AutoINcorrecting History

Near-future catastrophic scenario

We marvel at how simplistic the deepfakes of 2021 were. What began as a curiosity to see our ancestors move and speak quickly morphed into a new breed of deceptive technology designed to cancel cancel culture. We’ve resurrected people and put words in their mouths, edited their personalities, our relationships with them, and ultimately clouded our memories of the lives they lived. We are told that politicians caused great harm—but now, we can’t remember what it was, or why people were so mad at the time. With their digital extensions scrubbed, they all seem like rational, likable people.
INNOVATION

Synthetic media and content can be used for new product ideation, to test designs, and to help anticipate what’s on the horizon. Given the complexity of new media technologies, chief innovation officers must consider alternative uses of what their teams develop: Once a product hits the marketplace, it could be used to spread misinformation or cause harm.

R & D

Synthetic media can be additive to the traditional R&D process. Teams making use of digital twins, experimental digital extensions, and other forms of new media can accelerate vital research, especially in urban planning, mobility, and health-related fields. For those working in creative industries, a transformation is underway, which will unlock new business opportunities and shape the future of media and entertainment.

RISK

We are entering a new, and very complicated, field of intellectual property law. This leads to thorny questions about an organization’s legal rights to the content it builds and licenses. Chief risk officers should explore dimensions of intellectual property in an age of augmented media. There are longer-range implications to consider, including brand safety and consumer trust.

Application

The multiverse, along with shifts in content distribution, will eventually affect an organization’s reputation, its messaging, and some of the regulatory protections under which it operates. Chief strategy officers should engage more closely with others in the C-suite, especially chief technology officers, chief marketing officers, and chief innovation officers to develop a longer-term strategy and vision for the organization.
Key Questions

We recommend using this report to support your strategic foresight activity in the coming year. Every executive team should begin by asking these questions:

1. How will new media technologies improve our operations?
   - Our manufacturing processes?
   - Our product lines?

2. What aspects of our business could be disrupted by synthetic media or shifting news models?
   - Are we adequately planning for the longer term?
   - What assumptions must hold true for our current strategy to succeed?

3. How will our employees and customers find information in the future?
   - How might new paradigms be used to our organization’s advantage, or to our detriment?
Selected Sources

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