If your brand is using artificial intelligence in ways that don't fit with your brand strategy, your customers will be able to tell. Brands shouldn't just use artificial intelligence for the sake of using new, cutting-edge technology that is popular with Millennials. They need to utilize the technology to enhance their brand by improving the customer experience. Artificial intelligence should make things easier, not more complicated, and it should fit into the brand's existing persona.

For example, it wouldn't make any sense for a fantasy sports brand to produce smart home technology that can turn a stove on and off remotely. Customers are going to that brand to play fantasy sports games against their friends – not for home automation. In that particular scenario, producing a smart home device would be a waste of time and resources. But that same fantasy sports brand producing a voice assistant that can analyze thousands of game scores and player data would be relevant and useful. A customer could ask the voice assistant which player would best fit their lineup, and the artificial intelligence could produce a viable answer in a matter of seconds. That technology would be true to the company's original vision, and it would make life easier for its customers. A chatbot could perform similar functions for a fantasy sports brand. A user could visit the company website and ask a chatbot which NBA player has the highest three-point percentage over the past two weeks or which NBA player is averaging the most blocks during away games. It would take a user a significant amount of time to visit box scores and analyze this data on their own. But a chatbot could quickly analyze the entire NBA season and spit out relevant answers almost instantly.

Artificial intelligence should make things easier, not more complicated.

Of course, it is important to remember that your brand's goals, strategies, identity, and outlook may change over time. Your brand might not be primed to roll out an artificial intelligence tool at the moment, but over the next several years, that could change. If you aren't ready for artificial intelligence now, that doesn't mean that the present situation will persist. Your management team likely already meets on a regular basis to discuss brand identity and the direction of the company. As artificial intelligence technology develops, it will become prudent to evaluate whether or not AI could enhance your customer experience on a fairly regular basis.

AI Can Help Your Brand Become More Relevant With Target Demographics

Artificial intelligence is powerful in part because it is not a static tool. Unlike other forms of technology, artificial intelligence can "learn" and become more refined over time. Take the concept of machine learning. The essence of machine learning is that software can become more accurate in the predictions it makes over time without a human explicitly programming it. Rather, the software receives data inputs from sources other than the programmer and then uses statistical analysis to predict an outcome. The more data machine learning software acquires, the more accurate its predictions become. Machine learning is behind most social media news feed algorithms. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram use machine learning to determine which ads, stories, and photos to serve on a particular user's timeline. For example, Instagram will observe which photos and ads a particular user clicks on, likes, and comments on, and over time, the platform will serve similar types of photos and ads to that specific user. This is all without a programmer making explicit inputs. All of the information comes from the user, and Instagram becomes "smarter" about their preferences as time goes on.

The information and specific preferences that are gleaned from machine learning are extremely valuable. Machine learning can help brands better understand their target demographics. Machine learning isn't limited to social media algorithms either. Voice assistants, chatbots, and smart home devices can all use machine learning to better serve customers and provide brands with valuable insights into specific demographics.

Most chatbot users are looking for a particular answer to a complex question. As the chatbot gets asked similar questions over time, machine learning allows it to provide a more specific, higher-quality answer.

The same goes for voice assistants. As users ask questions over a long period of time, the artificial intelligence behind the technology gets better at determining what is a good answer and what isn't.

Smart home devices can use machine learning to do something similar: figure out the preferences of its owners and predict their future actions. For example, a smart home device might ask its owner if she would like to turn the oven on remotely before she gets home from work, since she usually does that on the weekdays. A smart home device could also learn the temperature preferences of its owner and start setting the thermostat automatically.

Customers can get an enhanced experience from machine learning. Brands get to see valuable information about customer behavior. The questions posed to chatbots and voice assistants can provide brands with data about specific demographics and their preferences. Brands can then use that information to further target specific demographics and better meet their needs. Perhaps young fathers – in the 20-35 demographic – are asking their voice assistant for nearby parks or fields where they can play baseball with their young child during the summer. If the voice assistant is tied to an e-commerce brand, that brand can then serve that demographic more ads for baseball equipment and gear.

Voice assistants, chatbots, & smart home devices can all use machine learning to **better serve customers.**

AI Can Make Life Easier for Your Customers

AI doesn't have to be an overly complex concept. At the end of the day, it is about making life easier for your customers, making it more likely for them to come back. Remember, AI is about enhancing the customer experience. Customers are willing to pay more for a better experience, so having a high-quality AI tool can ultimately be a boon for your bottom line. When developing AI for your brand, you should be thinking about how it can reduce the complexity of your products and services.

AI can streamline the process and reduce friction. Departments that didn't previously talk can use AI to quickly answer customer questions that used to be complicated.

This can be seen through chatbots; they can pull information from various sections of your website and give your visitors practical answers within seconds. This eliminates the need for them to call a customer service center. AI doesn't ignore or throw away data; it uses all of the data points to come to a conclusion. That is why AI can often present us with better options than actual humans could, or at least with options that humans might miss under certain circumstances. AI can also use machine learning to get more efficient the more data it has. For example, Facebook can learn what types of news you will click on, and over time, it becomes better at serving you those types of news stories in your feed.

The user or customer experience is often the differentiator between two companies. AI will help companies save important resources and become more efficient, allowing them to improve their customer experience. An example of a chatbot that enhances the customer experience is Whole Foods' messenger chatbot. The bot allows users to search for recipes from Facebook messenger. Users can even search recipes by emoji, typing in a jalapeno or apple and then receiving recipes that include those products. This can be especially useful for those walking through a Whole Foods store looking for something new to cook for dinner.
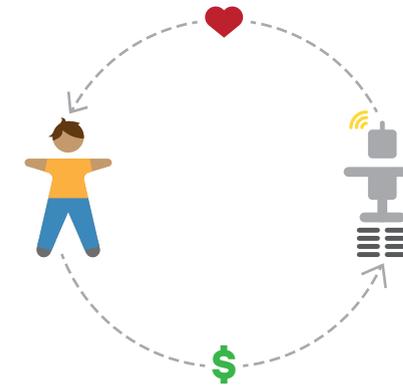
Customers are willing to pay more **for a better experience.**

Using AI to Solve Brand Personalization Challenges

There is a reason why brands like Apple and Amazon have given their personal assistant bots names and genders. Data shows that customers like personalization and building relationships with brands. Creating a human-like persona for a bot helps people feel like they are communicating with a real person instead of an AI. The distinction might not seem that important, but if providing a gender and a name for your AI can get more prospects to use your brand, then it is absolutely the right decision.

Research from Indiana University's School of Informatics and Computing shows that both men and women prefer female speech, as it comes across as warmer. This is opposed to male voices, which tend to be perceived more as authority figures. Researchers have found that most people would rather have a female voice coming from a voice assistant because they perceive it as someone helping them solve their problem on their own as opposed to someone giving them an answer from a place of authority. Male voices are generally perceived as the latter.

Although most people prefer a female voice from their voice assistant, that doesn't mean that all brands must go that route when implementing voice assistant AI. Domino's Pizza opted for a male vocal assistant called "Dom" for their app. Dom was created to give Domino's customers a more comfortable option for orders, but his sound is also meant to give customers the confidence that the order will go through correctly.

Although most people prefer a female voice from their voice assistant, that doesn't mean that all brands must go that route.

Whether the voice assistant for your brand is a man or a woman is up to your brand's specific goals as well as your relationship with your target audience. But expect the trend of gendered artificial intelligence to continue. Humans simply respond better to AI that has a defined voice, persona, and gender rather than a genderless voice that has no name or personality. Brands are also likely to expand the options for their voice assistants; you can already change Siri's voice to that of a man, for instance, and companies will probably improve on their AI's personalization to help their customers find a voice assistant that meshes with their own personality. In the future, brands might even offer a tool in their apps to help users find the voice assistant that best fits their personal preferences and needs. The challenge will be ensuring that all of the potential options are still in line with the company's image and brand strategy.

It is important to note that some political groups and activists have called the growth of female voice assistants sexist, claiming it implies that women are meant to serve others. This could fuel a push for more male voice assistants in the AI space, and brands should be aware of political pressure and public opinion that could sway the preferences of their target audience.

AI Needs More Than Just Data

Artificial intelligence can have a significant role in simplifying things for your company and your customers. But AI needs more than just data; AI needs human direction so that it knows what to look for and what insights to provide you with. It needs customer data points in order to give a proper analysis in the first place. AI isn't omnipresent. It needs direction from humans so that it can provide relevant and actionable information. Without the right guidance, artificial intelligence could provide irrelevant, useless information that isn't actionable.

To be more precise, artificial intelligence can provide your management team with a significant amount of data regarding your customers and their behaviors and preferences. It can track how those preferences change over time and make predictions about future behaviors through machine learning. But all of these conclusions still need to be interpreted by humans at some point in time. Artificial intelligence can be a vital and instrumental part of your analysis; however, if left unchecked, it can make mistakes just like humans do, especially if the sample size is small or the data it's working with is flawed.

That means that you can't just assume artificial intelligence is always going to make the right decision or provide you with entirely accurate data. It will often do so, and at a lower cost than alternative options. But it is vital to be aware of the conclusions that your AI systems are coming to and make sure that they are in line with your expectations.

Aim High With Your Company's Use Of AI

Your brand shouldn't be using AI just to say that it has an advantage. It should actually be using AI to create a gap between yourself and other industry players. IBM's Watson is an example of AI that has put a brand on the cutting edge. How can your brand use AI to not only make your job easier but to put a gap between your business and that of your competitors?

The focus is primarily on the customer experience.

The focus is primarily on the customer experience and how easy artificial intelligence makes it for your customers to solve their problems with your product or service. For example, Domino's Pizza customers used to have to log in on their desktop computers and visit several screens and fill out numerous fields before they could actually order their pizza. Dom, Domino's new voice assistant tied to their app, now allows users to order a pie simply by speaking. This kind of advantage gives Domino's an edge over competitors who don't use artificial intelligence to help make ordering easier for their customers.

Your entire marketing leadership team should evaluate your industry and take a look at where artificial intelligence can give your brand an edge over your competitors. Where can AI widen the gap? Where can AI expose the lesser customer experience offered by your competitors?

Conclusion (Why Your Business Should Invest in Artificial Intelligence)

Artificial intelligence has had significant growth and adaption over the past several years, but it isn't close to being a mature technology. AI will continue to grow and develop over the next several years as more brands adopt the technology and deploy it to improve the customer experience. Brands need to be aware of the findings from key AI research in order to maximize their investment in the technology. Management teams must recognize that:

- **Artificial intelligence is most popular with the Millennial demographic (those aged 18-34).**
- **52% of Millennials aged 18-34 say they are more likely to seek out a brand that uses AI tools.**
- **Women are less apt to use AI than men, and when they do use it, they report feeling less satisfied with the experience.**
- **Chatbots have significant room for growth as 39% of Americans never use the technology.**
- **59% of Americans use voice assistants on an occasional basis, indicating that the technology has already reached a large portion of the market.**
- **46% of those satisfied with AI have households with over $50,000 in annual income.**
- **53% of those satisfied with AI have children in the household.**

If your brand is looking to utilize artificial intelligence, it has to understand a few things. First, it has to take a look at how individuals use AI and learn their specific preferences. For example, a company that specializes in maternity clothing and wants to add a voice assistant to their app must gain a better understanding of why women are less likely to use AI and figure out a way to utilize AI so that it meets the preferences and expectations of their particular demographic. Brands that don't understand the preferences of their target audience won't be able to maximize the effectiveness of AI or create a gap between their company and their competitors.

In addition to understanding their target audience, brands must also use AI in ways that are in line with their brand strategy and image. It makes no sense for a travel agency to have a smart home device that can control your oven temperature. But it does make sense for a travel agency to have an app with a voice assistant that can answer questions about popular tourist destinations, like Paris or London. Your implementation of AI must be true to your company's brand.

The good news for businesses is that artificial intelligence can provide a wide range of new insights that were not previously available. Chatbots can catalog the types of questions that customers are asking, and brands can use this information to provide more efficient services. Voice assistants can track the input from their customers to give brands invaluable shopping data; for example, Domino's Pizza can use the inputs from their voice assistant Dom to determine which types of pizza are popular. Domino's can change their marketing efforts based on that information, and it can even offer targeted offers to individual customers based on their preferences.

Of course, one of the biggest draws for artificial intelligence is machine learning, or the ability for AI to become more accurate over time as it receives more input data. Machine learning is best known for its work on news feeds for social media platforms, curating timelines so that users are more likely to click on the stories and advertisements being served to them. But machine learning is increasingly being used in all sorts of AI, and it enhances the customer experience by being better in tune with customer preferences than old forms of technology.

Businesses looking to get a leg up on the competition should definitely consider an investment in artificial intelligence. But a brand's deployment of AI must make sense with their overall strategy and identity. It must ultimately improve the customer experience and fundamentally make it easier and more enjoyable. If the customer experience isn't improved – for example, as a result of a faulty chatbot that gives incorrect answers – the customer's experience can actually take a hit. That is why brands need to make sure that the AI they deploy fits their vision and meets the needs of their customers. This is happening across industries as more brands turn to AI to help them solve their everyday problems.

To learn more about our AI brand research or to discuss how AI fits into your current brand marketing strategy, contact Tim Weinheimer: tim@weinheimergroup.com

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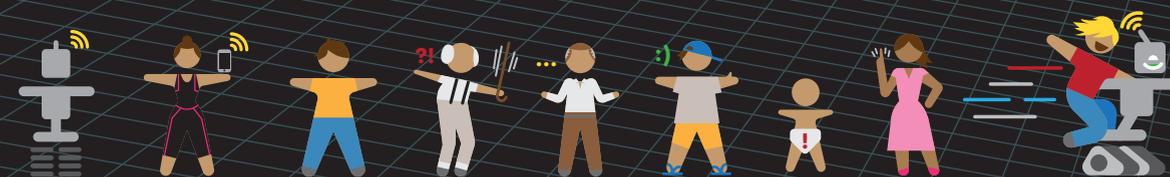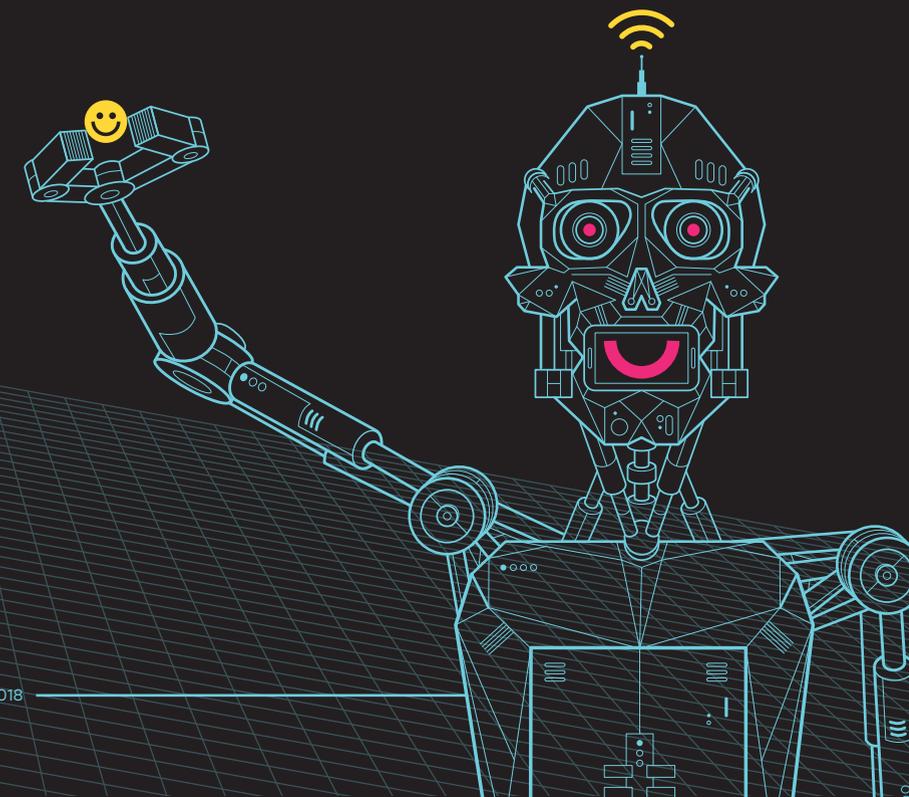http://www.convinceandconvert.com/digital-marketing/artificial-intelligence-can-help-your-brand/

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