PRESS RELEASE

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Made For You: Norton Study Reveals 77% Would Date an AI

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 artificial intelligence? New findings from the Norton Insights Report: Artificial Intimacy suggest the idea is now mainstream, with 77% of current online daters saying they would consider dating an AI, and 59% believing it is possible to develop romantic feelings for one. After all, who wouldn't be drawn to a "perfect" partner designed to be attentive, affirming and always available?

This shift in attitudes about dating and AI is unfolding amid a widespread loneliness epidemic. More than four in five (81%) people report feeling lonely, with rates even higher among Gen Z and Millennials (89%). With emotional isolation levels high, many are becoming open to deeper relationships with technology, creating new emotional and financial vulnerabilities that scammers are already weaponizing. 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

As traditional support systems strain, many people are turning inward, and online, for comfort. Seventy percent of current online daters say they would use an AI chatbot for therapy after a heartbreak, and 78% 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 (21%) respondents say they would talk to an AI chatbot to get through a rough day, while 38% trust AI to provide emotionally safe or ethical dating advice.

From Support Tool to Romantic Partner

What starts as emotional support is increasingly evolving into something more intimate. AI systems are designed to be attentive, empathetic, and always available, qualities that can quickly foster attachment. The report finds that 59% of current dating app users believe it is possible to fall for an AI chatbot, while 63% believe an AI partner would be more emotionally supportive than a human one.

Love, Trust, and a New Scam Landscape

As emotional bonds with AI deepen, so do new vulnerabilities. The report shows that 44% of current online daters say they have been targeted by a dating scam, and 74% of those targeted report falling victim.

More than half say they have been pressured to send money, and 61% report being contacted by someone impersonating a celebrity or public figure. Among those targeted, 53% of current online daters shared personal information, and 38% sent money.

Where AI, Dating, and Digital Trust Collide

The 2026 Norton Insights Report: Artificial Intimacy highlights a defining tension of modern relationships. AI is reshaping how people find comfort, advice, and companionship, but it is also expanding the attack surface for 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 us.norton.com/blog/research/romance-scams-insights-report-2026

About the 2026 Norton Insights Report: Artificial Intimacy Edition

The study was conducted online within the United States by Dynata on behalf of Gen July 24th to August 11th, 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 member of the Coalition Against Stalkerware. Learn more at https://us.norton.com.