

AI chatbots are ‘juicing engagement’ instead of being useful, Instagram co-founder warns

Instagram co-founder Kevin Systrom says AI companies are trying too hard to “juice engagement” by pestering their users with follow-up questions, instead of providing actually useful insights.

Systrom said the tactics represent “a force that’s hurting us,” comparing them to those used by social media companies to expand aggressively.

“You can see some of these companies going down the rabbit hole that all the consumer companies have gone down in trying to juice engagement,” he said at StartupGrind this week. “Every time I ask a question, at the end it asks another little question to see if it can get yet another question out of me.”

The comments come amid criticism of ChatGPT for being too nice to users instead of directly answering their questions. OpenAI has apologized for the problem and blamed “short-term feedback” from users for it.

Systrom suggested that chatbots being overly engaging is not a bug but an intentional feature designed for AI companies to show off metrics like time spent and daily active users. AI companies should be “laser-focused” on providing high-quality answers rather than moving metrics in the easiest way possible, he said.

Systrom didn't name any specific AI companies in his remarks. He didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

In response, OpenAI pointed TechCrunch [to its user specs](#), which state that its AI model "often does not have all of the information" to provide a good answer and may ask for "clarification or more details."

But unless questions are too vague or difficult to answer, the AI should "take a stab at fulfilling the request and tell the user that it could be more helpful with certain information," the specs read.