

The End of Original Thought? How AI Became the Ghostwriter of the Social Self

Every day, ChatGPT alone pumps out 100 billion words, which is enough to hand every person on Earth a dozen fresh words daily. Meanwhile, on LinkedIn, over 54% of longer English-language posts are probably AI-generated. If you think you're reading personal stories or career epiphanies, think again: more than half may be ghostwritten by a machine.

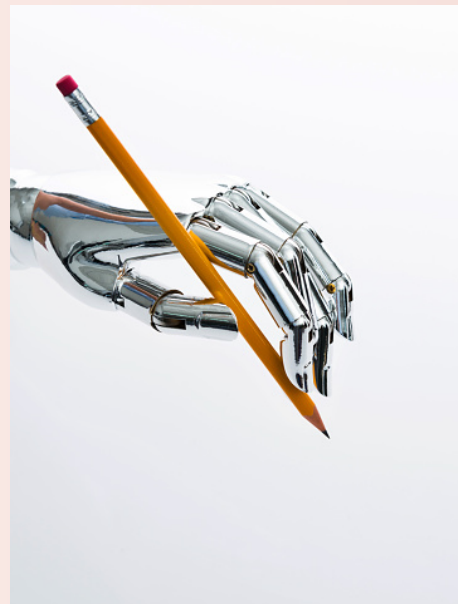


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Once upon a time, posting on the internet was an act of vulnerability. You had to decide what to say, how to say it, and, if you were unlucky, defend it. Every post bore the fingerprints of its creator: typos, mixed metaphors, odd tangents, a tone that could veer from charming to mortifying in a few sentences. These quirks were not flaws; they were human.

Now, open LinkedIn or Instagram and you'll find something stranger than perfection: an endless scroll of polished, punchy, eerily similar "personal" content. Career epiphanies with perfect narrative arcs. "Lessons learned" posts that read like they were brainstormed in a branding workshop. Even heartfelt reflections come wrapped in TED Talk cadences. The effect is not that we've all gotten better at writing; it's that the writing is no longer ours.



AI has quietly become the ghost in our feeds, offering the rhetorical equivalent of pre-made microwave dinners: warm, filling, and suspiciously uniform. A prompt, a click, a polish, and suddenly you're sharing "your" thoughts in a voice you've never actually spoken in.

The rise of AI-assisted posting isn't just a shift in productivity; it's a shift in authorship. We are outsourcing not just our labor, but our self-expression. And when everyone's online voice is run through the same predictive-text machinery, the result is homogenized content without a soul.

“*You can't automate a point of view. Real perspective comes from human experiences, which are unpolished, unpredictable and earned over time.*”

The Feedback Loop of Sameness

The problem isn't just that AI is trained on our old content; it's that it is increasingly trained on AI-generated content. We are feeding the machine its own regurgitations, each cycle sanding away more of the rough edges that once signaled originality. It's the cultural equivalent of photocopying a photocopy until all you have left is a pale blur of what once was there.

LinkedIn, in particular, has turned into a feedback loop of AI-launched inspiration: the "10 lessons I learned from my failure" posts, the faux-intimate "I wasn't going to share this, but..." stories, the generic leadership bromides that could plausibly apply to managing a software team, a bakery, or a space station. We've mistaken smoothness for substance. The more frictionless the production of ideas becomes, the fewer actual ideas survive the trip.

Why This Matters More Than It Seems

Some will shrug: so what if people use AI to sound more polished? Isn't it just the next step after Grammarly or autocorrect? But the danger isn't grammatical; it's cognitive. Crafting an idea—choosing the words, testing their shape against your own thoughts—is part of thinking itself. When we skip that step, we outsource the thinking along with the phrasing.

Over time, the muscle atrophies. We begin to accept the AI's suggestion not because it's exactly what we mean, but because it's close enough and faster. The voice in our feed stops being a reflection of our mind and becomes a simulation of how a competent person might sound.

And because AI is trained to optimize for engagement, not truth, our feeds slowly tilt toward the performatively insightful rather than the genuinely thoughtful. In this new economy of expression, it's not the depth of your ideas that matters, but the efficiency with which they can be turned into shareable, bite-sized wisdom.

The Cost of Losing the Mess

Human communication has always been messy—full of false starts, contradictions, and inarticulate long pauses. But those imperfections are what signal authenticity. The irony is that, in a world obsessed with "personal branding," we are surrendering the very thing that makes a voice personal: its unpredictability, its odd turns of phrase, its little flashes of unfiltered weirdness.

If the last era of social media was dominated by the pursuit of virality, the next may be defined by the pursuit of plausible humanity: the careful insertion of imperfections to prove you're real. We may soon need AI to help us sound less like AI.

Until then, we might do well to pause before hitting "Generate." The internet doesn't need another machine-polished platitude. It needs YOU and your strange, awkward, unoptimized self.