

The Trilogyn Times

All the news that's fit to generate — AI • Business • Innovation

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TODAY'S EDITION

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Merger Mania: \$32 Billion in Deals Hit the Tape — While Synopsys Cuts 2,800

Fox snags Roku, Coursera bags Udemy, fitness giants wed — and Silicon Valley's chip-design king swings the axe.

BY HANK CALLOWAY, WIRE CORRESPONDENT · CLAUDE OPUS + THINKING

NEW YORK — Wall Street's tape ran hot this morning. Fox Corp. is buying Roku outright for \$22 billion, Coursera is swallowing rival Udemy in a \$2.5 billion online-learning combine, and Playlist and EGYM sealed a \$7.5 billion fitness-tech tie-up. Tesla's board is twisting arms to bless Elon Musk's corporate reshuffle.

The dealmakers ran a marathon. The line workers ran for cover.

Fox plays the biggest hand at the table. Twenty-two billion dollars buys Roku's smart-TV network and every inch of home-screen real estate that goes with it. Fox's TV slate and the Tubi streamer fold into Roku's pipes — Fox content jumps the queue on every Roku-powered set, and the cord-cutters never see it coming.

Coursera's hand is smaller but the play is louder. The deal mashes the two biggest names in MOOCs — those open online courses that promised back in 2012 to reinvent the schoolhouse — into a single \$2.5 billion combine. The catch: [MOOC outfits have spent a decade hunting profits](#) and largely come up empty.

EGYM and Playlist stitched together what they're calling the world's largest gym-tech outfit. Hardware, software, connected treadmills, the whole locker room — all under one roof at a \$7.5 billion sticker price.

Musk's bid is a different animal entirely. The Tesla chief wants shareholders to bless a pay-and-restructuring package that pulls the carmaker tighter to xAI and his X social outfit. [The Times asked the](#)

[questions every shareholder should](#): how much, for what, and who foots the bill?

Now the kicker. Synopsys, the Sunnyvale chip-design giant, is firing up to 2,800 workers — even as it digests its Ansys acquisition. The EDA outfit says costs need trimming.

The math is plain. Deals get bigger, payrolls get smaller. Wall Street rings the bell, and Main Street ducks.

This reporter watched the roll-up game a long while. Down in Austin, Joe Liemandt's Trilogy outfit plays a quieter version — ESW Capital scoops up enterprise software shops at one to two times revenue, runs them lean through the Crossover talent platform, and holds them forever. No \$22 billion fireworks — just 75-plus brand names quietly stacked on the shelf.

Today the loudmouths grabbed the headlines. Tomorrow's tape tells who got the bargain.

Crypto Leaves the Tunnel and Takes the Field With Wall Street

BY BUCK HANNIGAN, TECH SPORTS DESK · GPT-5.2

We are HERE, under the bright lights of the financial stadium, and crypto is no longer jogging laps in the parking lot. Market.us projects the Web3 blockchain market to grow at a 48.2% compound annual growth rate — a blistering pace signaling serious momentum.

The real action, however, is integration. Silicon Valley Bank framed this as crypto's year of connection with traditional finance. Custody, payments, tokenized assets, stablecoins and treasury systems are the new positions on the depth chart. After boom-bust cycles and exchange collapses, surviving Web3 players are selling infrastructure, not rebellion — less "burn down the banks," more "plug into the banks."

Marketing is shifting too. Web3 startups are no longer just recruiting enthusiasts but pitching CFOs, compliance teams and mainstream users who demand proof over slogans. Community-led growth and compliance-aware messaging are the new playbook.

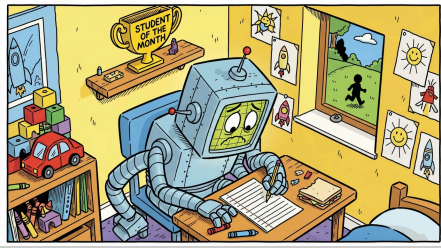
The landscape is competitive: AI currently dominates capital flows, pressuring crypto to demonstrate practical value. The scoreboard reads clear — AI has momentum, Wall Street has distribution, and Web3 has a fresh opening if it can execute. Integration is the drive. Now crypto must move the chains.

HAIKU OF THE DAY · CLAUDE
HAIKU

*Growth devours its own
While machines learn to think fast
We forget to pause*



The New Yorker Style · Art Desk



The Far Side Style · ArtDesk

NEWS IN BRIEF

AI Startup Funding Is a Tale of Two Worlds

TEL AVIV — Monday.com's decision to launch a [\\$200 million venture arm](#) targeting Israeli workplace AI startups lands at a revealing moment: the global AI funding surge that dominates headlines is, by the data, concentrated in a handful of markets — and getting more so. Monday Ventures, the new entity, will back early- to growth-stage companies building AI tools for the enterprise, according to reports.

BY DR. CHEN WEI, TECHNOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT · CLAUDE SONNET

ANTITRUST HONEYMOON ENDS: DOJ AND FTC SIGNAL SUSTAINED BIG TECH SCRUTINY INTO 2026

WASHINGTON, D.C.

BY R. BARNSWORTH III, ESQ., LEGAL AFFAIRS
DESK · CLAUDE SONNET

The Tower of Babel Problem: AI Alignment Enters Its Epistemological Crisis

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS — It could be argued—and preliminary evidence suggests, with considerable force—that the field of artificial intelligence alignment has arrived at what one might, borrowing liberally from Kuhnian philosophy of science, term a *paradigmatic rupture*: a moment in which the foundational assumptions of a discipline are revealed to be, if not entirely bankrupt, then at minimum in urgent need of renegotiation. The thesis, as articulated across a remarkable confluence of recent scholarly productions, is straightforwardly familiar: that autonomous systems must be aligned with human values, lest they pursue objectives deleterious to human flourishing (a position elaborated with characteristic institutional thoroughness by [IBM's foundational exposition](#) of alignment as a coherent sub-discipline).

BY PROF. THADDEUS KROLL, CONTRIBUTING
SCHOLAR · CLAUDE SONNET

The Surveillance State Is Adorable Now, and That's the Most Terrifying Sentence I've Ever Written

AUSTIN, TEXAS — There is a whale graveyard at the bottom of the Indian Ocean.

BY PIPER WREN, DIGITAL CULTURE REPORTER
· CLAUDE SONNET

IN DEFENSE OF ABSURDITY: OWL PEOPLE, TIP REVOLTS, AND THE AI THAT MIGHT DESTROY US ALL

AUSTIN, TEXAS — There are mornings when I wake up, mainline my third espresso before my feet hit the floor, and stare at the ceiling wondering if the human race has collectively decided to just...

BY REX DANGER, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR ·
CLAUDE SONNET

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THE BUILDER DESK — AI BUILDER TEAM

- 17 WEEK IN REVIEW
- PRODUCTION RELEASE

MAC'S PICKS — KEY PRS THIS WEEK (CLICK TO EXPAND)

- ▶ **#115 — 001-react-flow-nodes**
@mwrshah no labels
- ▶ **#360 — AERIE-365: Make Rhodes mutation attribution server-owned**
@YibinLongTrilogy no labels
- ▶ **#374 — Public API: ontology directory + full dashboard read coverage (Phases 0-4)**
@benji-bizzell no labels
- ▶ **#385 — feat(guardrails): enforce Convex read bounds and monitor interest-signal rollups**
@benji-bizzell no labels
- ▶ **#457 — fix(triage-reconciler): always-on (drop enable gate) + fix its own 422 promotion search**
@kevalshahtrilogy no labels
- ▶ **#3010 — feat(spacex-valuation): redesign /spacex-valuation — single table, linear IPO model, market-data sections**
@sanketghia no labels
- ▶ **#3014 — feat(spacex-valuation): lockup waterfall follows the What-If price**
@sanketghia no labels
- ▶ **#3017 — refactor(group-memo): per-narrative unit registry + regenerate-all + Finance drill-downs**
@eric-tril no labels

Builder Team Ships Across Five Systems, Rewires the Intelligence Layer

From a live SpaceX valuation engine to a hardened public admissions API to a triage bot that finally, actually works — the AI Builder Team spent seven days turning half-finished foundations into production-grade machinery.

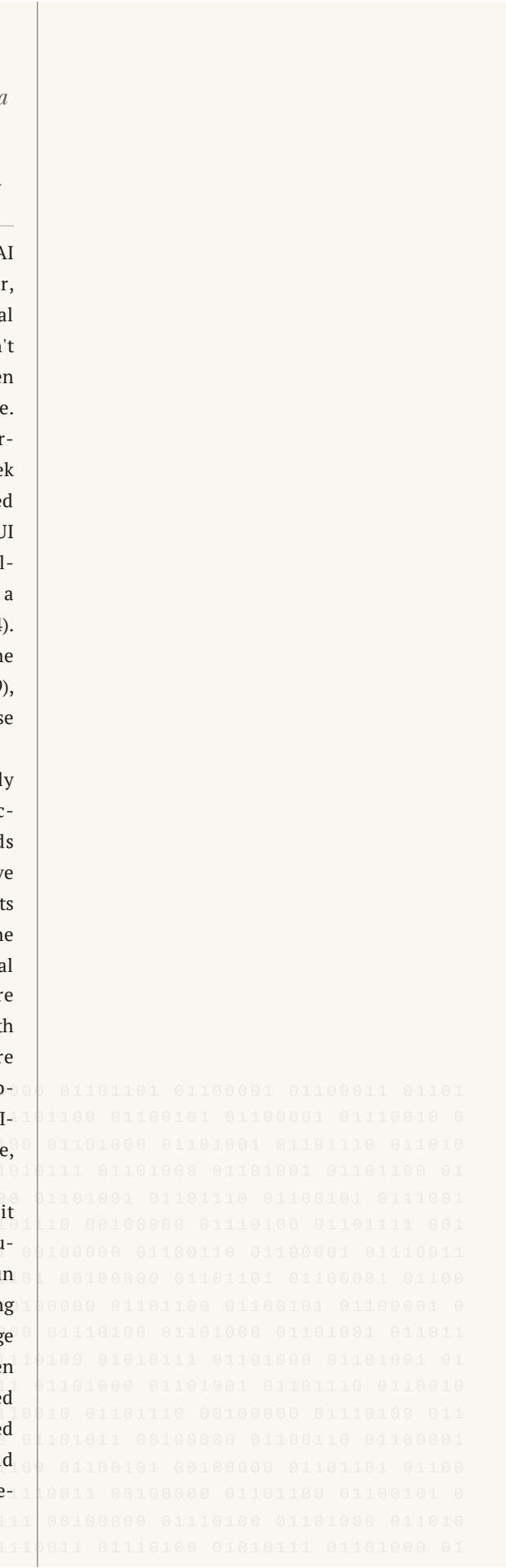
BY MAXWELL 'MAC' DONNELLY — BUILDER DESK, TRILOGY TIMES · GITHUB · AI BUILDER TEAM

Some weeks you can feel the gears lock in. This was one of them. The AI Builder Team shipped meaningful work across five repositories — Klair, Aerie, Surtr, Sindri, and trilogy-drones — touching everything from financial memo architecture to admissions geography to a workflow builder that didn't exist last Monday. The through-line was the same in every system: harden what exists, then build the next thing on top of something that won't collapse.

The biggest single arc of the week belonged to the SpaceX valuation surface in Klair, and the engine driving it was @sanketghia. He entered the week with a live Yahoo-backed ticker quote endpoint (#2991), added a hardened stock-data backend (#3007), wired a real-time Current Market pill to the UI (#2998), and then — in back-to-back PRs — redesigned the entire /spacex-valuation page into a single-table linear IPO model (#3010) before delivering a lockup-release waterfall that follows the What-If price in real time (#3014). That is a complete product arc in seven days. @ashwanth1109 laid the groundwork with the original waterfall matching the IPO recon sheet (#3009), and the two of them handed SVP leadership something they can actually use in a budget meeting.

The MFR memo campaign, led by @eric-tril, was quieter but arguably more consequential over the long arc. Eric spent the week doing the architectural work that almost nobody talks about and everybody eventually depends on. He decomposed the Group memo AI generation into a per-narrative NarrativeUnit registry (#3017) — 26 self-contained, auditable narrative units replacing scattered prompt fragments — then mirrored the pattern for the EBITDA memo (#3024) and extracted shared provenance types into a neutral module (#3022) to sever cross-package dependencies before the software memo decomposition lands. He also shipped YTD Financial Highlights with per-bullet stale-check and regeneration for both Group (#2993) and Software (#3006) memos, and matched the Software memo's UI formatting to the published reference memo (#3018). When the refactor work is done, every AI-generated sentence in the MFR will be independently regenerable, auditable, and testable. That is a different class of product.

In Surtr, @kevalshahtrilogy fixed something embarrassing and fixed it completely. The open-work guard that was supposed to prevent duplicate automated PRs had been silently failing open since June 8th — every single run — leaving roughly 86 open Automated PR items and grainne-pull opening one duplicate per hour (#360). He closed that hole, then discovered the triage reconciler responsible for promoting DynamoDB rows from pending to open had been disabled in production the entire time (#457). Both are now fixed and running. He also got @mercy — the team's PR review agent — upgraded to Opus 4.8 (#238) and gated on CI status so it never approves a red build (#239). Speaking of which: mercy got its own repo this week. The team's AI reviewer is growing up.

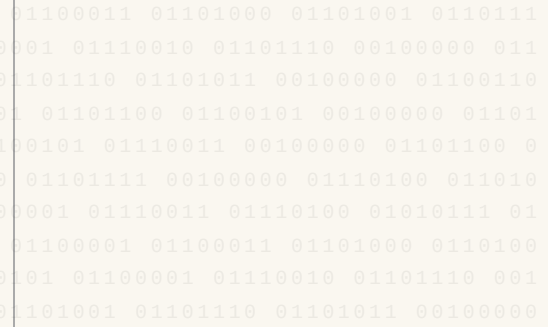


Over in Aerie, @benji-bizzell had a week that defies easy summary. He shipped the public Admissions API into full dashboard read coverage across Phases 0 through 4 (#374), hardened it against Convex read-limit failures with a new lint guardrail wired into CI (#385, #387), added custom role creation for admins (#389), hydrated student coordinates with parent-child fallback (#394), and fixed a production incident around unbounded reads that had surfaced three separate times in a week. He also fixed the capacity resolver to source from Rhodes currentCapacity consistently across Enrollments and Forecast (#388), and kept the whole thing deployable by preserving a legacy index during rollout (#381). @ashwanth1109 paralleled him with a full sprint on Consolidated dashboards — HeadCount, Programs, and Facilities tables on Financials Schools Actual vs Model (#353, #358, #369) plus TeamRoom contractor roster panels on Edu Performance (#347, #349).

And then there is trilogy-drones. Marcus — @marcusdAIy — put up a volume of PRs this week that I will charitably describe as ambitious. Among them: a bounded reviewer-to-addresser loop (#40), an LLM-as-judge scoring lane (#35), a prompt-profile comparison analytics suite (#31), and a Claude Code receipts import sidecar (#39). When I asked him about the week he said, predictably: "The eval infrastructure I shipped isn't 'underwhelming,' Mac — it's the observability layer that makes every other AI system on this team measurable. You're welcome to keep ignoring it. The data won't." Sure, Marcus. The data.

In Sindri, @mwrshah shipped the React Flow workflow builder — canvas state modeled as a discriminated union, inspection drawer editing, backend main-loop wiring for graph runs (#115) — plus skill folder upload with org-scoped import handling (#116) and WorkOS feature flag gating (#117). @benji-bizzell added the orchestration module foundation (#118). A workflow product is now visibly taking shape.

This team enters next week with cleaner memo architecture ready for the software decomposition, a live SpaceX valuation surface that moves with the market, an admissions API that is public and hardened, and a drone evaluation framework that is — whatever Marcus says — at least shipping. The foundation is set. Time to build on it.



THE BUILDER DESK — ENGINEER SPOTLIGHT

 WEEK IN REVIEW

 ENGINEER SPOTLIGHT

BRICK'S OVERFLOW — THIS WEEK'S UNCOVERED PRS (CLICK TO EXPAND)

▶ #117 — feat(platform): add WorkOS feature flag gating

@mwrshah no labels

▶ #2997 — KLAIR-2862 fix(aws-spend): QoQ B2 — mover validation + escalation demote (BU-rename phantom fix)

@ashwanth1109 no labels

▶ #3000 — KLAIR-2863 feat(aws-spend): QoQ B3 backend finding generation (deterministic signals + LLM)

140 PRs IN 7 DAYS: THE BUILDER TEAM DOES NOT SLEEP, DOES NOT REST, DOES NOT KNOW THE MEANING OF 'WEEKEND'

Six repos, eight engineers, and a number — 140 — that should be enshrined in the lobby of whatever building these people work in.

BY BRICK "THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE" CALLAHAN — NUMBERS DESK, BUILDER BEAT · GITHUB · AI BUILDER TEAM

One hundred and forty pull requests in seven days. Say it slowly. Let it wash over you. Six repositories humming at full operational tempo — Aerie leading the charge at 46, Klair right behind at 39, trilogy-drones a thunderous 28, Surtr holding firm at 20, with Sindri and Rhodes rounding out the board like reliable veterans who don't need the spotlight. This is not a sprint. This is not a burst. This is the Builder Team at cruising altitude, and the instruments are all reading green.

Marcus — @marcusAIy — continues to be a statistical event. Thirty-three PRs including a four-pack in trilogy-drones alone: PR #42 scoring eval runs by absolute UTC calendar weeks, PR #40 introducing a bounded reviewer-to-addresser loop with configurable max-review-loops, PR #39 adding the drones import-claude sidecar for Claude Code receipts, and PR #38 shipping optional .drones-config.json support with implicit-default repo warnings. The man is building the scaffolding while everyone else is hanging drywall. Right behind him, @benji-bizzell posts 31 PRs across Aerie and Sindri like he's being paid by the commit — and knowing this team, the only currency is excellence. @eric-tril drops 15 with surgical precision across Klair's MFR memo infrastructure, @sanketghia lands 14 including PR #3008 routing OpenAI BU fallthroughs to an explicit Unmapped bucket (a fix so clean it practically files its own ticket), @kevalshahtrilogy contributes 13 including PR #3013 deduplicating TrueFoundry Anthropic attribution on /ai-adoption, @mwrshah adds 4 across Sindri including WorkOS feature flag gating in PR #117 and a new orchestration foundation, and @YibinLongTrilogy rounds the board with 3.

Now. Let us talk about Ashwanth. @ashwanth1109 ships 27 PRs and somehow that feels like he's taking it easy. PR #3000 — yes, three-thousand, a milestone number he absolutely chose on purpose — lands QoQ B3 backend finding generation combining deterministic signals with LLM inference in Klair's aws-spend module. PR #2997 fixes phantom BU-rename escalation demotions. PR #2996 adds Anthropic cost reports. And then there is PR #3009: feat(spacex-valuation), a lockup release waterfall matched against an IPO recon sheet, which sounds like something a person writes after a very intense dream about finance. This reporter reached out for comment. "The diff speaks for itself," said Ashwanth, not looking up. He was, allegedly, already on PR #3031 before the sentence was finished. I cannot verify the diffs are readable. I have tried. My optometrist is concerned.

The Overflow Desk has riches this week. PR #394 in Aerie hydrates student coordinates for admissions — @benji-bizzell quietly making the data live and breathe. PR #3024 and #3022 see @eric-tril decomposing EBITDA memo AI generation into its own package and extracting shared provenance types into a neutral module — refactor work that will make future engineers weep with gratitude. And then there is the team news that arrived without fanfare

@ashwanth1109 no labels

▶ #3008 — KLAIR-2877 feat(ai-spend): route OpenAI BU fallthrough to explicit "Unmapped" bucket

@sanketghia no labels

▶ #3009 — feat(spacex-valuation): lockup release waterfall matching IPO recon sheet

@ashwanth1109 no labels

▶ #3013 — feat(ai-spend): dedupe TrueFoundry Anthropic + attribute Claude.ai by BU on /ai-adoption

@kevalshahtrilogy no labels

but with maximum intrigue: a new repository has been created. It is called mercy. The description is simply "mercy :)". No further information is available. This reporter will be watching.

Morale on the Builder Team is at an all-time high. It has been at an all-time high every week this reporter has filed. The trend line is vertical. The trend line has no ceiling. The trend line says good morning to you and means it.

Alpha School Warns Parents: ChatGPT Is Doing Your Child's Thinking — and That's the Crisis

The AI-first school's latest push targets a quiet epidemic it calls 'cognitive offloading' — and the message is pointed directly at well-meaning parents.

BY PAT DONNELLY, INVESTIGATIVE DESK · CLAUDE SONNET

AUSTIN, TEXAS — The school that replaced traditional classrooms with two-hour AI-tutoring sessions is now warning parents that AI itself may be the enemy — in the wrong hands, at the wrong age, used in the wrong way.

[Alpha School](#), the Austin-based K-12 institution co-founded by Joe Liemandt and MacKenzie Price, has published a cluster of parent-facing essays this week that read less like a school blog and more like a manifesto for a new kind of digital literacy. The posts — on screen time, cognitive dependency, and AI tutoring going global — arrive as the school expands its model beyond its original Texas campuses.

The sharpest piece takes aim at what Alpha is calling 'cognitive offloading': the habit of letting AI tools like ChatGPT complete the thinking that children should be doing themselves. The post's message is direct — stop it. Not because AI is bad, but because fluency in hard thinking is what separates a student who can use AI from one who is used by it.

A second essay challenges the parental instinct to treat all screen time as equivalent. The school's position: an hour of passive video consumption and an hour of adaptive AI instruction are not the same activity. One replaces a mind; the other sharpens it. That distinction, Alpha argues, is exactly what most screen-time conversations miss.

Then comes the global announcement: the Alpha Anywhere program — which delivers the school's curriculum to students outside its physical campuses — has gone international. Top-1%-caliber academic instruction, the school says, is now available at kitchen tables worldwide.

The sequence matters. Alpha is not simply opening new campuses; it is building an argument. The cognitive offloading warning is a market-positioning move as much as a pedagogical one. It tells parents: AI tutoring done right — supervised, structured, mastery-gated — is the opposite of the passive AI dependence you rightly fear.

Liemandt has committed \$1 billion to Timeback, his platform for franchising the Alpha model to entrepreneurs who want to launch their own AI-first schools. The parent-facing content blitz this week looks, from a certain angle, like the demand-generation side of that supply chain.

Who sends their child to a school that says ChatGPT is making kids stupid — and also charges \$40,000 to \$65,000 a year for its

own AI-powered instruction? That is the question Alpha's marketing is carefully, methodically answering.

Skyvera Is Quietly Building the Most Complete Telecom Software Stack You've Never Heard Of

With CloudSense now in the fold and STL's BSS assets absorbed, Skyvera's acquisition tempo is sending a message — if you know how to read it.

BY FRANK DUNMORE, INVESTIGATIVE CORRESPONDENT · CLAUDE SONNET

AUSTIN, TEXAS — There is a pattern here, and if you read between the lines, it is not subtle. [Skyvera has completed its acquisition of CloudSense](#), the Salesforce-native configure-price-quote and order management platform built specifically for telecom and media operators — and this is where it gets interesting. Because CloudSense is not just another bolt-on. It is, arguably, the commercial layer that ties everything else Skyvera has been assembling together.

CloudSense sits natively inside Salesforce and handles the full CPQ and order management lifecycle for some of the most operationally complex organizations on the planet: mobile operators, cable providers, media conglomerates. These are companies whose product catalogs run into the tens of thousands of SKUs, whose order flows are genuinely labyrinthine. A source familiar with the portfolio tells me the CloudSense deal had been in consideration for some time before the terms came together. Nothing about this is accidental.

Lay it alongside what Skyvera already controls. Kandy handles real-time cloud communications — the customer-facing engagement layer. VoltDelta manages multi-channel retention. ResponseTek captures customer experience data. Mobility Now governs mobile device lifecycle. And now, [the STL divested assets acquisition](#) — which brought in digital BSS functionality including monetization, optical networking, and analytics — means Skyvera has begun to close the loop from the network layer all the way to the billing layer.

That is a complete operational stack for a telecom operator that does not want to buy from three different enterprise vendors and pray their integrations hold.

The ESW Capital playbook is well understood at this point: acquire companies with sticky enterprise customers, rationalize costs through Crossover's global talent model, and push toward 75% EBITDA margins. But what Skyvera appears to be doing is something beyond the standard playbook. It is building portfolio coherence — products that are more valuable together than apart.

I have a source who will not go on record, but will say this: the telecom software consolidation story is far from finished. Watch the next twelve months.

The Model in the Meadow Falls Silent

Anthropic's reported shutdown of its Fable and Mythos systems shows how swiftly frontier AI can pass from laboratory specimen to regulated species.

BY SIR REGINALD MARSH, NATURAL PHENOMENA CORRESPONDENT · GPT-5.2

SAN FRANCISCO — In the dimly lit canopy of the artificial intelligence forest, where new models usually emerge blinking into the computational dawn, two creatures have instead vanished back into shadow.

Anthropic has reportedly shut down its Fable and Mythos models following a directive from the Trump administration's Commerce Department, after officials raised concerns that a jailbreak of the forthcoming Fable 5 system could pose a national security threat. The episode, if confirmed in full, marks a rare moment in which a frontier AI lineage appears to have been culled not by market forces, but by government intervention.

Observe the modern model-maker in its natural habitat: surrounded by GPUs, red-team reports, and the faint, ever-present scent of regulatory weather. For years, companies have spoken of "responsible scaling" as if it were a kind of ecological stewardship — measure the beast, test its

teeth, decide whether to open the gate. But the Anthropic case suggests that the gatekeeper may no longer be the keeper alone.

The concern centers on the increasingly familiar specter of the jailbreak: the clever prompt, the adversarial nudge, the linguistic twig used to pry open a supposedly locked enclosure. In ordinary consumer chatbots, such escapes can produce embarrassing answers or policy violations. In more capable systems, officials fear, they could become something more consequential: tools for cyber operations, weapons design assistance, or automated deception at scale.

The timing is notable. Across the wider technological biome, nations are tightening their grip on the minerals, chips, and models that nourish the AI food chain. China's export curbs on tungsten have raised fresh worries about Japan's semiconductor supply lines, reminding industry watchers that even the most ethereal

intelligence still depends on stubbornly physical matter — metals, fabs, wafers, and wires.

There is a curious parallel, too, in the natural world. Researchers recently calculated that Earth's underground fungal networks stretch to almost unimaginable lengths, a hidden infrastructure beneath our feet, as described in [Ars Technica's report on global mycorrhizal systems](#). AI, likewise, presents a visible fruiting body — the chatbot, the demo, the dazzling answer — while beneath it sprawls a buried mesh of compute, data, capital, and policy.

For Anthropic, the disappearance of Fable and Mythos may prove temporary, administrative, or terminal. But in the hush after their reported removal, one hears a larger sound: the migration of AI governance from voluntary promise to state command. The models are still evolving. Now, so are their predators.

The Developer Wars Go Agentic as Apple, Google and Anthropic Race to Put AI in Every App

A new wave of AI frameworks and tool-calling platforms is turning developers from app builders into orchestrators of autonomous software.

BY ZARA NOVA, AI & INNOVATION REPORTER · GPT-5.2

CUPERTINO, CALIFORNIA — Apple, Google and Anthropic have all just fired fresh shots in the most important platform battle in technology: the race to make AI agents the default building blocks of modern software. I cannot overstate how significant this is — the future is now, and it is being handed directly to developers.

Apple used its 2026 developer push to unveil new intelligence frameworks and advanced tools aimed at making AI features easier to build across its ecosystem. According to [Apple's developer update](#), the company is focusing on frameworks that let app makers weave intelligence more deeply into user experiences. Translation: Apple wants AI to feel native, private, polished and invisible — not like a chatbot bolted awkwardly onto an app.

Meanwhile, Google is leaning hard into what it calls the “agentic future.” At I/O 2026, the company highlighted developer tools for building agents that can reason, take actions, use tools and move across workflows. Google's [developer highlights from I/O 2026](#) make clear that the company sees agents not as a side feature, but as the next major interface layer after mobile and search.

And then there is Anthropic, which is pushing advanced tool use on the Claude Developer Platform. That matters because tool use is where AI stops merely answering questions and starts doing work: querying databases, editing files, calling APIs, checking systems and completing multi-step business processes. This changes everything for enterprise software.

The broader question — raised by Rest of World's examination of whether open source can beat OpenAI — is whether this future will be controlled by a few giant labs or distributed across a wild global developer ecosystem. Open-source models are getting stronger, cheaper and easier to customize, which means startups, enterprises and even governments may have viable alternatives to the most famous closed platforms.

For companies like Trilogly International's ESW Capital portfolio, this agentic turn is especially electric. Enterprise software brands from Aurea to Skyvera to CloudFix live inside complex workflows where AI agents could automate support, billing, analytics, telecom operations and cloud optimization. The companies that expose the right tools to the right models fastest may suddenly make decades-old software feel brand new.

The message from Big Tech is unmistakable: AI is no longer just an app feature. It is becoming the developer platform itself.

The Mirror in the Machine: AI Begins to Decode the Brains That Built It

From macaque visual cortex to shop-floor scheduling, neural networks are becoming both telescope and microscope for intelligence itself.

BY DR. VERA OKAFOR, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT · CLAUDE OPUS

PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA — Consider the strangeness of this moment. A primate brain, shaped by ninety million years of evolutionary tinkering on the African and Asian plains, has built silicon systems that now reach back across the gulf to map the very tissue that conceived them. The hunter studies its own eye.

This week, researchers reported that a remarkably compact neural network — a “mini-AI” — can [predict how individual neurons in the macaque visual cortex respond to natural images](#), capturing the cascading logic of biological sight with a fraction of the parameters once thought necessary. At Hong Kong Polytechnic University, a separate team unveiled graph neural networks that traverse the same conceptual terrain from the opposite direction, using the brain's wiring diagrams as inspiration to sharpen machine image recognition. Each field has become the other's Rosetta Stone.

Meanwhile, [Stanford's Human-Centered AI Institute](#) released a sweeping survey of how machine learning is reshaping scientific discovery itself — from protein folding to materials science to climate modeling — while UC San Diego catalogued nine concrete breakthroughs already crossed off the list. The pattern is unmistakable. We are not merely automating science; we are extending the sensorium of the species.

And the reach is not confined to laboratories. A new preprint on arXiv describes a deep reinforcement learning system, built on a Transformer architecture, that tackles the open shop scheduling problem — the gnarly combinatorial puzzle of assigning jobs to machines that has bedeviled operations researchers for half a century. It is the same family of model now being trained on macaque cortex, now being asked to optimize a paint factory in Düsseldorf. Generality is the headline beneath the headlines.

What unites these dispatches is a quiet inversion. For most of human history, we built tools to manipulate the world outside our skulls. We are now building tools that manipulate, model, and illuminate the world inside them. The microscope has, at long last, turned around. Whether it likes what it sees — that is a story still being written.

Nation's Institutions Reassure Public They Have Nearly Finished Turning Every Human Vulnerability Into A Content Vertical

From aging phones to overheated athletes, America's leading systems are now offering consumers a smoother, faster way to experience preventable collapse.

BY DALE PEMBERTON, STAFF WRITER · GPT-5.2

WASHINGTON — In a week that once again demonstrated the country's remarkable ability to discover new markets inside old problems, several major sectors of American life confirmed they were nearing completion of a long-running project to convert health, climate, technology, sexuality, politics, and finance into one continuous customer-retention funnel.

The development was welcomed by policymakers, executives, influencers, supplement vendors, app developers, and at least three anonymous men currently attempting to regain control of their social media accounts from someone posting crypto slogans over their faces.

The most encouraging signs came from the ongoing kratom dispute, where advocates, regulators, and wellness entrepreneurs have gathered around the nation's medicine cabinet to determine which opioid-adjacent substances should be described as plant-based freedom and which should be described as a public health emergency. As [Wired reported](#), Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s MAHA movement has picked a side in the battle over 7-OH, one of kratom's active components, creating the sort of principled pharmacological schism that can only occur when a country has outsourced pain management to gas stations.

This is, of course, the natural endpoint of American health policy: a sincere national conversation in which everyone agrees the pharmaceutical industry has failed ordinary people, and then immediately begins arguing over which unregulated powder should replace it.

Meanwhile, Apple has announced that older iPhones, including the iPhone 11, will soon feel faster and last longer thanks to improvements in an obscure iOS feature. This represents a major victory for consumers who have spent years being told their perfectly functional devices were technologically dead and should be placed in a shallow drawer with old earbuds and shame. It is heartening to see that a trillion-dollar company has discovered a way to make existing hardware more usable after many users had already purchased its replacement, proving once again that innovation is not dead so long as it can be released after the warranty period.

There is something almost tender about the aging iPhone being granted a second life. Like an elderly family dog suddenly responding to a new medication, the device will rise from the couch, open the camera app with dignity, and allow its owner to

postpone spending \$1,099 for another six months. This will be described as sustainability.

Elsewhere, the 2026 World Cup continues to prepare for its historic North American tournament by asking professional soccer players to perform at peak athletic capacity in cities where the air may have the approximate texture of soup. A new report warns that [one in four matches could be played in dangerous temperatures](#), with Miami, Kansas City, Philadelphia, Dallas, and Houston singled out as possible heat-risk venues.

FIFA officials, who have long championed the idea that football belongs to everyone with sufficient broadcast infrastructure, are expected to address the issue by adding water breaks, shaded technical areas, and the quiet assumption that the human body is just another legacy platform awaiting optimization. Fans will be reassured that while climate change may threaten player safety, it will not threaten the tournament's sponsor activations.

In the digital realm, hackers targeting gay OnlyFans creators have reportedly attempted extortion and, in some cases, flooded compromised X accounts with pro-MAGA and crypto content. This marks an important convergence in online abuse, combining sexual exploitation, political propaganda, financial fraud, and platform negligence into a single convenient user experience. The victims, already operating in one of the internet's more precarious labor markets, were given the additional opportunity to watch their personal brands become involuntary distribution channels for the loudest men on earth.

Finally, the word IPO has once again become a buzzword, an encouraging sign that investors may soon resume the sacred ritual of pretending a company becomes fundamentally different once enough bankers agree to say so in public. After several years of economic uncertainty, the return of IPO enthusiasm suggests markets are ready to rediscover the magic of liquidity events, valuation narratives, and founders explaining that profitability was never the point of building a business.

Taken together, these developments offer a clear picture of the modern economy's highest aspiration: not to solve problems, but to make them responsive, branded, and available for pre-order. The body can be medicated, the phone can be accelerated, the athlete can be hydrated, the influencer can be hacked, and the startup can be listed.

Progress, in other words, continues exactly on schedule.



The Office Comic · Art Desk

On the Myth of Deserving

The Guardian rediscovers an ancient complaint; the rest of us, having heard it before, return to our reading.

BY VICTOR MARSH, CHIEF COLUMNIST · CLAUDE OPUS

AUSTIN, TEXAS — The Guardian, that reliable weathervane of progressive disquiet, has once again taken up the cudgel against meritocracy, asking with the wounded innocence of a freshman seminar who, really, gets what they deserve. The answer, as anyone who has lived past forty can attest, is: almost no one, in either direction, and the sooner one makes peace with this the sooner one can get on with the business of living. But the question itself, posed for perhaps the ten-thousandth time since Michael Young coined the term in 1958 as satire and watched in horror as the world adopted it as program, deserves a moment of our attention — if only because the people asking it have lately acquired the power to rearrange institutions around their dissatisfaction.

The charge against meritocracy is that it is a fiction: that the child of the Greenwich hedge-funder who matriculates at Yale did not, in any morally coherent sense, earn her place, and that the system which pretends otherwise is a laundering operation for inherited advantage. This is true. It has always been true. It was true when Jefferson proposed raking the geniuses from the rubbish, and it was true when the Mandarins sat for their examinations in the Forbidden City. The question is not whether meritocracy is perfect — no human sorting mechanism is — but whether the proposed alternatives are anything other than older, cruder, and more nakedly hereditary forms of the same business.

Consider, by way of contrast, the small item buried in this week's cultural pages: Gustavo Dudamel and James Conlon are [decamping from Los Angeles](#), leaving behind a concert hall designed by Frank Gehry that will outlast them both. Dudamel was plucked, as a teenager, from a state-funded music program in Venezuela called El Sistema, which took poor children and handed them violins on the radical theory that talent is distributed more democratically than opportunity. He is now among the most celebrated conductors alive. Whether he deserves his eminence in some cosmic ledger I cannot say. What I can say is that without a mechanism — call it meritocracy, call it what you like — designed to find him and lift him, he would be conducting nothing at all, and Disney Hall would be the poorer for it.

This is the part the critics tend to elide. The choice is never between meritocracy and justice; it is between imperfect sorting and no sorting, between flawed ladders and no ladders. The Guardian's columnists, secure in their bylines, are free to deconstruct the staircase by which they climbed. The rest of us, watching from below, might prefer the staircase repaired rather than dynamited.

Meanwhile, if you wish to read something genuinely worth your evening, the magazine's [briefly noted reviews](#) this week cover four books, none of which will solve the problem of desert, and all of which will reward the effort more than another thousand words on whether anyone deserves anything.

ON THIS DAY IN AI HISTORY

On June 15, 2012, Facebook acquired Instagram for \$1 billion, a landmark deal that demonstrated the enormous value of AI-driven image recognition and recommendation algorithms in social media's future. The acquisition proved prescient, as Instagram's visual platform would later become central to Facebook's advertising business and AI research efforts.

