

Human Capital in a Bot Eat Bot World

By M. Dorsett

Everyone is talking about bots, and I'm just going to say what everyone is thinking. "What about my job?" You're not alone.

In May of 2015, NPR released [an interactive tool](#) that showed you the likelihood of your job being replaced by a machine. What wasn't included was information about the millions of jobs concerning CCPs (Customer Care Professionals) that work in the Connection Centers around the world. I can only assume the reason is the tool was released B.F8 2016 (before Facebook bot announcement)

A year later, A.F8 2016 (after Facebook bot announcement) [Wall Street released a list of 18 jobs](#) which they predicted would be most affected by robot replacement. Number 1 on the list: telephone operators at a whopping 42%.

While it can be scary to imagine your job becoming irrelevant, here are some points to think about that may offer some solace.

Does Not Compute

AI (artificial intelligence) is only as intelligent as the human or data capital that creates it. While it can do some learning on its own, most of its “intelligence” comes from being able to absorb what people already know, combine that quickly, and spit out solutions automatically. There will always be jobs for those that learn how to build bot solutions, or improve on existing ones. An excellent and easy to understand example of this is in text analytics. Lisa Wyche, Director of Insights Program Management at LivePerson, tells the story where an agent by the name of Dusty always had a negative sentiment scoring for his conversations. It was discovered that the word “dusty” had been scored by the computer program to be a negative and since it appeared often was giving his conversations low scores. This discovery was made by, of course, an actual human, who dug in and did some research.

Life is About to Get a Whole Lot Easier

Certainly for consumers, which we all are, interacting with bots makes our lives easier and generally makes the world we live in more efficient. For those that work in Connection Centers, bots will have a presence there, not only on the consumer facing side, but the CCP side as well. Bots will be able to proactively suggest predefined content, and other relevant information, links, or product suggestions, that a CCP would normally have to search for, or would forget to offer. This will increase CSAT, AOV and Conversion Rates, and saves time during the conversation. The ramp up time for training a new agent is shortened, as well as a result.

The Tango

This is a term coined by LivePerson (LPSN), which describes the collaboration of how a human works with an automated bot in the platform. CCPs are being upskilled to be “Bot Managers”. These roles monitor the bot conversations and proactively step in when needed, or are available for bots to escalate conversations when they can’t assist any further. Whether brands decide to let consumers know they’re talking to a human or not, a small

percentage of the population will always exist that insists they speak to a human in certain situations. Bot Managers can then use their experience to make recommendations on how to improve bots.

The Human Touch

One of the the greatest traits of being a human is the ability to go against what is “procedural” and use our own information to assess the situation and respond. The vast majority of Bots at this stage would not pass the [Turing test](#), and are mostly incapable of displaying empathy. Getting one to have a personality is another challenge. This is the complete opposite of a human! While bots can be similar to humans, they cannot fully replicate the individuality and uniqueness that defines being human. No two people are exactly alike in every detail. We all come with a completely unique personality.

History Repeats Itself

The Economist put out an uplifting [article](#) where they outlined several instances in time when automation replaced jobs and

ended up creating more new jobs than it took away in the first place. So there is hope. Michael Jones, Assistant Professor in Economics at the University of Cincinnati, confirms this trend in his opinion of the data, and says “yes, the robots will steal our jobs and that’s fine.”

In the A.F8 2016 world that we live in today, bots are doing tasks that a human once had to do, and they will be able to step into more spaces as AI develops. While we’re not that far away from Bicentennial Man being at least some part of our reality, the future is not all doom and gloom. As these advances are made, millions of jobs need to be reassigned, or upskilled. Tapping into human and data capital is an important step to creating and growing bot solutions that meet the needs and expectations of the future.

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