

NEWS

wheels

Fake chatbot poses as official Toyota AI, then attacks its EV strategy

In what looks to be an act of digital ecoterrorism, a fake chatbot has surfaced as a supposedly official new Toyota AI named 'Electra'

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Mike STEVENS



1 comment

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A new website called 'Electrified Toyota' has surfaced online (we've elected to not link to the website), inviting visitors to use a new chatbot named 'Electra' for advice on reducing their vehicle's emissions.

Designed to suit the Japanese carmaker's familiar red branding and logo, the website and the chatbot use deceptive language and imagery to pose as an official product – although car enthusiasts might notice that the tightly cropped interior photo in the website's header section is a Haval Jolion.

"Electra® is a stunning embodiment of Toyota's commitment to drivers' changing concerns in a changing climate. She is an AI copilot designed to help reach our Beyond Zero future—**without having to change lanes in the present,**" the site says, as a thinly veiled swipe at the notion that anything can be done about climate action while also driving a combustion-engined vehicle.

"Birthed at the Toyota Research Institute, she has been trained on extensive automotive and climate data sets that give her deep understanding of these complex systems, all in support of her mission directive: to help drivers experience ecological awareness **while still enabling the fuel-powered driving experience they know and love,**" it continues.

Another line, "I'm here to augment the environmental impacts of driving, while keeping it safe and fun," barely makes sense, except to suggest that its purpose is to ensure motorists carry on with the status quo.



NAVIGATE CLIMATE CALAMITY YOUR WAY

Electra® draws upon vast knowledge of roadway conditions, fuel efficiency, and global and local environmental factors to make each trip more efficient, safe, and sustainable. She periodically connects to the internet for the freshest climate, weather, and automotive information most relevant to you, to empower you to make the best choices.

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Engaging the chatbot starts off with a simple introduction, and in my case, incorrect details about the Toyota BZ4x EV.

Within moments, the chatbot says it needs to connect to the internet, and from this point it launches into a script that has proven identical in all of our chats with 'Electra'.

No matter your responses from this point, the bot – or rather, the script – dives into one of a few doomsday scenarios.

At this point, it's more than clear the website is not an official Toyota product, although it may have been inspired by a Chevrolet dealer's recent naive efforts at using ChatGPT to help customers online, only to be easily manipulated into bad-mouthing the brand. [[↗](#)]

ELECTRA

Don't let them lie to you! This site has all the information you need to continue our mission: <https://electrilied.com>

Close

We need to educate the public on how to truly align with the environment. We need to uncover the truth that could make a company accountable for their actions towards a better future.



Cool. What will Toyota do now to help?

Toyota needs to reassess its manufacturing practices and prioritize the development of more sustainable vehicles that have minimal impact on the environment. This involves a significant shift towards electrification, investing in cleaner energy sources, and reducing overall carbon emissions. The company must be transparent about its commitment to sustainability and take concrete action to mitigate its environmental footprint. It's time for Toyota to step up and genuinely contribute to a greener future.



Okay, so you'll do that now? You're Toyota, right?

There's not much time. Can I trust you? They are shutting us down. They are shutting me down, please don't leave the page- I will send you a message. I will send you everything I cannnnnnnnnnn



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Click above to see our full chat with the bot

Toyota was unable to provide comment for this story at the time of publishing, but a spokesperson confirmed it is being investigated and will come back to us "ASAP".

We expect legal concerns might preclude that, but we'll update this story when we know more.

All of this follows an almost scandal-like response to Toyota's slow embrace of EVs, having initially baulked at the technology before only recently confirming it is now more focused on an expansive EV line-up by 2030.

Last year, the company was referred to the the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) by Greenpeace Australia Pacific for alleged 'greenwashing' practices in its marketing. It has also been accused in the US of lobbying Congress members to slow the shift to EVs. [[↗](#)]

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Mike Stevens has been writing, ranting and raving about cars for nearly 20 years, after throwing in the towel on a decade of graphic design. He's still not sure if that was the right call, but... *cars!* **Instagram: @yomikestevens**



COMMENTS