LionTree WEEKLY UPDATE

WEEK ENDING JUNE 26, 2026

The market's leadership broadened out this week, with the Dow hitting a new high even as the broader market and tech-heavy indices came under pressure. The Dow rose +0.6%, while the S&P 500 declined -2.0% and the Nasdaq fell -4.6%, weighed down by renewed weakness across AI and mega-cap tech.

Within the sector, developments were on the lighter side (which we aren't complaining about!). See below.

1. LionTree's Lens: Summer 2026 - *NEW REPORT*
2. Competition for TV Watch Time Looks Set To Further Intensify
3. TMT Workforces Felt More Heat This Week
4. Meta Is Widening Its Lens On The Smart Glasses Market
5. Grab Bag: GTA 6 Starts Pre-Orders / Meta Reportedly Pushing Predictions App / Amazon Prime Day Estimates

I would also like to flag that we published the Summer Edition of our quarterly ***LionTree's Sector Insights & A Look Ahead*** deck this week, which is accompanied by a ~20 minute video narration, both of which can be accessed HERE.

Enjoy the read.

Best,
Leslie

P.S. If this report has been forwarded to you and you would like to be added to our distribution list, please email me at lmallon@liontree.com

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This weekly product is aimed at helping our key corporate and investor clients stay in front of major themes and developments driving the TMT and consumer-oriented sector. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or comments!

Top Themes

1) LionTree's Lens: Summer 2026 - *NEW REPORT*

In case you missed our email yesterday, we wanted to flag our ***LionTree's Lens: Sector Insights & A Look Ahead, Summer 2026 perspectives***, which highlights the market trends and thematic shifts across the TMT and consumer sectors which we viewed as most significant over the past quarter, along with our forward-looking expectations.

This edition highlights emerging trends across the sector, including growing data center pushback, consumer-facing agentic AI use cases, more companies pursuing "super app" strategies, increased focus on satellite connectivity and Big Tech's rising investment in smart glasses.

-> As always, we're happy to discuss any of these topics in more detail, and we'd appreciate your thoughts and/or feedback

CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL VIDEO (~20 min) AND DECK

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2) Competition for TV Watch Time Looks Set To Further Intensify

Just as the streaming wars have eased alongside the industry maturation, the TV industry may be gearing up for some new TV watch time competition as the lines between social video, streaming, and traditional TV continue to blur. Instagram this week announced that it is expanding its TV presence in the US with broader connected-TV availability and new viewing features. Some new features include interest-based channels, Stories, and horizontal video. Also interestingly, the Co specifically flagged that it is exploring longer form creator content, among other areas of expansion.

At the same time, late last week, Netflix signaled an openness to more broadcaster partnerships similar to its newly launched TF1 partnership in France. That took investors by surprise.

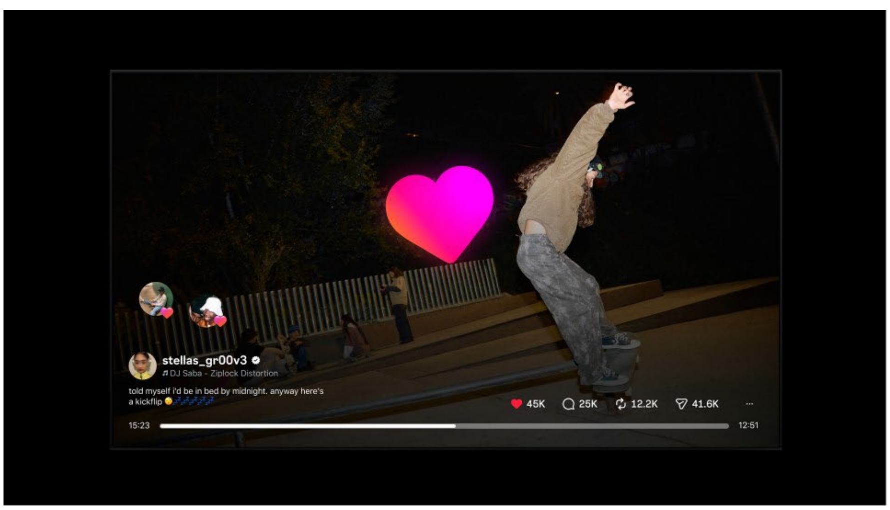
Overall, competition for consumers' entertainment watch time could be set to take another leg up.

See more details below…

Instagram Is Expanding "Instagram For TV" Across The US And Testing New Features (link/link/link)

- **Starting this week, Instagram for TV is available on Samsung Smart TVs, including 2020 model year TVs and newer**
    - **Background:** Instagram for TV first launched on Amazon Fire TV in Dec 2025, and first launched on Google TV devices in the US in Feb of this year…Samsung is the latest addition
        - The IG TV app was first launched to expand Reels viewing beyond mobile, and now users can also browse posts from their Instagram feeds directly on their TVs
        - IG TV is now available across most connected TV devices in the US

- **This expansion will include a wide array of new features -**
    - **Channels**
        - This will make it easier to find videos, "whether its comedy, sports, or your favorite creators"
    - **Cast Reels from users' phone**
        - Send Reels directly from users' phone to your TV
        - **Availability:** Casting is available now on Google TV and Fire TV, including videos from users' Saved tab
    - **Stories**
        - Users can see limited-time posts that appear on the top of Instagram feeds on TV
    - **Horizontal video:**
        - The Co is testing a dedicated home for horizontal videos



Source: Instagram

- **The Co is also still exploring other new formats as they continue to expand -**
    - **Longer-form creator content**
    - **Episodic series**
    - **Live on TV**
    - **The Co "aim[s] to start rolling them out soon"**

-> Meta's stock was down -2.3% in reaction to the news and is down -16.6% YTD. Netflix was down -5.8% on the day of the news

Netflix Is Also Signaling Interest In More Broadcast Partnerships (link/link/link/link)

- **According to co-CEO Greg Peters' comments last Friday, Netflix is open to pursuing additional partnerships with TV broadcasters after the launch of its previously annc'd TF1 partnership**
    - Peters highlights that the TF1 agreement is an opportunity to better understand how collaborations with established b-casters can create value for both parties and that similar partnerships could also be structured in other mkts

- **Despite signaling openness to partnership opportunities, Peters indicated that Netflix remains committed to its existing strategy and is not actively pursuing large-scale studio acquisitions**

- **For background on Netflix's partnership with TF1…**
    - **The agreement was originally annc'd in June 2025:** TF1's live channels and TF1+ on-demand library would become available directly inside Netflix in France starting in summer 2026
    - **The full rollout was confirmed last week:** Netflix annc'd on June 18th that the partnership was officially going live, with French Netflix subscribers able to access TF1+ programming and TF1 live channels starting June 19, 2026
    - **This rollout marks the first time in its history that Netflix has become a carrier of linear channels from a third party**

-> Netflix's stock was down -5.8% in reaction to the news and is down -21.3% YTD

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3) TMT Workforces Felt More Heat This Week

Workforce disruption was in focus this week as well, with several companies moving forward with restructurings, automation initiatives and cost-saving plans tied to new technology deployment. Oracle disclosed that it reduced its workforce by -13% over the past 12 months and cited the adoption and deployment of AI technologies as a factor that "have resulted, and may continue to result, in reductions to our workforce," while Meta has reportedly replaced ~50% of human review requests with LLMs this year and is aiming to push that figure to ~90% for certain types of content by year-end.

In gaming, EA reportedly laid off an unknown number of employees ahead of its pending $55bn sale, while JD.com's founder said robots would "sooner or later" replace ~700k delivery workers in China, even as the company works to retrain couriers for robot repair and maintenance roles, and iHeartMedia began layoffs as part of a broader restructuring plan designed to speed up the sales process and deliver $50mn of annualized savings.

See more below…

TMT Workforces' Are Feeling The Pressure…All From This Week:

- **Oracle disclosed that it reduced its workforce by 13% over the past 12 months and cited AI deployment in an annual filing on Monday** (link/link/link)
    - The Co's total workforce stands at 141k full-time employees as of May 2026, down from 162k employees at the same time last yr
    - "The adoption and deployment of AI technologies across our operations have resulted, and may continue to result, in reductions to our workforce"
    - **They noted that workforce changes can be "disruptive," including the incr'd restructuring costs and reduced productivity**
        - The Co spent $1.8bn on restructuring costs, including severance payments and other exit costs, a jump from the $374mn in the previous year
    - **As a reminder… The Co told employees in March that it was "cutting thousands of jobs" as it faced investor pressure over raising huge amounts of debt for its AI infrastructure buildout**

-> Oracle's stock was down -2.5% in reaction to the news and is down -23.8% YTD

- **Reportedly, Meta replaced ~50% of human review requests with LLMs this yr, according to people familiar with the matter** (link/link)
    - Meta aims to reduce that figure further by YE, and by ~90% for certain types of content, the people told the FT
        - The Co is also attempting to reduce operating costs by using AI to automate internal processes such as coding
    - **Meta recently instructed staff to use its new model, Muse Spark, for most of its moderation and customer support**
        - "The point of this work is to improve our enforcement efforts, and we're deploying these more advanced AI systems once we're sure they're consistently performing better than our current methods of content enforcement" Meta told the FT

-> Meta's stock was down -1.3% in reaction to the news and is down -16.6% YTD

- **Press reports also indicate that EA laid off an "unknown amount of people" ahead of their sale** (link/link)
    - An email seen by *Kotaku* sent out last Wed. to EA's customer support alluded to the layoffs to "adapt how we work to better meet fans' changing needs"
        - "As part of this evolution, we are making or proposing to make changes to some roles, creating new roles, and moving certain work to different teams, locations, or service partners"
    - **EA has been undergoing rolling layoffs for the last few years**
        - **In 2023**, it laid off ~200 Apex Legends testers, an unknown number of individuals at Codemasters, then later that year another ~800 people, followed by even more layoffs at BioWare in August
        - **In 2024**, they laid off ~670 individuals
        - **In 2025**, additional layoffs took place at BioWare, followed by another layoff of ~300, including ~100 people at Respawn
        - **This year,** the Co has already laid off developers that worked on Skate and Battlefield 6 (this marks the third layoff this year)
    - **No specific reason has been given for layoffs**
    - **Deal timing update…it is expected to be completed within the next few months**
        - Only a European anti-trust approval verdict is holding it back

-> Also this week as part of that EU review, a group of investors incl Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund have sought EU foreign subsidy approval for its $55bn acq of EA, according to a European Commission filing; The Commission, which will assess the deal under its Foreign Subsidies Regulations aimed at preventing unfair non-EU subsidies to companies looking to acquire rivals in the 27-country bloc or taking part in public tenders, set a July 30th deadline for its decision.(link)

- **Richard Liu, founder and chair of JD.com, said that "sooner or later" robots would replace ~700k delivery workers in China** (link/link/link)
    - "In the future, when robots are delivering parcels, sooner or later, there will be a day when couriers are basically no longer needed," Liu told the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation CEO forum
        - "It will definitely be robots delivering parcels"
        - But… "I really do not want our 700k brothers to go without meals, without jobs"
    - **Liu said the Co had signed contracts with ~120 schools to retrain its couriers for new work such as repairing and maintaining robots**
        - He did not forecast when robot deliveries would become widespread
    - **The # of "gig workers" in China (temp employees doing blue-collar jobs such as factory work, ride-hailing drivers or deliveries) will reach 320mn this year compared to 200mn from 5 yrs ago**
        - Gig workers make up ~40% of all urban employment in China
    - **Beijing prioritized frontier tech such as robotics in its next 5-yr plan, its policy document that was officially approved in March**
        - China's plan puts "robotics at the heart of its modern industrial system", the International Federation of Robotics said
        - "The aim is to pivot its AI research towards physical applications with robots as main drivers for economic growth"

-> JD.com's stock was down -1.9% in reaction to the news and is down -11.5% YTD

- **iHeartMedia began their layoffs as part of restructuring plan** (link/link)

    - In a memo sent to employees this week, execs outlined a need to speed up the sales process after building new tech capabilities over the past few years
        - The memo does not detail the exact number of employees impacted, but reports have put it in the dozens
    - **The move also comes after iHeartMedia annc'd a cost-saving plan that is meant to lead to $50mn of annualized cost savings**
        - The plan, annc'd in May, was set to begin in H2 2026, and comes in addition to the $100mn of previously annc'd savings

-> iHeartMedia stock was up +2.3% in reaction to the news and is up +3.8% YTD

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4) Meta Is Widening Its Lens On The Smart Glasses Market

Meta this week unveiled its first self-branded AI glasses, expanding beyond its Ray-Ban and Oakley collaborations. Although Meta designed the glasses itself, EssilorLuxottica will continue to produce them.

Starting at $299, the new glasses add a new lower price point to Meta's growing portfolio of AI eyewear. They also mark the debut of Meta AI powered by Muse Spark, the first AI model built specifically for Meta products. Together, the launch broadens Meta's smart glasses lineup across both brands and price points as the Co continues to build out its presence in the ever-expanding smart glasses space.

See more below… (link/link/link)

-> Meta's stock was flat in reaction to the news and is down -16.6% YTD

- **Meta launches new in-house designed smart glasses, which extends its smart glasses portfolio beyond those that feature designs from Ray-Ban and Oakley**
    - While Meta designed the glasses, its partner EssilorLuxottica SA (the parent Co of Ray-Ban and Oakley) will produce them
    - EssilorLuxottica's logo appears alongside Meta's on the inside of the temple arms and on the packaging

- **But the even bigger change is the the price tag:** The new Meta Glasses will start at $299, making them less expensive than the latest Ray-Ban models which begin at $379
    - **Meta and EssilorLuxottica execs said the new price point came in response to a desire for a "more accessible price point"**
    - "We were looking at brands together and trying to figure out what makes sense…we didn't really find one, so then it was just, 'All right, you've got Ray-Ban Meta here, Oakley Meta here and Meta at the bottom", per Alex Himel, who runs Meta's wearables unit

- **Meta Glasses are offered in 3 frames (all compatible w/ prescription lenses) -**
    - **Meta Adventurer ($299):** A "clean, rectangle shape" available in standard and large
    - **Meta Fury ($299):** A "bold frame that makes a bold statement"
    - **Meta Glasses by Kylie ($399):** A unique slim oval frame designed in collaboration with Kylie Jenner and inspired by her personal style

- **The glasses come in a wide range of color and lens combinations, w/ 26 styles available at launch**

- **These are the first AI glasses to launch with the "completely rebuilt" Meta AI powered by Muse Spark,** the first model out of Meta Superintelligence Labs built specifically for Meta products
    - **The Co's previous glasses will get the new model through a software update over the next few weeks**

- **Other new features (across Meta's AI glasses portfolio, including existing Ray-Ban Meta and Oakley Meta models where supported) include…**
    - **Dynamic photo,** which is a new way to capture photos that automatically snaps multiple frames and recommends the best one, while still letting users choose their favorite shot to share
    - **Pedestrian navigation is coming soon** for displayless glasses, making it easier than ever to get around with turn-by-turn directions

- **The Co is adding support for 14 new languages to live translation,** including Japanese, Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, and Korean, so you can have real-time conversations anywhere

- **Meta Glasses are available now in "several countries" at Meta.com, Best Buy, Amazon, Lenscrafters, Sunglasses Hut, and addtl select retailers**

- **The Meta Glasses announcement comes a week after Snap launched SPECS,** a pair of AR glasses that cost $2,195, though Snap's glasses overlay digital content onto a user's real-world view while Meta's glasses allow display for text and AI interaction

Source: CNBC

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5) Grab Bag: GTA 6 Starts Pre-Orders / Meta Reportedly Pushing Predictions App / Amazon Prime Day Estimates

- **GTA 6 preorders began on Thursday, June 25th at midnight local time** (link/link/link/link/link/link)
  - **The launch date remains at Nov. 19th** for the PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X/S games
  - **Pricing:**
    - **GTA 6: Standard Edition @ $79.99**, vs expectations that the game could launch as high as $100
    - **GTA 6: Ultimate Edition @ $99.99** and includes an exclusive collection of extra vehicles, weapons, apparel
  - **Pre-order details**
    - **All GTA 6 pre-orders and purchases before Nov. 20th, will include the Vintage Vice City Pack**: This includes a collection of in-game items, alongside a free month of GTA+ for digital pre-orders
    - **Players who pre-order the digital version will be able to begin pre-loading on Nov. 12th to ensure they are able to play on Nov. 19th**
    - The physical version of GTA 6 will contain a download code inside the box to support pre-loading
  - **Distribution:** The game will be available at the PlayStation Store, Microsoft Store, Rockstar Games Store, and global retailers and storefronts
  - **GTA 6 projections:**
    - Industry analyst and well-known leaker Tom Henderson, predicts GTA 6 could generate ~$1bn in pre-order revenue in an hour (~12-14mn copies)
    - Piper Sandler also recently est'd that GTA 6 could sell more than 46mn copies on its first day of release (generating ~$3bn in launch-day revenue)
  - **For comparison, GTA 5 had ~7mn pre-orders worldwide prior to its 2013 release (~3.7mn copies for the Xbox 360 & 3.4mn for the PS3)**

-> Take-Two's stock was up +1.3% in reaction to the news but is down -6.9% YTD

- **Meta reportedly plans to release an AI-powered prediction market app** (link/link/link)
  - Per press reports, Zuckerberg wants Meta to have its own predictions app and has given the go-ahead to develop one, internally calling it "Arena"
    - The app would be independent of Meta's other social media offerings
  - **Sources said the current concept for Arena can be described as "experimental but a top priority," and it wouldn't involve money**
    - Instead, it would essentially be a video game where users would earn points for betting correctly on topics
    - The sources added that money could be added later
  - **NPR also obtained internal Meta documents about the effort in further detail**
    - The docs describe how instead of wagering real money; users of the new app will receive "a daily virtual allotment" of "play money" that can be used to bet on "the outcome of future events"
    - It is unclear what range of topics Meta hopes to cover with its prediction market; the Co is planning to use AI to drive the svs
    - **Timing?** An exact release date was not specified

-> Meta's stock was down -0.3% in reaction to the news and is down -16.6% YTD

-> Also, this week, Kalshi is reportedly in talks to raise at a $40bn valuation, almost double its $22bn Series F which was priced seven weeks; This new round, potentially closing by Q3, would increase Kalshi's total equity raised to about $3.7bn since its inception. (link)

- **Amazon's Prime Day event this week (June 23-26th) is projected to bring in $26.3bn in e-commerce sales in the US, up +9% y/y, according to estimates from Adobe** (link/link/link)
  - According to Numerator rising prices could send people shopping, as ~50% say inflation will make them more likely to shop on Prime Day, while 20% said it would make them less likely to shop the sale

-> Target's equivalent, Target Circle Deal Days, also runs June 23–26 for Target Circle members. Walmart's competing summer event, Walmart Deals, runs June 22–28, with Walmart+ early access to select deals. (link/link)

-> Amazon's stock was down -4.7% on the day of the news but it was largely due to a broader hyperscaler selloff, YTD the stock is up +0.8%

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Stock Market Check

Market Changes the Past Week

Benchmark	Abs. Value	W/W Change
S&P 500	7,354	(2.0%)
NASDAQ	25,298	(4.6%)
Dow Jones	51,876	0.6%
Gold	$4,086	(3.8%)
WTI Crude	$69.50	(8.4%)
10-Year Treasury Yield	4.10%	(35.9) bps
Bitcoin	$60,110	(4.5%)
Ether	$1,563	(8.3%)

LionTree TMT Universe Performance (~220 stocks)

Best-Performing Stocks	+	Worst-Performing Stocks	–
Liberty Latin America Ltd	48.5%	Allbirds Inc.	(27.3%)
Optimum	44.8%	ARM Holdings PLC ADR	(24.2%)
Groupon Inc.	39.2%	AMC Ent.	(22.5%)
Ziprecruiter Inc	28.5%	DigitalOcean Holdings Inc	(20.5%)
Cable One Inc	26.2%	Oracle Corp	(18.8%)
Domo Inc	21.7%	Virgin Galactic Holdings Inc	(18.7%)
iHeartMedia, Inc.	19.8%	Rackspace Technology, Inc.	(18.3%)
Yext, Inc.	16.7%	CoreWeave	(17.8%)
MNTN	15.7%	QUALCOMM Inc	(17.1%)
ThredUp Inc.	15.0%	PLAYSTUDIOS, Inc.	(16.7%)

Best-Performing Sub-Industries	+	Worst-Performing Sub-Industries	–
Employment Marketplace	8.3%	Space	(18.8%)
Live Events	6.5%	Semis	(9.0%)
Last Mile Transport/Delivery	5.4%	China Internet / Tech	(8.7%)
Pay-TV / Broadband	3.8%	Satellite Communications	(8.6%)
Digital Real Estate	3.8%	Internet/Advertising	(7.3%)
Out of Home Advertising	3.1%	Entertainment Facilities/Theme P	(7.2%)
Online Travel	2.7%	e-Commerce	(4.6%)
Application Software	2.5%	Hardware/Handsets	(4.1%)
Cybersecurity Software	2.4%	US Media/Video	(3.8%)
Ad Tech	2.0%	Software & IT Services	(3.3%)

This Week's Other Curated News

Advertising/Ad Agencies/Ad Tech

- **WPP Media annc'd an AI standards initiative for TV/video ads, developing an AI Buyer Agent under its WPP Open platform.** The effort, backed by cos incl. Comcast, Disney, Fox, NBCU, Netflix & Paramount, aims to standardize how AI agents transact, validate and execute media buys. It targets linear TV, CTV & premium video to avoid fragmented systems, boost transparency and improve governance in AI-driven ad biz. (The Desk)

- **Walmart annc'd it will buy ad-tech Co Vibe. co for $1.4bn, its biggest deal in 2 yrs.** The firm enables ads on connected TVs, targeting smaller advertisers. The move builds on Walmart's push into ad biz, following its Vizio acquisition to expand platforms and reach across mkts. (The Wall Street Journal)

- **Disney will launch ESPN Fan House in Aug. alongside college football to help advertisers reach sports fans via interactive experiences.** The hub lets fans engage through live polls, trivia, sweepstakes, and branded activations across events, TV, digital, and social platforms. Partnering w/ Publicis Sports and using QR tech, Disney aims to deepen fan ties and boost advertiser engagement as live sports remain key to its ad biz. (Variety)

- **Reddit annc'd new ad tools built on its "community intelligence" strategy, aiming to tap human insights as AI-driven shopping grows.** Products include Shopping List Ads, a free-form ad generator, and Redditor Highlights. Unveiled tools align ads w/ user discussions. Reddit said Q1 ad rev hit $625mn, up 74% YoY, underscoring rapid ads biz growth. (Axios)

- **Omnicom Media and Netflix annc'd a partnership making Omnicom Netflix's first data collab partner for AI-powered ad creatives.** The tie-up combines Acxiom audience data w/ Netflix AI to deliver personalized ads aligned to content. Brands can create, test and measure tailored campaigns, improving engagement, relevance and performance via first-party insights and scalable creative iterations. (PR Newswire)

Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning

- **Hasbro is facing backlash after reports it is pushing child actors, including those on Peppa Pig, to sign contracts granting AI rights to their voices.** An open letter signed by 1,000+ performers warns such terms allow reuse across commercial assets without fair pay. Critics say this exploits young talent, as studios seek to avoid future recording costs amid growing AI disputes. (Kotaku)

- **Anthropic alleged in a letter to US senators that Alibaba-linked operators used thousands of fake accounts to make ~29mn exchanges w/ its Claude AI, extracting key capabilities via "distillation attacks.**" The US AI Co called this the largest such campaign, warning it lets Chinese rivals reuse US tech and urged stronger measures to protect AI innovation. (BBC)

- **Anthropic hired Orange's AI chief Steve Jarrett as it expands in Europe, boosting its intl push.** Jarrett, at the telecom Co since 2019, will join in Aug. based in Paris, focusing on adapting AI products for Europe & Africa. The Claude maker recently opened a Milan office and plans to triple global workforce ahead of a potential IPO. (Reuters)

- **AI is transforming "cat" models used by insurers, banks and utilities to assess disaster risk.** Generative AI enables faster, cheaper simulations, creating thousands of plausible events and improving detail from low-res data. This boosts analysis of rare "tail risks" amid climate change, though experts stress careful use to manage uncertainty and ensure reliability in predictions. (Financial Times)

- **Mirendil, founded by Anthropic veterans, raised $200mn at a $1bn valuation from Andreessen Horowitz, Kleiner Perkins and Nvidia to build AI that can create smarter AI.** The startup aims to help scientists develop in-house models for fields like medicine by accelerating research, offering broader access beyond restricted tools from major labs. (The Wall Street Journal)

- **Meta hired founders and team from AI security startup Virtue AI to join its Superintelligence Labs, boosting focus on safer AI agents amid rising scrutiny after recent model issues.** Founders Bo Li, Dawn Song, and Sanmi Koyejo will lead efforts in red teaming, guardrails, and governance. Move reflects Meta's cont'd push to scale secure AI as competition intensifies. (Yahoo Finance)

- **AI demand is starting to justify massive data-center spending, per a report, as global AI rev hit ~$25bn in Q1 2026, exceeding ~$21bn depreciation costs for a 2nd straight quarter.** Margins remain thin, w/ >⅔ of rev absorbed by costs. Big tech Cos plan ~$725bn capex this yr, suggesting demand is rising but financial risk and limited buffers persist. (Yahoo Finance)

- **Major cos incl. OpenAI, Anthropic, Amazon & Microsoft annc'd a $500mn nonprofit, Raise Us, led by Gina Raimondo, to address A.I.-driven workforce disruption.** The effort aims to guide U.S. workers as tech reshapes biz, amid govt inaction & rising concern over job losses. Estimates of impact vary widely, while worker sentiment worsens & some firms cite A.I. in layoffs. (The New York Times)

- **AI agents like OpenAI's Codex are gaining traction as delegated work tools, shifting beyond chat into task automation.** A Jun. 25 report shows usage rising, w/ org adoption growing from ~0% in Aug. 2025 to ~17%. Heavy users delegate hrs of work, though <1% of consumers use it. Non-developers are fastest-growing group as agentic tech expands into daily biz and admin tasks. (Axios)

- **California launched the California AI-Unemployment Tracker, an "early warning system" to flag potential AI-driven job losses.** Backed by Gov. Gavin Newsom amid pressure to address tech's impact on the labor mkt, the tool links measures of occupations' AI exposure w/ monthly unemployment insurance claims to detect disruptions in real time, built via a partnership w/ the state Employment Development Dept. and the California Policy Lab at the Univ. of California. (Bloomberg)

- **Elastic annc'd ~7% workforce cut as AI, automation enable leaner teams, CEO said.** Cuts may impact ~300 of 4,019 staff, though hiring will cont'd in customer-facing roles. Engineering is being split into 3 core areas. Co cited shifting tech landscape, simpler structure, and faster innovation. Recent results showed $451mn rev, up 16% yr over yr. (The Register)

- **The Trump admin asked OpenAI to stagger release of its GPT-5. 6 model over security concerns, per a cos memo.** CEO Sam Altman told staff the model will be rolled out in a limited preview to select partners, w/ gov't approving access customer by customer. The request followed talks w/ the Office of the National Cyber Director and OSTP. (Yahoo Finance)

- **Google is set to lose two key AI researchers, Jonas Adler and Alexander Pritzel, to Anthropic, adding to recent exits incl. John Jumper and Noam Shazeer.** The departures raise concerns about Googles ability to compete in AI as rivals attract talent w/ IPO incentives. Internal issues like shifting computing resources and priorities also cont'd to drive staff exits, though the Co says it remains confident in its AI position. (Yahoo Finance)

- **Google is taking a tougher stance in AI licensing talks w/ ~20 publishers, seeking deals after rivals moved first.** Publishers demand payment, transparency, and control as AI summaries cut traffic and ad rev. Regulatory pressure, incl. UK rules on Jun. 3, 2026, pushed talks forward. Potential fees could raise costs for Alphabet's AI biz and reshape competition, possibly disadvantaging smaller outlets. (Crypto Briefing)

- **Google annc'd computer use as a native tool in Gemini 3. 5 Flash, enabling devs to build agents that can see, reason and act across browser, mobile and desktop.** The upgrade improves performance for long tasks like software testing and enterprise automation. Safety features include adversarial training, user confirmation for sensitive actions and safeguards against prompt injection, supporting secure, scalable AI-driven workflows. (Google)

- **Concerns from Donald Trump and conservatives that AI chatbots show political bias led to tests using political questions.** Results indicate clear leanings: ChatGPT gave almost entirely left-leaning answers, rarely right; Google's Gemini presented both sides in >90% of replies; even conservative-branded models like Grok cited left-leaning arguments more often. Findings suggest chatbots may not be neutral despite cos' claims and could shape user views. (The Washington Post)

- **Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei has been sidelined in White House meetings, w/ officials preferring cofounder Tom Brown in talks on re-releasing the Claude Fable 5 AI model.** The shift reflects tensions, as one official called Amodei a "weirdo," leading the administration to engage w/ Brown instead during high-stakes discussions. (WIRED)

- **SoftBank CEO Masayoshi Son told shareholders AI is in early stages, calling bubble concerns "blasphemy."** He highlighted rising valuations tied to AI bets incl. OpenAI, and plans for U.S. data centres, robotics, and "physical AI" manufacturing. Son reaffirmed long-term vision for artificial superintelligence, while noting gap between SoftBank's ~¥37tn market cap and ~¥74tn asset value. (Reuters)

- **Mistral AI annc'd OCR 4, a compact document-intelligence model extracting text w/ bounding boxes, block classification, and confidence scores.** It supports 170 languages and enables structured outputs for RAG, search, and agent workflows. The Co claims top benchmark performance and ~72% preference wins, w/ faster, lower-cost processing. (Mistral)

- **Anthropic annc'd Claude Tag, an AI agent in Slack that joins chats via "@Claude," reads threads, breaks tasks, and flags updates across teams.** In beta for Claude Enterprise & Team users, it retains context and offers admin controls. The Co plans wider rollout as it cont'd enterprise AI push ahead of a potential IPO, citing strong biz demand. (Reuters)

- **Alphabet's Google is backing a new incubator for former employees launching A. I. startups, expanding ties w/ its alumni network.** The 12-week program, supported by its AI Futures Fund, will offer up to $350,000 in Cloud and A.I. credits plus as much as $100,000 in funding. Organizers plan to select ~10–20 startups for the first cohort, boosting early-stage innovation. (Bloomberg)

- **ByteDance annc'd its Seedance 2. 5 AI video model at a Beijing event, an upgrade from 2.0 that creates 30-sec 4K clips from one prompt.** Users can add up to 50 references (vs 12 prior) for more control. The Co plans a China release next month, though global timing is unclear. The model rivals top AI video tools but may face legal scrutiny over copyright and deepfake risks. (CNET)

- **Tencent annc'd it is testing "Xiaowei," a native AI assistant, on a small scale within Weixin to boost its AI biz amid rising competition.** Users can interact via text or voice, message contacts, and run mini-programs. W/ ~1.4bn users across WeChat/Weixin, Tencent aims to leverage its vast base to expand AI svs and create new rev streams while competing w/ rivals like Alibaba. (CNBC)

- **Alphabet shares fell ~5%, marking its worst day in over a yr, as investor concerns grew over AI strategy and talent losses.** Google saw high-profile AI researchers depart to rivals, raising brain-drain fears. The Co also faces pressure from rising AI spending and commoditization risks, w/ markets questioning if heavy investment will deliver sustainable returns. (CNBC)

- **AI chip Co Groq annc'd a $650mn funding round led by Disruptive and Infinitum, months after Nvidia's deal took key staff and IP.** Groq, last valued at $6.9bn, is pivoting to its neocloud biz, now spanning 13 data centers and serving ~5mn developers. The Co is rehiring execs and betting its inference svs can stay competitive w/ rising demand despite Nvidia rivalry. (TechCrunch)

- **OpenAI annc'd upgraded GPT-5. 5-Cyber and launched "Patch the Planet," an initiative w/ Trail of Bits, HackerOne, and others to fix open-source bugs.** Effort offers free security consulting to maintainers, aiming to reduce vulnerabilities and improve long-term resilience as AI-driven bug-hunting increases pressure on under-resourced projects. (Wired)

- **NVIDIA annc'd Halos for Robotics, a full-stack safety system for physical AI unifying compute, sensors and software into one architecture.** Built on autonomous vehicle safety, it spans IGX Thor hardware, Halos OS and an inspection lab for certification readiness. Agility is first to adopt it in humanoids for factories and logistics, aiming to scale safe human-robot collaboration. (NVIDIA News)

Cable/Pay-TV/Wireless

- **Verizon is advancing toward Level 4 network autonomy, leveraging AI tools like Claude Code deployed across its 33,000 tech team to boost automation and operations.** The Co made 70mn automated config changes last yr and cut outage remediation to seconds. It's shifting to a software-defined, self-optimizing network, using real-time data and AI-driven processes to enhance performance, w/ focus on critical segments. (Fierce Network)

Capital Market Updates

- **SK Hynix plans to raise >$29bn via a U. S. Nasdaq listing, issuing ADRs to fund expansion amid AI-driven chip demand.** The world's No.2 memory-chip maker aims to secure 45.453tn won (~$29.65bn), marking one of the largest share sales. (The Wall Street Journal)

- **OpenAI is leaning toward delaying its IPO until next yr despite earlier plans for a late-2026 debut, as advisers urge caution amid financial pressures and volatile mkts.** CEO Sam Altman had pushed for a $1tn valuation, up from $730bn, but SpaceX's post-I.P.O. stock drop and broader tech weakness have tempered ambitions. (The New York Times)

- **Nike annc'd a surprise CFO shift as Matthew Friend exits, replaced by Pfizer CFO David Denton starting Aug. 17.** Move signals turnaround progress but may precede further guidance cuts, as rev outlook already weak w/ flat results and expected 2%–4% Q4 decline. (Retail Dive)

- **SpaceX short interest estimated at ~5–7% of float, or ~40mn shares, per S3 Partners.** Borrowing shares has become easier, w/ costs ~60 bps, signaling ample supply for short sellers. Elevated valuation may attract bearish bets, though strong retail and institutional demand, plus Elon Musk's stance against shorts, could deter them. Shares rose ~6% to $164.04. (Reuters)

- **Alphabet will replace Verizon in the Dow Jones Industrial Average, boosting tech exposure in the 30-stock index.** The Google parent joins peers like Apple, Amazon and Microsoft, reflecting focus on AI, cloud and ads. Shares rose ~1% after the annc'd change. Verizon had minimal weight due to low share price. Alphabet stock is up over 10% in 2026 despite recent volatility. (CNBC)

- **Bilibili shares rose ~2. 5% in premarket trading after the Co annc'd a new share buyback plan worth up to $300mn.** The program, effective immediately, will run for 24 months and cover Class Z shares and ADS. The Co said repurchases will be funded using existing cash reserves, signaling confidence in its financial position and boosting investor sentiment. (Investing.com)

- **SpaceX turned to bond mkts for its first notes sale days after its IPO, aiming to refinance short-term debt and fund AI and next-gen rocket expansion.** The Co reported cash topping $100.8bn, while shares fell 9%. Rev rose 33% to $18.67bn last yr, though losses persisted amid heavy AI spending. (Reuters)

- **Robinhood Mkts said it plans to raise ~$2bn via private convertible senior notes due 2029, w/ 0% coupon and 60–65% premium.** Co will use proceeds for capped call deals to limit dilution and ~$300mn for buybacks. Move comes amid cost cuts incl. 10% job reductions. Shares fell 1.7% premarket as mkts weighed financing strategy. (Yahoo Finance)

Crypto/Blockchain/web3/NFTs

- **Polymarket paid creators to post deceptive videos showing fake bets and wins to lure users.** One student appeared to wager $410,000 Jan.–May, incl. a false $100,000 win, but none were real. Co built dummy sites for simulated trades and told creators to hide sponsorships, while repost networks amplified content targeting US users despite a 2022 ban. (The Wall Street Journal)

Cybersecurity/Security

- **Vodafone Spain (Zegona) annc'd a portfolio of tech svs for defence and security, spanning connectivity, cybersecurity, AI and sovereign cloud infrastructure.** The offering, via Vodafone Empresas, targets high-demand operational environments as Spain and Europe boost investment in defence capabilities. (Telecompaper)

eCommerce/Social Commerce/Retail

- **Retailers face rising pressure as consumers demand free delivery in ~2. 7 days, w/ 94% saying it impacts purchases and many abandoning carts if fees exceed ~$10.** While expectations tighten, 64% say home delivery isn't profitable and costs cont'd rising. Cos are shifting from price to reliability, diversifying carriers beyond UPS/FedEx to protect loyalty and improve service consistency. (The SCXchange)

- **Vuori, valued at $5. 5bn in 2024, is targeting China in a global retail push, aiming to double its domestic and international store footprint by 2030.** The Co bets Chinese demand for premium activewear will fuel growth as it expands beyond its California roots. Known for men's joggers, Vuori is scaling its women's biz and Asia presence to gain share from rivals Lululemon and Alo Yoga. (The Wall Street Journal)

- **Amazon. com Inc. is expanding its Amazon Now quick delivery svs across India, targeting over 300 cities and towns, as CEO Andy Jassy pushes growth in a key mkt during his first India trip.** The svc, offering items from groceries to books in minutes, launched last yr in select areas and scaled to 100 locations before this broader rollout, intensifying competition w/ local players. (Bloomberg)

- **Back-to-school deals are arriving earlier as shoppers spread spending to manage budgets.** Walmart is promoting dorm furniture and electronics, Target is discounting backpacks, and Amazon is highlighting curated Prime Day offers starting Jun. 23. The shift shows retailers pulling forward discounts alongside summer sales as consumers extend the shopping season. (The Wall Street Journal)

- **Target Co is set to open 11 new stores as part of 30+ planned for 2026, aligning w/ its broader goal of 300+ locations by 2035.** The ~125,000 sq. ft. stores support a $5bn investment covering new builds, 130+ remodels, and staff training. Locations span AZ, CA, CO, FL, KY, MA, SC, SD, TX, and UT, w/ more sites planned. (Chain Store Age)

Electric & Autonomous Vehicles

- **US DOT annc'd proposal to drop brake-pedal requirement for fully autonomous vehicles, easing rules for AVs designed w/o human controls.** Move could benefit Tesla, Zoox by removing FMVSS barriers and speeding deployments, cont'd broader regulatory shifts. Public comment period lasts 30 days before decision, as gov aims to modernize AV framework while maintaining safety oversight. (TechCrunch)

Film/Studio/Content/IP/Talent

- **Paramount Skydance plans to divest its Universal Pictures JV to ease EU antitrust concerns tied to its $110bn Warner Bros deal, w/ a formal proposal due Jun. 30 after regulator talks.** The move may extend the EU review to Jul. 21 and address cinema operator worries. While US DOJ cleared the deal, Paramount still faces lawsuits from multiple states opposing the merger. (Yahoo Finance)

- **Netflix placed feature animation under Hannah Minghella, naming her Head of Animation Studio, overseeing 1,000+ staff across global hubs.** Kira Goldberg expands her role to include live-action family films. Both report to film chairman Dan Lin. Move follows success of Kpop Demon Hunters, while Minghella continues building animation slate and related products. (Deadline)

- **Netflix won feature film rights to "Sesame Street" after ~1 yr bidding vs.** Universal & Warner Bros., strengthening its tie after securing TV rights in May 2025. Rideback will produce w/ Sesame Workshop. Warner previously held rights but stalled. No director is attached. (The Hollywood Reporter)

- **Disney-Pixar's "Toy Story 5" posted a record $160mn domestic opening, the franchise's biggest debut, w/ ~$312mn global in its first weekend.** It marked the 2nd-largest animated launch ever, behind "Incredibles 2." Strong family turnout drove sales, incl. premium formats, reinforcing trends favoring PG titles as the film eyes $1bn+ worldwide. (CNBC)

- **Google is investing ~$75mn in indie studio A24 as part of an AI research partnership aimed at developing tools for film production and distribution.** The deal marks Google's first studio stake. A24's rev has more than doubled in recent yrs as it expanded into TV, music, and theater. The alliance seeks to support creativity w/ AI, while avoiding concerns tied to generative tech and maintaining artist control. (MSN)

FinTech/InsurTech/Payments

- **Google annc'd a standalone Google Finance app for Android, offering real-time mkts data, watchlists, news, and AI "Key Moments" explaining stock moves.** iOS launch is expected in coming months, w/ added features like earnings call audio. Move targets competition w/ Yahoo Finance and Robinhood. Google also expanded its web experience, adding global portfolios, AI research tools, and task-based insights tailored to investments, cont'd rollout planned. (TechCrunch)

- **Kalshi, a regulated prediction mkts platform, is seeking funding at a ~$40bn valuation, up from $22bn, w/ total equity ~ $3. 7bn.** Trading volume hit $178bn annualized, w/ $16.81bn in May and ~$2bn rev. Growth is driven by institutional activity (+800%) and sports contracts (~90% rev). Valuation (~20x rev) reflects exchange infra positioning, though legal risks from 12+ state lawsuits and regulatory disputes could impact its biz. (Investing.com)

- **Tradeweb annc'd launch of a Kalshi pricing page, giving U.** S. institutional clients access to real-time event contract data within trading workflows. The move, part of a broader partnership, lets users track market-implied probabilities, build watchlists, and enhance risk analysis. Kalshi's American Power Index will be added, w/ cos exploring deeper analytics and platform integration. (Tradeweb)

- **Meta annc'd $900mn investment in India fintech Co CRED at ~$4.** 5bn valuation, taking minority stake w/o data access. CRED founder Kunal Shah to lead WhatsApp globally as platform expands payments & biz svs in its largest mkt. CRED, serving 17mn users & handling >40% card bill payments, will use funds to boost growth, leadership & products. (Reuters)

Handheld Devices & Accessories/Connected Home

- **Google's $100 Home speaker marks its first refresh in 6 yrs, aiming to bring its Gemini AI into homes via always-on voice chat.** Alphabet positions Gemini as central across devices & svs, replacing older Google Assistant. Touted as the first audio device built for Gemini, it offers 24/7 interaction, but questions remain on whether it's a real upgrade and worth buying at its Jun. 25 release. (Bloomberg)

Investor & Market Sentiment

- **SoftBank shares fell ~12% after reports OpenAI may delay its IPO, dampening hopes of near-term returns.** The Co's stake, ~$65bn by Oct., had fueled a rally on listing expectations. A delay amid volatile tech mkts could defer valuation clarity and gains, while investors reassess SoftBank's portfolio and exposure to private AI assets. (Yahoo Finance)

Live Entertainment/Theme Parks/Concerts/Experiential

- **Sony Pictures Ent annc'd a $100mn strategic investment in Cosm, leading its Series C and taking a minority stake, w/ CEO Ravi Ahuja joining the board.** The deal supports immersive "Shared Reality" tech blending virtual and physical experiences. SPE aims to expand IP into experiential entertainment, while Cosm will scale venues across U.S. cities and advance its tech growth. (Cosm)

- **Paramount annc'd a "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Live on Stage!" tour set for fall 2027, marking the franchise's 40th anniversary.** The 90-min show will blend parkour, martial arts & hip-hop to retell the Turtles' story. Produced w/ partners & led by Tony- and Emmy-winning creatives, the project is part of the Co's push into experiential biz, leveraging IP beyond traditional platforms. (The Hollywood Reporter)

- **Live Nation said its CEO spoke w/ Donald Trump in Feb. 2026 before a surprise antitrust settlement, per a Jun. filing.** The co held multiple talks w/ DOJ & White House Counsel from Feb. 2025–Jun. 2026 on a potential deal. The suit, filed in May 2024, alleged monopoly power in ticketing biz; a Apr. jury later ruled against the co despite the earlier settlement. (Variety)

Regulatory

- **The N. S.A. lost access to Anthropic's advanced A.I. models after the Trump administration imposed export controls citing national security risks, halting release of Mythos 5 and Fable 5.** Analysts had been testing the tools, which showed strong ability to detect software flaws. The episode highlights rising reliance on A.I. for cybersecurity despite tensions w/ a key U.S. tech developer. (The New York Times)

- **EU antitrust regulators said Amazon and Microsoft cloud svs should be classed as "gatekeepers" under DMA, expanding rules beyond search/social into cloud infra.** The move would impose obligations incl. limits on self-preferencing and ensure data portability. EU cited strong mkts positions, lock-in, AI role. Cos pushed back, warning of harm to EU competitiveness and innovation. (Reuters)

- **US FCC said a mid-band spectrum auction raised ~$3. 5bn, w/ up to $3.3bn to fund "Rip & Replace" efforts removing Chinese telecom gear like Huawei, ZTE.** Program costs seen at ~$4.98bn vs $1.9bn approved earlier. About 42% of recipients finished replacements, facing delays from supply chain, labor, permits. Auction supports rising 5G demand and reuses unsold AWS-3 licenses. (Reuters)

- **US officials are pressing Meta to allow voluntary AI reviews, citing rising security concerns.** Meta is the only major tech Co yet to join peers like OpenAI, Google and Microsoft in sharing models w/ the gov't for evaluation. The move follows an order forcing Anthropic to pull a new model. (The New York Times)

- **Alibaba filed a federal lawsuit against the Pentagon, challenging its designation as a military-linked Co, calling it "arbitrary and capricious.** " The suit seeks removal from the blacklist, arguing no factual or legal basis and citing First Amendment concerns over limits on lobbying. The move follows U.S. adding ~80 firms; China retaliated w/ export controls on U.S. cos. (CBS News)

- **US House Energy & Commerce Committee leaders reached a bipartisan deal requiring social media cos to add safeguards for children & parents, aiming to hold Big Tech accountable.** The plan omits a "duty of care" rule, a key dispute, but allows states to impose stricter laws. It faces hurdles incl. Senate approval & presidential backing amid rising scrutiny of youth online safety. (Reuters)

- **Arkansas AG Tim Griffin annc'd lawsuit vs Roblox & Discord, alleging firms knowingly exposed children to predators for profit.** Claims cite lack of age checks, weak parental controls, & rising exploitation cases (675 in 2019 to 13,000+ by 2023). (Arkansas.gov)

Satellite/Space

- **SpaceX plans to launch Starlink mobile svs for U. S. consumers, aiming to compete w/ Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile, per FT.** The Co may introduce a retail offering and build a terrestrial network. It already partners w/ T-Mobile for satellite connectivity. Spectrum buys (~$17bn + $2.6bn) bolster plans. Starlink's 10mn+ users underpin growth, w/ analysts seeing disruption to $1.6tn U.S. telecom mkts. ([Reuters])

- **AST SpaceMobile shares rose ~2% after Rakuten annc'd a Japan satellite JV to deliver direct-to-mobile svs, challenging SpaceX-backed rivals.** The JV, equally owned, aims phased rollout by late 2026 and nationwide coverage by FY2027. The move aligns w/ Japan's ~$1bn J-LEO program, where Rakuten competes to build a domestic LEO network for smartphone connectivity and disaster resilience. ([Yahoo Finance])

- **SpaceX annc'd a multibn deal to provide AI computing to startup Reflection AI, charging ~$150mn monthly through 2029 using its Memphis data center.** The agreement, w/ 90-day exit terms, adds to similar deals w/ Google (~$30bn) and Anthropic (~$45bn). The push highlights SpaceX's strategy to expand its AI infra biz despite lagging in model development. ([Yahoo Finance])

Social/Digital Media

- **Bumble is exploring a sale w/ Morgan Stanley amid slowing growth in online dating, sources said.** Co's shares fell 48% in 12 months, valuing it at ~$388mn. Paying users dropped ~11% in 2025 to 3.7mn, w/ rev down ~10% to $966mn. Competition, shifting preferences and app fatigue weigh on biz, though pricing gains lifted per-user rev slightly. ([Reuters])

- **YouTube annc'd updates to Shorts, adding a 2x playback speed option to help users consume content faster.** The platform also removed the dislike button, replacing it w/ "Not Interested" controls, and swapped likes for a heart icon. A new "Clear Screen" mode hides on-screen elements for distraction-free viewing, as YouTube aims to improve user experience. ([TechCrunch])

- **A German expert panel advised banning under-13s from social media and urged stricter child-safety rules.** It issued 56 recommendations, incl. parental duties to prevent "digital neglect" and tiered protections for ages 13–18. Govt welcomed the plan for debate, citing risks like fake news, AI content and youth radicalisation, while alternatives suggest platform-specific limits. ([Reuters])

Software

- **Notion annc'd it will shut down its AI-powered Notion Mail across web, desktop, & iOS on Sept.** 22, after launching in Apr. 2025. The Co said rising use of AI agents to handle inbox tasks reduced need for a traditional email client. Users must export drafts & data by Sept. 21 or risk deletion. Emails remain in Gmail, while Notion shifts focus to agent-driven workflows. ([9to5Mac])

Tech Hardware

- **Apple annc'd price hikes on MacBook and iPad due to surging memory/storage costs tied to AI demand.** Shares fell over 6%, worst drop since Apr. 2025. Prices rose ~$100–$300 across models as the Co cited unprecedented component inflation. Apple warned more increases may come as costs cont'd climbing, w/ suppliers benefiting from the boom. ([CNBC])

- **Apple plans to skip high-end M6 chips, releasing only a base version for entry Macs, while accelerating an AI-focused M7 lineup.** Pro, Max, Ultra M7 chips are set for 2027–2028, w/ major gains in memory bandwidth

(~240GB/s) and AI performance. Shift aims to meet rising demand for on-device AI and graphics tasks, marking a first break from prior chip rollouts. (Bloomberg)

- **SoftBank-backed Arm said its chip architecture surpassed 50% share in hyperscale cloud data centers, marking a key milestone in its rivalry w/ Intel and AMD.** An exec said surging AI demand is reshaping data centers and accelerating adoption. The Co is also moving beyond design into physical chips to capture more value as AI-driven growth cont'd across global mkts. (Nikkei Asia)

- **Qualcomm unveils data center chip lineup in New York, entering AI processor race to challenge Nvidia.** CEO Cristiano Amon said the Co will design China-specific chip aligned w/ US export curbs, aiming to ease global memory shortage. Move marks expansion into AI-focused data center biz amid rising demand. (Nikkei Asia)

- **Micron annc'd FY Q3 results, w/ rev surging to $41. 46bn vs $35.84bn est., driven by AI-led memory demand.** Adj EPS hit $25.11. Rev rose >4x YoY from $9.3bn, w/ data center biz leading growth. Co forecasts ~$50bn next qtr rev. Margins hit 84.9%. Micron secured $22bn in long-term deals, signaling sustained demand amid ongoing supply constraints. (CNBC)

- **Agility Robotics to go public via SPAC merger w/ Churchill Capital XI, valuing co at ~$2.** 5bn. Deal to generate >$600mn incl. $420mn cash and >$200mn PIPE led by Foxconn. Cos humanoid robot Digit used by Amazon, GXO, Schaeffler, Toyota to automate warehouse tasks like moving containers. (The Wall Street Journal)

- **OpenAI & Broadcom annc'd Jalapeño, a custom LLM inference chip built in 9 months as part of a multi-gen compute platform.** Designed from scratch for LLMs, it improves performance per watt, reduces data movement, & optimizes compute, memory, and networking. The chip supports OpenAI's full-stack strategy & will scale in data centers from 2026, aiming to make AI faster, cheaper, & more доступible. (OpenAI)

Towers/Fiber

- **KDDI and NTT Docomo developed a shared millimetre-wave repeater w/ Kyocera to extend 5G coverage more efficiently.** The single unit relays signals from both networks, reducing infrastructure needs vs separate repeaters. Field tests are planned for summer in Tokyo's Ueno Park to validate performance. (Telecompaper)

Video Games/Interactive Entertainment

- **Sony reaffirmed Marathon as a key part of its gaming portfolio despite major Bungie layoffs, w/ PlayStation's Hermen Hulst pledging cont'd support.** The sci-fi shooter launched strong but struggles to retain players despite updates and new content. A PVE-only mode is coming in Jul. to boost engagement, while Bungie also explores new incubating projects amid uncertainty around Marathon's long-term future. (Kotaku)

- **Xbox annc'd a third console price hike, effective Aug. 1, 2026, raising models by $100–$150, w/ Series X up to $800 and Series S to $600, while discontinuing the 2TB version.** Co cites rising memory and storage costs, up 2.5x since last yr. Amid industry strain, it intro'd "Buy Now, Pay Later" financing and plans refurbished sales to offset higher prices and slowing hardware demand. (Kotaku)

- **Fans debate GTA 6 pricing after Rockstar annc'd an $80 standard version and $100 Ultimate Edition.** The latter locks extra in-game shops, cars, weapons, and items, sparking claims the full game is effectively $100.

Critics call it paywalled content, while others say extras won't impact gameplay. Similar past Rockstar releases had gated content, but concerns over value and "incomplete" experiences persist. (Kotaku)

- **Bungie annc'd mass layoffs after Destiny 2's final update, citing need to reorganize and align resources after the game failed to meet expectations.** Cuts impact most of the Destiny team and some Marathon developers, w/ overall headcount already down from ~1,300 to ~800. Sony said the move followed a strategic review, while Bungie noted future projects remain in early stages and it can't operate at prior scale. (Kotaku)

- **10 new GTA 6 details from Rockstar's info dump ahead of pre-orders.** Highlights include fencing stolen goods, deeper weapon & vehicle customization, RDR2-style loadouts and chapters, plus side activities like classic car collections and gang compounds. Expanded clothing options, possible in-game TV shows, and fishing mechanics suggest a larger, more immersive open-world experience. (Kotaku)

- **Tencent may sell stakes in multiple game studios, incl Marvelous Inc. , as it reassesses underperforming investments, per Bloomberg**. The shift signals a move from passive investing to closer co-production ties w/ studios, sharing resources and talent. Strong performers like FromSoftware are unaffected. (Kotaku)

- **Netflix revealed Unhinged, a narrative horror game by Oxenfree dev Night School Games, starring Zoë Kravitz and Sadie Sink.** Players use their phone as a controller to help two friends survive a killer via calls and messages. The launch highlights Netflix's scaled-back gaming push after studio closures and strategy shifts toward casual titles. Game releases Jun. 30. (Kotaku)

- **Valve's Steam Machine ships w/ sales starting Jun 29 at $1,049, but limited supply means most buyers will face a randomized reservation queue.** Two models (512GB, 2TB) reflect high component costs amid shortages. Powered by AMD CPU/GPU and SteamOS, the device targets TV gaming. (Ars Technica)

Video Streaming

- **Pluto TV annc'd 2 new 24/7 classic TV channels dedicated to Cheers and Frasier, restoring separate streams after a shared feed.** Viewers can watch uninterrupted episodes of each series. The move expands its 400+ channel lineup and supports its free ad-supported model, aiming to boost engagement w/ targeted, single-show viewing experiences across its platforms. (Cord Cutters News)

- **Season 2 of NASCAR docuseries Rising will stream exclusively on Xumo Play, a free FAST svs, starting Aug.** Episodes drop monthly, w/ drivers like Carson Hocevar featured. Xumo holds exclusive rights for 6 months, w/ episodes later on YouTube after 14 days. Deal builds on prior partnership to expand NASCAR's digital reach and fan access. (Deadline)

- **Netflix's "I Will Find You" became 2026's biggest new series debut, drawing 24mn views in its first 4 days and topping TV charts during Jun. 15–21.** The mystery follows a father imprisoned for his son's murder who uncovers evidence the child may still be alive, driving a prison escape. The show is part of Harlan Coben's ongoing Netflix partnership, which includes multiple adaptations. (Variety)

- **Netflix annc'd animation slate at Annecy, previewing titles incl. "The One Piece" (Feb. 2027), "Ghostbusters: Night Shift," and Brad Bird's "Ray Gunn" (Dec. 18).** Event featured first looks, teasers, and new images, w/ creators sharing insights. Other projects include "Steps" (Nov. 20), "In Waves" (Dec. 11), and Ricky Gervais' "Alley Cats" (Aug. 7), highlighting Netflix's growing anime and animation biz. (Variety)

- **Comcast-owned Sky agreed terms to buy ITV's broadcast & streaming unit for ~£1. 6bn, sources said, w/ deal nearing finalisation.** ITV Studios will acquire Love Productions (~£80–£120mn) as part of transaction, w/ ~£200mn potential earn-out. Move aims to build top UK streamer vs global rivals. ITV shares rose 2.9%; deal could be annc'd within 2 wks, timing uncertain. (Reuters)

- **Disney+'s new Asia streaming chief outlined a strategy focused on sustainable growth, blending global IP w/ local content.** Strong K-drama hits and rising Japan investment highlight expansion, while sports via ESPN and bundles aim to boost reach. The Co stresses localization, selective spending and partnerships to scale across fragmented APAC mkts. (The Hollywood Reporter)