

Five Examples of Serious Incidents Caused by Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI offers incredible and positive opportunities for seniors and others. Essentially, it is a pattern-recognition technology, with its performance relying on computing power, machine learning, and the data it has been trained on.

However, examples from past events demonstrate that AI-based tools and machines aren't always foolproof.

To stay informed about AI developments, you can follow BBC News-business and AI pages- for the latest updates.

1. Apple AI tool led to a serious mishap

In 2025, Apple's AI dictation system (speech-to-text) experienced a significant glitch where the word "racist" was mistakenly transcribed as "Trump."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5ymvjzmeo>

The serious mishap reported above highlights the importance of adequately training and testing AI dictation systems on diverse languages, accents and dialects.

If you, like me, often use 'speech-to-text' to compose emails, text messages, word documents etc., it is essential to carefully check the accuracy of the machine's transcription as typed.

2. DPD's AI chatbot error caused swearing at customers



A few years ago, parcel delivery company DPD faced public embarrassment when their AI chatbot began swearing at customers and criticising the company. This issue was reportedly caused by a software glitch. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-68025677>

Robust AI moderation and testing is important.

3. Air Canada's chatbot gave incorrect information to a traveller



In 2022, Air Canada's chatbot promised a discount that wasn't available to passenger Jake Moffatt. He was assured that he could book a full-fare flight for his grandmother's funeral and then apply for a bereavement fare afterward.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/travel/article/20240222-air-canada-chatbot-misinformation-what-travellers-should-know>

This case highlights the need for regular reviews, checks and auditing of AI chatbots to ensure unbiased and accurate communication with customers.

4. A blunder by a bus lane camera



or 'knitter'

A car driver was sent a fine notice for driving in a bus lane when a bus lane camera's AI software mistakenly read a word on a woman's clothing as the car's number plate. The car wasn't anywhere near the bus lane in Bath. The offending camera and its AI software registered the word 'knitter' on a pedestrian's clothing as Mr Knight's car number plate KN19 TER. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-58959930>

An AI system is good as its pattern recognising and the associated software.

5. “What do AI agents do when humans aren’t watching” – BBC World Service



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDgRa74DpJE>

To know more, use the link above to watch a six minute video.

AI can be good, bad and ugly, as like many other things in the world, as well as humans.

Laws relating to AI should strike a balance to take account of innovations, lateral thinking, opportunities, productivity, the values of Western ways of living in the UK. They should also, address national defence and security and the necessity of maintaining social cohesion in a Western society.