

NEWSLETTER

AI is 'one member of the team': How one company is embedding AI into its work

DEJA LEONARD

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This is the weekly Careers newsletter.

Déjà Leonard is a copywriter and freelance journalist based in Calgary.

With the introduction of new artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT, helpdesk chatbots and other machine-learning applications, businesses are racing to embed AI into their products and services.

Retailer Showcase has been using AI for a decade to identify trending products and get them on the shelves faster. Since the introduction of ChatGPT in late November, they are leaning in further.

And they aren't alone. A quarter of Canadians have used AI tools, according to a [Leger poll](#) conducted in February. That includes 9 per cent who use it for work or school.

"Soon AI will be involved in every part of our business," said chief executive officer Samir Kulkarni.

Embedding AI into your business

Currently, the company is working on a Mother's Day campaign that they're referring to as "Mother's Dai" – a nod to their use of AI to create much of the promotion.

The team is using AI to help them identify what products are popular and then it aids them in brainstorming and creating product names, poems, imagery and promotional materials.

Mr. Kulkarni refers to AI as "one member of the team" that is helping bring the campaign to life.

"Obviously, we still need smart humans to interpret it and to guide it because it's not a panacea, but it's a very useful tool," he said.

Mr. Kulkarni said using AI company-wide has not come without its challenges.

There is a lack of understanding about what it is, and fear around how it may impact jobs.

"We spend a lot of time in team meetings to overcome those fears to help people understand what AI is and how it can be a useful tool," he said. "Just like Adobe Photoshop did not replace graphic design

departments, in the same way AI is not going to replace people so much as it's going to supercharge them and empower them.”

Then, you need to encourage your teams to use the tools.

To solve this the team holds knowledge-sharing sessions where people can share their successes and failures, and funny results that have come from AI projects. They can also brainstorm solutions to the challenges they come up against, because everyone has different insights about the technology.

AI is not a 'IT project'

Mr. Kulkarni's top piece of advice for organizations looking to use AI is that leaders need to get involved from the start.

“Senior people in the organization need to use the technology hands on – it is not an IT project or a side gig,” he said.

Even though a leader's time is often stretched across many different priorities, Mr. Kulkarni said AI is unlike other technology advances such as cryptocurrency or the Metaverse, because advancement in AI will be fundamental to the way businesses operate.

“You really can't escape it, so it's better to learn it and master it,” he said.

What I'm reading around the web

- Why do people rebel? We see it at home, at work and in society at large – and we try to counteract it with tactics like reverse psychology. [According to research in this Discover article](#), the urge to rebel is complex and innate, and may fade away as we age.
- If you're thinking of reapplying for a job you didn't get the first time, or even applying at a company where you've been turned down before, [you'll want to read this Forbes article](#). It provides tips for applying again so you can make the best impression.
- “I can't seem to claw my way out of full-time motherhood,” said Brittany Hopkins [in this Tye piece about B.C.'s child-care crisis](#). The mother, with two children under five, takes a look back at the historical inequities Canadians have faced in child care, and looks forward by addressing the three major challenges that can be addressed.
- You never really know how a company operates until you're a part of the team, but you can do your best to look for red flags. From Harvard Business Review, here's how to [detect if a potential company](#) will support your well-being and productivity – or leave you feeling burnt out.

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