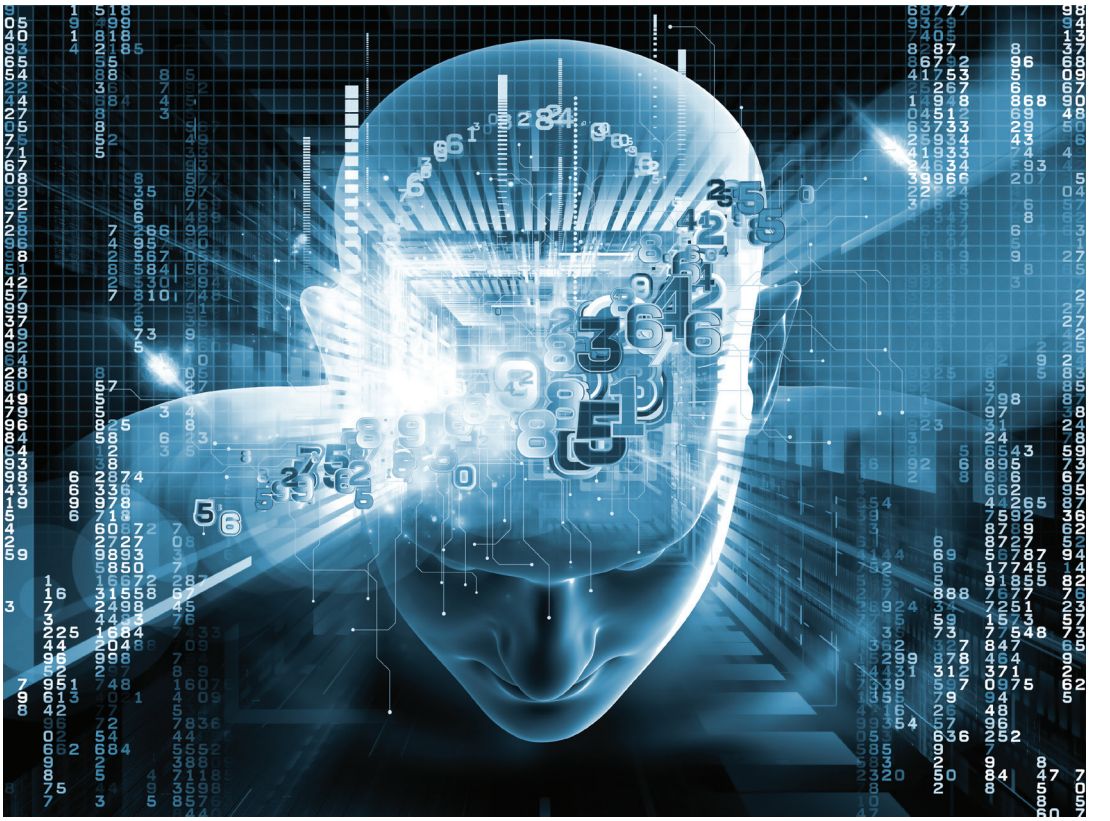

Is Artificial Intelligence Really Artificial?

By *Richard Marcus*

Until the advent of Artificial Intelligence, about the only common usage of the word "artificial" in front of a noun, at least for me, was a lake. Or maybe a food sweetener. But nowadays, if you were to be a contestant on the game show *Password* and you wanted to clue your partner to the word "intelligence," you'd probably do best by leading with "artificial."

Simply put, "artificial intelligence" has become so commonplace in our everyday lingo, perhaps even more so than "cryptocurrency," that you'd have to be living in a soundproof enclosure not to have heard it.

But what exactly is artificial intelligence and should it really be called artificial intelligence? Even though I have little knowledge beyond the basics, I am not so sure.

Artificial intelligence is most commonly described as: intelligence demonstrated by machines, as opposed to the natural intelligence displayed by humans or animals. That point is easy enough to understand. But the further you delve into it, the more confusing it gets, as shown by this sentence: Artificial intelligence can be defined as the study of intelligent agents. Any system that perceives its environment and takes actions that maximize its chance of achieving its goals. And finally, a third definition of AI is: a machine or series of machines that mimic cognitive functions that humans associate with the human mind, such as learning and problem solving.

Okay, hold on a second! For those of you getting impatient with me and wondering what all this intellectual crap has to do with AI in casinos, I will get there. Just please hear me out on this first!

In the above descriptions of what AI is and actually does, there are two words in those paragraphs that grab my attention. One is "humans" and the other is "machines," and there's nothing really artificial about either. And the reality is that humans create all machines, whether or not they're "artificial," if that makes any sense. That said, my biggest problem with the name AI is that if human intelligence is what creates artificial intelligence, then how can that created intelligence be artificial? Simply, it's not, in my opinion. It's not the same as an artificial lake, which is artificial mainly because it wasn't there in the first place. But the intelligence in and around what is now called AI has always been there, albeit in a pristine state. The difference is that this original intelligence has been enhanced by the process of gathering and processing human intelligence.

I think that this field, which is becoming so integral to the casino industry, or at least that seems to be what we think, might better be named "Enhanced Human Intelligence", or maybe just plain old "Mechanical Intelligence," although I much prefer the former.

Okay, I'm done! Let's go back to calling it Artificial Intelligence. So what do I think of AI effectiveness in casinos? Is it all it's purported to be? I think it is. After seeing presentations by casino industry AI experts such as Malcolm Rutherford of eConnect, I am convinced that AI is capable of enhancing the surveillance and security operations of casinos. But does that mean AI cannot be beat by casino cheats and dishonest casino employees?

Absolutely NOT!

If you've been wondering why I went on with all that IC…yes, "Intellectual Crap"…now I will tell

you. Remember how I was stressing that artificial intelligence is a creation of human intelligence? Well, you can't dispute that. And as that is true, whom do you think is capable of beating, bypassing or rendering artificial intelligence useless in casinos to some degree?

The answer is simply the human beings who created it, or human beings who didn't create it but still have enough human intelligence to outsmart it to a certain degree.

Now, don't take me for someone who knows much about AI, but I do know a lot about HI…you guessed it: "Human Intelligence." And I will be happy to use the cliché: The technology is only as smart as the humans who created it and as effective as those who are implementing it. In other words, you can take artificial intelligence, facial recognition and RFID technology and throw them all out the window, or the windowless casino, if you don't have the human brainpower to analyze the data and make the correct strategic decisions based on the "artificial" data given to them. And that goes for all industries, not just casinos. I mean, if the world's militaries had a bunch of unintelligent people working in Intelligence, what good would the data be if they couldn't interpret it correctly and apply it where needed?

You understand that, and to close I will give you some casino examples of how AI and other technologies associated with it might be skirted.

Let's start with RFID technology in casino chips. One of its security features is that it protects casinos against pastposting and other kinds of chip manipulations intended to increase or decrease wagers after the outcome is already determined. I was asked at one of my game protection seminars, "Isn't RFID 100 percent effective in preventing a pastposter from increasing his bet after the outcome is known?"

I replied, "In a perfect word, probably. In the real casino world, absolutely not." And I went on to explain that all the RFID does is transfer the data of amounts

of money bet by the players at a table to a monitor according to the RFID chips embedded in the casino chips. That part of RFID is pretty flawless.

But….and this is a BIG but. What about the human minds that are using that technology? If the pastposting cheat has added a higher denomination chip to his bet that RFID says wasn't legitimately bet before the outcome, does that mean the casino is going to deny the pastposter's claim to be paid the higher amount? Well, it should but it doesn't unless the casino employee empowered to pay or not pay the pastposter for the added chip properly reads the data and utilizes it effectively.

And this is where the highly non-artificial-intelligent human casino cheats go to work in order to compromise that proper employee performance needed to protect casinos. I cannot get into all those details here, but suffice it to say that through set-ups and behavioral psychology, skilled cheats are able to convince casino personnel that their large pastposted bets were actually legitimately placed even though the technology infallibly proved they weren't. This does not happen often but it does when casinos let their human guards down and depend solely on the technology.

What about facial recognition? Is it beatable or can it be skirted? I would give the same answer as I did for the RFID example. If the humans receiving the data are not up to par, then FR can become vulnerable as well.

So that's my mumble jumble on the subject.

You know what? After writing this article, I'm only sure of one thing...that is that I'm not sure about everything I said here, but it all makes for interesting conversation.

And speaking about what has been known as, and will undoubtedly continue to be known as Artificial Intelligence, three global industry experts in the field, eConnect Executive Vice President of Strategic Operations Malcolm Rutherford, Mirage Resorts Corporate Vice President of Surveillance Ted Whiting and SBK FanDuel Director of Surveillance Sam Kljajic, will be presenting must-see sessions on Artificial Intelligence at the first Global Table Games & Game Protection Conference in Las Vegas, February 14-17, 2022.

I am hosting this event and hope to see you there! Conference website...
https://richardmarcusbooks.com/?page_id=49478