AI & Automated News: Implications on Trust, Bias, and Credibility

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Abstract

While the technology is far from mature, artificial intelligence in the form of autonomous production of journalistic content is becoming increasingly prominent in newsrooms – and it's here to stay. The promise of automatically generating news at a faster pace, a larger scale, in multiple languages, and with potentially fewer errors, has scholars and practitioners championing this technology. As always, this development fuels fears that journalists will soon be out of work. Yet, today's algorithms cannot ask questions, explain phenomena, or establish causality, giving human journalists the opportunity to write stories that address the 'why' something happens – as opposed to the 'what' that machines tell us. When established news organizations start publishing partly or fully automated news stories, they lend credibility to them. Little is known yet about potential societal implications of this on dimensions of trust and potential bias, as the algorithms themselves cannot be held accountable. In this talk, I will discuss these developments and also place them in the context of news search and recommendations, automatic media monitoring, polarity detection and sentiment analysis.

Biography

Edgar Meij is a senior scientist at Bloomberg. Before this, he was a research scientist at Yahoo Labs and a postdoc at the University of Amsterdam, where he also obtained his Ph.D. His research focuses on all applications and aspects of knowledge graphs, entity linking, and semantic search.

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