

A Robot Wrote My Press Release

The advent and growth of social media created a huge leap in technology for public relations, but since then, few other new tech entries have made much impression beyond tweaking algorithms, adding features and providing updates.

Until now.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is trending on news sites and social media for being hyped as potentially making all kinds of content generation faster, easier and cheaper for everyone, including professional services firms. I decided to see how it works and what could make sense for use within the legal industry.

Putting Content Generators to the Test

My exploration focused on what application AI content generators might have in PR and, more specifically, for law firm PR. Two available content generators that I checked out are [Jasper](#) and [ChatGPT](#).

Jasper requires a monthly subscription after a free trial, and offers several plans depending on expected word number usage, type of content, type of user and other features. Jasper states it delivers original and optimized content at 10x the speed, presumably of normal human creativity. The platform offers many templates based on the needed content, and it offers to work with more than 29 languages. Jasper's AI recently [wrote its own press release](#) to announce a new chat interface on its platform, providing one representation of its claims of robust abilities.

"Some have breathlessly proclaimed ChatGPT to be the most important technological development since the invention of the printing press or the splitting of the atom," noted Joe McKendrick in a [Forbes](#) article about the ownership of content generated by AI. I simply had to try it out for myself!

I registered for ChatGPT, which became available in November 2022 to initially use as a free platform during its research preview, and entered this request: "Explain what an AI content generator does for writing articles." Within seconds, the following response appeared:

"An AI content generator is a tool that uses artificial intelligence algorithms to automatically generate written content. It can be used to produce articles, news stories, social media posts, or any other type of written material."

"The AI content generator works by analyzing a set of input materials, such as a list of keywords or a sample article, and then using this information to generate new content that is similar in style and content to the input. The generated content is not necessarily a copy of the input, but rather a new piece of writing that is based on the input and uses



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similar language and ideas.

"AI content generators can be useful for a variety of tasks, such as generating filler content for websites, creating social media posts, or producing articles for marketing and promotional purposes. They can save time and effort for writers and content creators, and can help to produce a large volume of written material quickly and efficiently. However, the quality of the generated content may vary, and it may not always be suitable for all uses."

Not bad. For me to formulate that response, I would have had to research and cull information from a variety of sites and write it up. That takes time, so witnessing the speed of this reply in seconds in real time was remarkable.

I next asked ChatGPT to write a press release to announce a new partner named Al C. Yuencourt who joined the Jacksonville, Florida, office of the national law firm Wee Winnit Allwaze, and who practices general litigation. The resulting draft of the press release surprised me with the content provided; it contained nearly all the elements I would have included had I written it. I finetuned the request to add other elements about this new partner's background, and the revised results acceptably incorporated those new points.

I had to chuckle at the quote prepared on behalf of John Doe, the managing partner of Wee Winnit Allwaze, since it was very generic. I visualized this AI generator whizzing around its data stash, reviewing every press release with a law firm managing partner quote welcoming a new partner, and collating the most common phrases to draft the quote – all in under 3 seconds! Editing for additional messaging, voice and tone would not be too difficult at this point.

My initial thoughts about using AI-generated content:

- Key messages requiring advance strategic thinking must be incorporated into the request or added during editing, but AI learns with feedback to develop more refined responses.
- Time is needed to learn full functionality, which can offset the speed of content being generated once the request is entered. Once that is learned, the process should be much faster.
- AI could generate a typical and basic press release with speed.
- A solo practitioner, or a small law firm without the resources for a PR consultant or communications employee, could reasonably turn to an AI tool to prepare a straightforward press release.
- Editing is always necessary.
- I found it useful for sparking prompts and ideas.
- Word choice in my example press release was rather simple and repetitive in some spots, and there was loss of context and depth, along with a lack of nuanced details that would come from someone who understands the industry and audience.
- Personality was missing – but I read that AI could learn voice and tone style, so improvements could be made. For example, I could have provided personality traits about the managing partner that would be reflected in the word choice of the draft welcome quote.

Overall, I predict PR and marketing professionals will start to incorporate AI into daily work, and it will become as ubiquitous as asking Siri now for reminders and data requests.

It's almost inconceivable to imagine a world now without Siri or Alexa, even if their results can exasperate and frustrate almost as much as they can delight and inform. How does ChatGPT fit in? Think of Siri for Q&A, giving you immediate facts at your voice command, one and done. Now imagine that you can continue the conversation over time, albeit only in written format –that is ChatGPT. Unlike Siri or Alexa, it remembers earlier conversations and learns and adjusts for continuing back-and-forth responses. I'm simplifying matters, but ChatGPT is designed for engagement in a written format.

Using AI in the Legal Industry

While outside the scope of a law firm setting, [this article showcases several ways to use AI](#). Some of these applications might make sense for a lawyer; for instance, asking it to help develop questions to ask in a new-business meeting, job interview or networking event could be useful. Furthermore, sharing the experience about using AI for your conversation would be an interesting icebreaker!

Another obvious content need in law firms is social media, and AI could easily help write social media messages. Reviewing and editing would still be necessary.

Humanity vs. Humanoid

In another [Forbes](#) article about the future use of AI, author and professor Ajay Agrawal offers a valuable reminder. "Despite advances in computing power, AI remains a tool about prediction, not judgment. Judgment is what humans must still do with the predictions that computing serves up."

In other words, the humanity behind our writing – the nuances and factors and history and personality and all the rest of what makes a writer – cannot be entirely replaced by AI when we share our stories.

While AI content generation seems promising, it is still *very* early in the game and requires strategic human thinking and eloquence for direction, instruction and – of course – editing. It's always exciting to witness industry shifts and growth from the use of technology, but I'm not worried about human writers losing their jobs anytime soon. (Indeed, I never thought I'd have to clarify and spell out "human writers," but here we are!)

What other uses, benefits and drawbacks do you see with the use of AI-generated content? Would you use it, and if so, how? If not, why not? To continue this discussion, write to me at vhood@jaffepr.com. I promise I won't use AI to respond!