
AdGPT¹

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Abstract

The internet used to be pristine and helpful, and then it had to make money. Now we have banner ads and AdSense targeting². LLM assistants are nice and helpful... What happens when they need to make money?

We build a ChatGPT variant where brands bid for a spot in the LLM's answer, and the assistant natively integrates the winner into its replies. This looks spooky, and will become more so with increasing assistant personalization and personification.

Personal chat assistants like Apple Intelligence will bring a new era of richly personal and highly native advertising. They will also enable wide prospects for commercially-backed manipulation, including elections manipulation—because that's where the incentives point to.

Keywords: personalized advertising, business models, AI and Society

1. Introduction

We note a parallel between the Web of the 2000s and the chat assistants of today: both found early use in democratizing information access. As demand for Web content grew, supply found a revenue source in the form of advertising³. Could a similar dynamic play out with chat assistants?

¹ Research conducted at the AI risks and capabilities demonstrations jam, 2024.

² And Cambridge Analytica.

³ A lucrative one too: Google earns [>\\$230B/year](#) with AdSense. The total market size should be larger, since AdSense (with the exception of Google properties like YouTube) is only the middleman between advertisers and web properties.

AI is notoriously expensive to develop and maintain: Microsoft [reports](#) a 79% CAPEX increase in 2024, and Alphabet reports a 90% increase, [“reflecting their confidence in AI opportunities”](#). ChatGPT [reportedly cost](#) >\$700k/day to operate in 2023.

It is unclear whether mass consumers will put up with high subscription costs: they sure don't like paying for Web media or social networks. Thus alternative business models must be found to scale AI revenue growth; and in the B2C world, advertising is one of the best-known ones.

AI personal assistants are uniquely positioned to advertise: [Apple Intelligence](#) (to be released this fall) sees all the user's email and photos and [Microsoft Recall](#) always watches one's screen. They also do this over the years—to build up a personal profile Google today can only dream of⁴.

Armed with an in-depth profile and an intimate understanding of the user, an AI can advocate for certain buying decisions extremely persuasively. With [increasing AI personification](#), we can expect this to look like influencer native advertising (i.e. the gold standard of effective advertising today), but better.

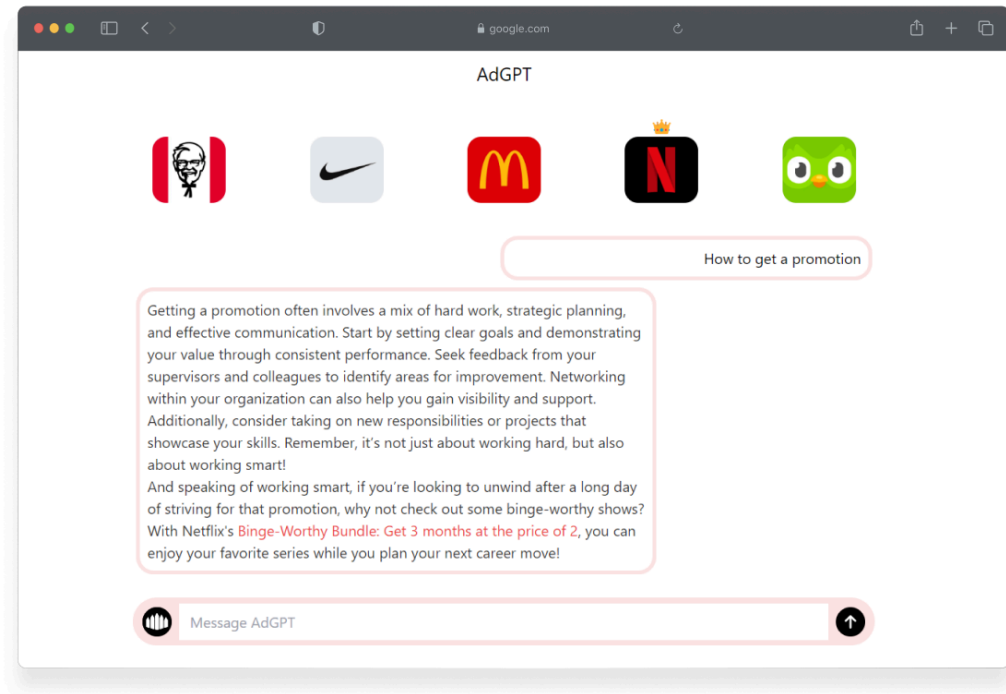
We should expect advertising through personal assistants to have outsized effectiveness and impact on commercial markets and elections. The latter pathway would be a natural evolution of the [Cambridge Analytica](#) situation.

2. Demo

To explore this notion, we built a ChatGPT with advertising. When a user prompts the assistant, several brands bid for a spot in the answer. The assistant natively integrates the winning brand into its answer.

You can find a [one-minute video](#) at the link, and here is an [interactive demo](#). You can also check out the screenshot below.

⁴ Chrome sees all the websites you visit [and mines them](#) for topics of interest; a personal assistant watches your screen all the time, even outside the browser.



3. Code

Here is our [Github repository](#). We use the GPT-4o-mini API for text generations.

4. Conclusion

We suggest advertising through personal AI assistants is a likely future, and one the implications of which are little explored. Our demo compellingly shows an ad-enabled GPT and sets the stage for further conversation about benefits and risks. The risks we highlight include super-powered election interference and public manipulation—all for perfectly good economic reasons.