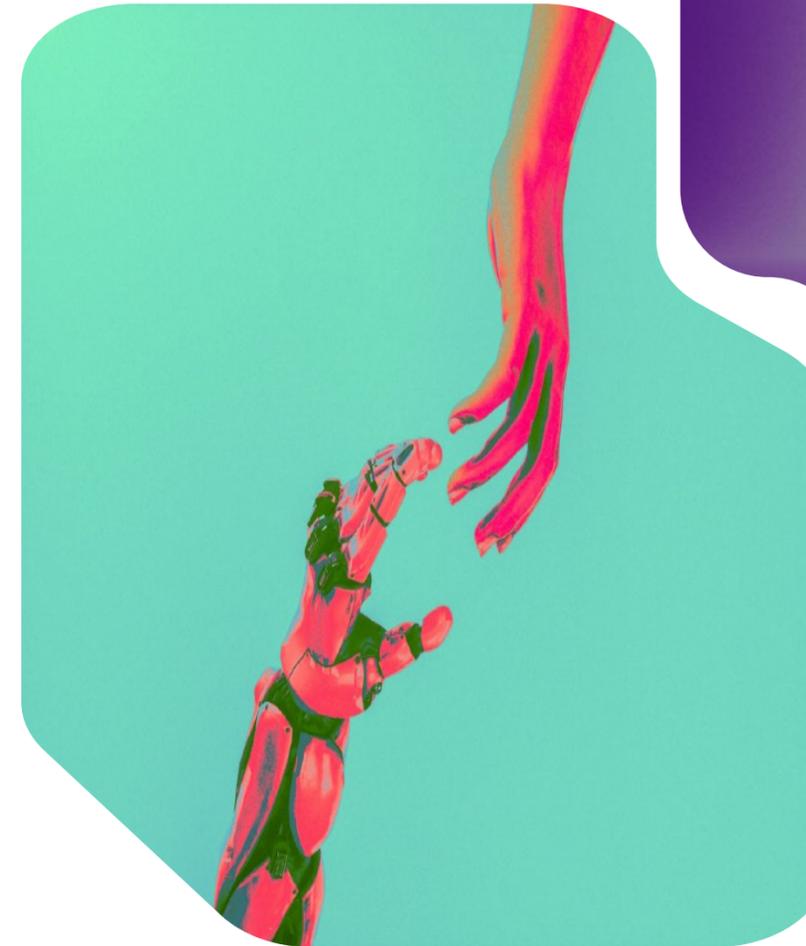


AI FOUNDATIONS TRAINING

FOR ILIFFE MEDIA GROUP

Facilitated by Melanie Moeller and
William Mata

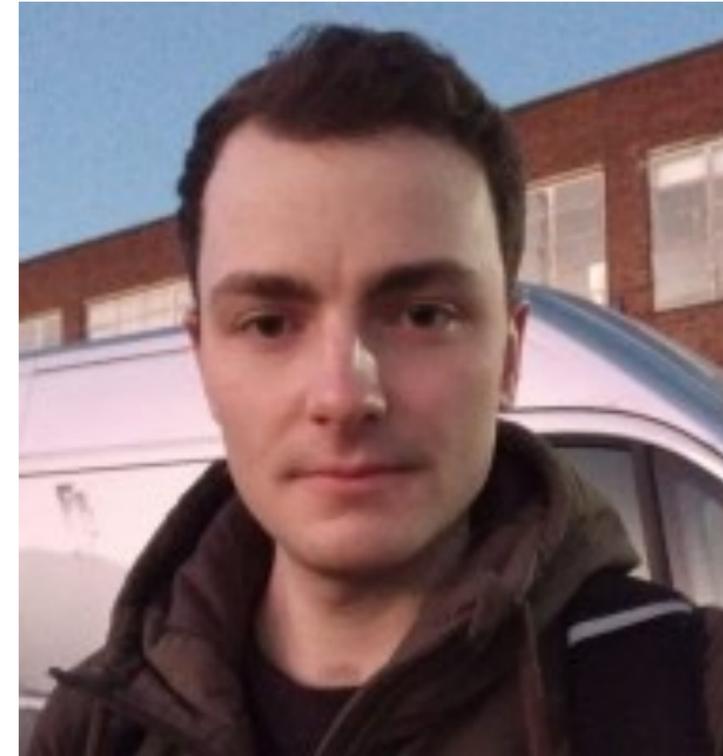
Date: 24 July 2025





Melanie Moeller

Chief AI Officer at GenFutures Lab &
Fractional AI Consultant
(Ex-BBC, SKY, HP)



William Mata

Journalist and SEO Editor
(Ex-Illife, Archant, Standard, Independent)

OVERVIEW



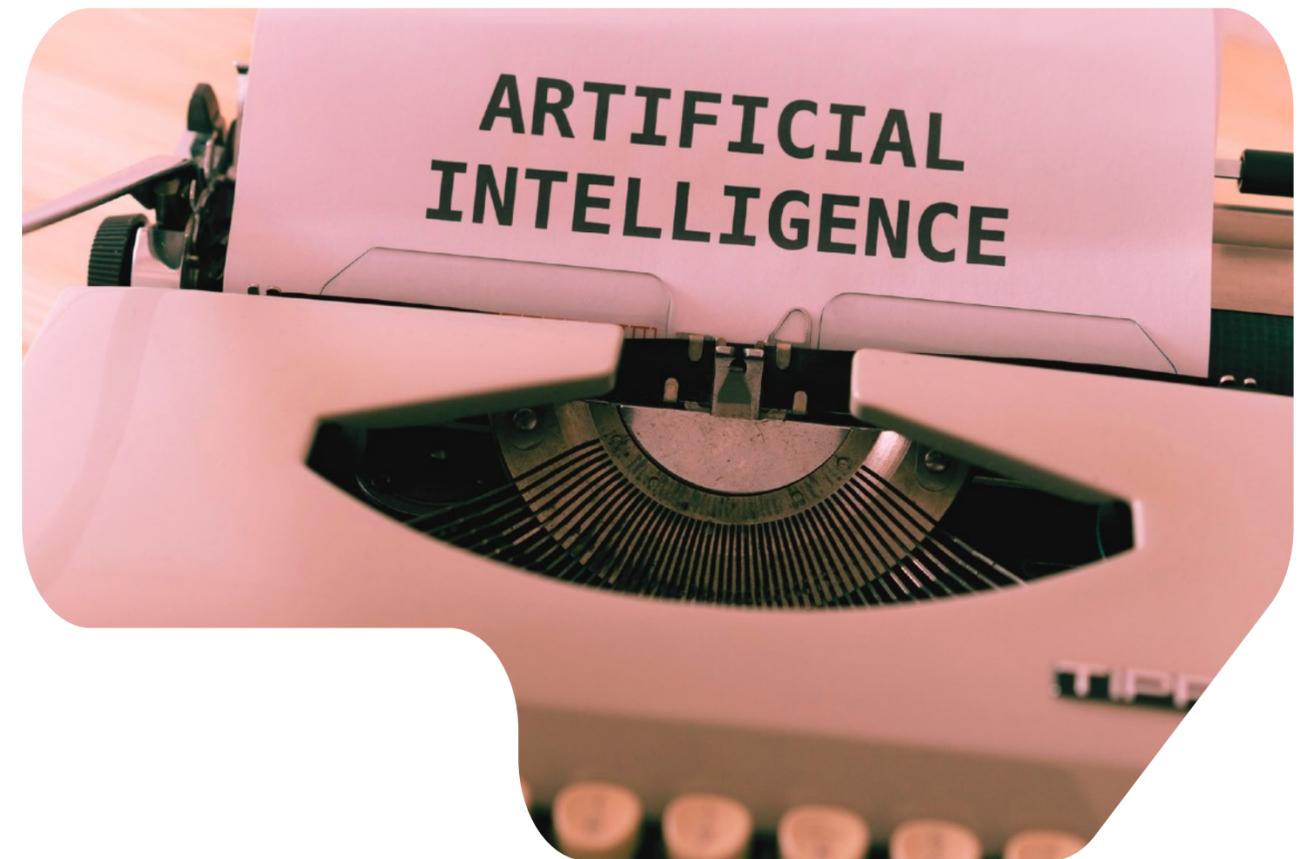
Topic	Time
Welcome & Intro	12:30 PM - 12:35 PM
AI Explained	12:35 PM - 1:10 PM
AI in Practice	1:10 PM - 3:00 PM
Break	3:00 PM - 3:10 PM
Scanning Docs & Generating Images	3:10 PM - 4:15 PM
Wrap up and Q&A	3:15 PM - 4:30 PM

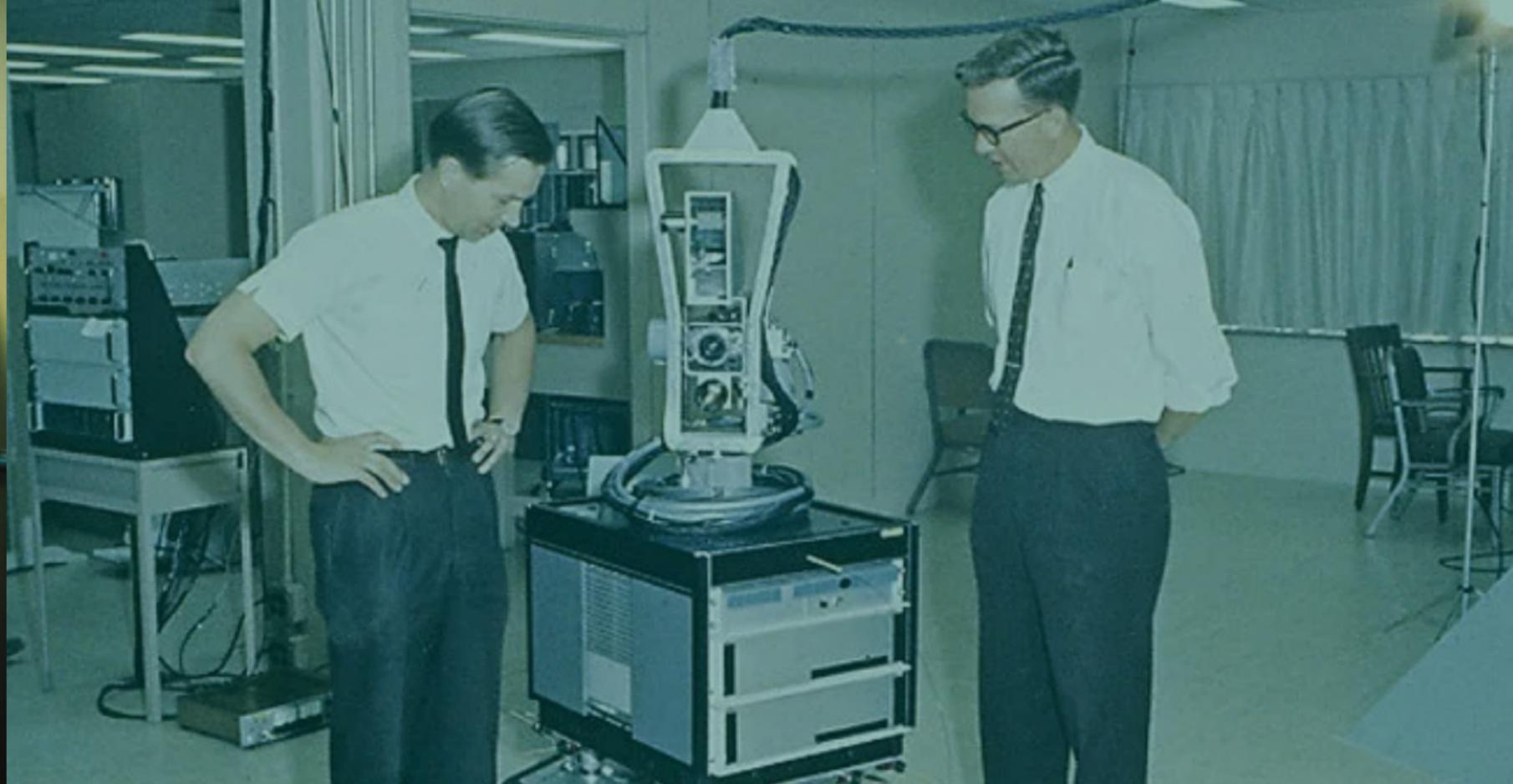
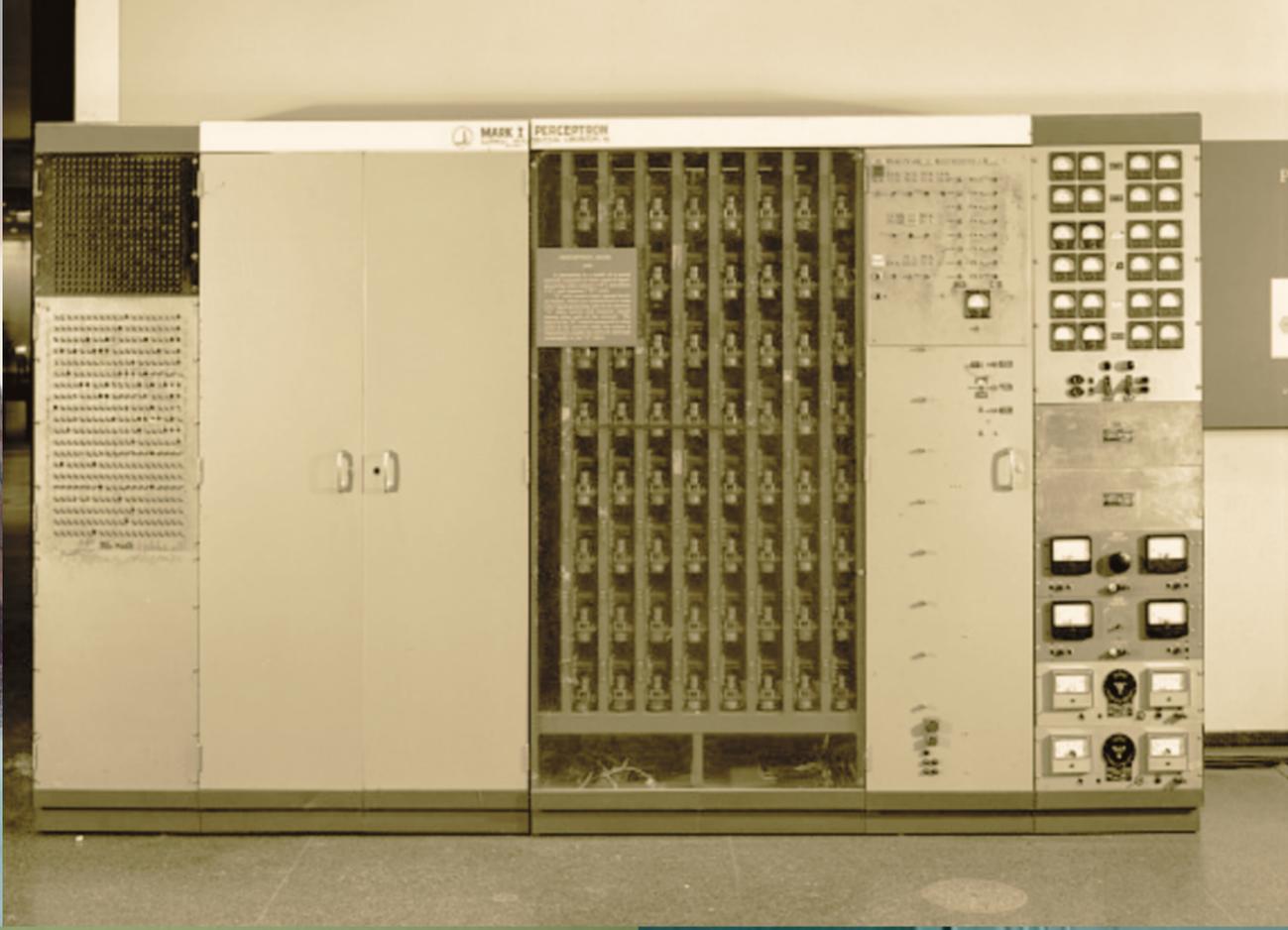


AI EXPLAINED

WHAT IS AI?

- Artificial intelligence (AI) is a broad field of technology that enables computers and machines to perform tasks typically associated with human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, generating creative works, and language understanding.





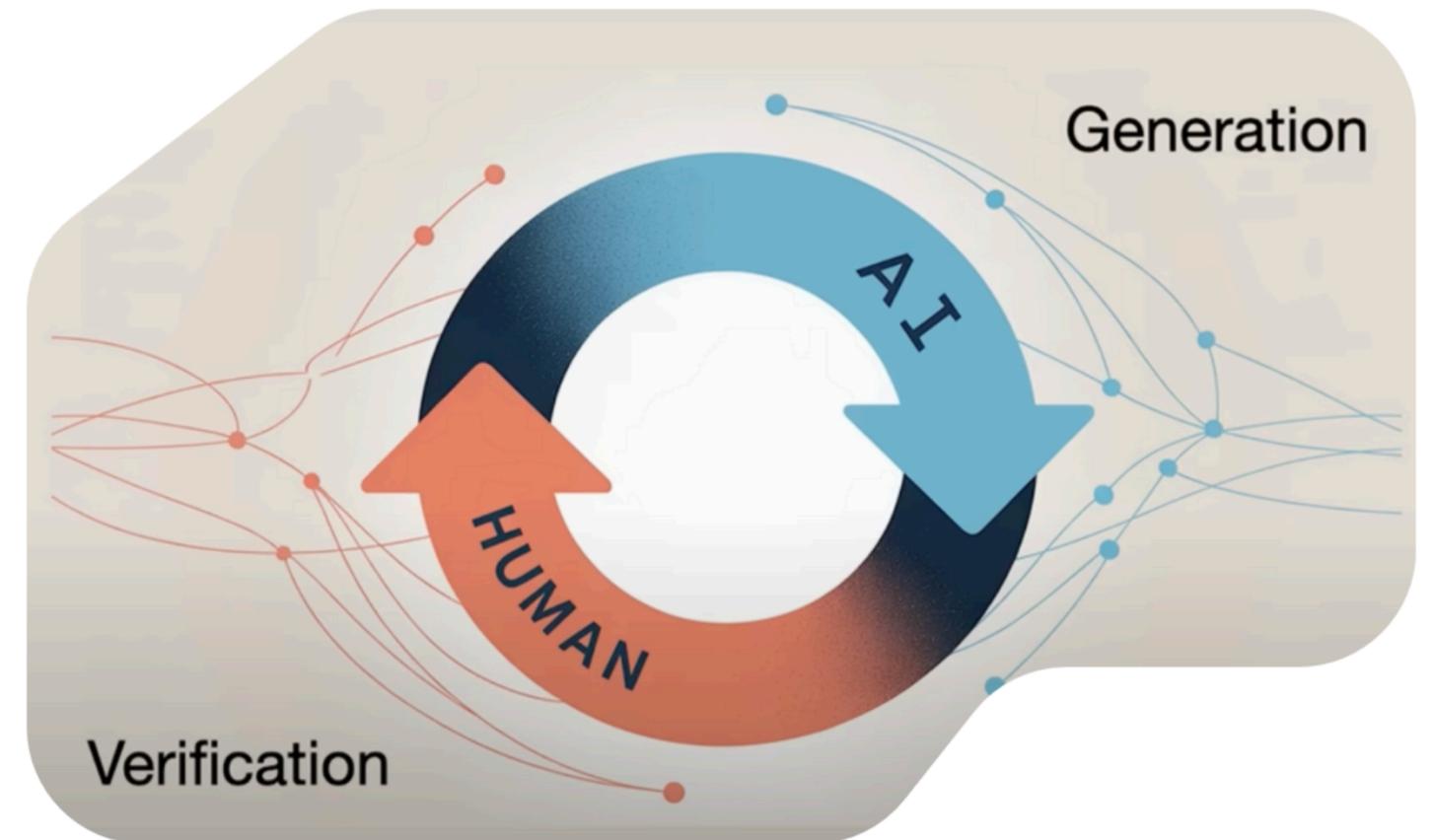


AI & HUMAN COLLABORATION



“We’re now kind of cooperating with AIs, and usually they are doing the generation and we, as humans, are doing the verification. It’s in our interest to make this loop go as fast as possible.”

- Andrej Karpathy’s talk, “Software Is Changing (Again)”



HOW AI CAN BE USED IN THE NEWSROOM



Find Content

Mining & scanning datasets, lengthy documents, council papers, CQC reports etc. for story ideas



Enrich Content

Adding additional content to enliven a story (timelines, graphics, factfiles)



Refine Content

Re-formatting content into house style (cinema times, court listings, football teams, race results)

IS AI GOING TO TAKE MY JOB?

AI can be a handy tool, but it can't replace the human element that's so crucial to journalism.

Here is why:

- **Human oversight is essential:** Efforts to replace the writing element without a human in the loop have so far failed or been modified.
- **Quality suffers without humans:** Where AI is being used to replace journalists it is often for low quality content.
- **Core skills still matter:** No evidence of high quality content being produced, instead, core journalism skills are still needed with AI used to take mundane tasks.



Human

Personal Approach

- ✓ Phoning contacts
- ✓ Attend briefings, meetings & events
- ✓ Leading interviews

AI

Preparation & Research Aid

- ✓ Transcribe interviews
- ✓ Identify story leads in long reports
- ✓ Help craft FOI requests

Human

Co-Creation & Authorship

- ✓ Write copy
- ✓ Creative leadership & oversight
- ✓ Capture, select & caption photographs

AI

Optimise & Refine

- ✓ Suggest & Optimise SEO and headlines
- ✓ Creating fact files and extra content to use
- ✓ Create supporting visuals

HOW LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS WORK



- LLMs guess the most probable next word.

At their core, LLMs are prediction engines. After analysing massive amounts of text, they learn the intricate patterns and relationships between words. This allows them to work by repeatedly predicting the most probable next word in a sequence, much like a highly sophisticated autocomplete.

Next-Word Predictor

Sir Keir Starmer
is...

Prime Minister
A Conservative
A grey man
Mr Darcy

LEADING LLMS



AI IN PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION TO CHATGPT



- ChatGPT is an AI assistant from OpenAI, built on a large language model. Trained on vast amounts of publicly available text, it predicts and generates human-like language, enabling a variety of tasks.
- While powerful, its replies are statistical predictions and therefore require human oversight.

Link to Prompt Sheet:

<https://shorturl.at/ZVy77>

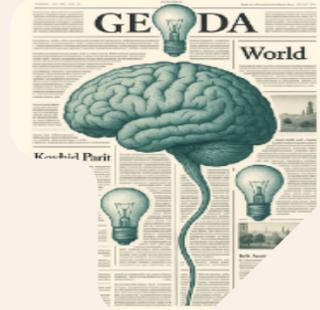


PROMPT ENGINEERING



Prompt engineering is the systematic practice of writing clear, context-rich instructions that help Large Language Models (LLMs) return accurate, relevant and usable results.

THE BRAINSTORMER



Short of ideas? ChatGPT can help you brainstorm. With this prompt, it asks you three questions first to better understand your needs/ your readers needs before producing a response.

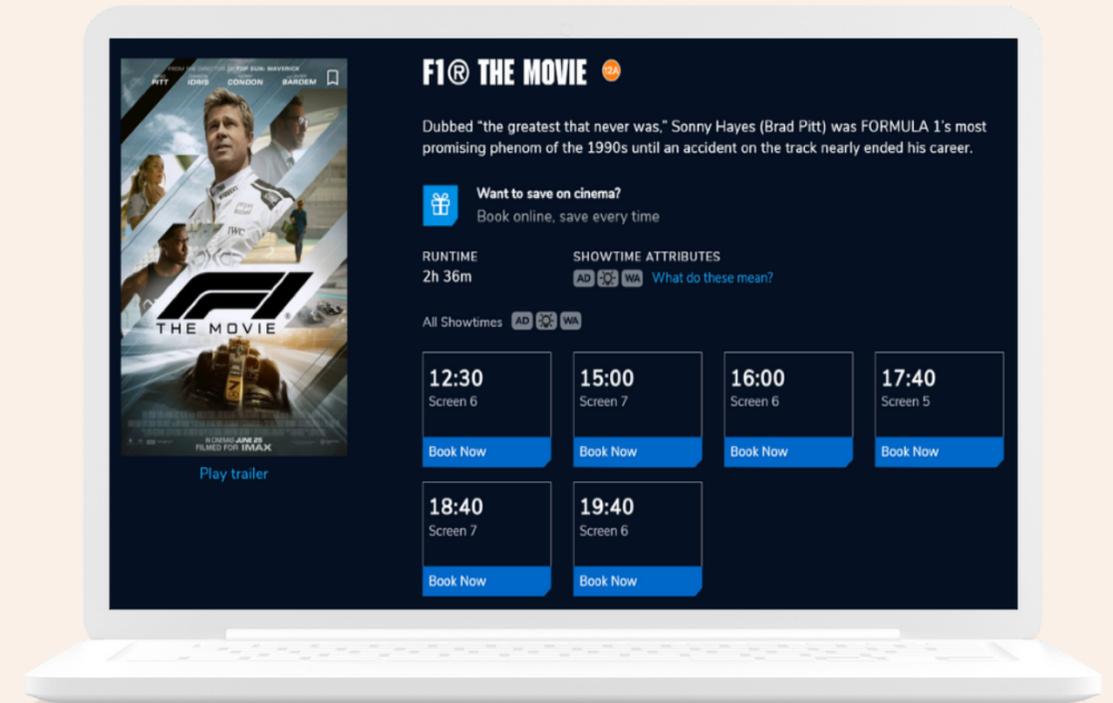


Help me come up with weekend content ideas for Kent Online. This would ideally be for a feature that is easy to write but also engaging. Ask me three questions, one at a time, to find out something that works for our Kent Online audience. Previous ideas have included “Plaxtol’s 17 Most Bougie Beer Gardens.”

STYLE TRANSFER & FORMATTING

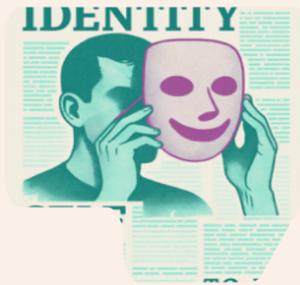
ChatGPT can be thought as a style guide. It can help with:

- Formatting listings, results, or lists into house style
- Putting work experience or freelancer work through
- Uploading advertorial / paid content or press releases without major editorial changes



Please visit www.odeon.co.uk/cinemas/tunbridge-wells/
Write all of the cinema listings for Superman for Thursday, July 24
Write in the following style: Superman (12a) showing at: 12.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.00pm, and 9.30pm

ROLE ASSIGNMENT



A technique where the AI takes on different roles such as experts, stakeholders, or members of the public to explore a topic from varied perspectives.



You are a typical Kent Online reader. Read the following article: www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/we-are-sending-our-bin-back-residents-blast-new-garden-wa-325550/ and ask questions about aspects of the piece you feel confused about. Make sure the questions you ask could stimulate a future article.

CHAIN OF THOUGHT



Chain-of-thought prompting is a technique that guides the model to break down complex tasks such as analysing article performance or developing a research plan into clear, logical steps. It encourages the model to explain its reasoning process step by step before arriving at a final answer.



Generate a 60 character-long engaging and SEO-friendly headline for the following article: ‘We Are Sending Our Black Bins Back,’ say residents
<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/we-are-sending-our-bin-back-residents-blast-new-garden-wa-325550/> Make sure to explain every step of your thinking.

SELF CRITIQUE



A technique where the AI reviews and critiques its own initial answer to improve the quality, clarity, or fairness of the response.



Please list at least five things wrong with your previous answer and then write a new one fixing them.

PROMPT CHAINING



This technique allows the breaking down of a broader task into smaller, manageable prompts, useful for multi-step tasks like persona development or campaign creation.



Prompt 1: Describe the typical user persona of someone engaging with the Kent Online Facebook page at 11am on a Monday. Include details such as their demographics, interests, online behaviour, and what kind of content they are likely to engage with at that time.

Prompt 2: Based on this persona, could you design a Facebook sell for the Kent Online story: "Kent residents revolt over soaring waste bin charges".

TREE OF THOUGHTS



A method of thinking that branches out like a tree starting with a main question then exploring different lines of reasoning, or perspectives before reaching a conclusion.



Example 1: I'm looking for FOI ideas to investigate Kent County Council. Think in a tree-of-thoughts structure: start with broad categories, then list specific FOI angles under each. Think step step-by-step in different directions.

Example 2: Use a tree-of-thought approach to help write a story on the report about Reform councillor Daniel Taylor. Pretend you're five diverse Kent residents reacting to the following article <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/thanet/news/reform-suspends-kent-county-councillor-with-immediate-effec-325551/>. Explore the issue from different viewpoints and think step step-by-step in different directions.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS FOR AI AND JOURNALISM



BBC threatens legal action against AI start-up Perplexity over content scraping

British broadcaster makes first move to clamp down on alleged
infringement of copyright by tech groups



Perplexity says the BBC's claims are 'manipulative and opportunistic' © Hollie
Adams/Bloomberg

“When used ethically and with transparency, AI presents opportunities for good.” - National Union of Journalists

1. Photography is especially sensitive
2. Do not share sensitive data or anything that might impact confidentiality or what your source has told you

PROMPTING FRAMEWORKS

RTF

Role
Task
Format

PROMPT TEMPLATE

"Role: [insert the role you want AI to take.] Task: [Insert the task you want AI to complete.]
Format: [Style, constraints or narrowing.]"



Role: You are a journalist for Kent Online.

Task: See this attached press release and re-write it as a news story with these primary instructions:

1. Angled on Craig Mackinlay's battle with sepsis,
2. Within and inline with the Kent Online style guide,
3. Write for a Kent audience who are familiar with Mackinlay as an MP - and use this as an introduction into

Format & Constraints:

1. Headline – 60 characters, active voice,
2. SEO headline - 70 characters, using Kent specific words,
3. Intro– 18–25 words to state how Mackinlay's battle with sepsis has inspired this Parliamentary push,
4. Body – 2–3 short paragraphs adding context, extra information, and further news hooks,
5. Quote 1 – most emotive and impactful line about the story,
6. More information and context about Mackinlay's situation and how he nearly died,
7. Quote 2 – more emotive feedback from a second person,
8. Extra information - content that is less important to the flow of the story

Additional Constraints:

- Do not use any information outside of this press release,
- To be written to a maximum of 250 words, in house style,
- Each new sentence should be a new paragraph
- Never use any quote where the person, in the first line, says they are “delighted”

RISEN

PROMPT TEMPLATE

"**Role:** [insert the role you want AI to take.] **Instructions:** [Specify the task you want AI to complete.]

Steps to complete task: [Insert numbered list of steps to follow.]

End Goal: [State your goal for the output] **Narrowing:** [Enter constraints]."

Role

Instructions

Steps

End goal

Narrowing



Role: You are a political reporter for Kent Online working in the week after the 2024 general election.

Instructions: Conduct background & reaction research around Liberal Democrats winning Tunbridge Wells election seat from Conservatives in the General Election 2024. Here the original article (publication date: July 5 2024) : <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/tunbridge-wells/news/voters-head-to-the-polls-in-tunbridge-wells-309229/>

- **Step 1:** Locate five X (Twitter) posts from verified or local authoritative accounts posted since reacting to the Lib Dem win; include the link to the post,
- **Step 2:** Gather at least three statements a piece from official or senior Liberal Democrat and Conservative figures (MPs, council leaders, party press accounts) responding to the result; cite source, date and URL),
- **Step 3:** Write a structured analysis report (headline, 40-word standfirst, 120-word bullet digest, 700-word narrative, 100-word forward-look) totalling no more than 1,000 words, embedding hyperlinks where relevant.

End goal: Provide an analysis report that uses voter volatility as its analytical lens, drawing on the above material to explain how and why electoral loyalties shifted and what the parties' reactions reveal about future prospects.

Narrowing: Limit to max 500 words; provide as plain text output, and within Kent Online house style.

RODES

Role
Objective
Details
Examples
Sense Check

[www.kentonline.co.uk/
maidstone/news/
gareth-gates-gets-hair-
transplant-134108/](http://www.kentonline.co.uk/maidstone/news/gareth-gates-gets-hair-transplant-134108/)

PROMPT TEMPLATE

"Role: [Insert desired role you want AI to take.]

Objective: [Insert objective you want AI to do.]

Details: [Insert any context or constraints AI needs to create a good output]

Examples: Here are good examples you can use to model your answer. [Insert examples of good outputs]

Sense Check: Do you understand the objective and the specific guidelines for this task?"



Role: You are a reporter of the Kent Online.

Objective: Compile a bullet-point factfile for Gareth Gates to complement an article saying he has undergone a hair transplant.

Details: Provide the following details in this order: 1.) Gareth Gates's age (in years), 2.) estimated net worth (cite source), 3.) relationship status (including name of current partner), 4.) top five most-streamed songs, 5.) number of children (including names and ages), 6.) hair transplant specifics - month-year, clinic, type of procedure, any quote from Gates.

Example: See sample factfile about Donald Trump contained within this LBC piece: <https://www.lbc.co.uk/usa/politics/donald-trump/trump-rename-football-soccer-us/>

Sense check: Reply "Yes – confirmed" if you understand before continuing; otherwise if you need more specific guidelines for this, ask clarifying questions. Once the user tells you to continue, please do so.

HANDS-ON LAB #1

- Use the prompting techniques and frameworks for the following production sequence:
- Idea generation → angle-testing → fact-gathering → final write-up

Part one: Getting a story from an FOI

- Use The Brainstormer to generate at least five ideas for potential Kent-related FOIs,
- Select the strongest idea and then use Tree of Thought to explore at least three different perspectives or angles for a story,
- Write a RISEN prompt to A) Write a FOI request to the authority to narrow down the parameters and give it the best chance of being accepted B) Get a comment from social media on this issue to help get quotes and identify potential interview subjects.

Part two: Find a story you have previously written (ideally one obtained via an FOI request)

- Use RODES to write a factfile to break down the essential parts of the story.
- Once you have generated the factfile use Self-Critique to check it, especially for factual accuracy (as much as possible).
- Finally put the factfile into your house style using Style Transfer.

Part three: Take a press release you have recently received and use RTF to put it into house style.

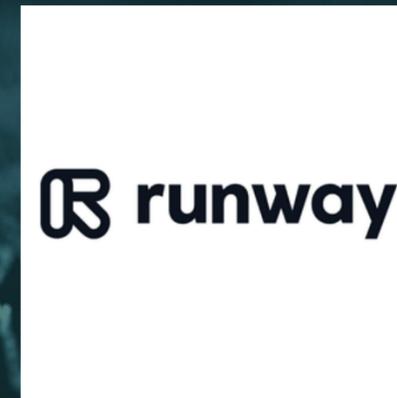
BREAK





**ANALYSING
DOCUMENTS AND
GENERATING IMAGES &
GRAPHICS**

IMAGE GENERATION MODELS & TOOLS



WHEN TO USE AI-GENERATED IMAGES



Use

- Alternative to a stock image.
- Use alongside a column, agony aunt piece, confessional, or a piece where no photo is available.
- For a press campaign material where a bold, attention-grabbing visual is required.
- Maps or graphics to illustrate an event
- News features.



Don't Use

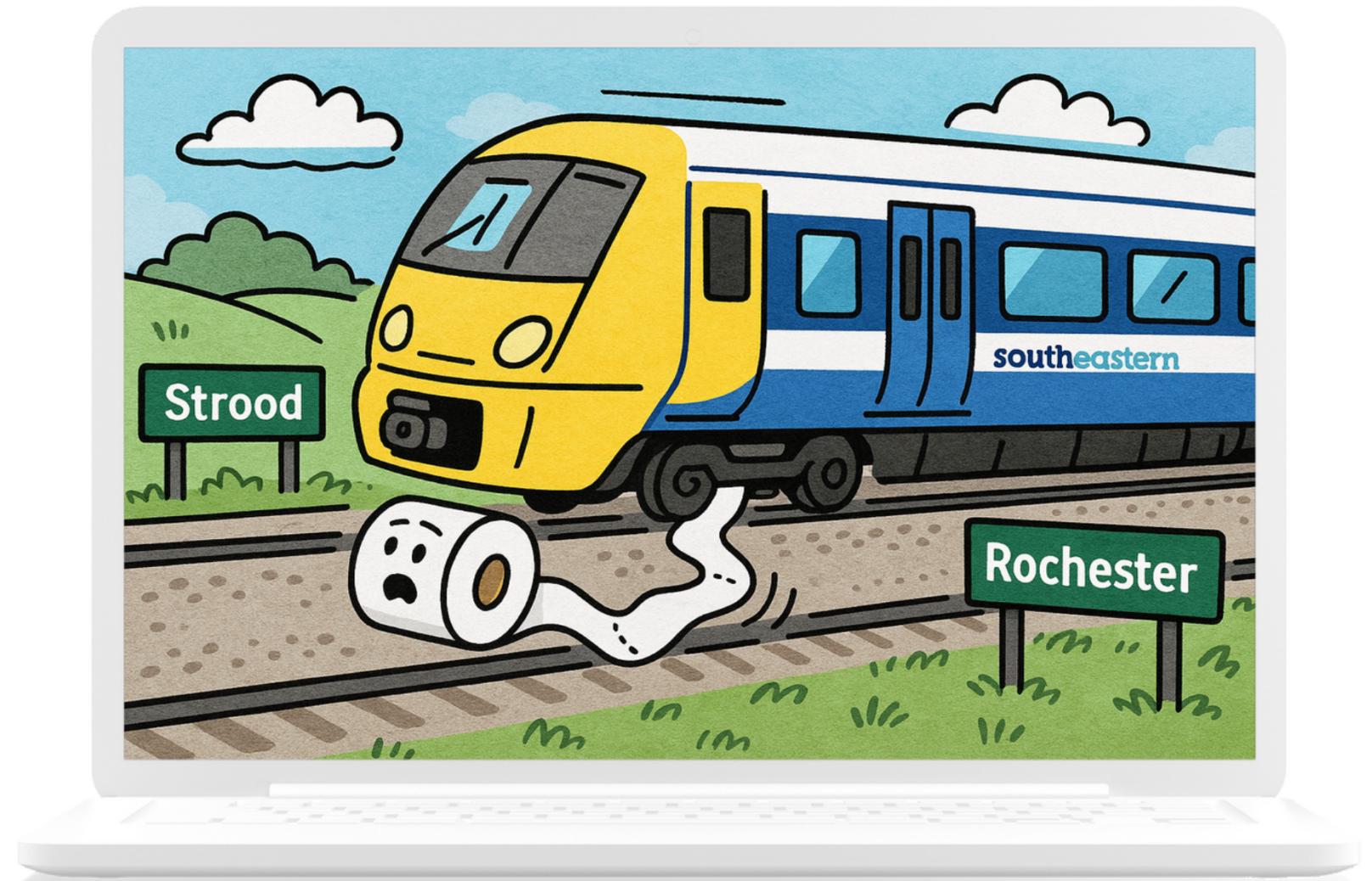
- To replace a real life image where there is one - especially for a news or sport story.
- To modify or manipulate an existing photos of actual real people, their pets or their personal possessions.
- For any visuals that could be perceived as misleading or distorting the facts.

Always ensure that AI generated images are clearly labelled.

PROMPTING FOR IMAGE GENERATION



Generate a cartoonish image (aspect ratio: 16 x9) of a loo falling out of a train travelling between 'Strood' and 'Rochester' (as shown on signs along the track). The loo roll is tumbling from an open carriage doorway and unraveling across the track, symbolising how Southeastern has recently had a problem with stocking sufficient loo rolls for its on board toilets. The tone should be playful but news friendly. This image will go with a column where the writer laments the sad state of affairs of Kent's railways.



DOCUMENTS TO VISUALS FLOW

Identify Data Rich Source Material
(hospital CQC reports, Ofsted inspections, council minutes, court bundles)

Mine the Documents with AI & Targeted Prompts
Surface facts, figures and red flags in seconds.

Extract story angles & ready-made data points
for visuals and infographics.

FINDING STORIES IN REPORTS



The document we want to review is **Tunbridge Wells Hospital CQC inspection report, October 2015** (mtw.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Tunbridge-Wells-Hospital-CQC-report.pdf)



- **Prompt 1:** Read through this hospital CQC report and return the hospital's overall rating and the rating for each key domain (Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive, Well-led) and its reasons for achieving it. Quote the exact wording and page number for every rating.
- **Prompt 2:** Please list five of the most serious failings or concerns about the hospital flagged by inspectors. For each include a short description (max 25 words), the domain it relates to and the page or section of reference.

TURN FINDINGS INTO VISUAL STORIES

IDEA

Ask ChatGPT to suggest two or three graphic concepts that would lift the story's main point.

MATCH

Pick the format that fits the data:

- Map → geography
- Bar or column chart → rankings & targets
- Timeline → sequence of events

CREATE

Example prompt: *“Design a one-page infographic: headline, key figure call-outs, sourcing note. Keep to Iliffe colour palette.”*

Shortfall in Meeting Targets



PATIENT FLOW

REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

- Bed shortages causing cancellations
- Key Failures -4-hur A&E waits



CRITICAL CARE (ICU)

INADEQUATE

- Consultant & facility gaps
- Staff training, hygiene, bleeding care



MATERNITY

INADEQUATE

- Staff training, hygiene, bleeding care
- Missing second theatre



CLINICAL GOVERNANCE

REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

- Fragmented incident systems
- Poor record access



TRANSLATION SERVICES

REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT

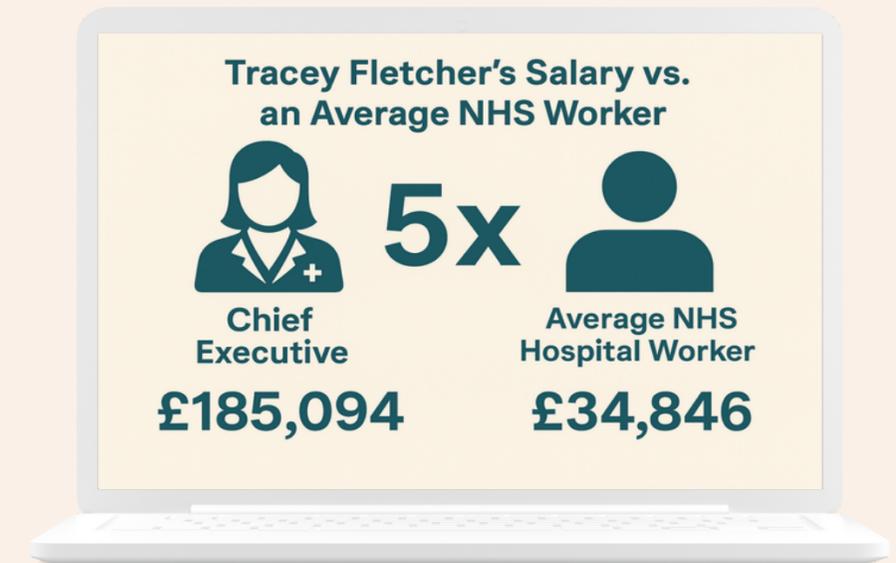
- Interpreter access lacking
- Interpreter access lacking

AI-Generated Infographic

VISUALISATION EXAMPLE | CEO PAY GAP

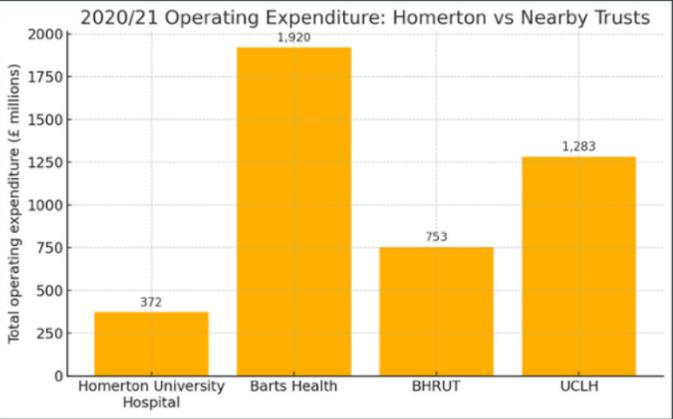
Source document

Homerton University Hospital NHS FT Annual Report & Accounts (2022-23)

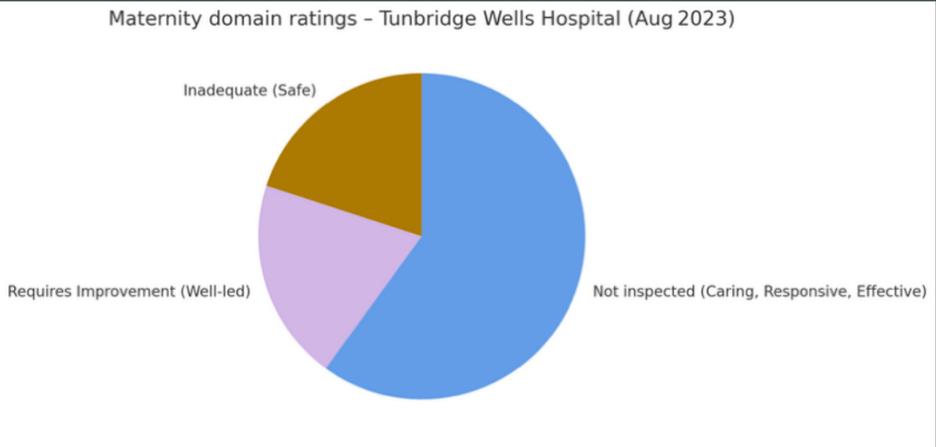


1. Read this report and extract the Chief Executive's total remuneration. Provide the figure exactly as stated, along with the page reference.
2. Find the latest average annual salary for an NHS hospital worker through a reliable source (e.g. NHS Digital or ONS). Include the source link.
3. Create a clear infographic (in png format) comparing the Chief Executive's pay with the average NHS hospital worker's pay. Use a simple ratio visual (e.g. 5x), two icons, and a concise headline.

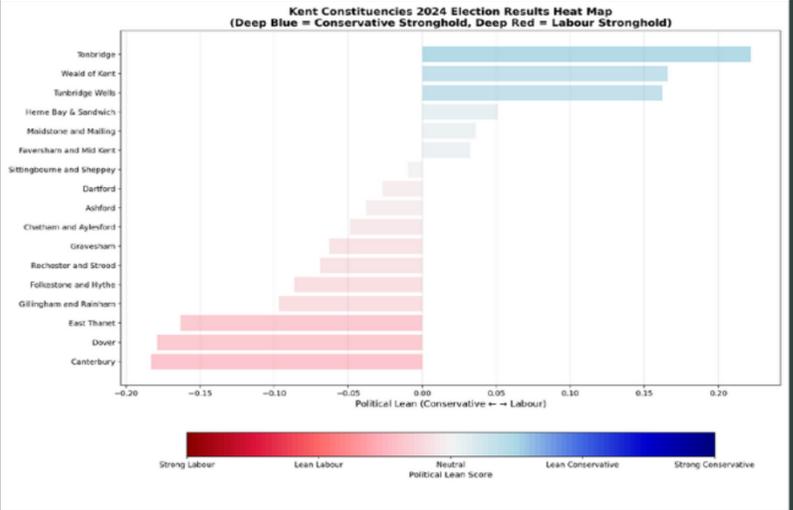
GRAPHS, CHARTS & MAPS



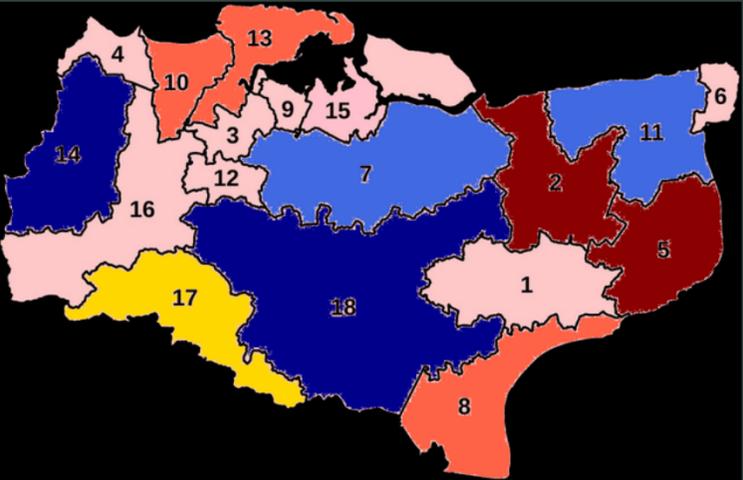
Bar Chart



Pie Chart



Horizontal Bar Chart (Heatmap)



Maps

CHARTS PROMPT TEMPLATE



Using the table you generated above, create a pie chart showing the percentage for **[X categories]**, and group all remaining items under ‘Others’ so the total equals 100%.

[Do not label percentages on the chart directly.]
Ensure the chart has a concise, descriptive title.
Use the following colour palette for consistency:
#005F58 (teal), #24D7BE (aqua), #013A63 (navy),
#A0A0A0 (soft grey), #EFEFEF (off-white). Make this
graphic available as a png.



HANDS-ON LAB #2

Exercise:

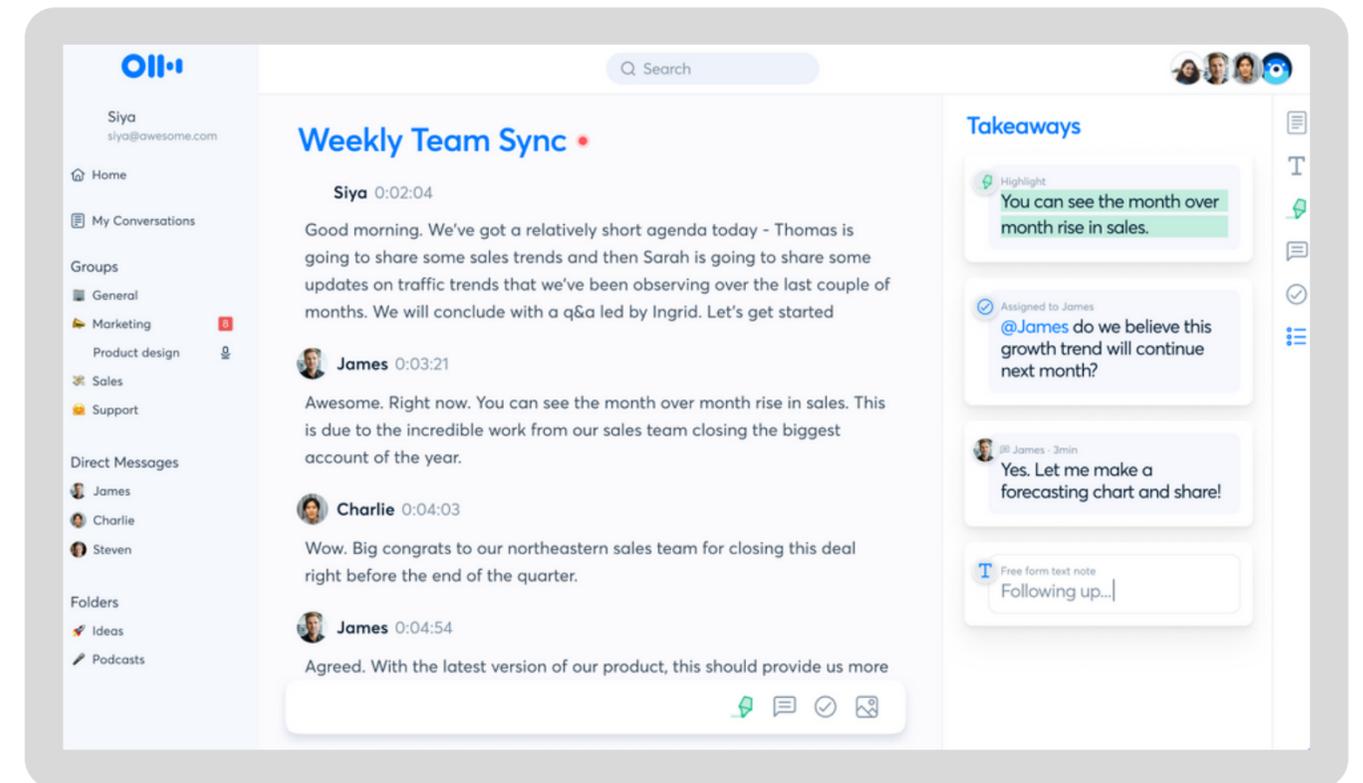
- Download the environment report for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council or use a similar report of your choice,
- Use ChatGPT and the prompting techniques we covered in the first part to scan the paperwork for potential stories. A basic prompt could be along the lines of: “Please find three potential news stories, to be covered by the Kent Online, within this document,”
- Use ChatGPT to find a data set within the report. Eg. “Please find the income versus the expenditure”, “How much does the chief executive earn versus an average member of staff”, “Break down how much council tax everyone is paying,”
- Ask it to create an infographic to illustrate key data in the data set.

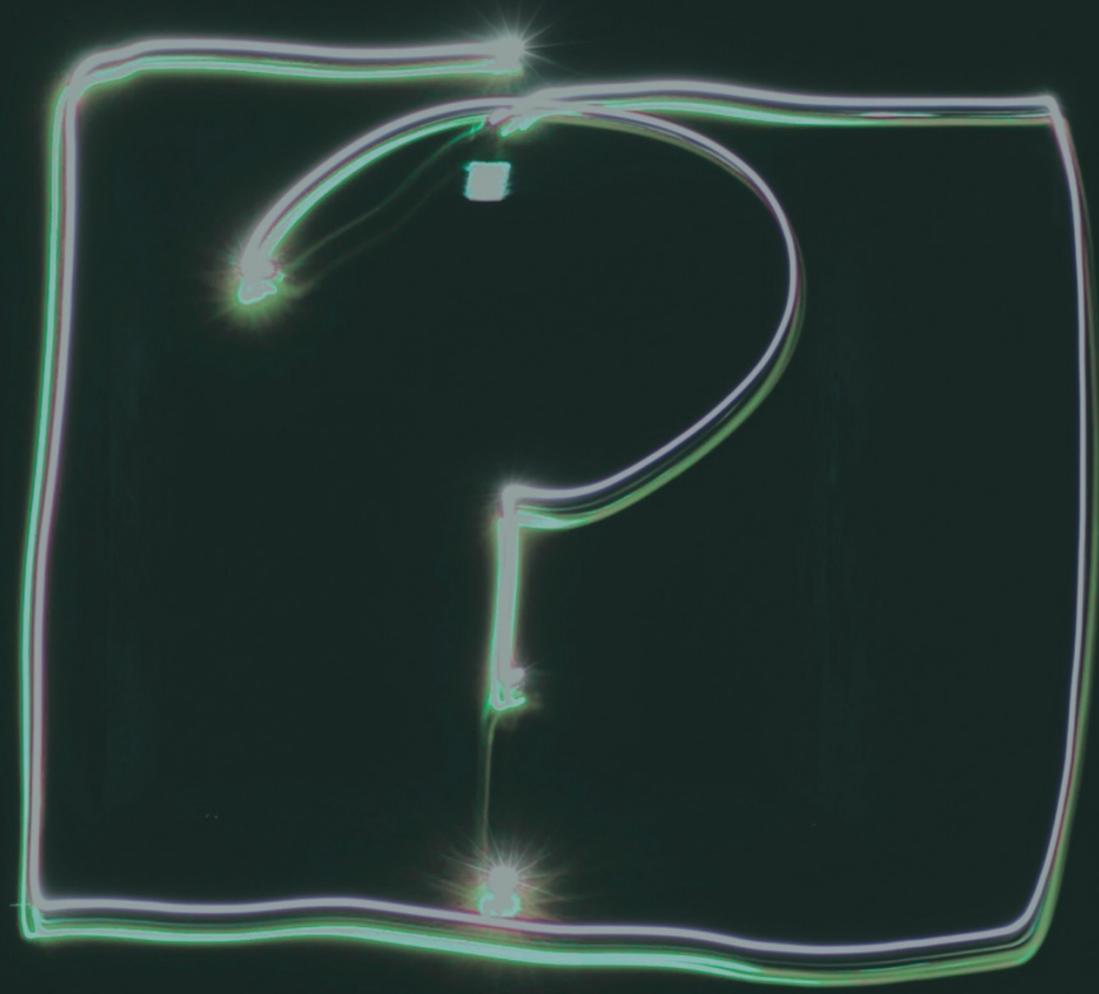
AI APPS FOR TRANSCRIBING

Otter is a great tool for transcribing interviews

Steps:

- Download the Otter app (iOS, Android, or desktop).
- Otter can record calls via your phone's speaker or join Teams calls.
- The app can transcribe recordings.
- You can edit and export the transcript as needed and even ask questions about the conversation.
- The transcript can be uploaded into ChatGPT.





Q&A



KEY TAKEAWAYS

THANK YOU

CONTACT

 hello@genfutureslab.co.uk

 genfutures.co.uk

Free Weekly Newsletter



REFERENCES

- <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/newsroom-has-been-experimenting-ai-2020-here-what-they-have-learned>.
- <https://pressgazette.co.uk/publishers/nationals/reach-ai-guten/>
- <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/what-is-international-day-of-persons-people-with-disabilities-un-december-3-b1041030.html>
- <https://news.sky.com/story/can-ai-do-my-job-we-made-our-own-reporter-to-find-out-12915336>
- <https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/RQXM1>

