

Sudan conflict

Biden reelection campaign

Latest on Russia-Ukraine war

Ed Sheeran copyright lawsuit

More news

# Google’s artificially intelligent ‘Bard’ set for next stage

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE

March 21, 2023



Google announced Tuesday it’s allowing more people to interact with “[Bard](#),” the [artificially intelligent chatbot](#) the company is building to counter Microsoft’s early lead in a pivotal battleground of technology.

In Bard’s next stage, Google is [opening a waitlist](#) to use an AI tool that’s similar to the ChatGPT technology Microsoft began deploying [in its Bing search engine](#) to much fanfare last month. And last week, Microsoft embedded more AI-powered technology in its word processing, spreadsheet and slide presentation programs with [a new feature called Copilot](#).

Until now, Bard had only been available to a small group of “trusted testers” hand-picked by Google. The Mountain View, California, company, which is owned by Alphabet Inc., isn’t saying how many people will be given access to Bard in the next step of the technology’s development. Initial applicants will be limited to the U.S. and the U.K. before Google offers Bard in more countries.

Google is treading carefully with the rollout of its AI tools, in part because it [has more to lose](#) if the technology spits out inaccurate information or takes its users down dark corridors. That’s because Google’s dominant search engine has become a de facto gateway to the internet for billions of people, raising the risk of a massive backlash that could tarnish its image and undercut its ad-driven business if the technology behaves badly.

## RELATED CONTENT

- [TikTok bans deepfakes of young people as it updates guidelines](#)
- [Digital literacy: Can the republic 'survive an algorithm'?](#)
- [Google suspends Chinese shopping app amid security concerns](#)

Despite the technology’s pitfalls, Bard still offers “incredible benefits” such as “jumpstarting human productivity, creativity and curiosity,” Google said in a blog post that two of its vice presidents — Sissie Hsiao and Eli Collins — wrote with assistance from Bard.

As a precautionary measure, Google is limiting the amount of interaction that can occur between Bard and its users — a tactic Microsoft has imposed with ChatGPT after media coverage detailed instances when the technology likened [an Associated Press reporter to Hitler](#) and tried to persuade [a New York Times reporter to divorce his wife](#).



Google also is providing access to Bard through a separate site from its search engine, which serves as the foundation for the digital ads that generate most of its profits. In a tacit acknowledgement that Bard may be prone to straying into manufacturing falsehoods, which are being called “hallucinations” in technology circles, Google is providing a query box connected to its search engine to make it easier for users to check on the accuracy of the information being displayed by the AI.

Bard made [an embarrassing blunder](#) shortly after Google unveiled the tool by prominently displaying a wrong answer about a scientific milestone during a presentation that was supposed to show how smart the technology could be. The gaffe contributed to a nearly 8% drop in Alphabet’s stock in a single day, wiping out about \$100 billion in shareholder wealth and underscoring how closely investors are watching how Google handles the transition to AI.