Economist Intelligence Unit AI research assistant

IMPLEMENTED 2025 ONWARDS · MEDIA AND PUBLISHING · UNITED KINGDOM · BAND D · CLAIMED ONLY
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The Economist Intelligence Unit launched generative AI search for its business clients in late 2025 and added a multi-turn research assistant, Lens, in 2026. Analysts score answers before every release and every live conversation is labelled for quality.

ABOUT THIS SYNOPSIS

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Facts and figures are as reported by the sources listed below, which may be incomplete, self-reported or out of date. Check the original source before relying on any figure.

The impact band, proof marker and SEAM view are MarLuc's opinion. The organisation is not a MarLuc client and has not reviewed or endorsed this synopsis. Names and trademarks belong to their owners.

NOTICE WORDING LAST UPDATED 16 NOVEMBER 2026

AT A GLANCE

AI used: Generative AI search and multi-turn research assistant over EIU's own content.

Implemented: 2025 onwards. Grade: band D, Task support, Claimed only.

Headline result, as reported: 96.9% task success rate and weekly task failures down 84%, by the team's own measure, June 2026

1 · The case

The facts, as reported by the 4 sources listed at the end. Where a source is silent, the field says "Not reported".

Organisation

The Economist Group. Publisher of The Economist, founded in 1843. Its Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), set up in 1946, provides country analysis, forecasts and indicators to businesses, financial firms and governments. Staff numbers: Not reported in the sources used. Canvas block: 3. Customers and proposition. Also 4. Operations and process.

Business challenge

The challenge. EIU's analysts cover nearly every country with analysis, forecasts and indicators, and the content can be hard to navigate, by the team's account. EIU says financial services firms, corporates and governments need to understand the implications of global events quickly.

Who implemented it

In-house (In-house): The Economist Group's product and engineering team built the tool, with EIU analysts scoring answers.
Amplitude (Software vendor): Supplied Agent Analytics used to score and monitor live sessions.
The underlying model provider is not named in the sources.

Technology (SEAM pillar E)

SEAM types: T4 RAG / vector search over your own data. Deployment: Not reported. Vendors and products: Amplitude, Viewpoint AI search & summarisation, Lens, Amplitude Agent Analytics.

Where it was built in: Built into Viewpoint, EIU's client website; answers draw only on EIU content and link to the full reports, searching the most recent content first; sessions flow into Amplitude for scoring.

What changed

Before: clients searched and read EIU reports themselves, and the product team judged usage from page views and by reading sessions by hand. After: clients can ask Lens and get answers sourced entirely from EIU content; every session is scored and the product manager gets daily updates. Measured results: a 96.9% task success rate and weekly task failures down 84%, by the team's own measure. [1] [2] [3] [4]

What it cost

Not reported

What it saved

Not reported. Setting up the session analytics took one engineer, by the product manager's account. [1] [2] [3] [4]

Governance and control

Answers must meet set thresholds, scored by EIU analysts, before the first release and every update. Answers are fully sourced so users can verify them. Every live conversation is labelled for task completion, frustration and repeated questions. Accountable owner beyond the product team, and the model provider: Not reported.

S2 · Accountable owner · Claimed
The Group Product Manager AI leads customer-facing generative AI work, including Lens, per aibl's talk summary; board-level ownership is not reported. [4]

A1 · Safe use · Claimed
Answers are fully sourced so users can verify them, and automated checks test tool use and refusals, by EIU's account. [1] [4]

A2 · Human in the loop · Claimed
EIU analysts score a test set of answers before the first release and every update; live answers reach clients without individual review. [4]

A3 · Monitoring and assurance · Claimed
Every conversation is labelled for task completion, frustration and repeated questions and joined to user behaviour; the team reports a 96.9% task success rate. [3] [4]

A4 · Vendor AI · Not reported
The model provider and any vendor review are not reported; Amplitude supplies the session analytics. [3]

A5 · Agent controls · Not reported
Not reported.

A6 · Standards and regulation · Not reported
Not reported.

What worked, what did not, what is unproven

WORKED

– Sourced answers that link to the underlying EIU reports, by EIU's account.

– Faster fixes: the data showed one-word queries ending in a clarifying question; after a prompt change those users asked more follow-up questions and clicked through more to EIU analysis, by the product manager's account.

– Analysts who scored the tool came to trust it, by the product manager's account.

DID NOT

– Users who typed one word, such as "Brazil", got a clarifying question and left, until the system prompt was changed.

– Weak answers often traced back to an article about six months old; an archive back to 2011 was too much search space, so the team narrowed it to about five years.

UNPROVEN

– Effect on client retention, subscriptions or revenue.

– Whether the 96.9% task success figure reflects accuracy as clients judge it; it is the team's own measure in a vendor tool.

– Whether a strong Lens experience deepens use of the wider Viewpoint platform, which the team says it still wants to find out.

Timeline

Dec 2025 Trade press reports EIU's launch of Viewpoint AI search & summarisation, its first integrated generative AI product for clients [1]

Mar 2026 The multi-turn research assistant Lens is added to Viewpoint, EIU's website [3]

Jun 2026 Product manager reports a 96.9% task success rate and weekly task failures down 84% [3]

Oct 2026 Product manager describes the two-stage evaluation process at aiblLIVE London [4]

2 · Grade and SEAM assessment

MarLuc's opinion, made on the evidence above. How cases are graded: marluc.co.uk/case-studies/how-we-rate

Level of change and impact

Claimed: Not applicable. Grade: D, Task support. Proof: Claimed only. Level of change: Task support.

Task support (Level 1, band D). Clients find answers in EIU research faster; no change to EIU's processes, staffing or revenue is reported.

Graded D. Clients get faster, sourced answers from EIU research, and the team built a release and monitoring process around the tool. No effect on subscriptions, revenue or how analysts or clients work is published.

The SEAM view and lessons learnt

The transferable practice is the release gate: subject experts score answers against set criteria before each launch and update, and live sessions are labelled and linked to what users do next. That gives a product team evidence instead of a handful of examples. The figures come from the team itself and say nothing yet about commercial results.

1. Set an expert-scored quality threshold for every release.
2. Link live answer quality to what users do next.
3. Check how recent the retrieved content is when answers go wrong.

Evidence

Score 1 of 4. Self-reported: the launch statement is EIU's own, relayed by trade press; quality figures come from the product manager's post on Amplitude's blog and his conference talk.

Evaluation method. Self-reported company figures: quality and failure-rate measures from the team's own analytics, described by its product manager.

Sources disagree. The December 2025 launch coverage names the tool Viewpoint AI search & summarisation; the 2026 post and talk describe Lens, added to Viewpoint in March. The sources do not say whether Lens replaced or extended the first tool.

Status. Ongoing: Lens is live on Viewpoint, and the team plans to add structured data and chart visualisation, per the June 2026 post.

3 · Original sources

Read these in full. To challenge a fact or a grade, use the contact form at marluc.co.uk or the link on https://marluc.co.uk/case-studies/economist-group-eiu-ai-research-assistant

[1] CFOtech UK: EIU launches AI tool to aid decision-making in global markets (December 2025)
https://cfotech.co.uk/story/eiu-launches-ai-tool-to-aid-decision-making-in-global-markets

[2] InPublishing: EIU launches Viewpoint AI search & summarisation
https://inpublishing.co.uk/articles/eiu-launches-viewpoint-ai-search-and-summarisation-26047

[3] Amplitude blog: Putting a number on AI quality, by the Economist's AI Group Product Manager (June 2026)
https://amplitude.com/blog/putting-a-number-on-ai-quality

[4] aibl: LLM evaluation at The Economist Group (talk summary)
https://aiblmedia.com/downloads/llm-evaluation-economist-group/

The Economist Group website: https://www.economistgroup.com

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