

We Asked Google's AI Bard How To Start A Business. Here's What It Said.

Should you ask a bot for business advice?

Google soft-launched Bard last week, an AI product that gives text-based answers to queries a la ChatGPT. After gaining access, we wanted to put Bard to the test.

What is Bard?

After ChatGPT exploded onto the market in 2022 and became one of the first publicly available tools of its kind, Google's released its own text-generation AI product called Bard. Both are bots that provide (theoretically) coherent answers to questions. ChatGPT can also pass a high school exam and write poems.

Related: ChatGPT: What Is It and How Does It Work?

Google's technology in the area of large AI language models, which ChatGPT and other similar tools use, had been in the works for some time under internal labels such as ERT, MUM, and LaMDA. In December, in response to an employee query if Google had "missed" the opportunity considering the popularity of ChatGPT, Jeff Dean, AI head, reportedly said that Google was comporting itself "more conservatively than a small startup."

Bard. Courtesy company.

But it quickly became a huge focus for the company, leading to a “code red” within Google and renewed attention for AI. CEO Sundar Pichai mentioned AI three times in his note about layoffs that affected about 12,000 employees.

The first public showing of Bard, however, did not go smoothly – the AI bot made a factual error in its example question.

Related: The AI Wars Have Begun: Microsoft Announces ChatGPT Bing Integration After Google Introduces AI Competitor, Bard

The company seemed to ask for understanding in Bard’s early days: “Things will go wrong. But the user feedback is critical to improving the product and the underlying technology,”

Pichai said in a letter to employees around the time of Bard's launch.

Related: 'Things Will Go Wrong.' Google Releases Its Chatbot Bard With Caution.

Still, we wanted to put Bard to the test and see what it knows about business. So we asked it four questions about getting a business off the ground. The takeaway? Bard is kind of boring (at least with these topics).

Bard's business advice

How do I start a business?

Bard gave a generic 10-step answer to this question, including the riveting, "A business plan is a roadmap for your business." However, the reminders to make sure to provide good customer service (especially considering the reported customer service quality of a few very well-known ventures) and to make sure to get your permits were helpful.

What makes a great idea for a startup or business?

Bard advised would-be entrepreneurs to think about an idea that solves a problem, has a target market, and is different from the competition. And, get a group with you. "The business should have a team of people who are passionate about the idea and who have the skills and experience to make it a reality," Bard said.

What's the best way to go about raising venture capital funding?

"Venture capitalists will ask you tough questions about your company and your business plan," Bard advises. The bot also counseled patience with a "long and frustrating" process. All valid points, if a bit basic.

What's your best business advice?

Bard went with the combo: be persistent, but always adapt. It feels a bit like a motivational speaker who is – well, a robot.

And, don't forget validation. "Celebrating your successes will help you stay motivated and keep working hard," Bard advised.

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