Made For You: Norton Study Reveals 64% of Brits Would Date an AI chatbot
With loneliness levels high, millions of online daters are open to romantic relationships with artificial intelligence, blurring the line between comfort, connection, and risk.

TEMPE, Ariz. and PRAGUE, Jan. 27, 2026 – Would you date an AI chatbot? According to Norton, a global leader in consumer Cyber Safety and part of Gen (NASDAQ: GEN), the answer for many Brits is yes. The Norton Insights Report: Artificial Intimacy reveals that nearly two thirds (64%) of current online daters in the UK say they would consider dating an AI chatbot, and 38% believe it is possible to develop romantic feelings for one. With AI designed to be attentive and non-judgmental, it no wonder some view it as the perfect partner. But as emotional connections shift from real-life to digital, scammers are seizing the moment – and for some Brits, it's ending in heartbreak and financial loss.

This attitude about dating and AI is unfolding amid a widespread loneliness epidemic. Four in five (80%) people in the UK report feeling lonely, with 91% of Gen Z and Millennials reporting that they experience loneliness. With emotional isolation levels high, many are becoming open to deeper relationships with technology, creating new emotional and financial vulnerabilities that scammers are already weaponising. According to the Gen Threat Report, social engineering - threats that rely on psychological and emotional manipulation - accounts for over 90% of all digital threats to individuals. Dating scams are some of the most prevalent, with more than 17 million dating scams blocked in Q4 2025 alone, an over 19% increase from 2024.

"When loneliness is high, trust can form very quickly online to fill that void, and that's exactly what scammers rely on to exploit our need for love and companionship," said Leyla Bilge, Global Head of Scam Research for Norton. "As more people seek connection through apps, chatbots, and digital tools, it's critical to pause, protect personal information, and remember that real trust should never come with pressure or secrecy. AI itself isn't a scam, and many people find it genuinely feels supportive or comforting, but it's still artificial and there is no substitute for real human connection."

Loneliness Fueling AI Intimacy
With AI designed to be so supportive, it's increasingly becoming the go-to for reassurance for many people. Sixty three percent of current online daters say they would use an AI chatbot for therapy after a heartbreak, and 59% of those who have turned to AI for dating advice say they would trust an AI relationship coach more than a human friend or family member for relationship advice.

For some, AI already fills an emotional gap. One in five (19%) respondents say they would talk to an AI chatbot to get through a rough day, while 34% would trust or somewhat trust AI to provide emotionally safe or ethical dating advice.

From Support Tool to Romantic Partner

What starts as turning to AI for emotional support can quickly evolve into a deep attachment. The report finds that 44% believe an AI partner would be more emotionally supportive than a human one. That openness to AI companionship is already reshaping how some people think about romance. Nearly half (48%) of current online daters in the UK say they would consider a romantic relationship with an AI-powered clone of their celebrity crush.

Love, Trust, and a New Scam Landscape
While some are falling for digital charmers willingly, others are being duped. Romance scams are growing more sophisticated, blending emotional manipulation with cutting-edge tech. The report shows that 32% of past and current UK online daters say they have been targeted by a dating scam, and 38% of those targeted report falling victim. Nine in ten (91%) victims lost money, with average losses topping £2,000, with some losing up to £30,000.

Scammers are also exploiting the power of celebrity and many Brits are falling for it. 55% of current dating app users report being contacted by somebody claiming to be a celebrity or public figure. Among those contacted by these individuals, 29% went on to send money. This is part of a larger trend of nearly half (47%) of current dating app users reporting that they have been pressured to send money to someone they met online.

Where AI, Dating, and Digital Trust Collide
The 2026 Norton Cyber Safety Insights Report: Online Dating highlights a defining tension of modern relationships. AI is changing how people seek comfort and connection, but it is also opening the door to new forms of emotional manipulation and fraud.

Norton 360 with AI-powered Scam Detection, advanced tiers of Norton VPN, and Norton Mobile Security help protect online daters by identifying fake profiles, blocking phishing links, detecting scams in real time, and safeguarding personal information across devices.

For tips on dating more safely online and to read the full report, visit Norton.com: [link]

About the 2026 Norton Insights Report: Artificial Intimacy

The study was conducted online within the United States by Dynata on behalf of Gen July 24th to August 12th, 2025 among 1,000 adults ages 18 and older. Data are weighted where necessary by age, gender, and region, to be nationally representative.

About the Gen Threat Labs
Gen Threat Labs is the Cyber Safety research team within Gen, focused on uncovering and analyzing the latest digital threats and scams worldwide. Rooted in data, research, and technical expertise, the team identifies patterns and risks that shape the evolving cyber landscape. Their insights power the security technologies that protect people across Gen's portfolio of trusted brands, including Norton, Avast, LifeLock, and others.

About Norton

Norton is a leader in Cyber Safety, and part of Gen (NASDAQ: GEN), a global company dedicated to powering Digital Freedom with a family of trusted consumer brands. Norton empowers millions of individuals and families with award-winning protection for their devices, online privacy, and identity. Norton products and services are certified by independent testing organizations including AV-TEST, AV-Comparatives, and SE Labs. Norton is a founding