

Web gets April Fools' makeover of goofy hoaxes

April 1 2010, By JAKE COYLE , AP Entertainment Writer



This screen grab shows the Google.com home page on Thursday, April 1, 2010. For at least one day, Topeka is one of the most popular Web sites in the world. It's all part of an April Fools' Day prank by Google, which for one day has changed its name to "Topeka." (AP Photo/google.com)

(AP) -- The Internet got an April Fools' Day makeover, as many of the major destinations on the Web continued the annual tradition of lighthearted hoaxes.

The prank Web sites were rolled out Thursday in a collective effort to amuse, not confuse. In a way, it's the Internet's biggest holiday.

YouTube offered the curious option of watching videos in text - essentially a stream of code instead of images.

The comedy video site FunnyOrDie.com was revamped as Bieber or Die, its home page riddled with the teenybopper star Justin Bieber. Last April Fools' Day, the site was "bought" by country star Reba McEntire.

Bieber was in the joke: In a video, he claimed he purchased the site and now "anything that's not Bieber dies." He also spoofs a number of famous viral videos, including "Dramatic Bieber" and "Bieber After the Dentist."

Google renamed itself Topeka, an ironic one-upmanship with the Kansas city, which renamed itself "Google, Kan." in March to help lure the company's experimental fiber-optic network.

Google is one of the most energetic April Fools' Day celebrators; last year it claimed to have invented a new technology to "index your brain." Pranks were rolled out across its myriad services, including a "vowel outage" on [Gmail](#) and a version of Google Translate for animals.

The site for Ben & Jerry's offered an even more enticing fantasy: virtual ice-cream. Starbucks poked fun at itself by unveiling new "micra" and "plenta" sizes, one absurdly small, the other as big as a bucket.

A number of sites took advantage of the recent explosion of 3-D by launching their products in another dimension. Google Maps and [Google Books](#) both unveiled 3-D versions, as did the video site Hulu.com. It added a 3-D viewing option that, when clicked, led to a mock Hulu "orientation" video.

Some news organizations, which on April 1 often have to fend off fake news, embraced the day's mockery, too. British media have stuck to the tradition for years.

One highlight: The London newspaper the Daily Telegraph reported that

ferrets were the key to delivering broadband to rural areas.

On the Net:

<http://youtube-global.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.funnyordie.com/>

<http://gmailblog.blogspot.com>

<http://www.starbucks.com/blog>

<http://www.benjerry.co.uk/>

<http://www.hulu.com/internal/confidential/the-initiative-chapter-1>

<http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en/landing/translateforanimals>

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