



Witty Works describes its plug-in as providing 'unconscious bias training on the go' | Photo source [Witty Works](#)

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A 'SPELLCHECKER' FOR INCLUSIVE WRITING

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The browser plugin nudges copywriters to avoid terms that might harm or deter under-represented groups

Spotted: Writing assistants have become a ubiquitous part of office life. Anyone who has worked with Microsoft Word will be familiar with the red and blue squiggly lines that indicate spelling and grammar mistakes. And sophisticated plug-ins like Grammarly—now the [tenth most valuable US startup](#)—provide more in-depth feedback on writing style and grammar. But what if the user experience of a spellchecker was leveraged to make people write more inclusively? This is the idea behind Witty Works, a Swiss startup that is using AI to uncover unconscious bias in corporate writing.

Why is inclusive writing important? Exclusionary and stereotypical language remains deeply embedded in professional vocabulary despite research demonstrating its harmful effects. A recent article published in the [Harvard Business Review](#) provides a good run-down of studies examining the impact of exclusionary language – from misused descriptors with negative connotations to terms in job postings that deter more women than men.

Witty Works, which was founded in 2018, is one of several AI tools that aim to tackle this issue. The company's free plugin analyses text as it is written, highlighting stereotypical or exclusionary terms and offering an alternative. Crucially, Witty Works does not simply help time-poor writers produce more inclusive copy without pausing for reflection. Instead, it is designed to be an educational tool, providing a brief explanation of why a term has been highlighted. The company believes it is vital that employees recognise bias in their daily workflow, referring to their tool as 'unconscious bias training on the go'.

The company operates a 'freemium' model, with the basic plugin available without charge. Users can then pay to upgrade to two more sophisticated packages known as Witty Teams and Witty Enterprise. These offer additional features that provide further training and help organisations manage inclusive writing across whole teams and organisations.

Inclusivity in the workplace is an important area of innovation and Springwise has recently spotted software that automatically analyses the diversity of media content, an artificial intelligence platform that helps companies improve diversity, and a tool for measuring workplace diversity and inclusion.

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Takeaway:

Witty Works argues that its plug-in is a useful tool for improving diversity and creating an inclusive culture – something that has been shown to be beneficial, not just for individuals, but for business performance. For example, a Boston Consulting Group [study](#) found that companies with more diverse management teams have 19 per cent higher revenues due to innovation. Witty Works itself highlights the external, reputational benefits of diversity and inclusion, arguing that 70 per cent of Generation Z require inclusive branding.