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PERSON: As part of a Talks At Google five part miniseries in partnership with the Google News Initiative, in this episode, you'll hear from Lisa Gibbs of the Associated Press about the future of news and artificial intelligence at the first Google News Initiative Innovation Forum in London. You can watch the video of this talk by visiting g.co/talksatgoogle/journalismandai.

LISA GIBBS: Is this the journalist of the future? Artificial intelligence used to exist only in the world of science fiction. Now journalism organizations like mine are increasingly using terms like "machine learning," "natural language processing," and "algorithms" to talk about how we report, produce, and distribute the news. AI has been described as the next era of computing.

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In the broadest sense, AI is a system that mimics human intelligence. It can be trained to recognize faces and objects, to understand languages, and to solve problems. An algorithm can perform millions of computations very quickly or it can be used to create a single template for a news story which can be replicated thousands of times from different data. When it comes to news, we are in the very early stages of figuring out how to apply this technology to what journalists do. At the Associated Press, we use automation and AI primarily to eliminate routine work like video transcription that our journalists--so that our journalists can concentrate on doing the creative and curious work that informs the world and holds our world leaders accountable. By the end of next year, the Associated Press will be creating around 40,000 stories using automated templates, primarily in business news and sports.

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We are transcribing video in real time. We're exploring how image recognition software can help us filter out graphic content from our image feeds or help us identify athletes in sports photos. Of course, AP is only one of many news organizations that are experimenting and learning with this technology. The broadcaster NHK in Tokyo created anime newsreaders, which can sign news for the deaf and hearing-impaired, and co-anchor the 11:00 news. The news agency STT in Finland is translating news into English and Swedish in seconds. For the World Cup, Fox Sports allowed their app users to create custom highlight videos, thanks to AI. Increasingly, journalists are using algorithms to help our journalists find news and break news faster. Investigative reporters can sort through data much faster than ever before. And AI-based systems are helping us sift through all the thousands of tweets and posts on social media and alert our editors when they show breaking news.

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We must talk about fake news, of course. Bad actors are increasingly using AI technology to create and spread misinformation. Journalists can and must arm themselves with the same technology to combat this. At AP, we're using algorithms and computer vision to build a tool called Verify that will allow our journalists to more quickly vet the images and video that people post on social media. This involves analyzing the metadata to tell us whether the source of the video is likely to be legitimate. It

breaks the video down frame by frame and scans the web to tell us whether
this video has shown up before, maybe in a different context, maybe
showing something else altogether, and it does this all at very high
speed.

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Using this tool will help us call out misinformation much faster, as well
as make sure we're disseminating more trustworthy, verified content. In
our four years of working with these technologies, we've learned a few
important lessons. These technologies are powerful, but they require new
skills, new workflows, and new ways of thinking in our newsrooms. They're
only as good as the data that goes into them. In this example, an alert
tool tweeted news of a very powerful earthquake...except for the fact
that the quake happened in 1925. The bot only knows what is fed into it.
Bad data, bad journalism. Guess what? That's true of human journalists as
well. The difference here is that bias in inherent in data sets
sometimes. Maybe racial or gender biases, for example, can create new
kinds of mistakes and magnify them a thousandfold.

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That's why AP and many other news organizations are adamant about
applying the same news values and principles to our work with AI as we
have in our journalism throughout history. And it's why we believe that
the industry must work together to develop a common set of standards and
best practices for AI in news that will ensure we hold true to those
principles. And it's also why we believe that this is not the journalist
of the future. It is a journalist's assistant, and it can be a very good
one. AI will augment, never replace, the work of the world's journalists.
We do acknowledge that this is an optimistic view of AI in news. We're
not blind to the challenges. As these technologies make it easier to
trick both machines and humans, newsrooms must act now to understand this
era of computing and develop defenses against them. Trust in journalism
is at stake. Thank you.

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PERSON: Launched in 2018, the Google News Initiative is Google's effort
to work with the news industry to help journalism thrive in the digital
age. To learn more about the GNI, please visit
g.co/talksatgoogle/googlenewsinitiative.