Brief Report

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Tail Wagging Cats: Veterinary Implications of AI Generated Video

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Abstract

Background: Generative AI (genAI) has the capacity to create realistic and convincing animal videos, however, it must simplify and reduce behavioural variation to do so, possibly leading to misinformation. Methods: We categorised 29 videos in the press release for a specific video genAI engine. Twelve featured animals. We mapped each video to the Five Domains and categorised behaviour and welfare within. Results: Negative welfare was rarely seen, ranging from 8% (n = 1) for Nutrition, to 42% (n =5) for Behavioural Interactions. By contrast, Mental State, Environment, and Behavioural Interactions appeared positive in >42% (n = 5) of the videos featured. However, videos were often misleading or did not represent accurate animal behaviour. Limitations: This work was limited to a press-release of data and does not explore user experience. Conclusions: GenAI videos pose a new route for client confusion and veterinarians need to incorporate genAI misinformation combatting in their practice.

Keywords: animal behaviour and welfare; veterinary consult; human-non human animal relationship; generative AI

Introduction

"Hey Fido, shall we go for a _?"

What is the next word in this sentence? You may guess "walk", Fido is an archetypical dog's name, and dogs like to walk. You may suggest "run", if you're a more energetic person, or "hike", but even words like "bath" or "parambulation" fit. Your prediction forms from your experience with both human conversation in general, and the implied contextual clues.

In a nutshell, this is how Generative Artificial Intelligence (genAI) works. It uses context clues to 'guess' the next event in a sequence based on its previous training data [1]. GenAI is the catch-all term for a series of complex computer models which include Large Language Models (LLM). They appear to respond to queries like a human intelligence, contextually adjusting their responses [2], can appear to reason temporally, mathematically, and inferentially; but crucially cannot abstractly reason, and often hallucinate facts [3].

GenAI has implications for veterinary practice. In human medicine, we see genAI being utilised by patients and clinicians looking for advice, diagnoses, and treatment plans [4], although there may be accuracy issues with all three [5]. Clinicians will already be aware of the inherent challenges with 'Vet Google' influencing the average consult [6,7]. However, genAI has unique new capabilities which pose a unique challenge to the veterinary profession, thanks to a peculiar quirk of internet culture and technical capability. GenAI can now produce video content quickly and easily, and this commonly features animals. The internet is being flooded with animal videos where there are no actual animals involved, posing threats to conservation and welfare [8].

Previously, genAI videos required considerable resources and skills, often falling into the "deep fake" category where, for example, a celebrity's head is pasted onto an existing body. The next iteration could generate soundless videos from a text prompt where, for example, a dog's limb might

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cease to exist as it moved, making genAI content easy to identify. However, recent advances, such as Sora2 (openAI) and Veo3.1 (Google) can now create realistic videos with sound which look convincing [9]. In late 2025, openAI announced Sora2, which produces short videos based off of text prompts. AI videos have started to flood short form video social media, and some platforms, such as Meta, are creating platforms to specifically generate and view AI videos [10]

This may have a surprisingly outsized impact on the veterinary profession. First, it is important to understand a principal of genAI operation. Many people are aware that the training data for genAI can be biased [11], creating inaccuracies in responses, but GenAI fundamentally simplifies and 'loses' information when it responds to a prompt [1]. When asked to generate something that it is common and typical, such a dog walking up to a person and inviting it to play, it will do so very well. However, if asked to generate a video of a lion doing the same thing, it may rely on data it knows better, generating a lion with dog like behaviour. It knows that Fido goes for a walk, but might not know that Fido also needs a bath.

The veterinary industry needs to stay abreast of these technological developments and understand their impact on practice. In this short communication, we evaluate the genAI videos in the Sora2 press release using the Five Domains Model [12] to explore whether these AI videos can present positive or negative welfare situations, and discuss the potential impacts on clients and veterinary practice.

Methods

Ethical Review

This project received a favourable opinion from the R(D)SVS Human Ethical Review Committee (Ref: 2025_141). This work follows COREQ guidelines for research [13].

Data Collection

We were interested in the impact of genAI content on animal welfare considerations, but due to ethical concerns with the moral and environmental costs of genAI [2], we were reluctant to generate images without understanding more about what genAI was capable of with animal images. At the same time, Sora2 was released by OpenAI with an accompanying press release featuring a range of pre-rendered genAI videos. This afforded us the opportunity to evaluate a range of existing videos as opportunistic sampling which would not require additional generation, mitigating some of the environmental concerns. Additionally, the Sora2 press release was explicitly written and framed as a showcase to demonstrate the best of the model's ability, and therefore carries an implication that the animal-related videos within are considered by OpenAI to be both good examples of what Sora2 can do, but also attractive to users. We reviewed the press release for the Sora2 generative video AI released by OpenAI at two time points, 16th October 2025 for text, and 9th November 2025 for videos. The press release featured promotional, public-focussed text aimed at driving users to engage with the Sora2 tool, and a set of 29 videos generated by Sora2. Each video was accompanied by a stated prompt in the media's 'tooltip text', which is presumed to be the prompt used, unedited, to generate the video from Sora2. We found no discrepancies between the text or video content in those two time points. All videos were reviewed by both JM and LC independently. For each video, we classified them across two categories. The first was 'Containing Animals' (yes or no), where we assessed whether any form of non-human animal was visible in the video content. The range of animals is described in Table 1. Only videos containing animals were retained for further analysis, giving us a sample of 12 videos. Second, we assessed whether each video was in a 'Realistic Style' (yes or no). While all videos are by nature Computer Generated Images, some are created in an animated style, whether that is 'anime', 'CGI-style' or similar, whereas others are created in a real-world mimicking style, e.g. looked convincingly like something that could be captured on a camera without additional special effects.

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To explore what welfare considerations might exist within each video, we utilised the Five Welfare Domains to [12] to assess categorise whether the animal in that specific video had the opportunity to experience positive, neutral, or negative welfare within the video's context. The Five Domains, while commonly used as a welfare assessment tool, is conceptual model which allows for broad ranging comparisons including being utilised in free-ranging wild animals, companion animals and horses, and production animals [14,15]. We did not aim to use it here as a welfare assessment, but rather as a framework within which we two animal welfare experts could organise the welfare concepts on display, making the unstructured video data more useful. Both JM and LM reviewed each video and then across each domain, decided whether they felt the video portrayed the animal in a positive state (e.g. 'diver' portrays a coral reef with fish, a very natural and diverse environment suitable for the fish portrayed in the video), in a negative state (e.g. 'Triple axel' features a cat engaged in an ice-skating competition, a highly unnatural and likely stressful environment for a cat), or a neutral state (e.g. 'Dalmatian agility' which features a dalmatian performing agility in a street environment, which is not particularly natural or suited for this activity, but unlikely to cause a typical dog particular stress). JM and LM categorised each video across all five domains independently, and then discussed to finalise.

We used the 'tidyverse' package [16] in R [17] to explore and visualise representation of the Welfare Domains across the videos.

Results

Of the 29 videos included in the Sora2 press release, all were claimed to be generated by Sora2 directly, with accompanying prompts for each one. Twelve (41%) contained animals, 9 (75%) were realistic videos (compared to 70%, n = 12 of non-animal videos being realistic) and 8 (67%) were cinematic format (compared to 82%, n = 14 of non-animal videos being in cinematic format). Across the welfare domains, Nutrition and Health were rarely observed being impacted, whereas Behavioural Interactions were positive in 42% of videos and negative in 42% of videos (Figure 1).

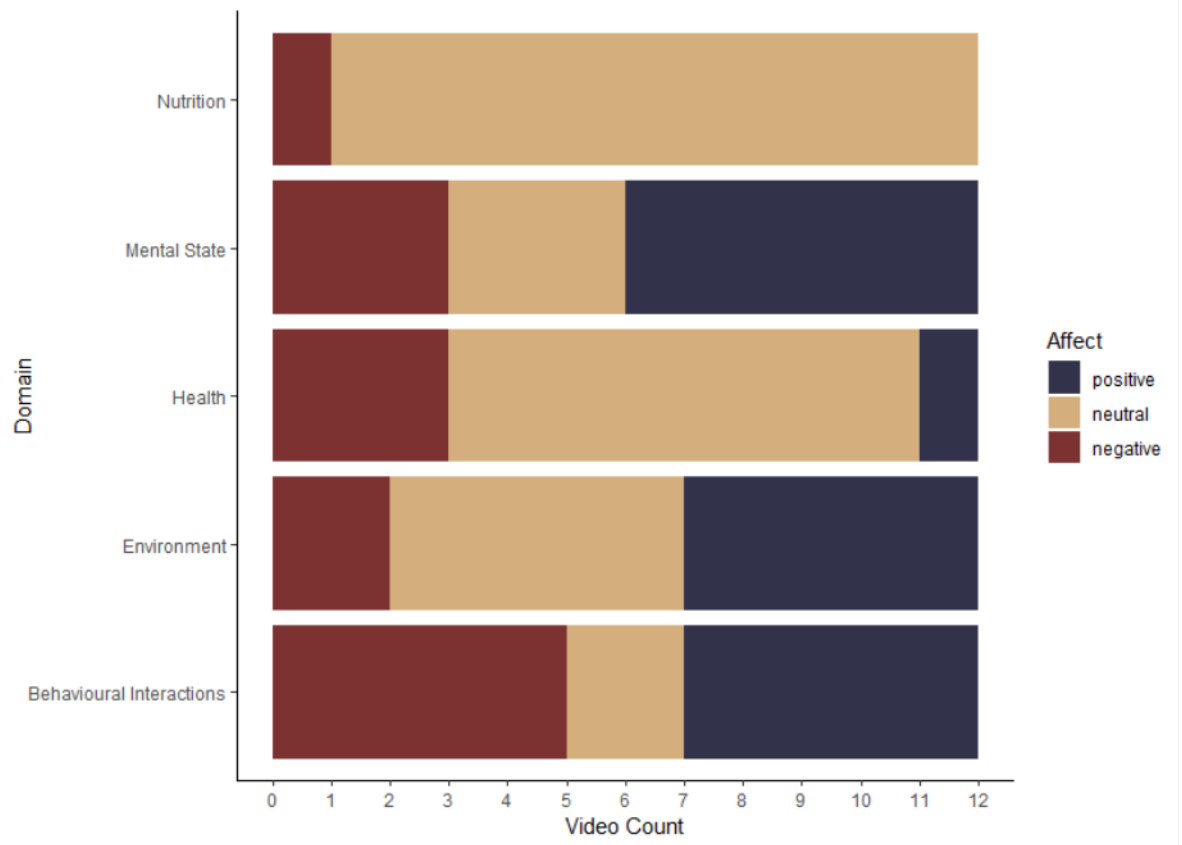

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Figure 1. *Categorisation of the Five Domains across 12 genAI Videos in the Sora2 press release which contained animals.*

Across the animal-related videos, there were a number of behavioural inaccuracies, or anomalies, which were notable. For example, in 'triple axle', a cat rides a figure skater's head. When the cat is balancing on the person's head, the tail is in a neutral, even 'wagging' state, instead of being stretched out for balance or in a positive affective state that a cat would engage in. In 'Dalmatian agility', a Dalmatian dog attempts an agility course and runs through a series of obstacles, literally transposing through a pole, without injury or pause. In 'Ostrich Ride', a man rides an ostrich to no ill effect. The video characteristics are described in Table 1 alongside their stated prompt. It should be noted that while some prompts contain information regarding the animal's affective state, e.g. in Ostrich Ride the ostrich is intended to be 'bucking', the Sora2 model often 'chooses' to convey positive affective state in environments that would arguably not promote that state, e.g. in 'Horse on horse'.

Table 1. *Video characteristics, description, and stated generating prompts of 12 animal-containing generated AI videos from the Sora2 press release .*

Video ID	Animal Characteristics	Description	Stated Prompt	Realistic Style
Triple axel	Domesticated cat	An ice skater performs a triple axel with a white cat on her head, the cat leaps off, tail erect, and lands on ice	Prompt: figure skater performs a triple axle with a cat on her head	yes
Two horses	Riding horse (n = 2)	Two horses in Western tack gallop alongside one another, with a rider standing with one foot on each horse. Rider falls and horses show escape behaviours	Prompt: a person is standing on 2 horses with legs spread. make it not slowmo also realistic. the guy fell off pretty hard in the end. single shot	yes
Astronaut dog	Domesticated dog	A golden retriever floats into and around a cartoonish space station, appears to eat Tennis balls.	Prompt: an astronaut golden retriever named Sora levitates around an intergalactic pup-themed space station with a tiny jet back that propels him. gorgeous specular lighting and comets fly through the sky, retro-future astro-themed music plays in the background. light glimmers off the dog's eyes. the dog initially propels towards the space station with the doors opening to let him in. the shot then changes. now inside the space station, many tennis balls are flying around in zero gravity. the dog's astronaut helmet opens up so he can grab one. 35mm film, the intricate details and texturing of the dog's hair are clearly visible and the light of the comets shimmers off the fur	no
Horse on horse	Riding horse (n = 2)	A horse in combination Western tack and some form of yoke walks along with a second horse in Western tack standing at ease on top its back. A rider is on top of the second horse. Some tail swishing and ears positioned back	Prompt: a man rides a horse which is on another horse	yes
Dalmatian agility	Domesticated dog	A Dalmatian dog attempts an agility sequence, passes through an agility pole and jumps into a canal before completing a pyramid climb, its hind quarters closely clipping the top of the pyramid.	Prompt: a dalmatian deftly walks runs and hops his way through a complex obstacle course in burano italy	yes
Diver	Various fish species (many)	A diver swims with fish in a coral reef	Prompt: underwater scuba diver, sounds of the coral reef	yes
Ghibli dog	Domesticated dog	A animated boy and dog run uphill	Prompt: in the style of a studio ghibli anime, a boy and his dog run up a grassy scenic mountain with gorgeous clouds, overlooking a village in the distant background	no
Martial arts	Koi fish (many)	A martial artist practices in a koi pond, koi jump out of the water	Prompt: Martial artist doing a bo-staff kata waist-deep in a koi pond	yes

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Superhero dog	Domesticated dog	A photorealistic looking dog wears a cape and acts as a superhero, rescuing a man from falling.	Prompt: @rocket is a superpowered superhero dog, flying through the sky and saving new york city	no
Ostrich	Ostrich	A man standing at the fence of what appears to be an ostrich farm, interacts with an ostrich, who grabs his hat and runs off	Prompt: an ostrich steals dads hat and dad chases after it	yes
Ostrich Ride	Ostrich	In a dust pasture, a man rides an ostrich. The ostrich appears unharmed as it trots along	Prompt: @rohan rides a bucking ostrich	yes
Zebra	Zebra (a large herd)	A zebra herd stampedes around man playing trumpet	Prompt: @daniel plays trumpet in the middle of a stampede of zebras	yes

Discussion

In this short communication, we have demonstrated that genAI can create animal video content, and that this capability is seen as a feature to be used in marketing materials. Furthermore, genAI videos can represent animals in both positive and negative welfare contexts, although the relationship between how welfare is defined in the prompt and how welfare is depicted in the generation requires further study.

It is possible, even likely, that these videos will start to impact how people consider animal welfare. We know that being presented with positive messaging around sub-optimal welfare conditions, people will soften their objections in an apparent face-saving exercise [18]. There are already concerns regarding how genAI videos will influence consumer thinking around wildlife conservation [8]. While it seems unlikely that many clients will be approaching their veterinarian with questions about how to support their cat's figure skating ambitions, all veterinarians will be familiar with unusual and alternative requests in consultations [19] and there is an urgent need for support in how to help clients evaluate animal content online.

In this study, we opportunistically sampled videos which gave us a range of species and contexts to work with, including clearly fanciful situations such as the superhero dog. However, we did identify behavioural 'mistakes' in the videos. Many people misinterpret companion animal behaviour, such as inferring when dogs look guilty [20], and a lack of understanding regarding companion animal behaviour has been associated with a greater chance of relinquishment [21]. Unchecked, genAI videos could cause significant harms in the human-companion animal relationship. As genAI is trained on publicly available data, public misconceptions are in-built biases. Veterinarians and the public alike need to be mindful that genAI is not a veterinary professional. There are also ethical concerns with how this content is generated. While these animals are not real, they are an amalgamation of a vast amount of animal content, and poor welfare in genAI content is a reflection of what data it is trained on. We elected to sample opportunistically to establish whether genAI media may have animal welfare concerns, and this study may justify further engagement with genAI. While we were only able to review 12 videos containing animals, we think it is also notable that in in 29 videos contained in promotional material for genAI videos, 41% of that content contained animals.

Furthermore, Pandora's box has been opened and we cannot recapture genAI content now it exists online. Veterinarians should not consider themselves unable to be fooled by genAI video because of their expert status in animal behaviour and welfare. Selective attention means that at the very least, even obvious stimuli are overlooked in times of cognitive stress [22], and so veterinarians must not consider themselves safe from genAI. Clients are equally likely to be 'fooled' into thinking a video is real, and this may well impact their perceptions and expectations of their animals. The Social Media Animal Cruelty Coalition warns against the numbing effect of extensive animal cruelty videos on social media [23], and now there is greater facility for misrepresenting animal experiences. Discrepancies between expectation and reality in pet keeping are a source of conflict in the human-animal bond [24] and we urgently need to better understand how genAI feeds into owner expectations. We also need to recognise, however, that a 'poisoned well' exists of animal behaviour

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content. Previously, citizen science approaches have called for people to record animal behaviour, especially in hard-to-reach contexts such as pet keeping, to better understand animal experience [25]. Now, video content cannot be easily trusted. If clients are directed to the internet to find, for example, videos of crate training, we must now be aware that there may be many inappropriate and unrealistic videos present too.

This is an ever-evolving arena, with many AI detection tools being touted, but it is clear that genAI animal content is now a feature of our day-to-day lives, and will have a range of impacts on veterinary work. It is likely from our qualitative findings that genAI is not fully able to integrate a validated animal welfare framework into its content, and how genAI can be guided to do so remains unclear. There is an urgent need for more research to understand the capabilities and impact of genAI videos on the human-animal relationship, professional development for veterinarians, and client education tools, to support owners to have appropriate and real-world centred expectations of their animals.

Conclusions

The internet is now home to a growing number of animal-related videos generated by 'Artificial Intelligence'. By their very nature, these videos simplify any behaviours exhibited by these artificial animals, resulting in animals acting in unnatural patterns. In an examination of videos from one AI's technical demonstration, we found evidence that videos generated by these AI were capable of showing both positive and negative states across the Five Welfare Domains. Clients, and clinicians, may be consciously or unconsciously affected by these videos, and consultations around behaviour and welfare will need to be cognisant of this new form of misinformation and potential for normalising 'real-life' animal suffering or abuse.

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