5D Ng Chun Yu, Nathan

AI : Game Changer or Job Stealer?

The trend of automation has recently become a heated topic around the globe. AI has brought significant impact around us, from assisting us with daily tasks to analysing numerous data in big enterprises. For example, Instagram uses AI to collect users' preferences for personalised user experiences. Apple not only brings Siri into appearance, but also uses robots to build and assemble their mobile chips. The famous virtual bank – ZA Bank as well uses such advanced technology to interact with their users in a NFT Maker campaign. Robots of all kinds are slowly becoming an inevitable part of our lives and the market. Yet, such advancement does not come in all roses. It is estimated that those most repetitive and analytical jobs will soon be replaced by AI, raising our unemployment rate. However, are robots really a threat to our future careers?

According to research done by BBC, over 60 percent of professionals from different sectors responded with an opposite view from the concerns raised with a solid reason – robots cannot create. It is undeniable how productive and efficient these robots are, but their perfection only lies on the surface. All their tasks to be conducted are coded inside the programs of the system. In other words, they could not 'think out of the program'. Limitations are faced by them as they could not generate or create new and flexible solutions that are not in their codes. With that being said, humans and robots are not in a competitive relationship, but more likely a complementary relationship. Our new Internet Era relies on automation as much as automation relies on us for their smooth operation.

Does that mean our jobs are safeguarded? The answer will be a yes and a no. Robots depend on humans, thus creating new positions, as technicians and professionals that are needed to inspect, monitor and even program the robots. Unfortunately, it is still unavoidable that robots will replace certain aspects of workers, including factory workers, street cleaners or even drivers. These jobs share a common characteristic of not requiring creativity and involving repetitive tasks. As a result, it is not uncommon to observe that many manufacturers today employ more robots than humans. At the same time, an increasing number of driverless cars like Tesla's new

models are running over the roads of America. Therefore, the crisis of various monotonous jobs remains a cruel truth.

While most believe that robots are a double-edged sword to our future, such doubt might as well be rebutted. With the reference to the research from HKUST, over
70% of factory workers and drivers are aged 40 or above. Although robots are developing rapidly, it is not likely that the majority of these workers will be replaced in the foreseeable future. When the robots are well-developed and ready to take up these jobs, most middle-aged workers are already retired or promoted. On the other hand, the new generations with the protections of I.T. knowledge implemented from their high school curriculum or even additional courses could equip them with sufficient ability to cope with the trend of robots. These teenagers who hated labour-intensive jobs from the start could then be trained to immerse themselves in a whole new and comfortable working environment with the assistance of robots.

"One new machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man." – Elbert Hubbard

It is true that robots are more accurate than us, but in a dynamic and subjective market, it is futile for robots to replicate our creativity. To conclude, robots may eventually replace some jobs, but they could also lead to new opportunities, arising to more favourable job atmospheres and supporting our social and economic growth. The advantages of expanding the presence of robots in our labor force certainly outweigh the disadvantages.

Don't be afraid of what machines might do to us. Be interested in what it can do for us. Let's work the hardest of ours and together we can evolve with the implementation of technology.