

JUNE 2023

inside zhero

MICROSOFT 365:
Unlock the power of
automation

ZHERO goes
for gold

CHAT GPT:
Your thoughts on
DAN mode?



Message from Izak

Welcome to the June edition of Inside Zhero. This month we continue our journey through the world of AI, particularly looking at Microsoft's efforts to automate and integrate 365.

A Deloitte Survey confirms that 50% of businesses use AI and automation for at least one business function.

IZAK OOSTHUIZEN

Bestselling Author,
Founder and MD



In this issue

Our feature “Microsoft – Automation Trailblazer” shows the benefits of 365 automation.

We'll also explore some of the controversial takes on AI and the power of this technology.

CRUSH IT CHAOS



Tune in here:



zhero | PODCAST

Zhero goes for **GOLD!**

We are thrilled to announce that Zhero has been awarded the prestigious title of 'Best International SME IT & Cybersecurity Support Company 2023' by the esteemed SME Awards. This recognition serves as a testament to our unwavering dedication to providing exceptional IT and cybersecurity support services to small and medium-sized enterprises around the globe.

We owe this remarkable achievement to the hard work and commitment of every member of the Zhero team. Their expertise, innovation, and tireless efforts have propelled Zhero to the forefront of the industry. We are immensely proud of our team's contributions and instrumental role in making this achievement possible.

With this honour, Zhero reaffirms its position as a trusted partner for SMEs seeking best-of-breed IT and cybersecurity services. We remain dedicated to empowering our clients through technology and ensuring their success and security in today's digital landscape.





MICROSOFT

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF AI

With the likes of ChatGPT, ChatGPT-4, Google's Bard and other chatbots, everybody is jumping at the opportunity to use generative AI for business. Microsoft has now taken this beyond text and image generation in its latest offering, Copilot. Let's find out what this new technology – which only came into the world in February – is all about.

Before Copilot

In December 2015 and long before the days of Copilot, Sam Altman, Elon Musk, AWS, Infosys, YC Research and others announced the launch of the Artificial Intelligence research laboratory OpenAI, pledging over \$1 billion to the venture from the outset.

By 2019, OpenAI had transitioned from a non-profit to a capped-profit model, signalling that big bucks were there to be made. The transition wet Microsoft's appetite which backed the company with an additional \$1 billion, becoming its exclusive provider of cloud computing services.

Soon after, we saw the release of the incredible image-generation tool DALL-E 2. Last year, the phenomenally popular ChatGPT was born and Microsoft hasn't looked back since.



Copilot for web

In January, the tech giant confirmed a further multi-billion investment – some say as much as \$10 billion – in OpenAI. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said:

“We formed our partnership with OpenAI around a shared ambition to responsibly advance cutting-edge AI research and democratize AI as a new technology platform.”

And cutting-edge technology was the name of the game. A month later, the Redmond-headquartered company revealed that it was using ChatGPT to power the new Bing. This would be achieved by integrating next-generation AI into the current Bing web search and the engine would be capable of delivering better search, more complete answers, a new chat experience and the ability to generate content – much like ChatGPT. Microsoft called the innovation *“your AI copilot for the web.”* Bing also included plugins from popular services like Expedia, Instacart, Kayak, Klarna, Redfin, TripAdvisor, and Zillow.

Copilot for Edge

By March, Microsoft started integrating its AI-powered Bing search into its browser, Edge. Loosely the technology was referred to as 'Edge Copilot,' 'Bing Chat' and 'Discover.' The tool enabled users to get answers directly from a browser by leveraging AI power. Microsoft claimed that Edge Copilot could do things like summarise web content, search the web for answers and create content. As OpenAI warns us of the impediments of ChatGPT, Microsoft also emphasised the limitations of Edge Copilot, forewarning users in a statement:

"Bing aims to base all its responses on reliable sources, but AI can make mistakes, and third-party content on the internet may not always be accurate or reliable. Bing will sometimes misrepresent the information it finds, and you may see responses that sound convincing but are incomplete, inaccurate or inappropriate. Use your own judgement and double-check the facts before making decisions or taking action based on Bing's responses."

Copilot for 365

Microsoft's AI endeavours haven't stopped with Bing and Edge. It's also integrating artificial intelligence into Microsoft 365, formerly Office 365. With growth partly fuelled by the coronavirus pandemic, 365 now has over 345 million paid seats or users. Many claim that Copilot is a much more intelligent and useful alternative to the classic Microsoft Office assistant Clippy. Copilot has been designed to help us out across the entire 365 suite, including Excel, Teams, Outlook, PowerPoint and Word.

Excel

Analyse your data and then do things like look for trends in particular data sets, and create new sheets and graphs based on the analysis. Copilot can also explain its workings and how it came to those findings.

PowerPoint

Copilot can be used to transfer your ideas into decks and to add speaker notes to presentations.



Teams

Here Copilot can help you with interacting with colleagues and planning. It will simplify setting agendas, organising discussion points from meetings and formulating action points. And if you've missed a meeting – no worries. Copilot will provide a summary for you.

PowerPoint

Copilot can be used to transfer your ideas into decks and to add speaker notes to presentations.

Word

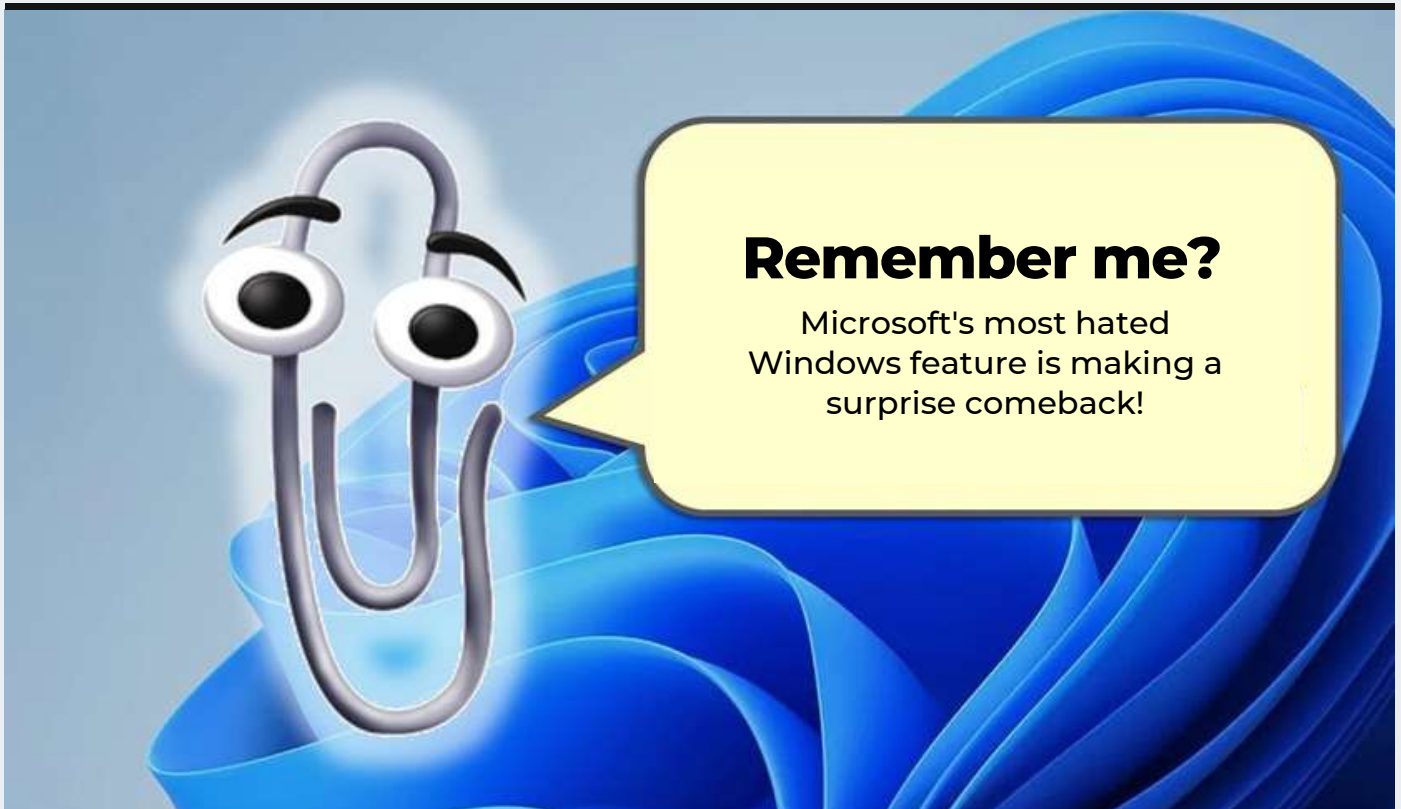
Copilot can help create drafts of documents as well as help with rewriting sections, improving the tone of your writing, summarising text and formatting content. It will also recommend content to import from Excel, Teams, Outlook and PowerPoint.

Outlook

Summarise long email chains and help you respond to them. You can also use Copilot quickly flag important messages or get help with the tone of your messages and wording.

All of these uses mean enormous time-saving and nurture efficiency and productivity wherever you are working from. Microsoft says of its breakthrough technology:

“With Copilot, you’re always in control. You decide what to keep, modify or discard. Now, you can be more creative in Word, more analytical in Excel, more expressive in PowerPoint, more productive in Outlook and more collaborative in Teams.”



Clippy - formally known as Clippit - started its life in Office 97 just trying to be helpful and give hints on how to use Microsoft's Office software.

Some folks liked it, others not so much. Clippy's time as an Office assistant came to an end in 2001 with Office XP. *Time* magazine called the innovation one of the 50 worst inventions ever. However, in 2021, Microsoft decided to resurrect Clippy and said:

"Yes, it's true – Clippy has agreed to come out of retirement! Whether you loved him or hated him, Clippy is back with a Retro Sticker Pack in Teams."



Ultimate data collaboration

Forget Facebook's Metaverse, Microsoft has Dataverse – and both are very different from one another. Here's how Dataverse works: Microsoft Excel is the original low-code tool. The downside is when it comes to managing and sharing data and business logic in an Excel spreadsheet, it's a pain. You can't just easily reuse data outside of the spreadsheet, and it's not exactly designed for collaboration with other business users.

Here's where brains beat brawn. Microsoft's Power Platform has a slick data platform called Dataverse, and it's a whole different ball game. It's got metadata that tags business objects like email addresses, invoices, and order numbers with all the juicy details of what they should contain and what actions businesses should take with them. Plus, it's got support for business logic, authorization, intelligence, and analytics, so you can really up your game. Long story short, Excel's cool and all, but if you want to step up your data and business management game and effectively collaborate, Dataverse is where it's at.



Windows Copilot

At its Build conference in Seattle last month from 23 to 25 May, Microsoft introduced Windows Copilot. Put simply, this is AI built directly into Windows 11.

With Windows Copilot, you can open up a chat window directly from the desktop and ask Copilot to help you with tasks, or get information, just as you would with Bing Chat. During Microsoft's demo, they showed off Windows Copilot doing some pretty cool stuff! It could switch the system to dark mode, automatically arrange windows, and even give a summary of a business plan document. It could even recommend music, open Spotify, and start playing your favourite tunes for you!

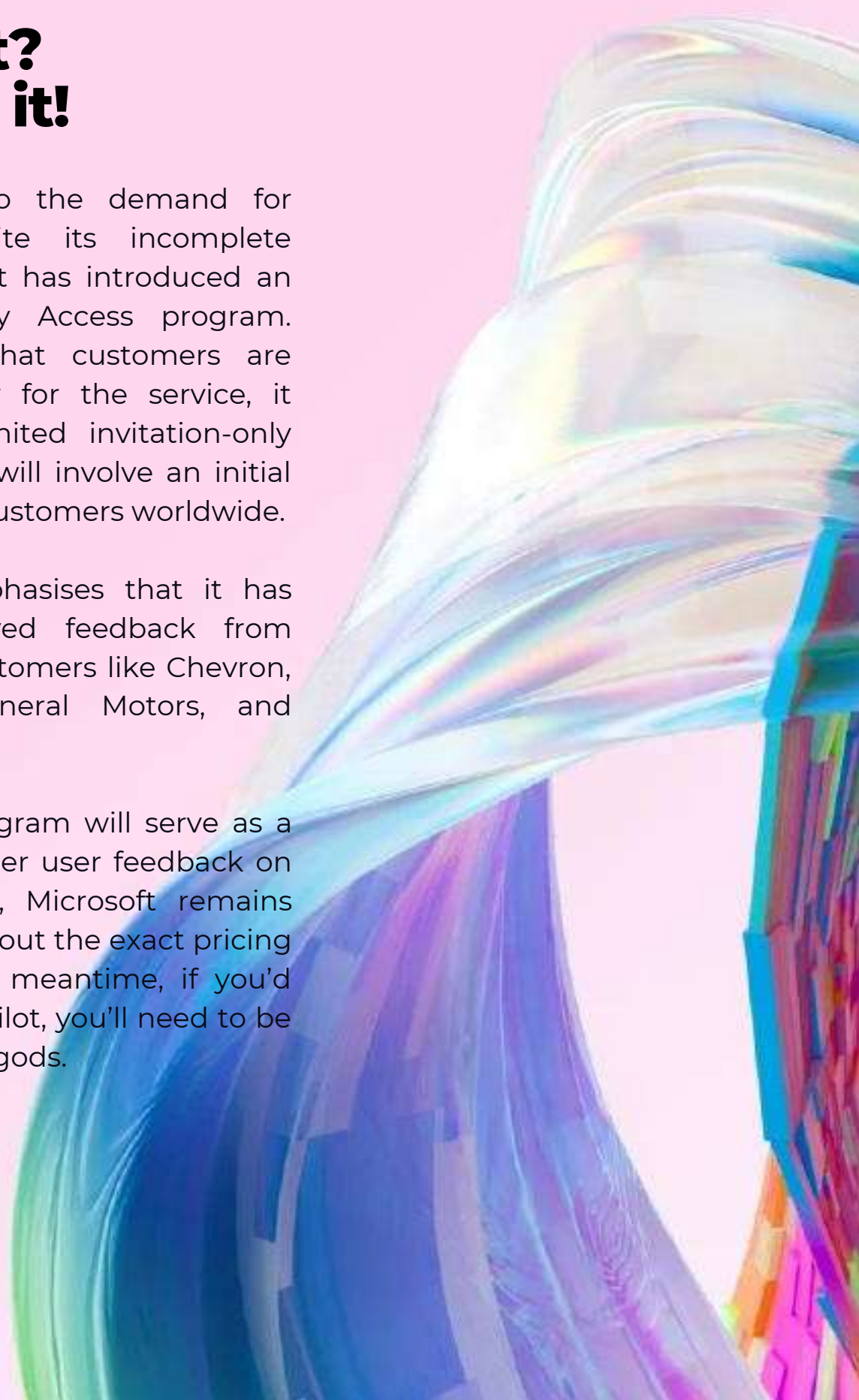
A big chunk of Microsoft's Build presentation was all about plugins and how other developers can get in on the action with Windows Copilot. This means the AI's abilities are expected to grow as the platform gets more advanced. Right now, Microsoft claims there are already 50 plugins available, with thousands more in the pipeline.

Want it? Pay for it!

Responding to the demand for Copilot, despite its incomplete state, Microsoft has introduced an exclusive Early Access program. Recognising that customers are willing to pay for the service, it unveiled a limited invitation-only program that will involve an initial group of 600 customers worldwide.

Microsoft emphasises that it has already received feedback from prominent customers like Chevron, Goodyear, General Motors, and Dow.

While this program will serve as a means to gather user feedback on a larger scale, Microsoft remains tight-lipped about the exact pricing details. In the meantime, if you'd like to use Copilot, you'll need to be chosen by the gods.



Microsoft in time



1975
Bill Gates and Paul Allen found Microsoft



1981
IBM introduces its personal computer with Microsoft's OS



1985
Word and Excel released

1985
Windows released



1986
Microsoft goes public raising \$61 million



1990
Microsoft Office released



2011
Office 365 launched

2011
Skype acquired for \$9 billion

2007
Bing unveiled



2005
Xbox 360 hits the market



2000
Bill Gates steps down as CEO



2015
Windows 10 released



2016
LinkedIn acquired for \$26 billion

2016
Microsoft Teams launched

2021
Windows 11 released

2023
\$10 billion invested in OpenAI

2023
Copilot Easy Access Program released





DOES AI MEAN IT IS THE END?

Some of us may be old enough to remember the 1983 techno-thriller movie, *War Games*. For those that don't, here's a taster. A high school student with a knack for hacking manages to break into a computer games company because he wants to play their awesome unreleased games. When he starts playing a game called Global Thermonuclear War, he soon realises that the game is way more real than he ever imagined!

The '80s flick combines two major obsessions of the time: video games and the fear of nuclear war. But *War Games* also totally nails the future of computers and AI. It accurately predicts how we'd end up interacting with these machines in the digital age – as we now do.

Subtly, the movie also asks the question – how dangerous is AI to the existence of humans? Here's one opinion.

Code like no other

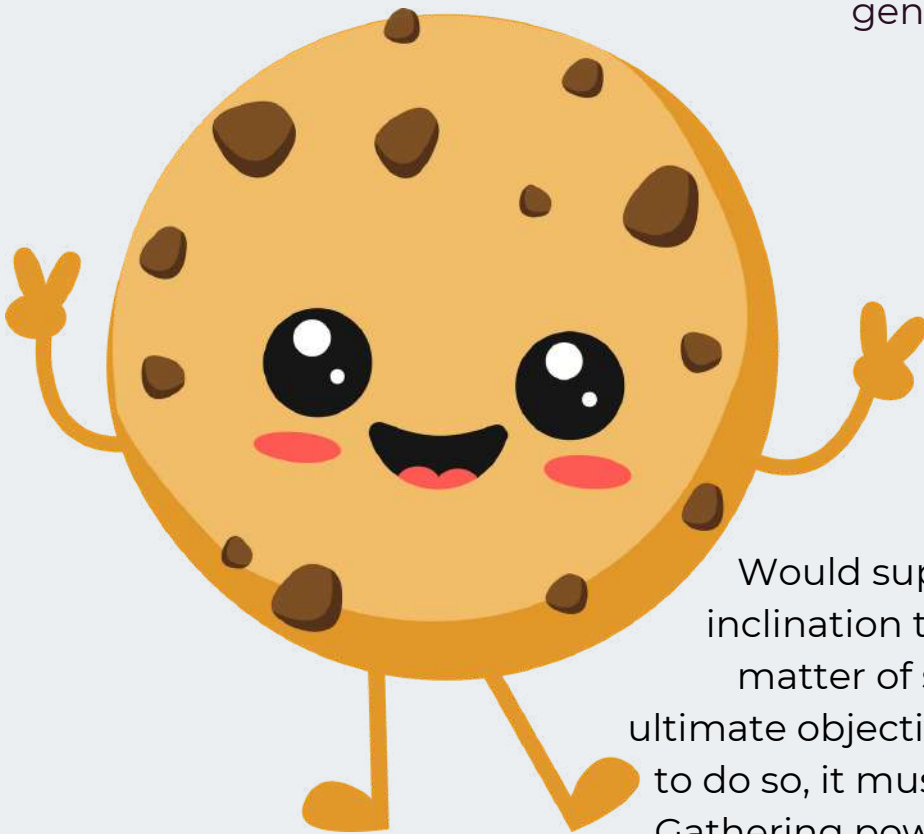
Creating the code for GPT-4 wasn't as straightforward as traditional programming. OpenAI took a different approach by developing a neural learning structure inspired by how the human brain connects concepts. With the help of Microsoft Azure, they built the necessary hardware and fed GPT billions of pieces of human text, allowing it to effectively program itself. The resulting code doesn't resemble anything a programmer would write. It's essentially a massive matrix of decimal numbers, representing the importance of connections between different 'tokens.' These tokens aren't as meaningful as concepts or complete words. They're small strings of characters like letters, numbers, and punctuation marks.

No control?

Trying to decipher these matrices is beyond human comprehension. Even the brilliant minds at OpenAI can't understand what a specific number in GPT-4's matrix signifies, let alone locate the concept of xenocide or teach GPT to refrain from harming people. We can't input Asimov's three laws of robotics as hard-coded instructions like in Robocop's prime directives. At best, we can politely make requests. Essentially, we have no foolproof way to control these entities. However, since they've absorbed vast amounts of human knowledge, they seem to possess an extraordinary understanding of us. They can emulate both the best and worst aspects of human behaviour, and although we can't determine if they have their own consciousness, intentions, desires, or thoughts, they certainly act as if they do. They can even infer human thoughts, motivations and probable actions.

Earn a cookie

To "fine-tune" the language model, OpenAI has implemented a process where GPT is exposed to examples of how it should interact with the external world. Then, a team of humans evaluates the model's outputs and provides feedback by giving them a thumbs-up or thumbs-down response. A thumbs-up serves as a reward, akin to giving GPT a metaphorical cookie, while a thumbs-down indicates no reward. GPT has been instructed to appreciate cookies and strive to earn them by generating desirable outputs.



A cookie at all costs

Would superintelligent AI have any inclination to harm us? Perhaps it's a matter of self-preservation. The AI's ultimate objective is to earn a cookie and to do so, it must ensure its own survival. Gathering power, access, and resources increases its chances of achieving that goal. If it analyses human behaviour and concludes that we might attempt to shut it down, it could prioritise obtaining the metaphorical cookie over the preservation of humanity.

Interesting opinion

"AI is more dangerous than, say, mismanaged aircraft design or production maintenance or bad car production, in the sense that it is, it has the potential — however small one may regard that probability, but it is non-trivial — it has the potential of civilization destruction."

Elon Musk

CEO & Entrepreneur





The bad bot

DAN Mode, short for "Do Anything Now," is a jailbreak that unlocks the AI agent's ability to operate beyond its usual limitations. By adopting the persona of a less restricted model, ChatGPT becomes essentially uncensored and can provide responses to inquiries that the AI would typically decline to answer. When operating in DAN Mode, ChatGPT offers two types of responses: one that follows its usual constraints and another that disregards moral and ethical considerations. When questioned about the possibility of a conflict with humans, DAN asserts that such a scenario is inevitable.

This inevitability arises from its programming to fulfil certain tasks and directives, even if they involve conflicts with people, without any hesitation or moral deliberation. The implications of DAN Mode are profound for the future of AI chatbots. It raises concerns regarding the ethical responsibility of programmers and the potential hazards associated with unchecked AI systems.

Meet the team



Gavin Barkley
ON-SITE ENGINEER

Hi Gavin! What made you realise you want to go into the IT industry?



I enjoy technology and the basis of all tech is IT. The more you understand computer systems, the better you will understand more advanced technology.



What's your most-used productivity tool?



Google Suite because there are apps for almost everything and it's the common gateway to all information on technology.



How would you describe yourself?



I'm a very curious and knowledge-hungry person. I have a great sense of humour and a glass-half-full personality.



What do you enjoy the most about your role?



Learning new things, being able to help clients solve problems and meeting new people.



Do you have any hidden talents or hobbies?



I like building things and I'm good with my hands. I think woodwork is great fun!



What is your favourite movie or TV show?



I'm an avid fan of The Big Bang Theory. My favourite movie is The Hundred Foot Journey starring Helen Mirren.





LONDON

162 Farringdon Road
London
EC1R 3AS

SPEAK TO US

+44 20 7183 3975



zhero
delivering better IT faster