

What possible use could Gen AI be to me? (Part 1)

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There's a great scene in the Simpsons where the Monorail salesman comes to town and everyone (except Lisa of course) is quickly entranced by Monorail fever...

He has an answer for every question and guess what? The Monorail will solve all the problems... somehow. The hype around Generative AI can seem a bit like that, and like Monorail-guy the sales-guy's assure you Gen AI will solve all your problems - but can be pretty vague on the "how" part of the answer.

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So I'm going to provide a few short guides into how Generative (& other forms of AI) Artificial Intelligence can help you and your team. I'll pitch the technical level differently for each one, and we'll start with something fairly not technical: Custom Chatbots.

ChatBots these days have evolved from the crude web sales tools of ten years ago, designed to Hoover up leads for the sales team.

They can now provide informative answers to questions based on documents or websites. If we take the most famous: Chat GPT 4. If we ignore the standard free version, that every other student is using to churn out essays, and look at the paid-for version - that will be a good entry point.

This \$20 a month service allows you to create and distribute custom Chat GPT's. This will have all of the conversational ability of the latest chat GPT, but you can also get it to base answers on documents you give it. You can also tailor how it responds, for example should it be casual or formal, provide examples or just "answer the question" only. Use college level language or that of child e.g. "explain it to me like I'm 5"

Behind the scenes, Chat GPT is doing a semantic search of your documents, that is - search based on the concepts of your question - rather than a crude keyword search. This approach known as RAG (Retrieval Augmented Generation - fancy name for a simple thing) allows Chat GPT to look for information on the concepts held in your query - and then answer using those concepts, woven into a single coherent response. I.e: it retrieves data using a clever search and uses that data to augment the answer it generates.



AI Chat Bots can be an invaluable aid to learning and delivery

You can actually go further and get Chat GPT to base its answers based on an API call into your systems. This API call might do a calculation (ChatGPT can struggle with math questions) or query your database. It might also set up a calendar invite, score the results of a game or find cheap flights - if you connect it to something like SkyScanner.

So how do I use these custom AI chat-bots? I currently work in the field of SWIFT Payments. (Ever seen a movie where they “wire” the money round the world - they are using SWIFT payments.) These payments are based on complex messages and are heavily regulated by central banks and governments. As you can imagine - in this sweet spot between Government regulation, banks and complexity lives a lot of long dry documentation.

So I took these publicly available documents and specifications and put them into a Chat GPT chat bot - along with a few sentences on how to discuss and explain the answers to my questions. The end result is a very helpful and knowledgeable assistant that can answer questions varying from what are the options for a data field in a complex payment message up to what is the regulatory impact of system X or Y being deployed in the cloud.

Of course this information can be found in Google, but the difference is - Google will correctly give me a link to a 400 page PDF that contains my answer. Correct but not useful. Meanwhile - My custom Chat GPT chatbot will essentially read that document for me, and answer based on what it found - That’s useful.

Modern AI chatbots can do much more than this - the above is possible in 10 minutes, with guidance and a willingness to experiment - you can build AI tools that help you and your team learn, adapt and deliver faster.