

There are two divided sides when it comes to AI: those excited about its possibilities and those scared by its potential. Love it or hate it, AI already exists in our everyday lives.

From asking Siri to perform a Google search to asking Alexa to play your favorite song, AI is being used daily. It has several application uses, both personal and business related. Facebook Messenger chatbots are just one example of how quickly AI is being utilized by companies to streamline customer service and mundane tasks. AI also has the potential to improve your B2B lead generation, starting with the four reasons below.

Provides more accurate prospect information

Potential leads are sourced from a variety of channels -- LinkedIn, Google, etc. -- when you introduce AI into the process it can validate your data against several sources, helping you gather the most accurate data possible.

When you are contacting accurate data from the first stage of the prospecting process, it drastically improves your overall success. You aren't calling disconnected phone numbers, dead email addresses or contacting people who have changed positions or companies. Your follow-up success and close ratio improve when you are working with accurate data from the beginning.

Improves productivity.

AI can work 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. It never calls in sick to work, it doesn't need a break in the middle of the day, doesn't take a week off for vacation and it doesn't ever leave the office.

AI can't replace the value an employee delivers in terms of relationship-building and human-to-human communication skills, but it can be a huge help in generating more leads and interest around the clock while your sales team isn't working. They can arrive at the office daily with ultra-qualified leads thanks to AI.

Makes automated messages feel more human.

Automated marketing is nothing new -- from automated social media posting to email drip sequences, there are plenty of automation tools available to help generate leads. AI takes it a step higher, allowing you to show more specific marketing messages relevant to a lead's specific needs. These targeted messages increase your conversion rates because you are sending them automated marketing that is more likely to convert them based on data AI is able to identify.

A salesperson would need to take the time to create a personalized email and write it in a certain voice/tone depending on several factors. One of the biggest drawbacks when it came to things like automated email, was that it was too generic. Now, AI is able to give your automation more of a human-feel.

"AI creates superhuman salespeople. They cannot be replaced by a machine, but a machine can certainly make them smarter and stronger, suggests Olin Hyde, CEO and founder of LeadCrunch a B2B lead generation company that relies heavily on AI and machine learning.

Reduces missed opportunities.

It takes up to 8 to generate a viable sales lead and there are preferred times to contact leads as well as response times that all come into play, as well. B2B leads need to be followed up with quickly, and AI can streamline the process.

It's an older study, but consider the data from this Harvard Business Review on lead response

- The average first-response time of B2B companies to their leads was 42 hours
- Only 37 percent of companies responded to their leads within an hour
- 16 percent of companies responded within one to 24 hours
- 24 percent of companies took more than 24 hours
- 23 percent of the companies never responded at all

AI allows you to immediately reach out to prospects and follow up with leads in your pipeline that show interest, with precision, eliminating missed opportunities. Imagine if a prospect in your sales funnel took an action at 3 a.m. that signaled a high level of interest -- you could wait six hours until your sales team arrives at the office, or you can implement AI to contact them right away, which greatly increases the likelihood of them converting.