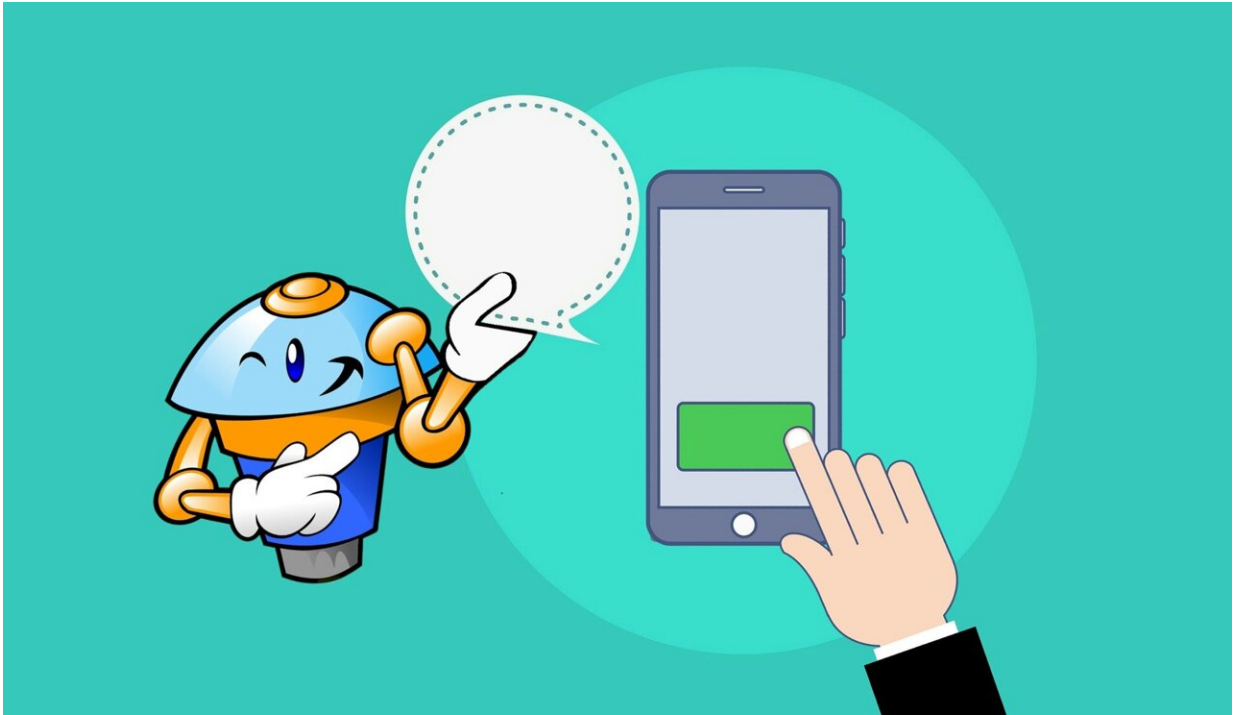


China's Alibaba joins global chatbot race

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Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba said Thursday it was working on a rival to ChatGPT, joining a flurry of global tech firms rushing to match the popular AI-powered chatbot.

ChatGPT has sparked a [gold rush](#) in [artificial intelligence](#) technology, with Microsoft, Google and China's Baidu all working to develop chatbots that can mimic [human speech](#).

The service, created by San Francisco company OpenAI, has caused a sensation for its ability to write essays, poems and programming code on demand within seconds, sparking widespread fears of student cheating or professions becoming obsolete.

Alibaba is now working on a ChatGPT-style conversation bot of its own that is being tested by employees, a company spokeswoman told AFP on Thursday.

She declined to offer details on when the service would be launched or whether it would be part of Taobao, China's biggest online shopping platform.

The announcement comes days after Chinese search giant Baidu said it would complete testing of its AI chatbot in March.

Microsoft has announced a multibillion-dollar partnership with ChatGPT maker OpenAI and plans to integrate the powerful capabilities of language-based artificial intelligence with its Bing search engine.

Google also announced a slew of features powered by AI on Wednesday.

With no barriers to creating AI-synthesized text, audio and video, the potential for [identity theft](#), [financial fraud](#) and tarnish reputations has sparked global alarm.

Beijing has warned that deepfakes—which use technology similar to chatbots to create chillingly accurate digital doppelgangers —present a "danger to national security and social stability".

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