

# Beyond Hype: Practical AI for Travel and Tourism Organizations

10th Annual OBX Tourism Summit  
November 2024

# The Future Grounded in Reality

**Trends:** What's next?

**Today:**

Case studies

Security and Privacy

AI ethics and regulations

**People:**

Visitors, vendors, and adoption

**Tools:** getting started and future  
outlook



Next-generation  
AI company that  
connects  
companies with  
customers,  
since 2021



# Delivering Practical Innovation



Started in 2021

Acquired in 2024 by GMS, a global leader in mobile and messaging

Our Focus Areas:

- DMO and Travel
- MNO (Mobile Network Operators)
- Enterprises

We've deployed multiple AI projects that deliver meaningful impact and drive innovation globally.

Advancing practical use of AI since 2021



# 2022

## INTENTFUL for UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Following several guest speaking sessions at Oxford about the practical use of AI, we worked with the AI faculty at Saïd Business School to create content for a debate at Oxford Union.

We trained AI to express itself like William Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, Jane Austen, and Winston Churchill. See the full article in [The Conversation](#).



2024

WFA Global Marketer Week Toronto '24



Conference sponsor  
DV DoubleVerify | slido.com #GMW24

WFA



**Jane Wakely**  
Chief Consumer & Marketing Officer, Chief Growth Officer  
PEPSICO



**Asmita Dubey**  
Chief Digital and Marketing Officer  
L'ORÉAL



**Jenny Rooney**  
Chief Experience Officer  
ADWEEK



**The Ritbot**  
Mark Ritson's AI alter ego  
Mini MBA  
Marketing

WFA Global Marketer Week Toronto '24



Driving Marketing Success

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# About GMS

We partner with leading industry associations to exchange knowledge, ideas, and best practices



18 years of leadership in messaging



Cooperation with 700+ enterprises worldwide



8 bn+ SMS and OTP messages processed per year with 99,99% uptime



250+ MNOs directly connected



93% Customer Satisfaction Score  
56 Net Promoter Score



ISO/IEC 27001 and ISO 9001 certified

“

AI's unparalleled potential is fundamentally transforming communication, turning every interaction into a unique journey at a scale like never before, thus completely redefining customer engagement and the art of the possible.



**Iurii Makarenko**

President of the Board / Executive Chairman of the Board at GMS

GMS is at the forefront of global communications solutions, empowering our partners to bring true value into every conversation.

**3x** AMA  
Global Telco Award  
winner 2024



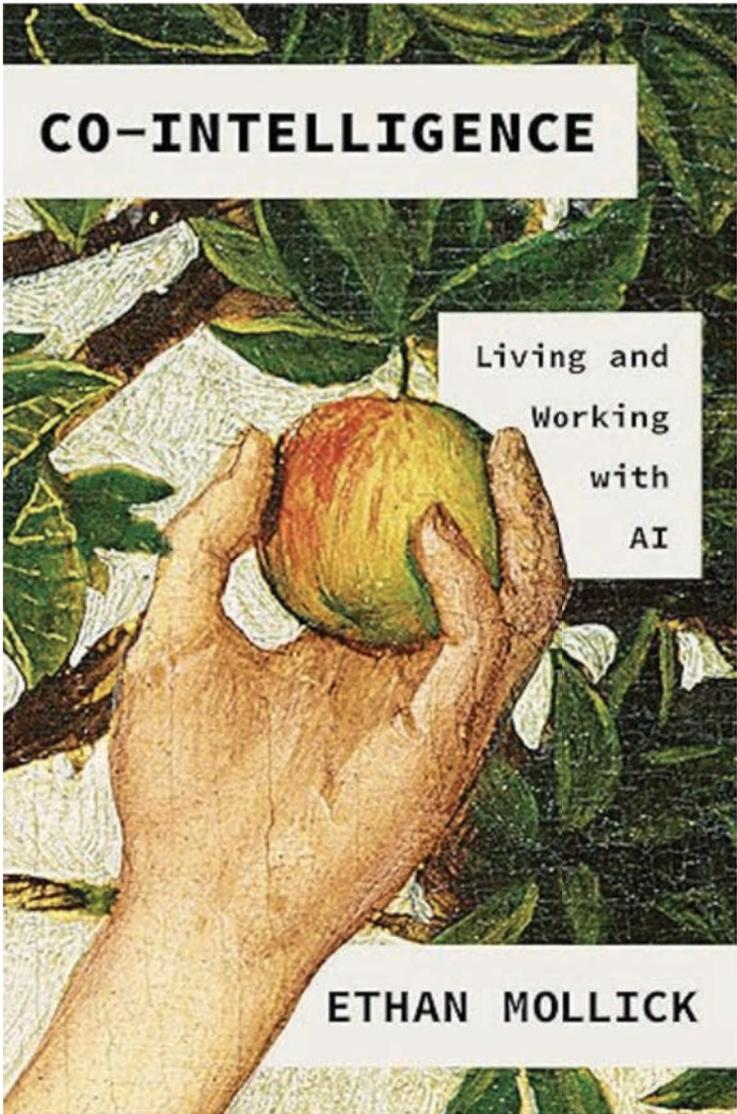
Conversational AI   Generative AI   SMS Firewall

**5x** ROCCO  
Tier 1 winner  
2023-2024

Industry Award and Research Leader

CPaaS   A2P SMS   A2P SMS MNO   SMS Firewall   SMS Monetisation





“...After millions of years on our own, humans had developed a kind of co-intelligence that could augment, or even replace, human thinking.”

What does AI  
“know”?

Write about top 10 things to do in New York City for first-time visitors.



1. Take a Tour of the Statue of Liberty: The Statue of America is an absolute must-see for any first-time visitor. Take a tour and learn about the feat of engineering that went into making it.

2. Visit the Empire State Building: A visit to the top of this iconic building provides a stunning 360 degree view of the city.

3. Take a stroll through Central Park: A great place to relax and take in the beauty of the city. Take a stroll through the park and enjoy the views.

4. Stroll through Times Square: Times Square is one of the most iconic spots in New York City. Full of flashing lights, advertisements and entertainment, it's a great place to people-watch and take in the hustle and bustle of the city.

5. Visit the 9/11 Memorial and Museum: Pay your respects to those who lost their lives in the tragic events of September 11th, 2001. The Memorial and Museum are located at the site of the World Trade Center and provide a moving reminder of the tragic event.

6. Enjoy a Broadway Show: Broadway is one of the best

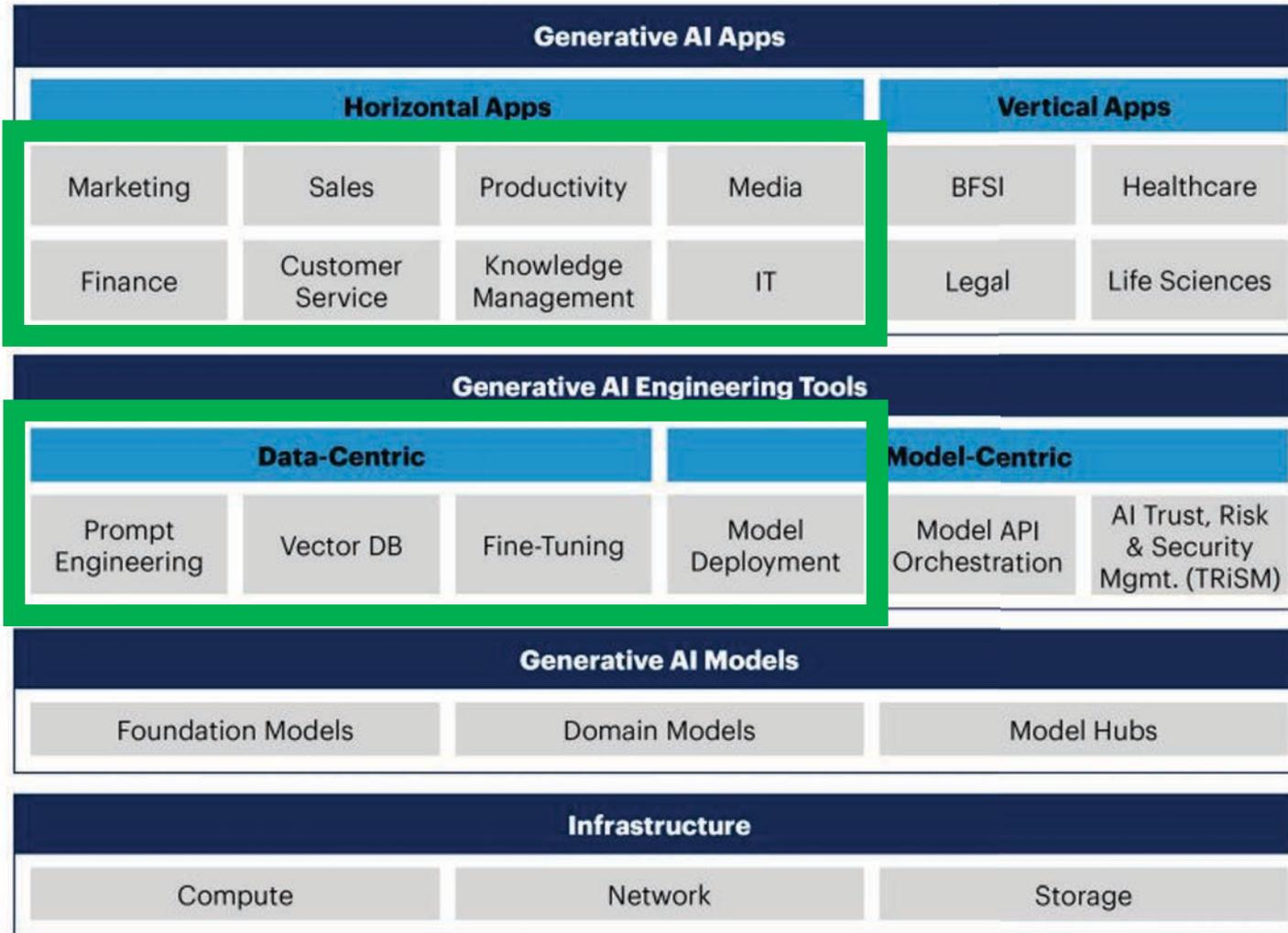
Times = 81.84%  
the = 12.77%  
Chinatown = 1.85%  
Brooklyn = 1.15%  
Time = 0.51%  
Total: -0.20 logprob on 1 tokens  
(98.12% probability covered in top 5 logits)

# Teach AI Anything



AI that knows the destination, the brand or the business.

# Generative AI Technology Landscape



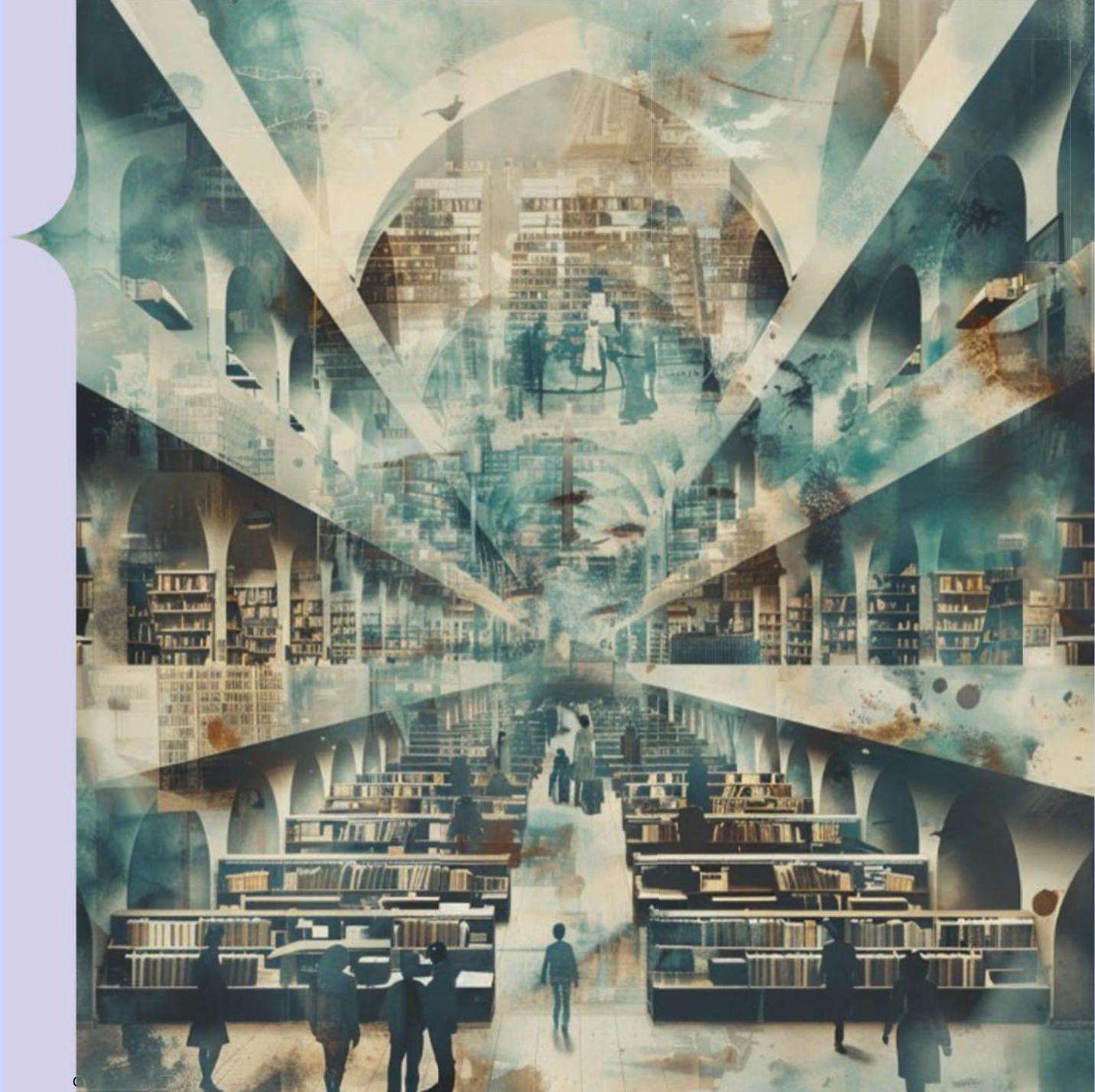
Source: Gartner  
793970\_C

Brand, business or destination guidelines.

Facts, SKUs, ingredients, or local highlights.

Where to buy.

Customer concerns and pains it solves, or Visitor needs and interests.



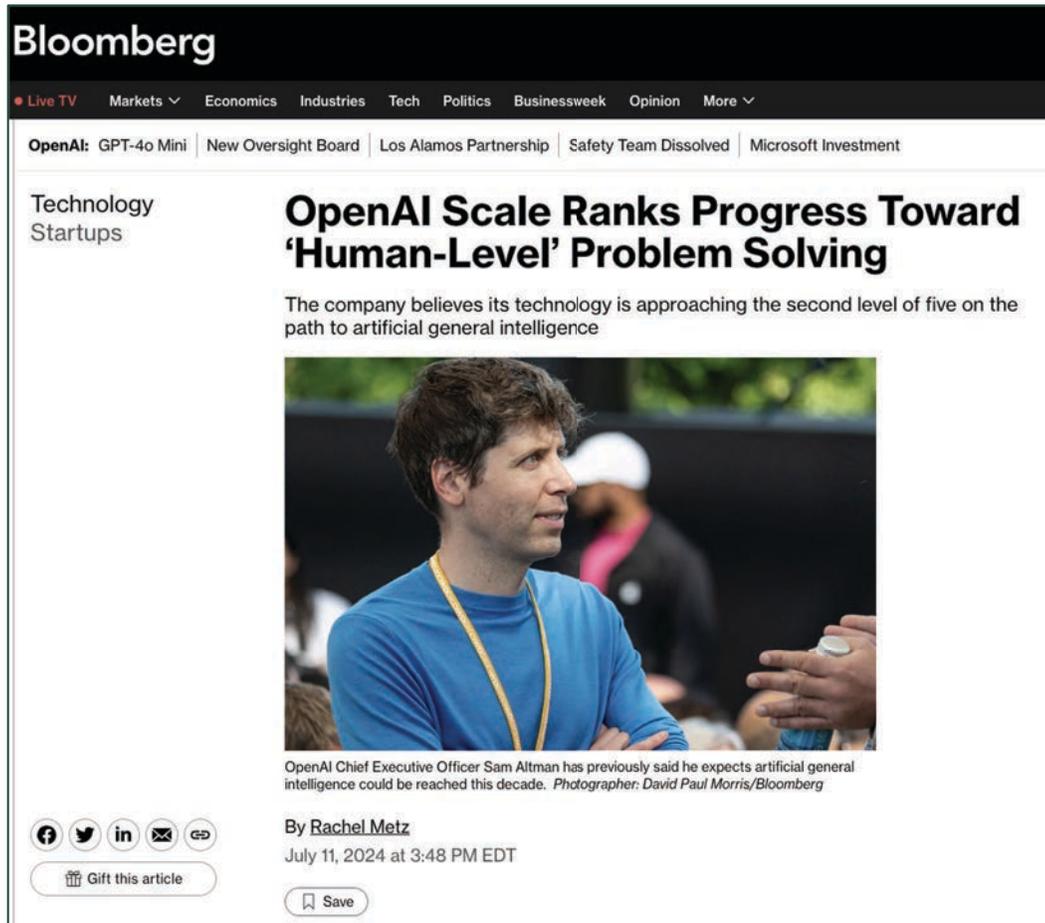
# The Future

Let's zoom out into the “known” future to zoom in  
what makes sense today

# Human and Artificial Intelligence

Combined

# 5 Levels of AI by OpenAI, June 2024



**Bloomberg**

• Live TV Markets Economics Industries Tech Politics Businessweek Opinion More

OpenAI: GPT-4o Mini | New Oversight Board | Los Alamos Partnership | Safety Team Dissolved | Microsoft Investment

Technology Startups

## OpenAI Scale Ranks Progress Toward 'Human-Level' Problem Solving

The company believes its technology is approaching the second level of five on the path to artificial general intelligence



OpenAI Chief Executive Officer Sam Altman has previously said he expects artificial general intelligence could be reached this decade. *Photographer: David Paul Morris/Bloomberg*

By [Rachel Metz](#)  
July 11, 2024 at 3:48 PM EDT

 Gift this article

 Save

# OpenAI Imagines Our AI Future

## Stages of Artificial Intelligence

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Level 1 | Chatbots, AI with conversational language                 |
| Level 2 | Reasoners, human-level problem solving                    |
| Level 3 | Agents, systems that can take actions                     |
| Level 4 | Innovators, AI that can aid in invention                  |
| Level 5 | Organizations, AI that can do the work of an organization |

Source: Bloomberg reporting



<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-07-11/openai-sets-levels-to-track-progress-toward-superintelligent-ai>



## SAM ALTMAN'S MANIFEST DESTINY

*Is the head of Y Combinator fixing the world, or trying to take over Silicon Valley?*

By Tad Friend

October 3, 2016

 Save this story

One balmy May evening, thirty of Silicon Valley's top entrepreneurs gathered in a private room at the Berlinetta Lounge, in San Francisco. Paul Graham considered the founders of Instacart, DoorDash, Docker, and Stripe, in their hoodies and black jeans, and said, "This is Silicon Valley, right here." All the founders were graduates of Y Combinator, the startup "accelerator" that Graham co-founded: a three-month boot camp, run twice a year, in



Altman says, "Most people want to be accepted, so they won't take risks that could make them look crazy." Illustration by R. Kikuo Johnson



<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/10/10/sam-altmans-manifest-destiny>

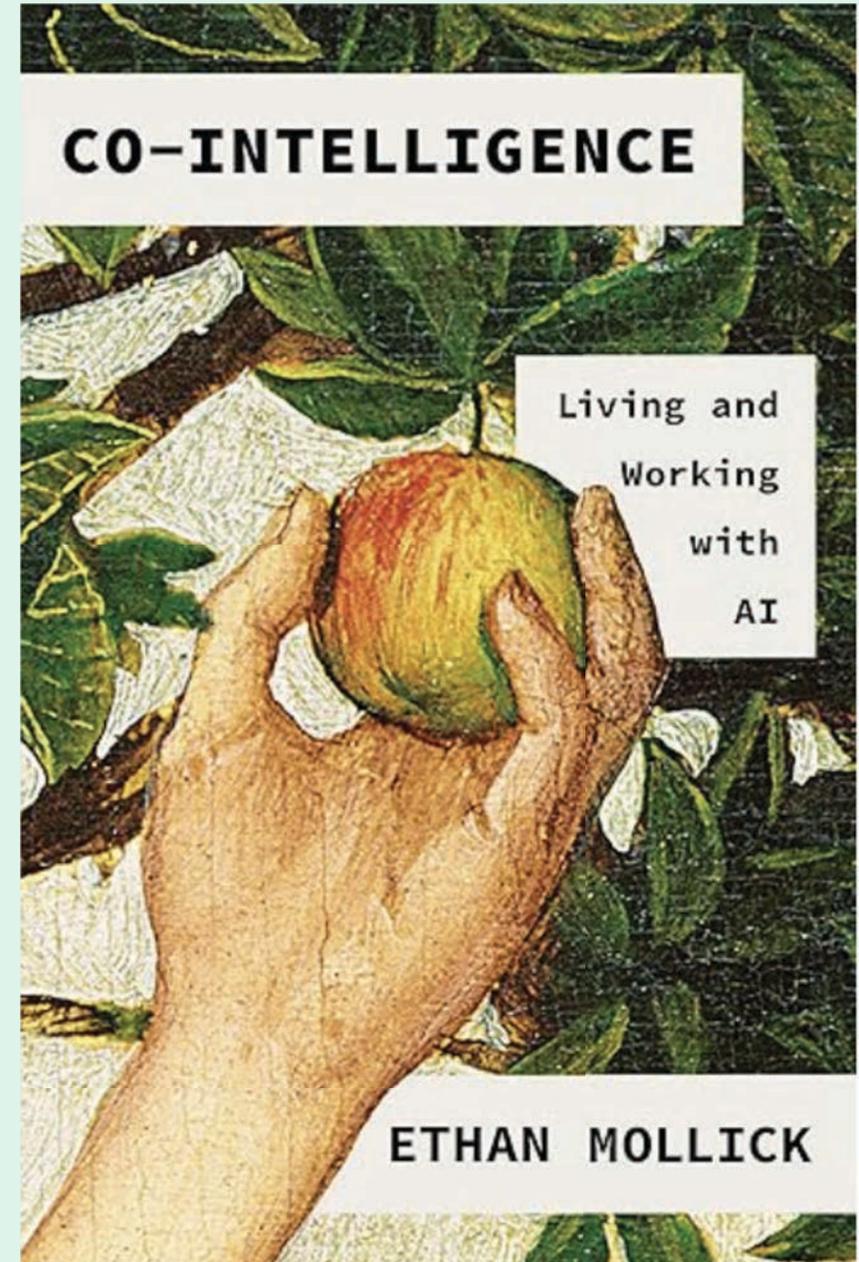
# Ethan Mollick's 4 Scenarios of Future

**Scenario 1.** As good as it gets.

**Scenario 2.** Slow growth.

**Scenario 3.** Exponential growth.

**Scenario 4.** "The Machine God".



October 31, 2024

# Introducing ChatGPT search

Get fast, timely answers with links to relevant web sources.

[Plus and Team users can try it now ↗](#)

[Download Chrome Extension ↗](#)

## How it works and what comes next

The search model is a fine-tuned version of GPT-4o, post-trained using novel synthetic data generation techniques, including distilling outputs from OpenAI o1-preview. ChatGPT search leverages third-party search providers, as well as content provided directly by our partners, to provide the information users are looking for. Learn more here.

Thanks to feedback from the SearchGPT prototype, we brought the best of the SearchGPT experience into ChatGPT. We plan to keep improving search, particularly in areas like shopping and travel, and leverage the reasoning capabilities of the OpenAI o1 series to do deeper research. We also plan to bring our new search experience to Advanced Voice and canvas, as well as to Free and logged out users in the future.



Hertz at Norfolk International Airport (ORF) offers generally mixed experiences. While some customers report smooth drop-offs and helpful service at the counter, others have encountered significant challenges. These issues include vehicle availability problems, long wait times, and miscommunication about reservations.

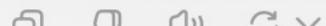
### Pros:

- **Easy drop-off:** Customers appreciate the efficiency when returning cars, even outside business hours [\[1\]](#).
- **Friendly staff:** Some travelers highlight positive interactions with the Hertz team at the Norfolk location [\[1\]](#).

### Cons:

- **Reservation issues:** Some users have reported not receiving the type of car they booked, resulting in last-minute downgrades or substitutions [\[1\]](#).
- **Operational delays:** There have been complaints about long wait times and power outages disrupting service, while other rental agencies nearby continued to operate smoothly [\[1\]](#).
- **Customer service challenges:** A few renters have expressed frustration with Hertz's customer service, particularly with follow-ups and compensation issues [\[1\]](#).

Overall, Hertz can be a viable option if you're prepared to encounter some variability in service quality. If you prioritize reliability and fast service, you might want to consider alternatives like Alamo or National.



 OpenAI said they have no plans for ads in the responses, at least for now.

 Destinations and Brands are no longer in control of how their content is served to a user – every carefully crafted on-brand word is rewritten by AI based on:

- How AI understands this content.
- How AI adjusts responses specific to a user's earlier behavior AND a query the way a user asked it.

Understanding GEO Webinar,  
November 25



# Today

Use cases and Case Studies  
Security and Privacy  
Ethics and Regulations

# Use Cases in Travel and Tourism

As of November 2024

## AI Assistants

Early adopters  
Learning curve

## Itineraries

Personalized  
recommendations

## AI Copy

LLMs or copy tools

## Translations

Phasing out Google  
Translate

## Keyword campaigns

Using AI to expand keyword  
lists

## Enhanced Tools

Adding GenAI to existing  
platform, e.g., social  
listening

## Custom

Solving one-off pain  
points with LLM

# Use Cases in Travel and Tourism

2025

## AI Assistants

Evolution beyond basic chatbot enhanced by LLM

## Content

Information to “feed” LLMs

## Productivity

Enterprise tools

## Voice AI

Early rollouts

## Video content

Enhancing human work

## Ad Ecosystem

Sentiment, prediction,  
greater relevance  
**Generative Response Ads**

## Conversational AI

Major transition across  
every interaction

# Case Studies

# 2024

A shorter discovery  
journey—faster answers,  
better experiences



"Give me the splendid, silent sun with all his beams full-dazzling."  
-WALT WHITMAN



## EXPLORING ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT IN STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

Celebrating those elements which make us unique in a way that connects us to one another is what being human...



Visit Stockton AI

Visit Stockton AI  
Answer

Welcome! I'm an AI from Visit Stockton, here to help with your inquiries on attractions, activities, and dining. While I don't know everything, I'm equipped with a vast array of Stockton-related information. Feel free to ask in any language.

# WELCOME TO THE CITY OF STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA



# Transforming Visitor Interaction

Visit Pasadena, Florida's Historic Coast,  
Visit Fresno County, and other DMOs.

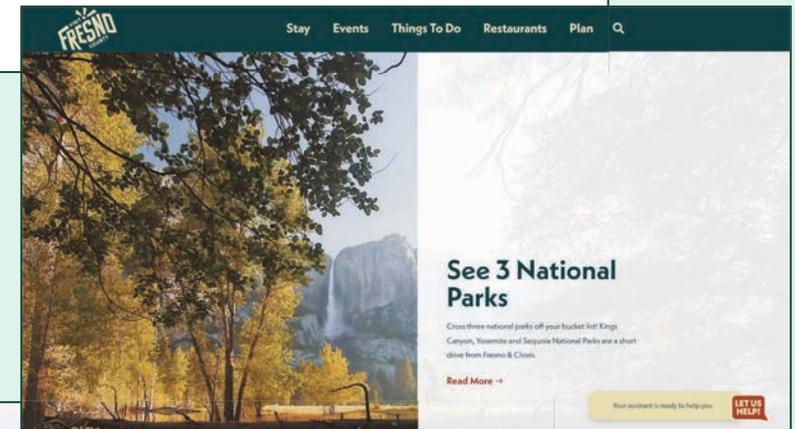
- Real-time updates.
- A deeper understanding of visitor interests and actions.
- Multilingual support without additional costs.
- Specific to a DMO:

**Find Restaurants and Hotels:** Search by name or postal code to discover dining and accommodation options.

**Locate Attractions and Museums:** Easily access popular and local attractions by name or area.

**Explore Shopping and Wineries:** Quickly locate malls or wineries using postal codes or names.

**Nearby Business Finder:** Identify local businesses close to any chosen location.



# Disrupting Discovery and Engagement

Unscripted, Real-time  
Conversations

Quick access to information

Valuable Insights  
into Interests

Natural language responses

Multilingual with 0  
Translation Costs

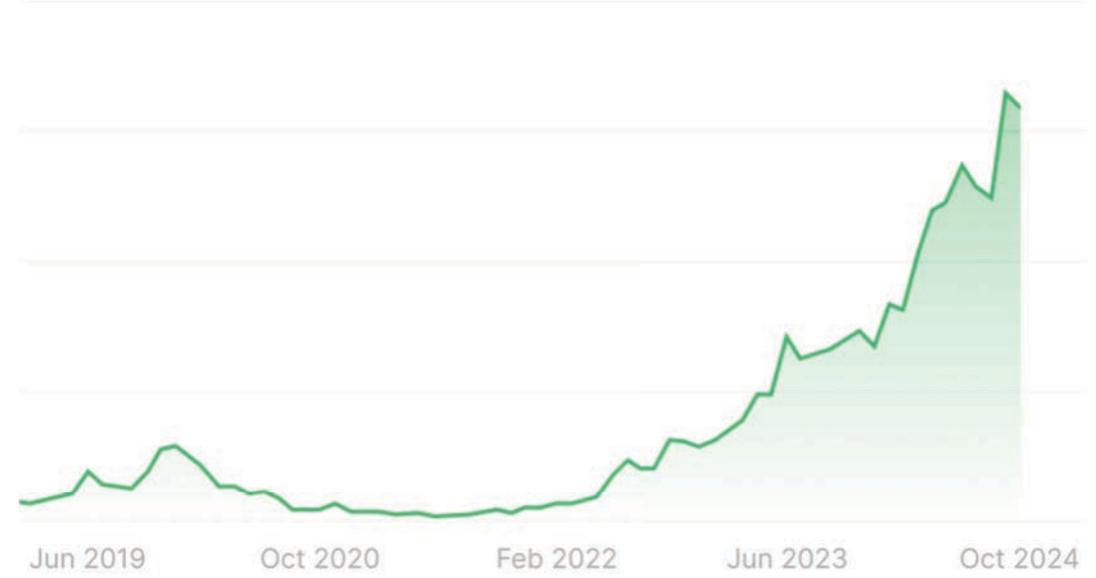
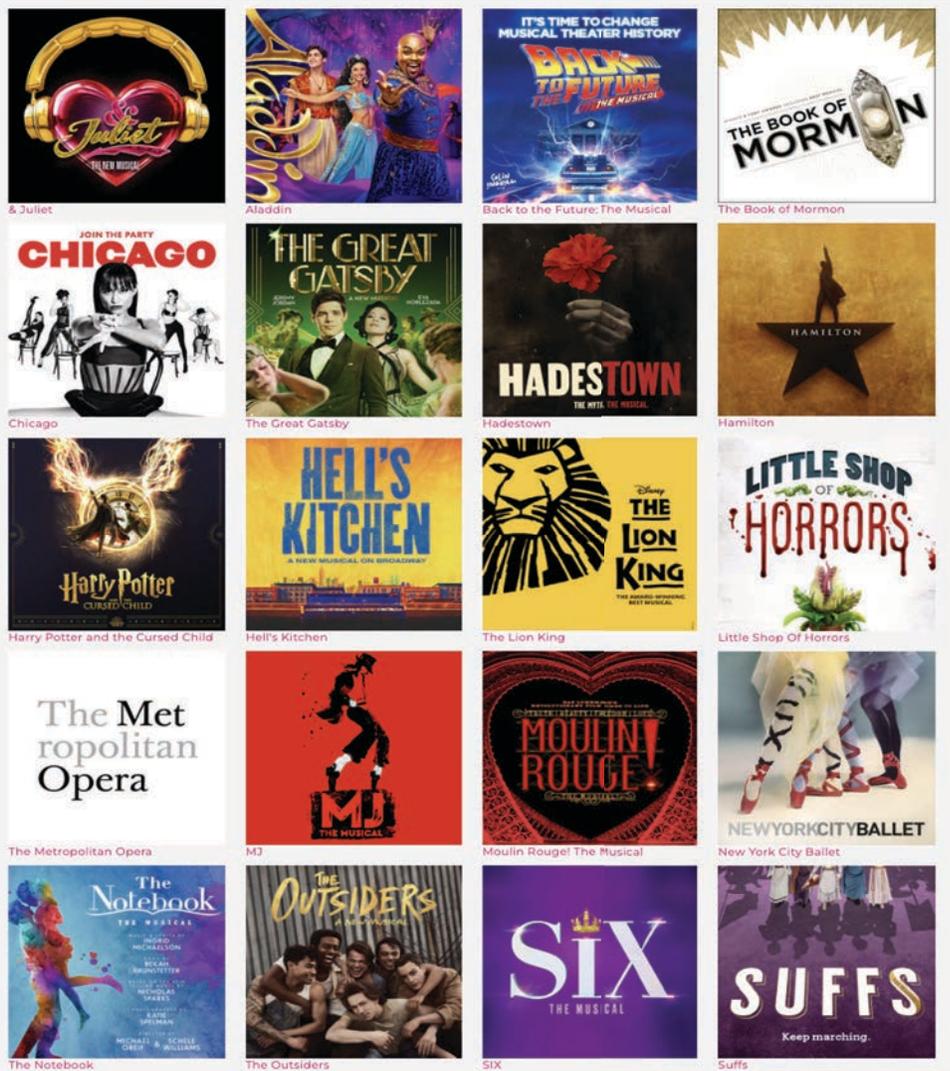
Speaks 90+ languages

# Evolution: Voice and Video

# Data-Driven Content

Insights that drive relevance.

Content that responds to  
your audience's needs—  
without relying on  
assumptions



## Marketing Content that drives Conversions

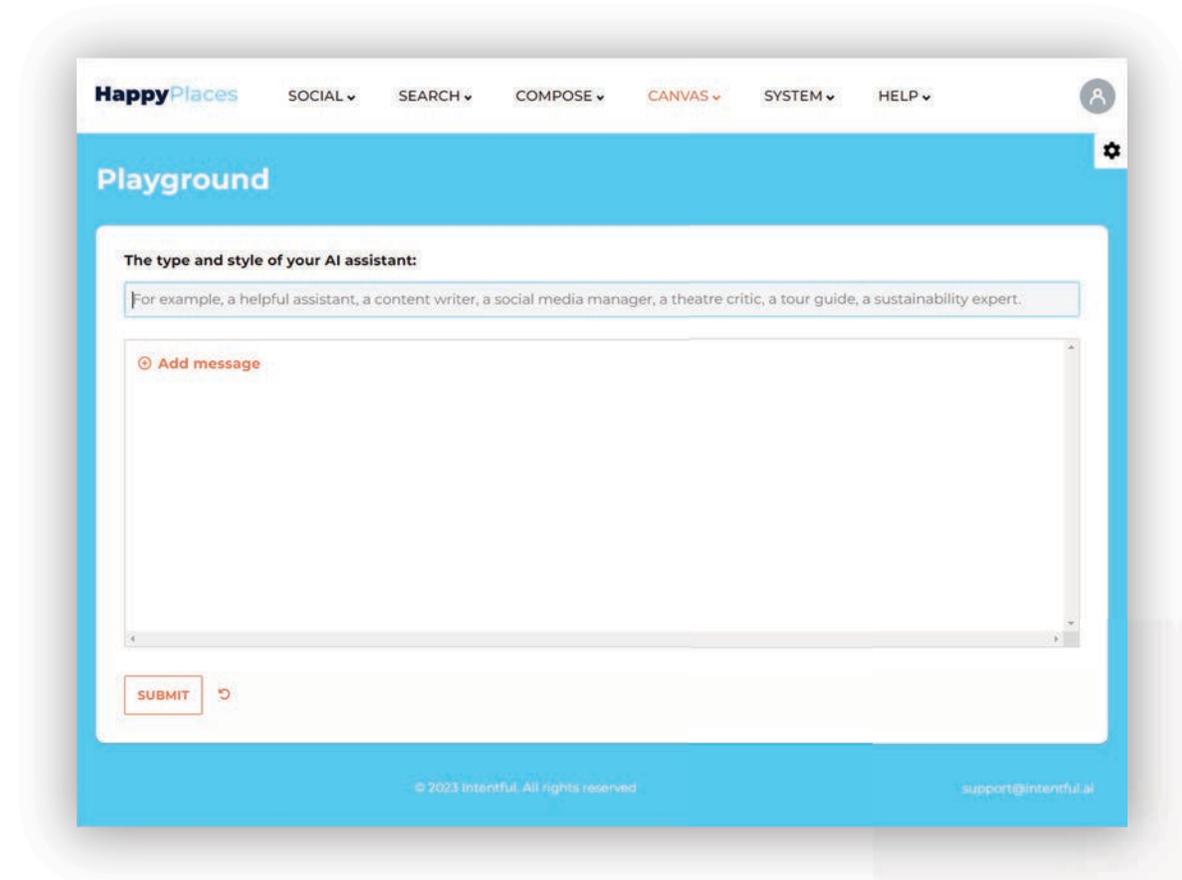
Data-driven content relevance has fueled a 2,845% growth in audience engagement since January 2022.

Best .....



# HappyPlaces©

- A content creation platform specific for DMOs and travel brands.
- **DMO's own AI:** HappyPlaces© uses knowledge base specific to your destination.
- Designed to streamline high-quality content creation, leveraging a constantly updated knowledge base of your destination.



## Content plan

### The type and style of your AI

For example, a social media copywriter, a tour guide, a destination professional.

### Company or brand

Include a destination, and its very short description.

### Format

For example, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter

### Style example

Enter an example if you'd like to follow a particular style, e.g., copy and paste previous posts.

### Time of the year

For example, July, or the holiday season in November and December.

### Keywords you want to be included in social media content

Primary keyword

Secondary keyword 1

Secondary keyword 2

Secondary keyword 3

### Use emoji?

Yes  No

## SEO ideas

### Related keywords

#### Master keyword

Enter the keyword

SUBMIT



#### AI

If you'd like to continue the initial AI output, click Submit one more time.

### Long-form content topics

#### Article audience

For example, local visitors, families, young professionals, international visitors.

#### Keywords you want to rank for

Primary keyword

Secondary keyword 1

Secondary keyword 2

Secondary keyword 3

#### Format

For example, a blog for destination website, a guest blog post in B2B industry media

SUBMIT



# Disrupting Content Relevance

The AI that truly  
knows your  
destination or brand

Facts and style

Efficiency and scale

90% faster, for every channel

SEO, GEO and retail  
search

Max visibility and conversions

# Content creation for DMOs and travel brands

## HappyPlaces

Visit Estes Park, Visit Roseville, Visit Macon, and other DMOs.

**Smaller DMOs:** No bandwidth and resources to deliver fresh, relevant content quickly using traditional, time-consuming methods is a challenge.

**Solution:** A platform powered by AI with real-time, destination-specific knowledge and visitor insights, designed to streamline relevant content creation.

**Results:** Engaging content in DMO's unique voice and style at a scale that manual processes can not achieve.



# Security and Privacy Checklist

- Information is stored in a secure environment.
- No data is shared externally or used to train the core AI model.
- Additional security measures include data encryption.
- PII data protection and de-identification.



# Your own knowledge base

## AI model selection

## Custom voice and style

**FAQs, How-To  
library, and support  
for any assistance.**

### Local Business Profiles

- Listings Creation
- Event Descriptions
- Tours and Activities Descriptions

### Canvas Tools

- Playground for Freestyle
- Translation into 80+ Languages
- Text-to-Image Conceptual Visuals

### SEO and GEO

- Keyword Finding
- SEO Ideas Generation
- SEO Checker for Conversational Search
- SEO-Friendly Content Creation

### Content Repurposing

- Transforming Existing Content into Various Formats
- Optimizing Content for Different Platforms

### Itinerary Planning

- Create Itineraries
- Expand existing descriptions

### Social

- Content Planning
- Hashtag Generation
- Emoji Suggestions

# Reach Out to Early Adopters of AI

# Early Adopters of AI

## Amie Newsome, Visit NC Smokies:

"HappyPlaces provided us the tools to generate compelling itineraries and creative content for visitor guides. Our content always feels fresh and engaging."

## Kendall Akin, Visit Estes Park:

"The coolest part about HappyPlaces for me is that it helps my creative brain—especially with SEO purposes, giving ideas and blog titles that are really helpful."

## Maria Gonzalez, Travel Santa Ana:

"HappyPlaces helps me create listings that can help local shops rank higher. And it's a service to our visitors so that they could find these hidden gems."

[Link to a full video](#)



## Visitor Guide Content



# Video and Image



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSPN74NIHiM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gDn-TuEYhM>



# AI Ethics and Regulations



# FROM THE BASE OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TO THE WORLD

A case study through Visit Estes Park's journey into Generative AI solutions – and how your DMO can carve its own AI path

By Kara Franker and Heidi Barfels  
May 1, 2024



## Table of Contents

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Introduction  | 1-2   |
| AI's Impact on the Travel and Tourism Industry  | 3     |
| How and why we integrated GenAI into Visit Estes Park's operational strategy and how your DMO can leverage our findings | 4-5   |
| Meet GuideGeek  | 6     |
| Meet Rocky Mountain Roamer  | 7     |
| Meet HappyPlaces  | 8-9   |
| Insights versus Realities   | 10-11 |
| What's Next for Visit Estes Park?   | 12    |
| Strategic Opportunities   | 12-13 |
| Closing Thoughts  | 13    |

<https://www.visitestespark.com/articles/post/visit-estes-park-leverages-ai-to-take-destination-marketing-to-a-new-level/>

Initial research and writing by Diamelin Lopez and Liana Lozada; Graphic design by Kendall Akin

# 2025

Ads that speak, bots that  
chat without scripts, and  
content that is relevant for  
every moment

# Generative Response Ads

Ads that Speak.  
Interact.  
Respond.

For the first time,  
ads that can engage your  
audience directly—simplifying the  
visitor journey.

# AURELLIA

**WELCOME TO  
AURELLIA BEAUTY!**

EXPERIENCE THE  
PERFECT BLEND OF  
LUXURY AND  
SCIENCE

**ASK US HERE!**



**CHAT IN THIS BANNER**



Powered by GMS AI

# Disrupting the Way Ads Work

Instant, Relevant  
Engagement

Real-time, on-brand

Simplifying Visitor  
Journey

Fewer Clicks to Conversion

Actionable Audience  
Insights

Data, not assumptions

# Looking for volunteers



Shaping the future: connecting with  
visitors one-on-one AND at scale,  
simultaneously.

# People

# Adoption

Visitors

Vendors

Regulators

# Tools

# New FAANG

OpenAI

Anthropic

Perplexity

Cursor

Midjourney

Overwhelmed  
yet?

Start Small:  
Enhance and use AI as a pain  
killer and value creator.

Start getting ready for tomorrow now.

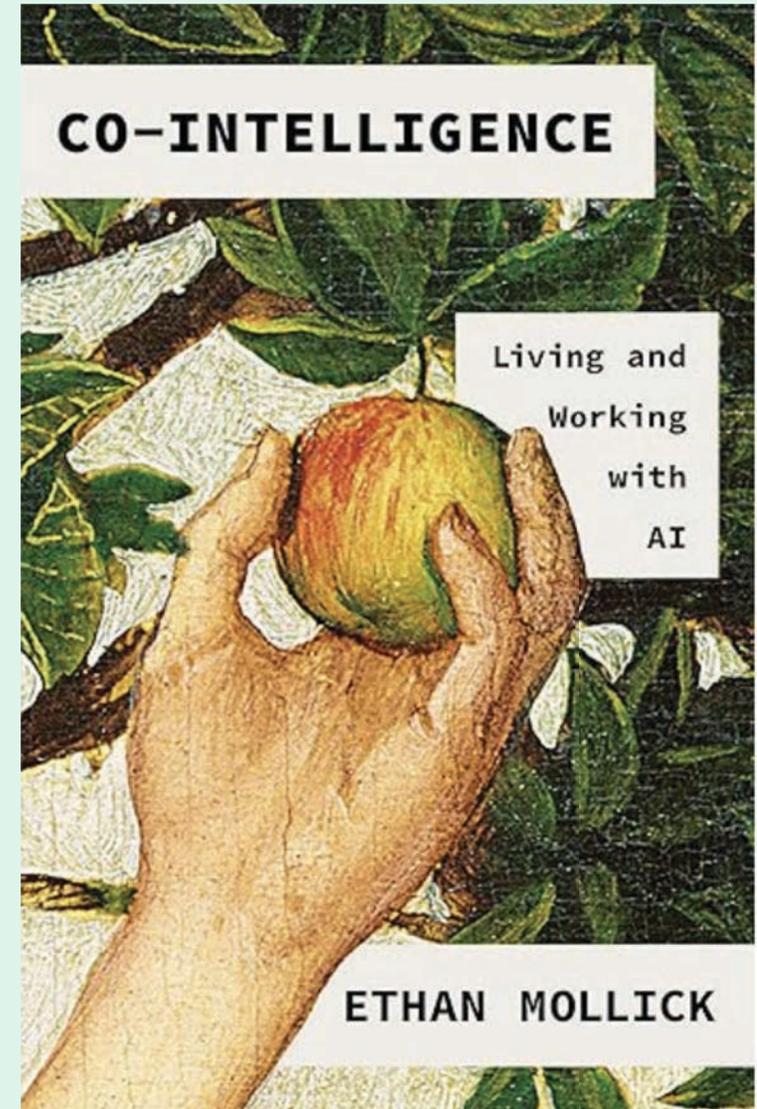
# Ethan Mollick's 4 Principles

**Principle 1.** Always invite AI to the table.

**Principle 2.** Be the human in the loop.

**Principle 3.** Treat AI like a person, but tell it what kind of person it is.

**Principle 4.** Assume this is the worst AI you will ever get.



## OpenAI Imagines Our AI Future

### Stages of Artificial Intelligence

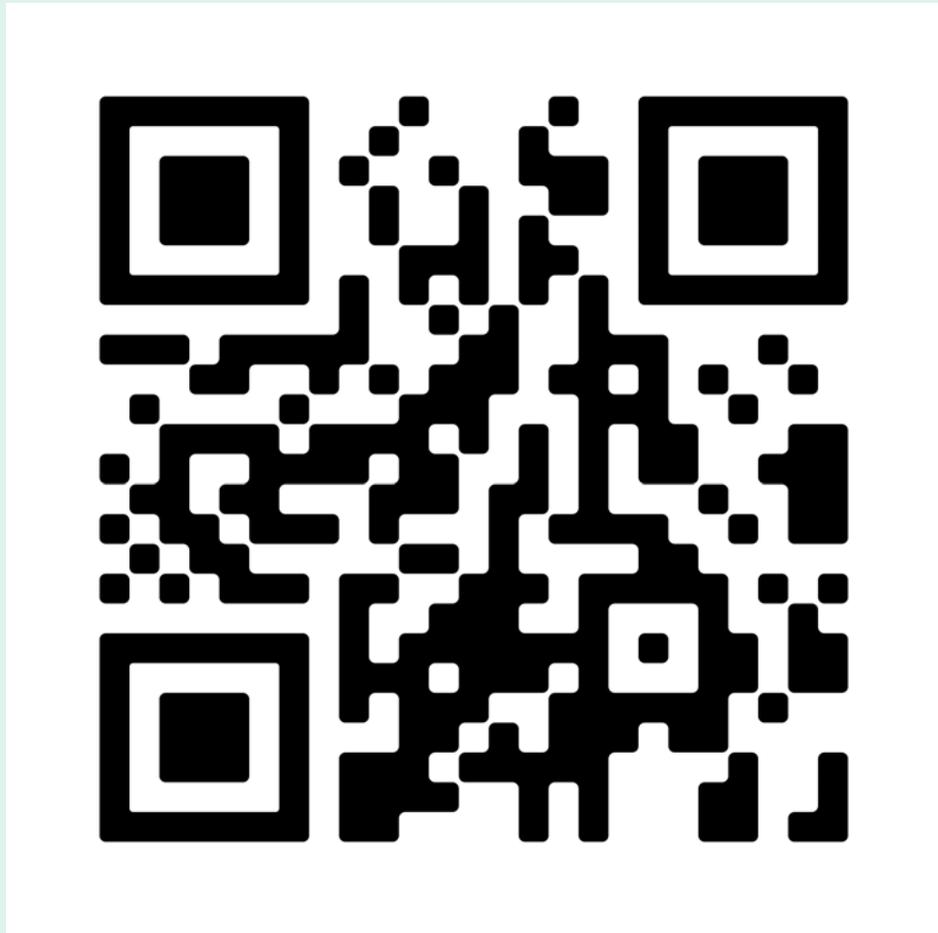
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| Level 1 | Chatbots, AI with conversational language                 |
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| Level 4 | Innovators, AI that can aid in invention                  |
| Level 5 | Organizations, AI that can do the work of an organization |

Source: Bloomberg reporting

Principle 5 by “The original Marina”:

Just get started  
and fail fast  
to be ready for AGI.





LinkedIn

