



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PAGE

Office Technology

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FLASHBACK



The association's magazine cover 51 years ago this month — the NOMDA Spokesman, April 1973.

Artificial Intelligence: How Are You Using It?

As I've mentioned in past issues of Office Technology, I regularly host Business Technology Association (BTA) Dealers Helping Dealers Discussion Group calls via Zoom with non-competing member dealers of BTA. The members simply submit topics or questions for their fellow dealers to address in our one-hour calls. Here are two questions asked by an attendee in a call I hosted yesterday: "How are teams using AI? What AI policies have they implemented?"



The dealer asking the questions said his dealership uses ChatGPT to help reps write thank-you letters, prepare scripts for calls and assist with email campaigns. Using AI to help with writing blog posts was also mentioned. One dealer warned against sharing any private data in uploads to ChatGPT. That same dealer said that instead of using ChatGPT, his dealership is using Microsoft Copilot (billed by Microsoft as "Your everyday AI companion"). In the call, I mentioned how a dealer panelist at this year's Executive Connection Summit said his dealership uses ChatGPT to listen to recordings of reps' calls and video conference calls. AI then recommends how the reps could have better handled objections that may have come up in the calls.

No one in yesterday's call said they have implemented any AI policies to date. For me, that brought to mind the February 2024 column that Incoming BTA General Counsel Greg Goldberg wrote for Office Technology, "The Implications of AI." In that column, he wrote, in part: "An effective AI policy should set forth guidelines to ensure AI is used ethically and responsibly, including complying with legal and regulatory standards, as well as protecting data privacy." So, take heed.

There is a sample AI Policy available at www.bta.org/LegalDocuments.

I did sign up for the free version of ChatGPT. I have only used it twice. The first was to see how it would fine-tune some session descriptions for a then-upcoming BTA district-hosted event. I also used it to take a stab at writing a two-word headline for my June 2023 cover story on water purification systems. The result: "Refreshing Expansion." We went with ChatGPT's suggestion. I should stop here and say this: I would never use ChatGPT — or any AI tool like it — to help write any article with my byline. It's important to me that whatever I write is all mine. I have written bazillions of articles to date and have at least a bazillion more to go. In the end, they will all be mine.

If you are like me, you are wondering where this is all headed. The floodgate is open. There is no turning back. Much good will come from AI, but so will some things that are not so good. The ominous warnings do get your attention.

BTA is striving to educate its members on AI. At next week's 2024 BTA National Conference in Orlando, I am looking forward to attending the session, "Welcome to the Future! AI Literacy for Professionals." At the following BTA event, Capture the Magic, set for June 17-19 in Huntington Beach, California, there are four AI-specific sessions on the schedule. Visit www.bta.org/BTACalifornia to learn more.

Increasingly, you will see articles addressing AI within these pages. In this issue, on page 23 in our new "AI Insight" department, Xerox's Steve Miller writes about the transformational power of AI. There was an AI article from Toshiba in our March issue. For our May issue, Ricoh is submitting an article. I ended the discussion on AI in the call yesterday with three words that seem appropriate for this column, too: To be continued. ■

— Brent Hoskins