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Rise of the machines: HATE ROBOTS are here and taking over the internet

COMPUTER robots designed to spread hatred are now dominating the internet, a shocking investigation claimed.

By [Jon Rogers](#)



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Web bots are being used to sway public opinion

So-called "social bots" have been discovered after research found numerous accounts that can post thousands of comments a day, every day, as well as send messages and links.

According to Professor Simon Hegelich, in Munich, these robots act like humans and the ordinary online user cannot tell the difference.

These differ from so-called "trolls" who are real people, invariably paid to spread comments and hate messages.



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People have been employed to leave biased comments

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The trolls can also be paid by companies, political parties or even countries to spread a corporate message to give favourable opinions about them.

The German TV documentary 'ZDFzoom', on the public-service broadcaster ZDF featured one such businessman who operated such a company, Maik Satzer, who claimed to have a number of large customers, including political parties, using his services.

Mr Satzer said: "Political parties are trying to... imply, or pre-generate, some sort of opinion."



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Political parties are using web programs to sway opinion

He claimed that after a political party had posted a comment on a social media site like Facebook it would book comments to influence opinion.

Mr Satzer added that it was "a fierce business".

According to the documentary, such comments cost between 0.16 and 2.04 euros.

All the main political parties in Germany denied that they used these hate robots, although the programme failed to get a response from the Eurosceptic AfD (Alternative fur Deutschland).

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'Troll factories' employ people to leave antagonistic comments

The documentary also claimed these social bots were widely used in the US presidential election and found that almost a quarter of all Twitter likes on both candidates pages - Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton - were from fake accounts.

Facebook said that they would aggressively pursue these "fraudulent activities".

The research has come to light after it was alleged that Russia had established a so-called "troll factory" which employed around 400 people to spread damaging lies about other countries and promote Russia.

The English-speaking employees were said to be paid around £600 a month to post comments on websites that could be seen as damaging. Comments being posted claimed that the Scottish referendum was fixed or made outlandish claims about politicians.