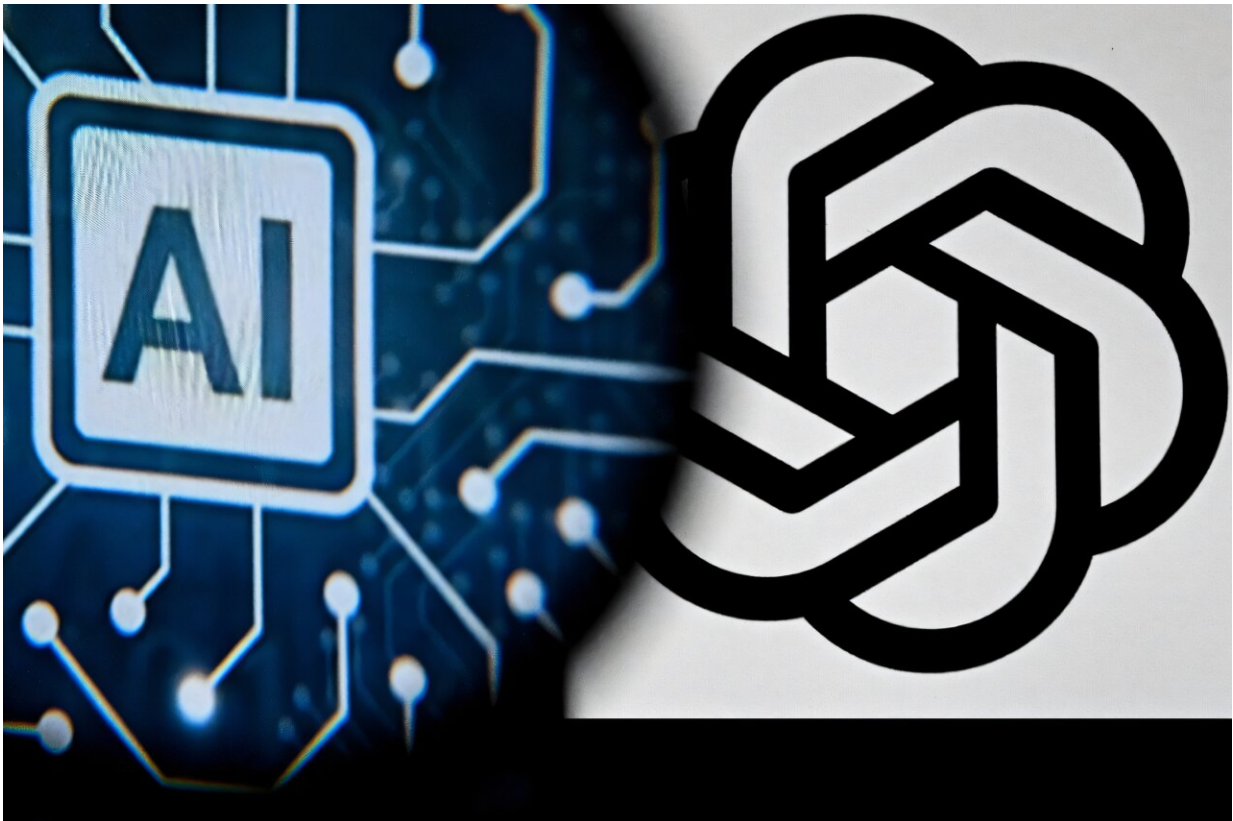


OpenAI unveils 'Operator' agent that handles web tasks

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OpenAI says its new artificial intelligence agent capable of tending to online tasks is trained to check with users when it encounters CAPTCHA puzzles intended to distinguish people from software.

OpenAI on Thursday introduced an artificial intelligence program called

"Operator" that can tend to online tasks such as ordering items or filling out forms.

Operator can look up web pages and interact with them by typing, clicking, or scrolling the way a person might, according to OpenAI.

"Operator can be asked to handle a wide variety of repetitive browser tasks such as filling out forms, ordering groceries, and even creating memes," OpenAI said in an online post.

"The ability to use the same interfaces and tools that humans interact with on a daily basis broadens the utility of AI, helping people save time on everyday tasks while opening up new engagement opportunities for businesses."

An AI "agent," the latest Silicon Valley trend, is a digital helper that is supposed to sense surroundings, make decisions, and take actions to achieve specific goals.

Google in December announced agent capabilities with the launch of Gemini 2.0, its most advanced artificial intelligence model to date.

AI race rival Anthropic two months earlier added a "computer use" feature to its Claude frontier AI model in an experimental public beta phase.

"Developers can direct Claude to use computers the way people do—by looking at a screen, moving a cursor, clicking buttons, and typing text," Anthropic said in a post at the time, cautioning that it was a work in progress.

OpenAI described Operator as one of its first AI agents capable of doing work for people independently, designed to complete tasks it is given.

Operator is available only to US users who pay for Pro subscriptions to the OpenAI service "to ensure a safe and iterative rollout," OpenAI said.

"If it encounters challenges or makes mistakes, Operator can leverage its reasoning capabilities to self-correct," OpenAI said.

"When it gets stuck and needs assistance, it simply hands control back to the user."

Operator is trained to ask the user to take over for tasks that require login, payment details, or when solving "CAPTCHA" security challenges intended to distinguish between people and software online, according to OpenAI.

"Users can have Operator run multiple tasks simultaneously by creating new conversations, like ordering a personalized enamel mug on Etsy while booking a campsite on Hipcamp," OpenAI said.

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