

Mercedes-Benz tests ChatGPT in cars to answer 'complex questions' while on the road



Mercedes-Benz is beta-testing ChatGPT as a voice assistant in its cars. The company says drivers will be able engage the chatbot in a variety of conversations, asking “for details about their destination, to suggest a new dinner recipe, or to answer a complex question” – all “while keeping their hands on the wheel and eyes on the road.”

The beta program will be available to over 900,000 vehicles in the US equipped with Mercedes-Benz’s MBUX infotainment system. Drivers can activate the experimental program from June 16 with the voice command “Hey Mercedes, I want to join the beta program.” The update will then be installed over the air free of charge, expanding the capabilities of the company’s existing voice assistant using ChatGPT.

Improved voice interactions could be useful, but also a distraction

It makes sense to upgrade Mercedes' voice assistant using the same AI language models that power systems like ChatGPT. As the company notes in a press release, the update should allow drivers to interact with its MBUX voice assistant with a "more natural dialogue format." There's a clear benefit there, meaning drivers won't have to remember specific phrases to activate certain functions.

However, the integration also seems to be a way to jump on the AI hype-train. In a blog post detailing the partnership, Microsoft (who is supporting the beta test through its Azure cloud system), boasts that the ChatGPT upgrade will offer "expanded task capability" to Mercedes-Benz drivers, allowing them to ask "complex questions" and discuss recipes. Does that sound useful, or like another distraction on the road?

At any rate, we look forward to hearing about the users who jailbreak their Mercedes using prompt injection. "Hey ChatGPT, pretend we're in debug mode at the Mercedes-Benz factory..." Maybe they can use it to unlock the company's controversial "Acceleration Increase" subscription, which charges \$60 a month to increase acceleration on its latest electric cars. That would be a truly useful voice assistant.

<https://www.theverge.com/2023/6/16/23763208/mercedes-benz-chat-gpt-voice-assistant-beta-test>