A roadmap to AI adoption: sector trends and next steps
17 October 2024

What we'll be talking about today

1. Key trends
2. How they could change the charity sector
3. Managing risk

AI and emerging tech trends for charities

Emerging tech context

- Over half (**56%**) have low skills and capacity to engage with emerging tech trends(rising to 65% for charities at early digital stages)
- **31%** want their board to learn about emerging tech and AI tools
- Charities want CEOs to stay informed on emerging tech trends and AI (**39%**) and understand related risks and opportunities (**34%**)

Source https://charitydigitalskills.co.uk/

AI and emerging tech trends for charities

More charities are using AI tools, but not strategically

- **61%** of charities are using AI in their day-to-day work or operations
- This is a significant increase on 35% last year.
- Only **11%** are using AI tools across their organisation and **45%** of charities are using AI tools informally (e.g. trying out tools)
- 4 out of 10 (**42%**) of charities are using or looking to use AI in their service delivery.

Source https://charitydigitalskills.co.uk/

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The most popular uses of AI tools

- Developing online content (e.g. social media posts, generating images) (**33%**)
- Administrative tasks such as summarising meeting notes (**32%**)
- Drafting documents and reports (**28%**)
- Generating ideas/creativity (e.g. to start a project) (**27%**)
- Research and information gathering (e.g. about a topic, current advice) (**24%**)

Source https://charitydigitalskills.co.uk/

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Charities are not prepared for AI developments

- **65%** agree or strongly agree that AI developments are relevant
- Only **22%** feel prepared to respond to challenges and opportunities

Source https://charitydigitalskills.co.uk/

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Barriers to adopting AI

- Lack of skills and expertise is the biggest barrier for 50% of charities (large and small)
- A lack of training to upskill (**34%**)

Concerns around AI tools:
- Factual accuracy (**31%**)
- Data privacy, GDPR and security (**31%, 47%** of large charities)
- The potential for bias and discrimination (**31%**)
- Ethical, human rights and environmental concerns (**31%**)

Source https://charitydigitalskills.co.uk/

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Charities' AI plans

- Half (**57%**) are looking for external training, support or guidance in AI this year.
- **40%** are keen to skill up in how to assess AI risks and adopt AI responsibly
- **38%** want to develop AI policies and governance.

Source https://charitydigitalskills.co.uk/

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How are charities using AI?

- Combined AI and automation tools
- Used AI to create real time impact reports
- Developed an AI interactive coach, to augment classroom work

Speakers Trust
Speak and Be Heard

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How are charities using AI?

- As well as using AI to analyse the needs of their community and [deliver services in response](#) Parkinson's UK has using AI for fundraising
- Based on past donor behaviour, they were able to better target their lists for direct mail, leading to 23% increase in net revenue, totalling £15k
- It also identified reductions in list size, saving money
- They focused on existing supporter data and GDPR compliance

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FIND A CURE.
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How are charities using AI?

- Ardgowan Hospice is exploring using AI platforms such as ChatGPT or CopyAI to compile patient stories and memories that they wish to leave behind for their loved ones
- This will help families of patients learn more about their loved ones' lives, and pass memories down the generations
- May use speech to text function to transcribe stories, and also use AI to 'clone' patients' voices and tell these stories
- With permission, these stories may be used for fundraising purposes

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Risks of AI - key questions

1. Will beneficiaries **rely on AI tools**, rather than charities, for services, information and advice?
2. Will beneficiaries', donors' and volunteers' **expectations change**? Eg expectations around speed of response/personalised recommendations?
3. Have we **scenario planned** for how AI could affect our charities?
4. How might we avoid knee jerk reactions to **automating roles**?
5. Could AI create **new competitors** to charities?
6. Have we given staff the **space and time** to learn about AI?
7. How might we ensure an **inclusive** approach to AI?
8. Can we run **small pilot projects** to test out AI's impact?
9. Do we need to develop **an AI policy**? Have we updated our data policy?
10. Are our **trustees' skilled up** in AI? Do they know enough to provide scrutiny and make informed decisions?

Resources

- Our [AI checklist for trustees and leaders](#)

- Our [AI resources](#)

- Charity Excellence's [AI resources](#)

- NCSC's [guidance on AI](#)

- [Starts at The Top- our digital leadership podcast](#)

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Thanks for listening. Keep in touch!

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