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News Item

Amazon Scraps Secret AI Recruiting Tool that Showed Bias Against Women | Reuters

By Jeffrey Dastin
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> Amazon.com Inc's (AMZN.O) machine-learning specialists uncovered a big problem: their new recruiting engine did not like women.
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> The team had been building computer programs since 2014 to review job applicants' resumes with the aim of mechanizing the search for top talent, five people familiar with the effort told Reuters.
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> Automation has been key to Amazon's e-commerce dominance, be it inside warehouses or driving pricing decisions. The company's experimental hiring tool used artificial intelligence to give job candidates scores ranging from one to five stars – much like shoppers rate products on Amazon, some of the people said.
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> "Everyone wanted this holy grail," one of the people said. "They literally wanted it to be an engine where I'm going to give you 100 resumes, it will spit out the top five, and we'll hire those."
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> But by 2015, the company realized its new system was not rating candidates for software developer jobs and other technical posts in a gender-neutral way.
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> That is because Amazon's computer models were trained to vet applicants by observing patterns in resumes submitted to the company over a 10-year period. Most came from men, a reflection of male dominance across the tech industry.

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