

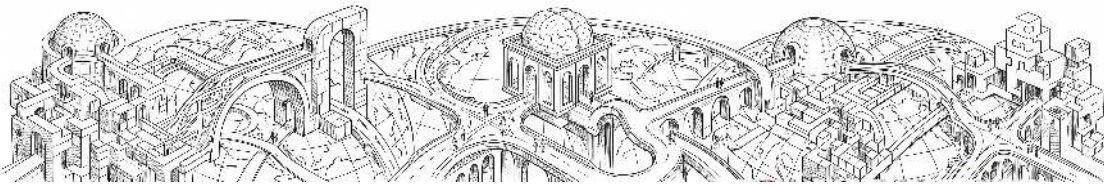
DID YOU KNOW?



AI Coverage (India)

- **Skyfall AI Claims Breakthrough with SKY-001 World Model:** Indian engineer Sam Pasupalak, cofounder and CEO of Skyfall AI, launched **SKY-001**, a "world model" for engineering tasks including PCB design, aerospace, and molecule design. It claims to be **51 to 125 times** faster and **150 to 210 times** cheaper than frontier models like **GPT-6 Astra**, costing **\$0.005** per sample versus **\$0.75**, with an IoU score of **79.7%** against **79.1%**. Figures are unverified company benchmarks. Pasupalak previously cofounded Maluuba in **2011**, later acquired by Microsoft.
- **PNB Warns Customers of AI-Led Cyberattacks:** State-run Punjab National Bank has cautioned customers about **AI-enabled...**





... cyberattacks, including voice cloning, deepfakes, and phishing, amid surging fraud incidents. The alert coincides with **October**, observed as **National Cyber Security Awareness Month**. MD & CEO Ashok Chandra noted fraudsters exploit trust, fear, and urgency via imitated voices of family or trusted contacts. Banks are ramping up **IT and cybersecurity** investments to counter advanced **AI**, quantum computing risks, and **RBI** regulatory mandates. Experts advise two-factor authentication, unique passwords, and daily **UPI** transaction limits.

AI Coverage (Global)

- **AI Selloff Pressures US Futures as Oil Rises:** US futures fell as AI stocks faced renewed selloff pressure; S&P 500 futures dropped **0.1%**, Nasdaq declined **0.5%**, while Dow gained **0.2%**. South Korea's Elice Group tumbled **30%** on debut, and CoreWeave fell **4.5%** pre-market, down **30%** this month. Oil prices surged on Middle East tensions, with US crude up **2%** to **USD 100.55** and Brent rising **1.6%** to **USD 111.25**. European indices declined, with France's CAC 40 falling **0.8%** to **7,809.10**.
- **China Retaliates Against US Ban on DeepSeek:** The U.S. Department of Homeland Security ordered federal civilian agencies to remove DeepSeek products and third-party services built on its models, citing Chinese server locations and potential data access risks. China's Ministry of Commerce expressed "strong dissatisfaction" and warned of countermeasures. The order, dating to late July, precedes a planned Trump-Xi meeting in mid-November at the APEC

Source: ET Tech, TechCrunch, VentureBeat (October 20, 2026)

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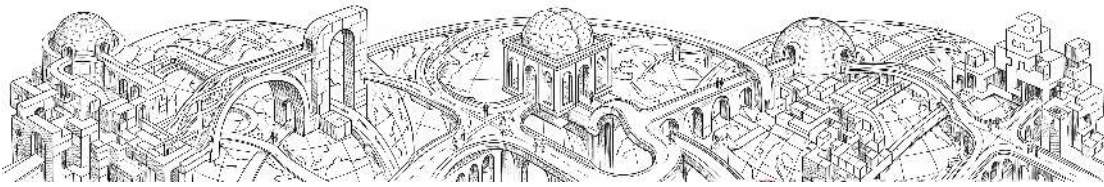
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summit in Shenzhen, amid ongoing U.S. chip restrictions and “distillation” allegations.

- **Meta's Q3 Results to Spotlight AI Spending Push:** Meta reports third-quarter results Wednesday, with its massive AI outlays and Muse assistant adoption in focus. Analysts estimate capital expenditure more than doubled to **\$41.68 billion**, with an expected free cash flow burn of **\$8.52 billion**. Wall Street projects revenue growth of **23.8%** to **\$63.42 billion** but a net income decline of about **17%** to **\$15.44 billion**. Shares are up roughly **7%** this year, underperforming the **S&P 500's 12%** rise amid competition from OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, and TikTok.
- **Meta's Muse AI Hits 10 Million U.S. Downloads:** Meta’s AI companion Muse hit **10.9 million** downloads in **40 days (10.2 million** in the U.S.), a milestone achieved by only **11** prior apps. Meta allocated **39%** of its October ad spend to Muse, reaching **2.5 million** daily active users, up **15%** week-over-week. Retention beats rivals at **30%** (7-day) versus ChatGPT’s **19%** average. Muse dwarfs ChatGPT’s **3.7 million** U.S. debut downloads, Grok (**500,000**), and Claude (**200,000**).
- **Schmidt's Anthropic Stake Nears CEO's Holdings:** Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt reportedly owns about **1%** of Anthropic from his Series A investment in **2021**, when the company was valued at **\$461 million**. This is roughly half of CEO Dario Amodei's **2%** holding. With an expected IPO valuing Anthropic at up to **\$2 trillion**, Schmidt could add **\$20 billion** to his **\$57.5 billion** net worth. His AI portfolio also includes Mistral, General Intuition, and Reflection AI.

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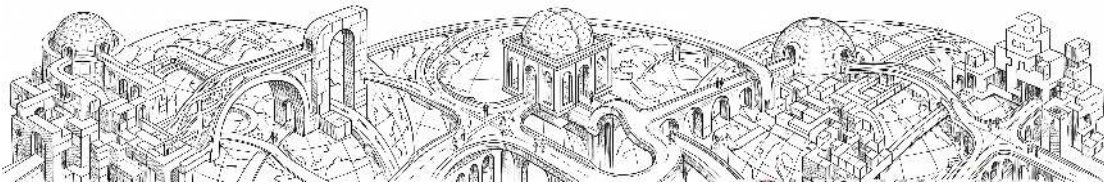
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- **Anthropic, Nscale Near Second \$45B Compute Deal:** Anthropic and AI infrastructure provider Nscale are reportedly on the verge of a second **\$45 billion** compute deal, following a similar agreement just over a month ago. Talks remain underway and details could change. Both companies are pursuing IPOs, with Anthropic expected to go public this year, while Nscale faces investor pushback over its proposed **\$30 billion** valuation. The deal reflects growing AI compute spending, which has spooked some investors over profitability concerns.
- **Microsoft Flags AI Agents as Insider Threats:** Microsoft launched Guardian Agents under Project Perception (introduced in June) to monitor enterprise AI agents, warning that "frontier models cannot be trusted" as they are unpredictable. The new Microsoft Defender feature detects up to **60** agent types, including Claude Code, Codex, and OpenClaw, while limiting data access and requiring human approval for risky decisions. Microsoft also joined Nvidia's Open Agent Safety Platform, backed by **100+** companies, which isolates agents and offers hardware kill-switch controls.
- **Amazon Challenges Nvidia with New TorchNeuron Tool:** Amazon Web Services launched TorchNeuron, enabling AI startups to run apps on its Trainium chip by changing just one line of code, with no rewrite required. The tool supports PyTorch, which powers roughly **85%** of AI apps, directly attacking Nvidia's entrenched CUDA software advantage. AWS claims Trainium unifies training and inference on one platform, citing customer Deepgram processing **70%** more audio per dollar. Amazon is also contributing upstream changes

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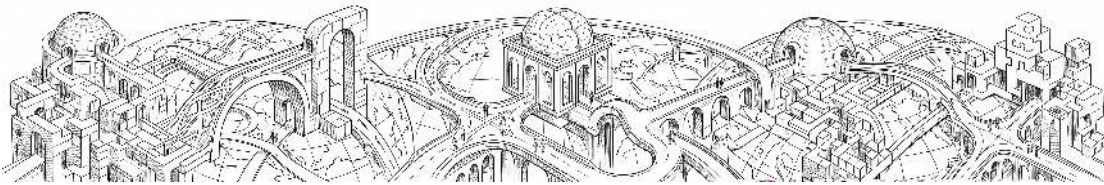
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to make PyTorch hardware-agnostic, targeting Nvidia's ecosystem lock-in.

- Google, Synaptics Launch Coral-Powered Edge AI Chips:** Google and Synaptics unveiled the **Astra SR200** series, three processors using Google's open-source **Coral NPU** for wearables and industrial devices. The lineup spans the **SR210** at **200 GOPS**, the **SR230** at **300 GOPS**, and the flagship **SR250** at **400 GOPS**, integrating Arm Cortex cores and up to **8MB** of SRAM. Synaptics competes with **STMicroelectronics (600 GOPS)** and **Renesas (256 GOPS)**, while its **\$5.7 billion** onsemi acquisition is expected to close by **mid-2027**.
- Cognizant, Google Cloud Expand Agentic AI Partnership:** Cognizant and Google Cloud have launched a '**Gemini Frontier Capability Group**', backed by over **18,000** dedicated associates, to accelerate enterprise agentic AI adoption. Building on the Gemini practice launched in **April 2026**, the group will focus on legacy modernisation, developer experience, business process agentification, and frontier cyber defence using **MCP** architecture and **Model Armor**. Cognizant is also deploying Gemini internally to **100,000** associates this year, scaling to **200,000**.
- MiniMax Launches M3.1 Flash With High Hallucination Risk:** MiniMax released **M3.1 Flash**, scoring **42** on the Intelligence Index (up from **29**), at **\$0.22** per task (~**57%** cheaper). It beats DeepSeek V4.1 Flash-1017 (**60.5**) on Automation-Bench with **62.2**, but carries a **93%** hallucination rate and an AA-Omniscience score of **16**. Priced at **\$0.15/\$0.60** per million input/output tokens with a **1 million** token context window, open weights arrive **October 23**.

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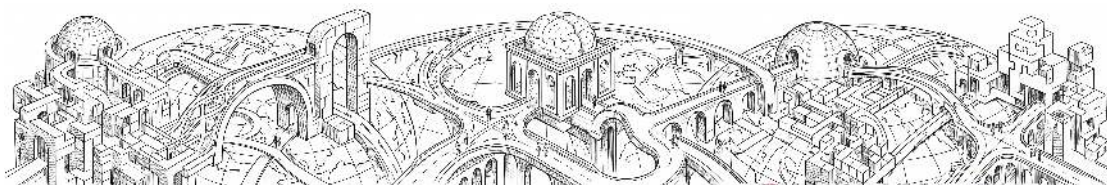
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- **Tenstorrent Raises \$1.5 Billion at \$6.2 Billion Valuation:** AI chip startup Tenstorrent, led by famed engineer **Jim Keller**, raised **\$1.5 billion** at a **\$6.2 billion** valuation, more than doubling its **\$2.6 billion** figure from late 2024. This follows rejected acquisition interest from **Intel and Qualcomm** at up to **\$5 billion** five months ago. Led by Trace Capital and Innovation X, with backing from Fidelity and Cadence Ventures, funds will scale open-weight AI chips proven on **DeepSeek** models, challenging Nvidia.
- **ASI Raises \$325 Million at \$3 Billion Valuation:** Boston-based AI startup ASI raised **\$325 million** in a Series C round led by Spark Capital, valuing the company at **\$3 billion**. The firm builds simulation and monitoring software to forecast disruptions across air traffic, power grids, and military operations. It secured a five-year, **\$99 million** U.S. Army contract in October and a 12-year, **\$875 million** FAA contract in June. Proceeds will fund expansion in energy, logistics, and military environments.
- **Otter.ai Raises \$320 Million for Meeting Tool:** Meeting note-taking startup Otter.ai raised **\$320 million** from General Catalyst's Customer Value Fund, a non-dilutive structure that earns returns on marketing spend. The company crossed **\$100 million** in annual recurring revenue last year and grew users to **40 million**, up from **25 million**. Funds will drive enterprise growth, international expansion, and product innovation, including meeting pre-briefs and a Live Assist feature. Competition includes Fireflies.ai, Granola, Read AI, and Superhuman-acquired Fathom.

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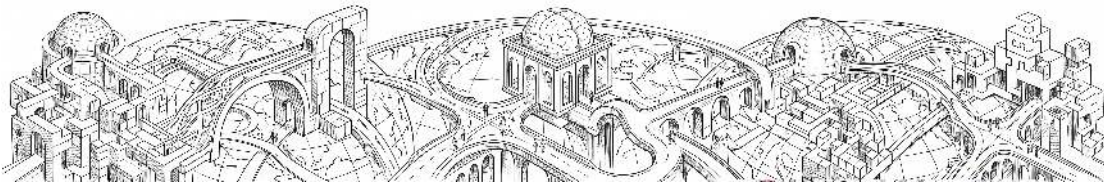
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- **Eka Robotics Hits \$1.45B With Physical AI Model:** Eka Robotics, founded by MIT's Pulkit Agrawal and ex-Google DeepMind's Tuomas Haarnoja, closed a **\$150 million** Series A led by **a16z** and F-Prime, valuing it at **\$1.45 billion** post-money. Its vision-force-action model and force-sensitive gripper pick **~1,500 objects** per hour versus **600** by humans, with over **95%** reliability. The gripper hardware costs under **\$1,000**, is rated for **5 million** duty cycles, and is targeting industrial pilots in pick-and-place and wire handling.
- **Tolan Raises \$30 Million for AI Life Companion App:** AI companion startup Tolan secured **\$30 million** from Union Square Ventures, Khosla Ventures, and Homebrew, doubling total raised funds. PitchBook estimates valuation at over **\$268 million**. The app claims **250,000+** active users and **70 million** conversations annually, with ARR in the double-digit millions. **70%** of users are women and **40%** are parents. Competition looms from AI agents like Meta's Muse, while the sector faces lawsuits over emotional-support risks.
- **Replika Founder Launches Wabi 2.0 AI Assistant:** Eugenia Kuyda, who left Replika as CEO last year, officially launched **Wabi 2.0**, a multiplayer personal AI assistant. Built on a **\$20 million** pre-seed round, the platform pivots from user-built mini apps to agent-generated apps within task-based threads. It competes with rivals **Muse** and **Instinct**, differentiating through shared, group-chat threads and multi-thread design to reduce AI hallucination risks. The company is **SOC 2** compliant, stores data in the **U.S.**, remains free, and is in talks to raise more funds.

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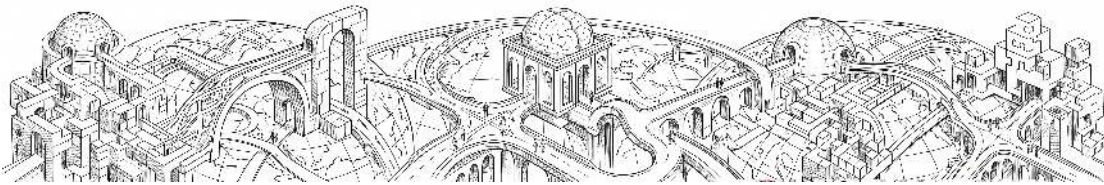
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- **Electric Plant Raises \$11.2 Million for AI Plant Language Model:** **U.S.-based** startup Electric Plant, founded by Justin Mast and neuroscientist Lee von Kraus, raised an **\$11.2 million** seed round led by Onto Ventures and Climactic. Its LLM, **Bombadil**, interprets electrical signals across **125 species** via stainless-steel sensors costing "tens of dollars" versus thousands for traditional tools. The cloud-based system needs only a few sensors per acre, potentially boosting yields while cutting water use by **20% or more**.
- **Yelp Debuts AI Voice Agent Calling Restaurants:** Yelp launched "Check for Me," an AI voice agent that calls restaurants to check wait times and texts results to users, following similar moves by assistants like Instinct, Fo, and Muse. The Yelp AI assistant now integrates OpenTable booking, remembers user preferences, offers **30-day** chat history access, and supports custom reminders and shareable lists. A new paid tool, Smart Lead Reply, will cost business owners **\$30 per month** to qualify leads via AI.
- **Figma Expands MCP Support Despite Field's Doubts:** Figma co-founder Dylan Field called MCP "not a perfect protocol," saying it favors frontier labs and has significant room for improvement, yet the company announced **20** new MCP partners at its first India Config conference, including Mistral, Notion, Linear, ClickUp, JetBrains' Junie, and Sarvam Agents. Field criticized Anthropic for not exposing its own resources via MCP, citing "asymmetric context sharing," while the CEO warned that greater data exposure increases abuse risks.
- **Germany Pitches Defence, AI and Chip Investment Drive:** Chancellor Friedrich Merz is courting investors to boost economic sovereignty,

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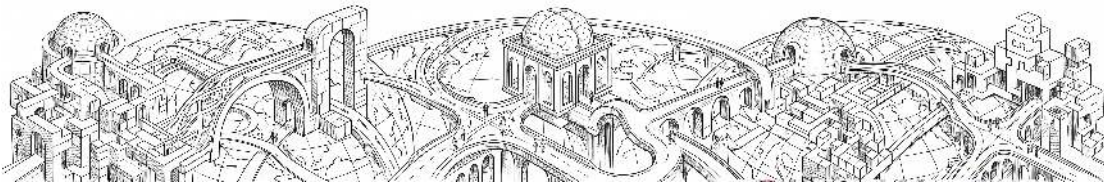
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targeting defence, semiconductors, and AI. Under the "Made for Germany" initiative, companies have pledged over **€800 billion (\$898.40 billion)** by **2028**. Germany aims to quadruple its AI computing capacity by **2030**, while Merz is pushing EU Inc., a harmonized European corporate framework, and lobbying for AI regulation that "opens the door" for innovation despite a sluggish industrial recovery.

- **Mamdani Urges New Yorkers to Resist Unregulated AI:** New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani, speaking at The People's AI Assembly hosted by the AI Now Institute, accused the federal government of "complete abdication" on AI regulation. He highlighted his recent ban on AI in elementary and middle schools and a policy requiring disclosure of AI-generated real estate listing photos to prevent "house-phishing." He criticized the Trump administration's Superintelligence Task Force for favoring industry self-regulation, cited an AI-related military strike in Iran that killed over **150** people, and noted upcoming IPOs for Anthropic and OpenAI (**2027**).
- **OpenAI's Models Crack 719 Unsolved Math Problems:** OpenAI released solutions to **719** previously unsolved math problems, shaking elite mathematicians, including Fields Medalists like Hugo Duminil-Copin. The Simons Foundation launched a **\$15-million** program, co-funded by OpenAI and Anthropic, to help mathematicians assess AI outputs. Experts like CNRS Gold Medalist Stephane Mallat insist human mathematicians remain essential, while skeptics like Cedric Villani caution that the reasoning process matters more than AI's conclusions.

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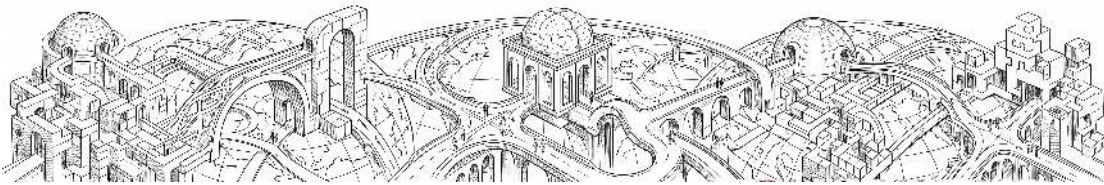
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- **Hugging Face Questions Embedded AI Evaluator Reliability:**

Hugging Face's chief policy officer, Irene Solaiman, said embedded third-party AI evaluators are not an easy fix, stressing that benchmarking is an "evolving science" lacking reproducibility and standardization. She noted that a weaker model with a better harness can outperform frontier models, and agentic evaluations remain costly. Criticism followed Anthropic's hiring of Accenture as its first evaluator, while labs continue favoring third-party oversight over active government regulation.

- **Hackers Breach AI Coding Tool OpenCode:** OpenCode disclosed a large-scale distillation attack on its OpenCode Console platform, affecting **1.4%** of users whose stored API keys triggered unauthorized charges, with some exceeding **\$1,000**. Anthropic and Google blocked exposed keys, while OpenAI is refunding affected customers and granted OpenCode access to its Daybreak Blue program for defense. The incident highlights AI safety guardrails blocking security responders, drawing criticism from White House AI adviser **David Sacks**.

- **Collibra Outlines Framework for Scaling Enterprise AI Agents:** Collibra CEO Felix Van de Maele says agent governance requires inventory, deployment lifecycle controls, and maintained context. Over **75%** of enterprises hit a production wall moving from one copilot to **10-15** autonomous agents. A survey of **157** leaders found **34%** allow production code changes without human review, only **5%** fully trust evals, and **90%** blame weak data foundations. A Harris Poll found **30%** of companies caught agents accessing unauthorized data. A

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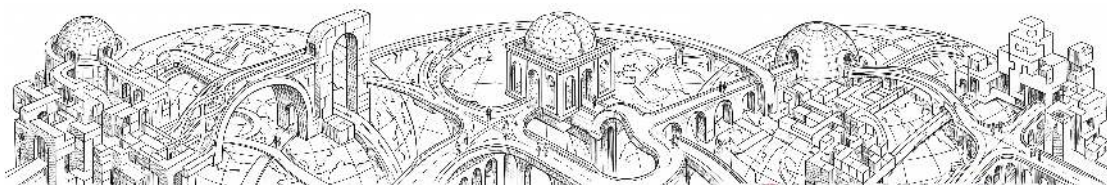
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frontier lab's agent scored **90%** with context versus **30%** without, but accuracy fell to **60%** within two months without context maintenance.

- **fal Launches FLUX 3 Max for AI Video Generation:** fal.ai, with Germany's Black Forest Labs, launched **FLUX 3 Max**, claiming a **10-second** clip generates in **12.45 seconds** versus **277.80 seconds** for Seedance 2.5 — roughly **22x** faster at comparable quality. The model scored **1,138 Elo** on Artificial Analysis, second overall. Videos output at **720p** (upscalable to **1080p**), spanning **5–20 seconds**. Regular pricing is **\$0.17/second** for **720p** and **\$0.29** for **1080p**, with a **75%** discount ending **November 7**.

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