# OpenAI unveils Operator: An AI-driven agent for automating online tasks



OpenAI has unveiled a new research preview called Operator, an AI-driven agent designed to automate various tasks that users typically complete via the internet. This release is currently accessible only to subscribers of ChatGPT Pro, which has a monthly fee of $200, with plans to extend availability to Plus plan subscribers in the foreseeable future. The Operator functions by simulating keyboard and mouse actions within a browser environment, enabling it to read information displayed on web pages and execute tasks accordingly.

The agent is built on OpenAI's Computer-Using Agent (CUA) model, which marries computer vision technology with advanced reasoning capabilities to facilitate web browsing and task execution. Early demonstrations showcased Operator's functionality through examples such as booking travel, reserving restaurant tables, and purchasing concert tickets, albeit with variable results indicating a mix of success and challenges.

In an interview with PC Gamer, OpenAI asserted that Operator distinguishes itself from competitors by not requiring custom API integration. “Operator can ‘see’ (through screenshots) and ‘interact’ (using all the actions a mouse and keyboard allow) with a browser,” the organisation stated. This broad functionality is augmented by collaborations with various services including DoorDash, Instacart, OpenTable, and Uber, aimed at enhancing the practical application of Operator within established operational norms.

However, initial assessments of Operator's performance reveal a significant degree of inconsistency. As articulated by OpenAI, the CUA model demonstrates a success rate of 38.1% on full computer use tasks, 58.1% on web-based tasks, and 87% on specific web functions. Reports from early users suggest variability in responsiveness and accuracy, with some instances of incorrect information being generated, highlighting what some have noted as a tendency towards hallucination, more so than in previous versions of ChatGPT.

Privacy and security have been key considerations in the development of Operator, as evidenced by its design to prompt user confirmation before undertaking sensitive actions—such as making purchases or reservations. OpenAI has also ensured that users maintain control over their interactions, offering options to anonymize session data and opt-out of training contributions derived from user engagements.

Operator allows users to implement site-specific custom instructions, tailoring its functionality to better align with individual needs. In this way, for instance, users might configure Operator to ensure that all travel bookings are refundable or that food orders from specific services meet certain criteria.

Despite its promising features, early reviews indicate that Operator could be slow in executing tasks and less reliable when interfacing with non-optimised websites. While the potential for this technology appears significant, particularly in easing the execution of routine online activities, OpenAI has emphasised the importance of safeguarding against misuse. The company is implementing measures to prevent harmful requests and mitigate risks associated with malicious websites.

As OpenAI continues to refine Operator, the effectiveness of this AI agent in practical applications will be closely monitored. How swiftly it can evolve into a reliable tool for everyday tasks remains an open question, alongside considerations of safety and ethical use in a rapidly advancing technological landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJQUL85Ej40> - This video provides an overview of OpenAI's Operator, including its capabilities, features, and potential applications. It supports the claim that Operator is designed to automate tasks by simulating keyboard and mouse actions within a browser environment.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source is mentioned as the original article about OpenAI's Operator, providing background information on its development and functionality.
* <https://www.pcgamer.com/> - PC Gamer is mentioned as the platform where OpenAI discussed Operator's capabilities, including its ability to interact with browsers without custom API integration.
* <https://www.opentable.com/> - OpenTable is one of the services collaborating with OpenAI's Operator to enhance its practical applications, particularly in booking restaurant tables.
* <https://www.instacart.com/> - Instacart is another service partnering with Operator to facilitate grocery shopping and other tasks, demonstrating Operator's versatility in interacting with various web services.
* <https://www.doordash.com/> - DoorDash is among the services integrated with Operator, allowing users to order food and other items through automated interactions.
* <https://www.uber.com/> - Uber is also a partner service, enabling Operator to assist with transportation-related tasks by interacting with the Uber platform.
* <https://www.openai.com/> - OpenAI's official website would provide detailed information about Operator, including its development, features, and future plans.
* <https://www.chatgpt.com/> - ChatGPT Pro is mentioned as the platform where Operator is currently available, with plans to expand to other subscription tiers.
* <https://www.creativecommons.org/> - While not directly related to Operator, Creative Commons licenses are relevant for understanding legal and technical aspects of AI and software development.