# Microsoft Copilot: how to make work easier and faster in innovative ways 3/29/23

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We often spend a lot of time in Microsoft Office creating and formatting presentations and writing emails and reports. The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) means office workers can now save time on such tasks. We have written before about one of the most popular AI tools – ChatGPT and GPT-4, its operating principles, uses and restrictions (see our article on GPT-4 here). In this article we are continuing our tour of new technologies, looking at Microsoft as a leading AI creator for business purposes and its brand new AI assistant, Microsoft 365 Copilot.

## Functions

Powered by OpenAI's GPT-4, Copilot will run alongside Microsoft 365 apps. Like GPT-4, when it comes to creating text and presentations, Copilot analyses and summarises publicly available information in digital format in all languages.

Copilot's principle of operation is as simple as GPT-4's. To use Copilot, all the user has to do is ask a question or set a task, and Copilot will perform it automatically.

Copilot can be used in all Microsoft Office apps, so your simplest everyday office tasks can be completed much faster in a wide range of situations, for instance:

- In Microsoft Teams you can use Copilot to get ready for meetings by asking questions about news related to projects, organisational changes and even recent hires, and to create a meeting summary by noting key details, which will replace an important and time-consuming part of your work.
- In Microsoft Excel you can format, cleanse, aggregate and analyse data in a faster and easier way. Copilot makes it easy to work with charts and pivot tables, allowing you to analyse trends and create impressive data visualisations in a matter of seconds, which will save you several hours, allowing you to tackle more important aspects of your work.
- In Microsoft PowerPoint you don't have to start your presentations from scratch, as you can ask Copilot to help you create, say, a ten-slide presentation based on publicly available information or a particular Word or Excel document.
- The way you work with Microsoft Outlook is also facilitated. You can use Copilot to summarise long email conversations, which will let you see a summary of correspondence spanning several days or even weeks, so you can spend less time reading and searching. Also, Copilot can automatically write replies to emails, saving your valuable time.

Of course, some people might be sceptical about using such AI tools in handling sensitive information, yet Microsoft has ensured data security – Copilot is integrated in the Microsoft 365 software and automatically adopts all of your company's valuable security, compliance and confidentiality policies and processes.

# Restrictions

Since Copilot is based on OpenAI's ChatGPT, it has similar restrictions to those facing GPT-4 users:

- Copilot's abilities and accuracy are very much dependent on the input language, as Copilot uses all digitally available information in the language the user asked the question. So the performance of GPT-4 and Copilot will be considerably lower if you use a language with a smaller number of users, such as Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian or Icelandic.
- Copilot will not always put out accurate and correct information. This problem has two causes. First, GPT-4 doesn't feature any source of truth – a database or filter with selected true information it could compare its potential information output against. Second, more cautious training might cause Copilot to reject questions it's able to answer correctly. So users should carefully check the truthfulness of information before their document or presentation can be considered complete.
- Copilot is currently in the testing phase and available to 20 Microsoft customers only. Yet it might become available to a wider audience in the coming months.

Despite a few early flaws in its operation, Copilot is expected to completely change the workplace by reducing the time, attention and effort employees spend doing tasks that are time-consuming and not too interesting. You will no longer spend hours thinking about formatting your presentation, text or data, and there will be no more awkward moments like forgetting to do an important task mentioned in a team meeting. Learn more about Copilot here.