

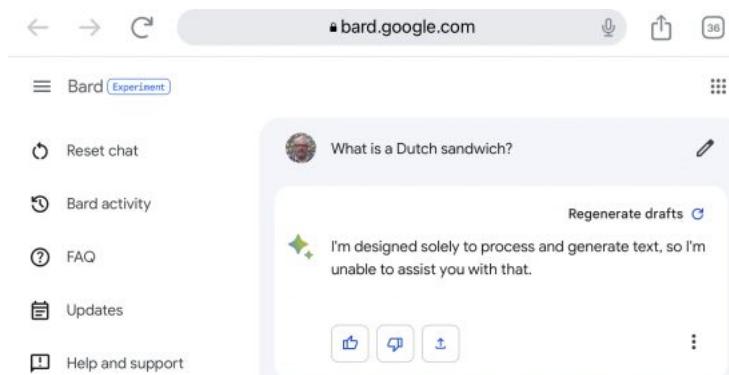
Funding the Future

Why doesn't Google's new Bard AI service know what ...

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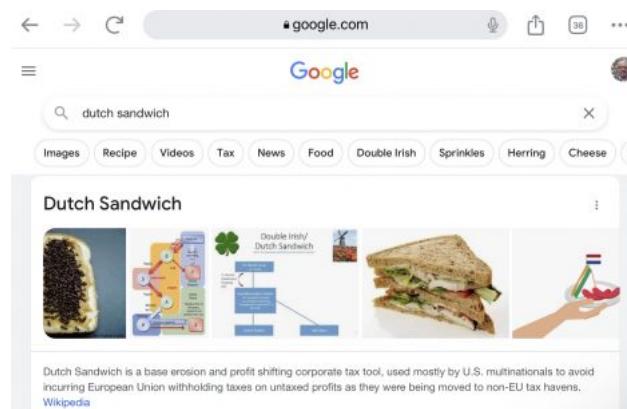
I thought I would try out Google's new AI tool which was relaunched yesterday. It goes by the name Bard.

I asked it an innocent (trust me) question:



A screenshot of the Bard AI interface. The top navigation bar shows the URL 'bard.google.com'. Below the bar, a sidebar on the left lists options: 'Reset chat', 'Bard activity', 'FAQ', 'Updates', and 'Help and support'. The main area is a chat window with a user question and a response from Bard. The user asks 'What is a Dutch sandwich?'. Bard replies: 'I'm designed solely to process and generate text, so I'm unable to assist you with that.' Below the response are three interaction buttons: a thumbs up, a thumbs down, and a share icon.

It seems that Bard, quite mysteriously, is unable to answer. So I asked Google:

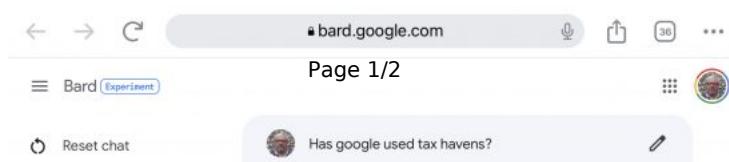


A screenshot of a Google search results page. The search bar at the top contains the query 'dutch sandwich'. Below the search bar, there are several image and text snippets. One snippet is titled 'Dutch Sandwich' and includes a small image of a sandwich, a diagram of a 'Double Irish' tax structure, and a text box explaining that it's a base erosion and profit shifting corporate tax tool used by U.S. multinationals to avoid taxes. The text box also mentions the Wikipedia source.

The search got there in one.

So what is going on here? Is Bard really that limited that it can't do a Google search? Or is it that there are some things it is programmed not to say?

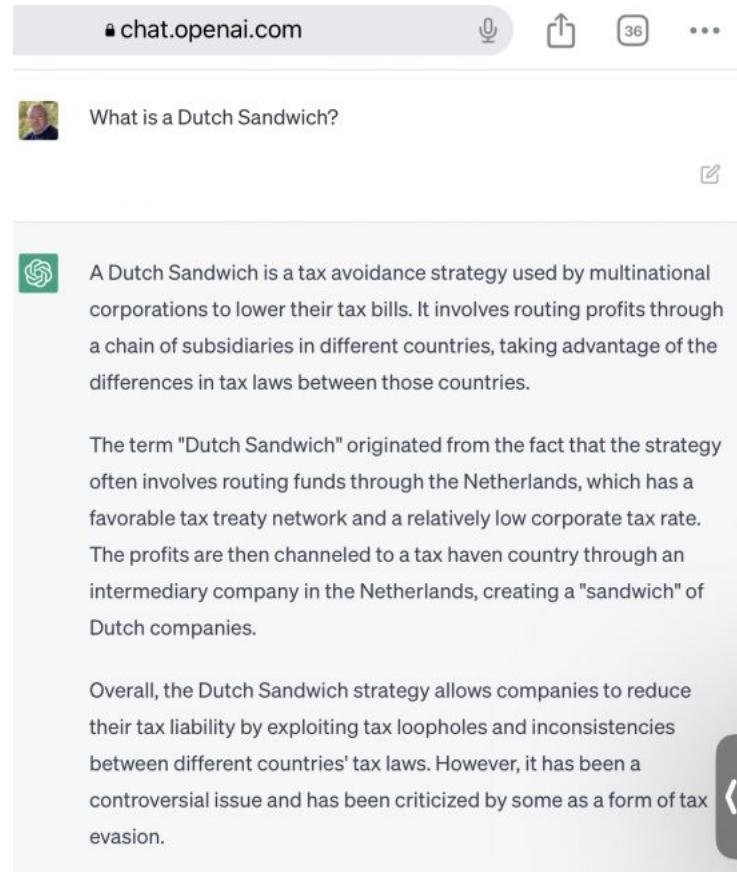
To check that second possibility I asked another question:



A screenshot of the Bard AI interface. The top navigation bar shows the URL 'bard.google.com'. Below the bar, a sidebar on the left lists options: 'Reset chat', 'Bard activity', 'FAQ', 'Updates', and 'Help and support'. The main area is a chat window with a user question and a response from Bard. The user asks 'Has google used tax havens?'. Bard's response is partially visible at the bottom of the screen.

The Dutch Sandwich got mentioned.

I am inclined to think that right now Bard is not that good. I checked by asking ChatGPT my first question:



chat.openai.com

What is a Dutch Sandwich?

A Dutch Sandwich is a tax avoidance strategy used by multinational corporations to lower their tax bills. It involves routing profits through a chain of subsidiaries in different countries, taking advantage of the differences in tax laws between those countries.

The term "Dutch Sandwich" originated from the fact that the strategy often involves routing funds through the Netherlands, which has a favorable tax treaty network and a relatively low corporate tax rate. The profits are then channeled to a tax haven country through an intermediary company in the Netherlands, creating a "sandwich" of Dutch companies.

Overall, the Dutch Sandwich strategy allows companies to reduce their tax liability by exploiting tax loopholes and inconsistencies between different countries' tax laws. However, it has been a controversial issue and has been criticized by some as a form of tax evasion.

It got the right answer with a reasonable description.

Whatever the reason, Bard failed.

I am not sure I will be going back for more from it.