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Integrated Approach of Gen AI with Humans at the Heart of Strategy

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Introduction

Generative AI has sneaked in, and here we are in the landscape where most organizations are still trying to discern how it can be capitalized on, along with human expertise, for the best adoption results.

From the perspective of managing technology changes, few know that human expertise ultimately yields the most successful outcomes in managing changes effectively. Their change management teams are on the battlefield, designing change strategies for their clients. Organizations have now come to terms with the fact that keeping humans at the center supports the new narrative. They have also realized that generative AI, without a human touch, is like huge piles of data with no human creativity to conclude.

Market research



According to the Forbes Advisor survey conducted in April 2023, over 80% of businesses have integrated AI into their operations. However, nearly half of the respondents express concerns about the potential consequences of overreliance on AI without human expertise. Customers often lament the lack of human interaction and personalized experiences in automation systems. This disconnect leads to dissatisfaction, decreased customer loyalty, and missed business opportunities.

Target audience



This article may help AI practitioners, developers, and customer experience professionals focus on the relationship between AI and human capabilities in delivering personalized experiences.

A real-world success story



The problem statement

Let me share a use case with you. I led a change management effort in a major acquisition deal between two companies that were mightily different in culture, language, and individual personalities. Employees of the acquired company expressed dissatisfaction with the idea of being managed by their counterparts from the acquiring company, whom they perceived as less competitive. This sentiment was accompanied by noticeable discomfort and reluctance, even in response to minor policy changes.



The solution

As a part of our change management framework, we used Natural Language Processing (NLP), a type of generative AI, to analyze internal communications and gauge the company culture. We also analyzed team dynamics, communication patterns, and emotional sentiment, providing insights into the cultural compatibility of those organizations. A survey was rolled out with the idea of gauging employees' sentiments and sentiment analysis. This key NLP application in Business Intelligence was used to analyze reviews and feedback on social media.



The outcome

We knew artificial intelligence performs better when humans are involved in data collection, annotation, and validation. A huge amount of data was gathered during the survey, and a properly trained AI algorithm made it meaningful. Hence, we annotated the data to rectify AI's vocabulary so it could gauge survey results better.

There was a clear need for human interaction to mitigate the risk because AI, despite its sophistication, could not fully emulate human dialogue. Communication between two people is a complicated and unpredictable process. The flow of a conversation is not solely determined by the most recent part of the conversation; it can depend on various factors beyond the immediate past, unlike what is used in AI. We organized several one-on-one interactions with employees to make AI effective and develop solutions using AI derivatives. We focused on understanding the fears and inhibitions behind their resistance to new policies and working methods.

Challenges faced during the execution

High operational costs

The AI algorithms generated were too complex and opaque. Also, to draw insights from the huge piles of data, we had to involve a fleet of experts. We had to hire substantial computational resources, which had a massive impact on operational costs.

Data misinterpretation

AI algorithms produced a few erroneous interpretations and wrongly classified sensitive information, leading to misleading insights and privacy breaches. Human experts had to step in and provide feedback to improve AI algorithms and intervene to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation.

Contextual misunderstanding

AI algorithms sometimes struggle to interpret personal information data in context, like understanding cultural nuances, historical backgrounds, and individual circumstances. We had to bring human experts for contextual understanding, empathy and domain knowledge for informed decision making. For instance, an employee from the acquired company, who used to select 'unhappy' on a question asked to him every morning at the time of login, was classified as a major attrition case in shared AI findings. It was only with the interaction of human experts and the employee that it was understood that the employee was going through certain personal/ family issues that led to him being severely unhappy when he came to work.

What worked well for us

01

Data-driven decision-making

Going back to the above example, we used AI to identify patterns, correlations, anomalies, and trends in the acquired employee behavior. This included team meeting attendance, internal review participation, performance, and attitude toward peers, managers, and the organization. A single question that pops up at the time the employee logs in to the system, 'Good Morning! How are you doing today?' is enough to gauge their mood and emotional patterns. It could help understand complex data sets better, including absenteeism, percentages of deadlines met, and more. Moreover, it imputed missing values by learning from the existing data patterns and distributions and helped generate more complete visualizations, improving the overall quality of insights.

02

Personalized approach

With AI having access to employee data, it created segments based on demographics, behaviors, and preferences. Going by the use case, an employee identified as a 'red' in red, amber, green (RAG) analysis was given personalized content and relevant messaging. This was based on interactions (likes, shares) on his internal and external social media handles. Personalized communication and training enhanced engagement and minimized resistance to change. Following the above example, an employee from the acquired company would express his inhibition of moving to the new technology. The inhibition was possibly because of wanting to stay in their comfort zone due to age or experience with the old technology. AI could precisely segment all such target audiences, allowing personalized content and recommendations.

03

Added operational efficiency and effectiveness

AI analyzed large quantities of data at high speeds and identified patterns and trends. For instance, the survey data received in huge quantities was churned out, sliced, and diced to draw insights. These insights were invaluable for the change team in creating a strategic roadmap for change that takes performance metrics, feedback, and resistance, leading to quicker adoption of change. Human experts validated the findings of AI algorithms by cross-referencing them with additional sources or performing additional manual checks. Ultimately, the findings had to be conveyed to stakeholders with the help of data visualization and story-telling approaches so they could understand the insights clearly.



Conclusion

A report released by Gartner mentions that as the number of companies that have eliminated customer service interactions with an agent grows, government agencies are discussing regulating AI's use in business and consumer relations. Gartner analysts predict that the European Union will likely pass legislation mandating customers' right to talk to a human agent by 2028. If the EU demands a "right to talk to a human" in their customer service strategy, it would be the best use case of putting humans at the center while creating strategies at the enterprise level.

As we continue to harness the power of AI for the betterment of humanity, human interventions will remain indispensable in shaping the future where AI benefits all. The real-world examples and challenges mentioned in this whitepaper demonstrate that the collaboration between AI algorithms and human experts yields profound insights, drives personalized experiences, and enhances operational efficiency. Despite the hurdles encountered, success stories underscore the indispensable role of human oversight in ensuring accurate interpretation, contextual understanding, and ethical considerations. Moving forward, embracing this integrated approach will optimize the potential of AI technologies. It will also foster meaningful human connections, ultimately shaping a more empathetic and effective organizational landscape.

References

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Author's bio



Charul acts as a change advisor to clients with large transformational deals. She is a certified Change Management Practitioner from APMG International, UK. Through a professional career spanning a couple of decades, she has worked in domains like learning and development, organization development, and organization change management. Charul has led the change for various enterprise product implementations like SAP ARIBA, SAP Concur, Salesforce .com, SuccessFactors, ServiceNow, and other digital implementations

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