

JOINT WEBINAR: TechWrite STL + AMWA Mid-America

The Editor's Edge

What AI changes, what it doesn't, and where you add the most value.

The Editor's Edge Núria Waddington Negrão, PhD

The bottleneck moved

After Gutenberg, new jobs emerged where the old constraint used to be.

BEFORE THE PRESS

The hard part:

Production

- Scribes
- Hand-copying
- Slow production



AFTER THE PRESS

The hard part:

Curation. Judgement.

- Editors
- Booksellers
- Translators
- Publishers
- Critics
- Indexers

Sound familiar?

Until recently, producing a draft was the hard part.

That isn't true anymore.

So what's the new hard part? And what's the new job?

For an editor, the new hard part is a familiar one.

*Judgment. Deciding what is true,
what matters,
and what can be trusted.*

That has always been your job. Better AI just raised the stakes on it.

DEMO

A therapeutic landscape analysis, turned into an interactive site.

[Bispecific antibodies in NSCLC.]

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Then I put the editor's eye on it.

The output was fluent and confident, and wrong in the places only a specialist would catch.

Three things the model shipped

1 One source list for every number

One SOURCES line for the whole site. Not a single number traces to a citation I can actually check.

2 The deck contradicts itself

The headline claims three FDA-approved bispecifics. Its own body says two. The bigger number won.

3 Niche agent, equal billing

Zenocutuzumab shares top billing with amivantamab. It treats NRG1 fusions, under 1% of NSCLC.

Two takeaways

Both failures come from where you aim your attention.

1 Under-trust

The tools are far more capable than most people assume. Understand what they can do, so you can name the value you add on top of them.

THE RISK: *getting left behind.*

2 Over-trust

When a tool is right most of the time, vigilance slips. The errors that get through are fluent, confident, and easy to miss.

THE RISK: *shipping mistakes under your name.*

PART 1

Where AI helps

Start on the safe rungs. Then never stop climbing.

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Let AI do the work around the job

Not the editing itself. The busywork that surrounds it.

RENAME

Rename papers

- A script renames every downloaded PDF.
- Author, year, and title.
- No more 1-s2.0 filenames.

SUMMARIZE

Summarize sources

- A sheet, one row per paper.
- What it claims, where you cited it.
- Built once, reused all project.

ORGANIZE

Reference library

- An EndNote library of sources used.
- Only the papers you actually cited.
- Ready to check against the draft.

DEMO

The source sheet

Every paper, what it claims, where you cited it.

[Built once. Reused on every fact-check.]

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Two verification tools

The busywork demos double as your fact-checking floor.

The Source sheet

One row per paper: the claim, the number, the citation. Now you can catch a cherry-picked stat in seconds.

RIGOR INFRASTRUCTURE, *hiding as convenience.*

The References

Every source you used, in one place. Trace any claim back to the paper that supports it, or find that nothing does.

The fastest fact-check *is the one already set up.*

The 4-Part Brief Blueprint

1

Context

What is the document? What stage of development? Who is the audience?

2

Task

What specific action is required? Check against guidelines, flag unsupported claims.

3

Success criteria

What does a good result look like?
What must be avoided?

4

Format

How should it be delivered? Tracked changes, bulleted list, summary table.

Clinical editing

The x-ray view

- CONTEXT** 1 → You're an experienced medical editor reviewing a Phase III oncology trial abstract for submission to the Journal of Clinical Oncology.
- TASK** 2 → Check it against CONSORT for Abstracts.
- SUCCESS CRITERIA** 3 → I want you to flag three things specifically: primary endpoint language that could be misread, any statistical reporting missing confidence intervals or p-values, and any deviation from AMA style.
- FORMAT** 4 → Give me a bulleted list of issues with the exact line each appears on, plus a one-sentence suggested fix for each.

PART 2

Where it adds risk

The better it gets, the easier it is to stop looking.

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Why AI hallucinates

The one idea to hold onto

A prediction engine, not a knowledge engine.

It does not look up the trial.

It generates the words that should plausibly come next, based on patterns it has learned.

Most of the time, plausible matches true.

When they diverge, the model does not flinch. It just keeps going.

The fluent confidence problem

When AI is wrong, it does not sound less sure.

The voice does not change.

No waver. No hedging.
No quiet uncertainty creeping in.

Tone is no longer a signal.

You cannot use confidence to
decide what to trust.

The five categories

How AI gets it wrong.

1

Fabricated references

A citation that does not exist. Author, journal, DOI. All plausible. None real.

2

Misattributed claims

Source exists, but it does not say what AI says it says.

3

Statistical drift

Numbers close to real but off. 0.44 becomes 0.40. Close enough to feel right.

4

Conflated findings

Merges results from two studies, or two arms, into one statement that matches neither.

5

Phantom subgroups

Invents a subgroup, secondary endpoint, or post-hoc analysis that was never reported.

FULL REFERENCE: *today's cheat sheet*

Automation bias survives training

A randomized trial in physicians trained in AI literacy. Qazi et al., NEJM AI 2026.



The study

diagnostic cases, with and without an LLM

- Physicians worked real diagnostic cases, some with AI, some without.
- Some were shown AI advice that was deliberately wrong.
- Every participant had AI-literacy training first.



What happened

when the model was confidently wrong

- Diagnostic reasoning fell from 84.9% to 73%.
- Top-diagnosis accuracy fell from 90.5% to 76%.
- AI-literacy training added zero protection.

KEY TAKEAWAY: *Trained physicians followed a confident model down. Verification cannot be assumed from training alone.*

The slow risk

Deskilling. Use AI well, and keep your own tools sharp.

1 Skills fade when you stop using them

Editors who let AI make every call lose the judgment that made them worth hiring.

2 Some skills never form

People who start out leaning on AI may never build the editorial eye in the first place.

3 Keep your mindware sharp

Read the source yourself sometimes. Edit cold. Verify a claim by hand. The muscle stays yours.

Keep your mindware sharp

Perkins' term for the mental tools you think with. Right most of the time is exactly when they rust.

READ FIRST

Read the source cold

- Open the primary paper yourself.
- Before any AI summary frames it.
- Raw reading stays a skill.

VERIFY

Check one thing by hand

- Trace a claim to its source.
- Recompute a number yourself.
- The judgment stays yours.

NAME IT

Know your frameworks

- CONSORT, AMA style, the floor.
- The checks you run, and why.
- Tools you can teach, you keep.

Where your value lives: ART

Three things AI cannot sign its name to.

A

Accountability

Your willingness to put your name on it. To answer for the claims, the framing, the choices.

R

Rigor

The discipline of verification. AI generates fluent text. It doesn't know what's true. You do.

T

Taste

Knowing what to elevate, what to cut, what your audience needs. AI doesn't have taste. You do.

Rigor: the second set of eyes

A

Accountability

The signature

R

Rigor

The floor

T

Taste

The edge

The verification floor stays a human job.

Always verify these six things

The floor

*Below this floor, you cannot defend
the draft. Above it, you can.*

1 Numbers
Any number,
every number

2 References
That each exists,
and says what
you think

3 Drug names
Spelling, brand vs.
generic, indication

4 Dosing
Amount, route,
schedule

**5 Statistical
claims**
Hazard ratios,
CIs, p-values,
effect sizes

**6 Citations as
a whole**
Does every claim
trace to a real
source?

The floor is not yours alone

1 You own the content

The writer/editor is responsible for AI-generated, public-facing material. It cannot be handed off to an AI vendor.

2 Disclosure

Where AI use touches the content, it has to be transparent.

3 Integrity stays human

Accuracy, balance, and independence remain a human responsibility.

4 Governance is a competency

Oversight is part of the work now, not a side committee.

Taste is the differentiation engine

When every first draft starts from the same few models, sameness becomes the default.

THE DEFAULT: SAMENESS

- Same models, same phrasing, same shape.
- Safe, fluent, and forgettable.
- Reads like everyone else's draft.

THE EDGE: A POINT OF VIEW

- You decide what the piece is really for.
- You set the angle before a word is drafted.
- You hold the line on a house voice.

Taste is front-end work. It happens before the writing starts.

Rigor and accountability

One is the work you do. The other is what you own.

RIGOR: THE WORK

- The second set of eyes.
- Catching errors before they ship.
- The floor of things you check.

ACCOUNTABILITY: THE OWNERSHIP

- Your name is on the result.
- You answer for the framing and the claims.
- You stand behind even what you could not verify.

Rigor is what you do. Accountability is what you own.

APPLY

How does this apply to your work?

From what the value is, to what you do with it.

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The line is in your work, somewhere

The shift is specific.

WHAT AI CAN DO REASONABLY WELL

- First draft of a familiar format
- Summarize sources you provided
- Suggest alternative phrasings
- Reformat content across channels
- Generate options at speed

WHAT IT CAN'T

- Decide what the piece is actually for
- Choose which source matters most
- Hear when something sounds wrong
- Decide what's worth saying again
- Stand behind the final claim

Which column are you charging for?

ART as career lens

The framework, used differently

A

Accountability

What clients pay you for
The signature on the work
Stand behind the claim

R

Rigor

Your defensibility
The reason errors don't ship
Verify what you can't see

T

Taste

What can't be outsourced
The editorial judgment
Decide what's worth making

How you make the work. How you describe it. How you price it.

The AI Integration Ladder

One rung this week. Then never stop climbing.

START HERE

Automate the busywork

Rename papers. Summarize sources.
Safe, and it pays off today.

NEXT

Put it on real work

Use it inside your real projects. Check
what it produces.

THEN

Rethink how you work

Ask what the job is now, and where
your judgment matters most.

At every rung, ask: how could AI help me do this faster, simpler, better?

The Editor's **Edge**

AI can draft. You are the reason it can be trusted.



Thank you

Now it's time for your questions.



Scan to download the slides

