The dark fate of Terminator or how to approach advantages in AI technology

What does the future of AI hold – a new version of the dark ages as shown in the new Terminator: The Dark Fate movie? Hovering chairs as in Wall-E? Or improvements for our everyday life?

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I have always been passionate about technology and always wonder what’s next. When the iPhone came out, I was one of the first to get one. When the HTC Vive virtual reality headset came out, I was one of the first to have it installed in my living room (my husband wanted to set up a Star Trek-like Holodeck). Smart speakers, game consoles, drones, I tried a lot of them. I’m one of those people that get excited about the evolution of technology, and I’m sure that I’m not the only one. I like checking out new things, reading about the latest and greatest and following the industry to see what the future might hold. As a technology enthusiast, one of the talk tracks that I like to follow as well are the conversations about the risks of technology, especially AI.

Will Skynet, the AI in Terminator that started the war to end humankind, be reality at one point? Personally, I don’t think so. Already today, there are a lot of thoughts being discussed about moral principles for AI, how to guarantee a governance and making sure AI doesn’t learn any random stuff. Because AI doesn’t have a conscious that would stop it from learning something that is not ethical, human supervision is still critical. Think about the AI technologies, like conversational IVRs and virtual assistants, that represent a brand. Could you imagine if your customer engagement technology suddenly sold your competitor’s product because it felt ignored by you or someone told it that (true or not) the other product is much better? Thankfully, General AI and/ or self-aware technology is not available today, and even though there is a lot of work being done in that area, I don’t think it will be available for a long time to come.

Just think about how many decades it took to get to where we are now. Today, we can command our living room devices to increase the volume or play a different song. We can ask our car to call the in-laws because we haven’t done that in months. Our doctor can send us an automated appointment reminder. Our bank uses the unique pattern of our voice to identify us. And I can have a meaningful conversation with an agent because they know who I am and what I’ve bought before.

Think about the opportunities that we have if we focus on enhancing the capabilities that are available today. Self-driving cars would enable us to get to work stress-free. No more traffic jams and chaos on the streets. I don’t have to search for my remote anymore, because I can just talk to my TV, smart speaker or any other device in my house. When I sign up for a new service, that business will reach out to me and help me with getting started because hundreds of other customers before me were in a similar situation.

And even further, probably when we are not around anymore, will we be sitting in hovering chairs like in the movie Wall-E, or will we be spending our time in virtual reality worlds, like in Ready Player One?

What’s next for us? What do you dare to dream about?
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Josefine Fouarge is Sr. Product Marketing Manager in the Nuance Enterprise Division, focusing on automated and human assisted engagements in digital channels. Josefine brings more than 10 years of experience in sales and marketing for technology related businesses in Germany and the U.S. Her past expertise ranges from selling and configuring Apple computers to defining the market and messaging for a security software for on-premise datacenters and services offered through the cloud.

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