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By Crispian Balmer



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Italian newspapers Il Foglio lie on a table in Rome, Italy April 18, 2025. REUTERS/Claudia Greco [Purchase Licensing Rights](#)

Summary Companies

Il Foglio's AI trial boosts sales, plans weekly AI section
AI won't replace journalists, says editor Claudio Cerasa
AI excels in irony, lacks critical thinking, Cerasa notes

ROME, April 18 (Reuters) - Artificial intelligence can write a great book review and is good at irony, but it won't replace quality journalism, said the editor of an Italian newspaper at the forefront of AI experimentation.

In what it said was a world first, Il Foglio put out a four-page daily insert for one month that was written entirely by AI and was sold together with the normal newspaper.

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The trial, which has just ended, was a big success and boosted sales, editor Claudio Cerasa said, adding that his paper will now publish a separate section once a week written by AI.

He said he would also use AI to write the occasional article in areas where *Il Foglio*, a small conservative newspaper with 22 staffers, didn't have the expertise, such as a piece published on Friday on astronomy.

However, he insisted AI programmes would not lead to job losses in his newsroom.

"Some publishers see AI as a way to have fewer journalists and more machines. That is very wrong and self-harming. The fundamental thing is to understand what you can do more of, not less," Cerasa told a small group of foreign journalists.

Cerasa said AI would create jobs for people who knew how to ask the right questions and get the most out of the technology, but predicted it would also boost high-quality journalism by forcing reporters to dig deeper and be more original.

"Writers will be compelled to find new elements to be more creative and relatable," he said.

Cerasa interacted daily with his AI programme and was often surprised by the results. "The most mysterious thing, the most incredible thing, was its sense of irony was immediately genuine," Cerasa said. "If you ask it to write an ironic article on any topic, AI knows how to do it."

He added that the AI was also adept at producing book reviews, capable of analysing 700-page tomes and generating insightful critiques in just minutes.

It needed to be told whether to give the review a positive or negative spin, which turned it into a "hitman" at the command of whoever was at the keyboard.

This lack of critical thinking was a handicap, he said. "If you give a journalist guidance for an article, for me it's good to hear them say 'no', to hear them disagree with you. This discussion is fundamental but doesn't happen with AI."

He also noted the occasional factual errors and said it did not always update its knowledge base, citing its persistent refusal to register that U.S. President Donald Trump had won re-election in 2024.

Reporting by Crispian Balmer; Editing by Kirsten Donovan

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