

Chapter 7

The Future of Journalism in the Robotic Age

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the rise of artificial intelligence in journalism, offering distinction and clarification among its various aspects in the near to distant future. It investigates the impact of robotics, computational journalism, holographic projections, and looks toward the creation of synthetic mediated forms not yet invented. The world of journalism in the robotic age will challenge the journalist to learn how to lean on artificial intelligence assistance, being cognizant of its strengths and weaknesses.

IMAGINE . . .

“Kiyo! Kiyo!” An impatient tone rose from the kitchen.

“What is going on Akihiko? I will be there in a minute,” Kiyo shouted back from the bathroom.

The conversation continued through the walls, “What do you want to do about this promotion from The New York Times, it’s going to expire today.”

“I don’t know, what do you think?” Kiyo replied in a non-committal tone.

“I think we should do it,” Akihiko responded, sounding more like a question than a firm answer. “We will get access to 10 more KioskVR™ endpoints in the city, unlimited access to CityCam™ and DroneView™, a new collection of RealityEngine™ filters, and a 6-month trial of Pervasive™ and Sony PlayStation news.

Kiyo sounded more excited about it now, “Let’s do it! We can always cancel, right?” “Yes. Ok, signed up,” a relieved Akihiko mumbled.

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Kiyo and Akihiko were both excited about the KioskVR™. Adding more kiosks meant they had access to 3D virtual, immersive news content that they could share with friends or as highly personalized experiences in key areas of the city. Anyone could pay a one-time use fee, but the subscription gave you 24-hour access to higher quality content, better background profiles, and more realistic environmental renderings. The CityCam™ and DroneView™ services were more about social voyeurism and entertainment when you didn't have as much time to devote to curated content or to access remote sensors.

“Let's sync with one of the Antarctic drones tonight. There is a huge iceberg about to collide with a small island in the South Atlantic Ocean. I want to see what happens,” Akihiko suggested to Kiyo.

“Maybe. I might watch the border crossing into New Mexico. I saw this Facebook post about this one family in the migration. They are going to fly a drone next to the group for the final two miles before they reach the checkpoint. I hope they make it,” Kiyo said with a mixture of excitement and sadness. The NYT was investing heavily in the use of terrestrial, and non-terrestrial drones to amplify its reach and provide “first-person perspectives” to its coverage. They were actually close to securing a deal with Boston Dynamics to use their robotic dog Spot® for “sniffing out” stories, delivering live feeds, conducting interviews, and operating as an information hub.

Excited to see if the PlayStation news plugin was activated, Akihiko shouted out to his son, “Kenzo, check if the New York Times news is running!”

After a few moments Kenzo shouted in a slightly distracted and muted tone back, “Hai.” Kenzo was playing the new Grand Theft Auto: Colony Collapse and was impressed by the quality of the news feeds. His game character could tap into the NYT mobile app, listen to audio podcasts, and also visit KioskVR™ hotspots in the game. But the most exciting new feature they wanted to test out was Pervasive™. This feature offered a fully integrated news experience that connected all of their in-home devices, mobile devices, vehicles and appliances. What made it even more special is that it adapted to each family member, offering news to match their personal preferences and interests at the moment they wanted and needed it.

Akihiko once again shouted out, “Look at this, there is a video and recipe by Gordon Ramsey for a new Sushiritto dish showing up on the refrigerator.”

Kiyo sounded excited, “Great, it is your turn to cook dinner tonight!”

“Maybe we let this trial expire,” Akihiko muttered to himself.

INTRODUCTION

“[Hephaistos] The bellows he set away from the fire, and gathered all the tools wherewith he wrought into a silver chest; and grasped a stout staff, and went forth halting; but there moved swiftly to support their lord handmaidens wrought of gold in the semblance of living maids. In them is understanding in their hearts, and in them speech and strength, and they know cunning handiwork by gift of the immor-

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