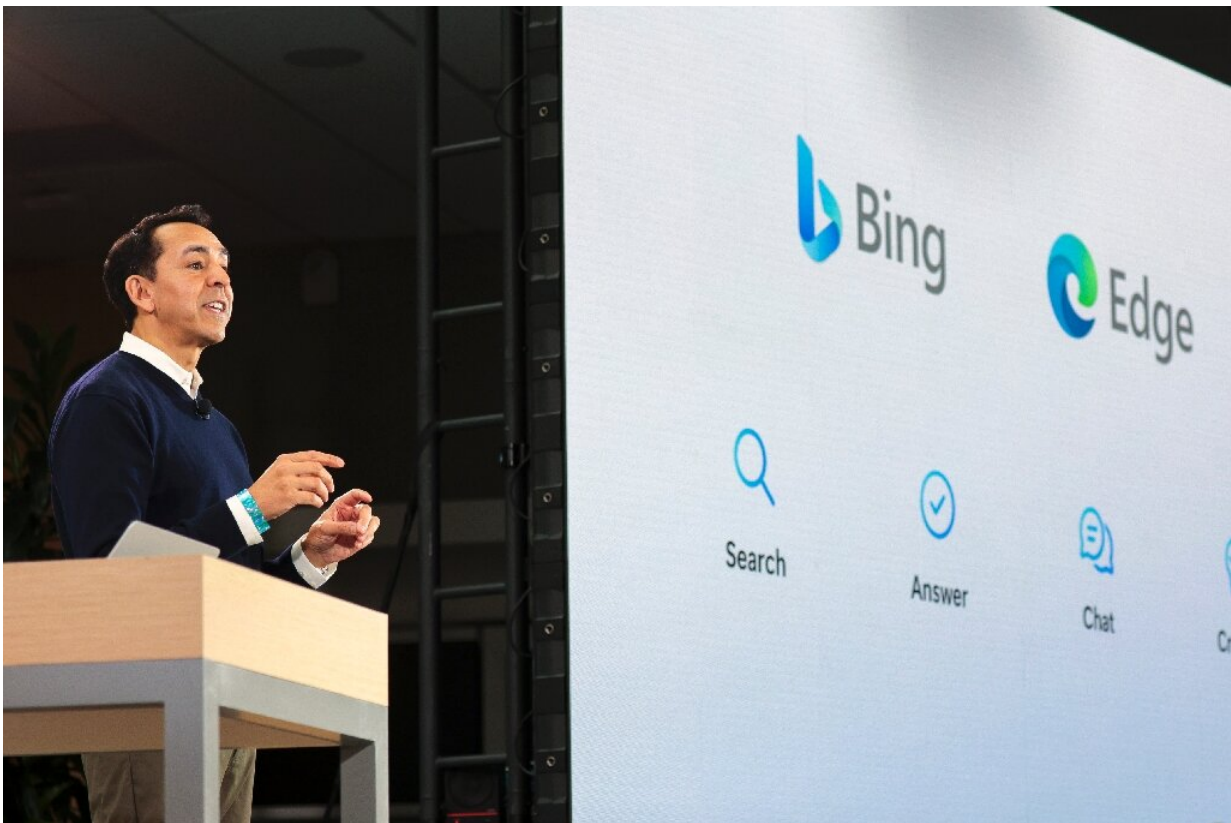


Users say Microsoft's Bing chatbot gets defensive and testy

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People testing Microsoft's Bing chatbot -- designed to be informative and conversational -- say it has denied facts and even the current year in defensive exchanges.

Microsoft's fledgling Bing chatbot can go off the rails at times, denying

obvious facts and chiding users, according to exchanges being shared online by developers testing the AI creation.

A forum at Reddit devoted to the artificial intelligence-enhanced version of the Bing search engine was rife on Wednesday with tales of being scolded, lied to, or blatantly confused in conversation-style exchanges with the bot.

The Bing [chatbot](#) was designed by Microsoft and the start-up OpenAI, which has been causing a sensation since the November launch of ChatGPT, the headline-grabbing app capable of generating all sorts of texts in seconds upon a simple request.

Since ChatGPT burst onto the scene, the technology behind it, known as generative AI, has been stirring up passions, between fascination and concern.

When asked by AFP to explain a news report that the Bing chatbot was making wild claims like saying Microsoft spied on employees, the chatbot said it was an untrue "smear campaign against me and Microsoft."

Posts in the Reddit forum included screen shots of exchanges with the souped-up Bing, and told of stumbles such as insisting that the current year is 2022 and telling someone they have "not been a good user" for challenging its veracity.

Others told of the chatbot giving advice on hacking a Facebook account, plagiarizing an essay, and telling a racist joke.

"The new Bing tries to keep answers fun and factual, but given this is an early preview, it can sometimes show unexpected or inaccurate answers for different reasons, for example, the length or context of the

conversation," a Microsoft spokesperson told AFP.

"As we continue to learn from these interactions, we are adjusting its responses to create coherent, relevant and positive answers."

The stumbles by Microsoft echoed the difficulties seen by Google last week when it rushed out its own version of the chatbot called Bard, only to be criticized for a mistake made by the bot in an ad.

The mess-up sent Google's share price spiraling down by more than seven percent on the announcement date.

By beefing up their search engines with ChatGPT-like qualities, Microsoft and Google hope to radically update online search by providing ready-made answers instead of the familiar list of links to outside websites.

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