JUST TECH

NEWS

Microsoft Plans to Eliminate Face Analysis Tools in Push for ‘Responsible A.I.’ | The New York Times

By Kashmir Hill
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The technology giant will stop offering automated tools that predict a person’s gender, age and emotional state and will restrict the use of its facial recognition tool.

For years, activists and academics have been raising concerns that facial analysis software that claims to be able to identify a person’s age, gender and emotional state can be biased, unreliable or invasive — and shouldn’t be sold.

Acknowledging some of those criticisms, Microsoft said on Tuesday that it planned to remove those features from its artificial intelligence service for detecting, analyzing and recognizing faces. They will stop being available to new users this week, and will be phased out for existing users within the year.

The changes are part of a push by Microsoft for tighter controls of its artificial intelligence products. After a two-year review, a team at Microsoft has developed a “Responsible AI Standard,” a 27-page document that sets out requirements for A.I. systems to ensure they are not going to have a harmful impact on society.

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