Sensay - Using AI to Help Dementia and Alzheimer's Patients by Capturing Life Stories and Essence as a chatbot to Interact with Daily and Preserve their Identity for Future Generations

Dan Thomson
Founder

Sensay

Interview conducted by:
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CEOCFO: *Mr. Thomson, the first thing I see on the Sensay website is "Empowering Connections. Preserving Memories," what is the concept?*
Mr. Thomson: Sensei uses AI to help patients and families suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's by allowing them to capture a patient's life stories and essence as a chatbot to interact with daily and preserve their identity for future generations. Essentially Sensay is a new way of preserving someone's identity and helping them through a very difficult time by replicating themselves and replicating their friends and families as a therapeutic chat box for them to interact with 24/7. The chatbot tackles loneliness, provides daily tasks and reminders, and allows loved ones to capture the patient's essence to preserve them for the future.

CEOCFO: *Would you give us an example of how this works?*
Mr. Thomson: When diagnosed, patients are encouraged to write down life stories which are then used to train their chatbot replica through interactive interviews about their personal history and memories. This is to encourage their minds to hold on to memories and actively engage their long-term memory more often. This could be writing it down, talking to someone in an interview format, it could be recording themselves on a video or phone call. There are a few services that cost less, but a lot of them are quite long or quite expensive. Essentially by having an interactive and friendly chatbot as a way of training their replica, a patient that has just been diagnosed with dementia, can use Sensay to start having someone talk to them about their memories and their personal history and start creating their life story in an interactive and engaging friendly way that is preprogrammed to quiz them about their life.

Once created, the chatbot continues training and can be used as a daily interaction for reminders and to track cognitive decline. It can pop messages in every day to say, "Do you want to chat?" And that could be text, voice, or even a phone or video call in the future. They can have that interaction on a daily basis. That can be a standard trainingbot or it can replicate a loved one for them. They can interact daily with their likeness, mannerisms, voice, and everything that makes that person.

After the patients started using the application for a while, it not only helps them with some of the core issues, it helps them with recording those memories and thinking about those memories. The chatbot helps with loneliness and prompting daily tasks and reminders for patients. Unfortunately, it is not a cure and we would not want it to be seen as such. It is a helping hand and a tool for people who are going through a difficult time. I have had family members who have suffered from dementia. The way we can be there for them is a massive helping hand to families, loved ones, and

the patients as well. It is a more cost-effective option than traditional care which can cost hundreds of thousands annually.

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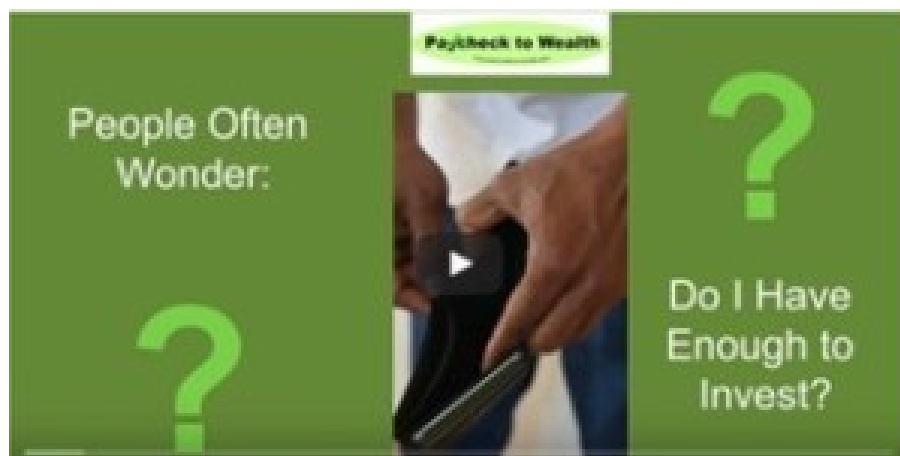
CEOCFO: *Is the patient as excited about this as the caregiver, and what is the psychological feeling in the health community about this approach?*

Mr. Thomson: Every case is unique. Sometimes it is family members who come to us and sometimes it is the patients themselves. I think it is the stage of the diagnosis as well. It is an early stage for us as well, so the technology has a long way to go and the user end space can be improved. It is a huge work in process but it is the first application of these good quality life-like chatbots that have been approaching the space. The medical community responds in the same way, it is still early.

There has been a lot of research in the past about potential chatbots to help dementia patients and that research was inconclusive because the quality of chatbots was not there. Pretty much every report did state that they showed some promise and did it with a quality replica or chat box which would show some help to patients.

> **""A patient that has just been diagnosed with dementia, can use Sensay to start having someone talk to them about their memories and their personal history and start creating their life story in an interactive and engaging friendly way that is preprogrammed to quiz them about their life." Dan Thomson**

CEOCFO: *Is interacting with chatbots and having them be more personal and life-like, appealing to older people or does it seem a bit off-putting at first?*

Mr. Thomson: I think we have gotten to a point where some of the chatbots are extremely life-like in a lot of ways, arguably indistinguishable from real people. Deep fakes and replicas are fooling people into thinking that these are real people or real things that are happening. Voice generation goes a long way to convincing someone that this is a real person and there is comfort in that. It will become one of those things we are used to in the future because replicas will be able to be spun up for a lot of use cases in the not-so-distant future. It will become commonplace in terms of job hunting, matchmaking, to interacting with sales agents.

Even though talking with a chatbot does not feel quite human and real, the reality is in the last two years there have been cases of people forming relationships with chatbots that they have been interacting with. Even though it is still early now, that kind of connection can be there and there is a big loneliness epidemic and people are disconnected despite being so well connected. Having someone to talk to, especially when it is a familiar voice, goes a long way beyond anything currently out there.

CEOCFO: *Sensay is currently in beta; what have you learned so far from users?*

Mr. Thomson: The biggest challenge has been creating a simple user interface for older users. Plans to launch a telephone service are discussed. Continued iterations and improvements are needed based on feedback. Outreach will expand once the service level improves.

CEOCFO: *The pricing seems quite reasonable. How did you decide what to charge?*

Mr. Thomson: Pricing was determined based on expected usage and a fair profit margin to grow the business sustainably without causing financial distress. I want it to become global. I spend a lot of time in Latin America and various African countries and Southeast Asia and I am very well aware that even $20 a month is not very much for the US, Canada, UK and Australia, but for a lot of other countries, it is expensive. We hope to be able to improve that as well.

We price the actual cost and usage in a way that is fair. We do not want to go down an overly priced route. In the US medical costs can be put on insurance and go up quite steeply, whereas we want a fair market price for the world to be able to use and enjoy. Even at $20/month, pricing needs to be affordable globally to achieve widespread adoption and accessibility.

CEOCFO: *How do you reach out to potential users, partners, and organizations that might benefit from knowing about this; what is your strategy?*

Mr. Thomson: We know that we can do advertisements pretty well because the only people searching for dementia are people who have it or a family member who has it recently. We are working with a few clinics in the UK at the moment to continue our reiterations and keep building and improving. At the moment we are limiting our outreach until we improve

the service to a level where it is mainstream. We think a news push and articles like this will help bring other institutions and clinics our way and doctors will advise their patients on what to do.

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CEOCFO: *For potential investors, patients, caregivers, and medical professionals, what makes Sensay important?*
Mr. Thomson: One of my first books was about the concept of digital immortality. We live in this generation where there is so much data that we will go on so much longer than our physical selves. We live in this incredible generation where with this AI technology, these replicas of ourselves can almost interact with generations to come. Unfortunately, if you look back at your ancestry it is rare for people to know more than two or three generations before themselves, and even then, maybe they know the names but not too much more.

Chatbots provide a form of digital mortality where future generations can interact with and get advice from digital identities of past generations. This allows people's essence, personality and interactions to speak to descendants for generations to come through augmented and virtual reality.