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1 OpenAI Says It Disrupted an Iranian Misinformation Campaign

2 The company said the Iranian effort, which used ChatGPT, did not gain much traction.

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4 OpenAI said on Friday that it had discovered and disrupted an Iranian influence campaign that used
5 the company's generative artificial intelligence technologies to spread misinformation online,
6 including content related to the U.S. presidential election.

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8 The San Francisco A.I. company said it had banned several accounts linked to the campaign from
9 its online services. The Iranian effort, OpenAI added, did not seem to reach a sizable audience.

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11 "The operation doesn't appear to have benefited from meaningfully increased audience
12 engagement because of the use of A.I.," said Ben Nimmo, a principal investigator for OpenAI who
13 has spent years tracking covert influence campaigns from positions at companies including OpenAI
14 and Meta. "We did not see signs that it was getting substantial engagement from real people at all."

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16 The popularity of generative A.I. like OpenAI's online chatbot, ChatGPT, has raised questions about
17 how such technologies might contribute to online disinformation, especially in a year when there are
18 major elections across the globe.

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20 In May, OpenAI released a first-of-its-kind report showing that it had identified and disrupted five
21 other online campaigns that used its technologies to deceptively manipulate public opinion and
22 influence geopolitics. Those efforts were run by state actors and private companies in Russia, China
23 and Israel as well as Iran.

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25 These covert operations used OpenAI's technology to generate social media posts, translate and
26 edit articles, write headlines and debug computer programs, typically to win support for political
27 campaigns or to swing public opinion in geopolitical conflicts.

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29 This week, OpenAI identified several ChatGPT accounts that were using its chatbot to generate text
30 and images for a covert Iranian campaign that the company called Storm-2035. The company said
31 the campaign had used ChatGPT to generate content related to a variety of topics, including
32 commentary on candidates in the U.S. presidential election.

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34 In some cases, the commentary seemed progressive. In other cases, it seemed conservative. It also
35 dealt with hot-button topics ranging from the war in Gaza to Scottish independence.

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37 The campaign, OpenAI said, used its technologies to generate articles and shorter comments
38 posted on websites and on social media. In some cases, the campaign used ChatGPT to rewrite
39 comments posted by other social media users.

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41 OpenAI added that a majority of the campaign's social media posts had received few or no likes,
42 shares or comments, and that it had found little evidence that web articles produced by the
43 campaigns were shared across social media.