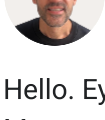




# Tech Decoded

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**Daniel Thomas**  
Editor, Tech Decoded

Hello. Eyebrows were raised this week when Sam Altman, the boss of OpenAI, claimed that Meta was **offering \$100m bonuses to poach his staff**. Experts say the Facebook owner has fallen behind in the AI race and is scrambling to catch up. I explore whether a major new investment can turn the tide. We also examine the Trump Organization's claim that its new smartphone will be entirely US-made, and look at the worrying rise of 3D-printed guns.

PS, please **let us know what you think** of Tech Decoded's new format. We really value your feedback!

## THE DOWNLOAD

### Can Meta catch up in AI arms race?



Facebook boss Mark Zuckerberg has said AI will "transform" every industry. Credit: Getty Images

For the last few years, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has been bullish about the possibilities of artificial intelligence. And yet, it's no secret that his company has fallen behind on this technology.

The tech giant was relatively late to launch a generative AI chatbot. And its Llama large language models have never matched the industry leaders, OpenAI's ChatGPT, Google's Gemini and Anthropic's Claude.

The Facebook owner has also struggled to hold on top AI researchers, amid reports of burnout and a lack of faith in leadership.

The problem is, AI stands to transform the industries in which Meta leads - social media, online advertising and virtual reality. And this perhaps explains why the firm is now aggressively trying to narrow the gap with its competitors.

This week, it confirmed it would take \$14bn stake in Scale AI, a fast-growing data start-up that has worked with AI's biggest players. Scale's co-founder Alexandr Wang will also join Meta to lead a new team devoted to creating AI "superintelligence".

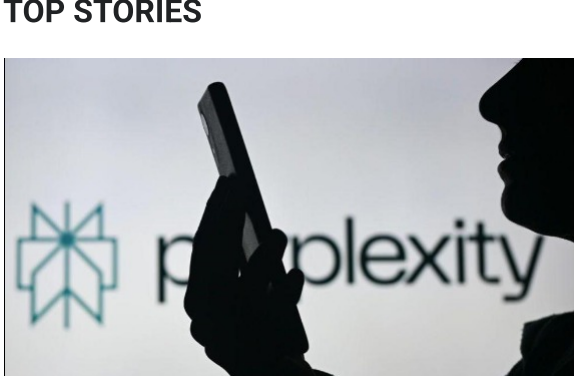
Meanwhile, reports suggest Meta is trying to poach AI talent from its rivals by offering gargantuan pay packets - something Altman corroborated this week.

Will it work? Creating the kind of culture that attracts top AI talent to firms like OpenAI and Google's DeepMind won't happen overnight, even if Meta's salaries are a sweetener.

And while some think Scale AI will help the company leapfrog its competition, others think Meta still lacks a clear AI strategy.

***The download:** Either way, Zuckerberg had to act. The pressure on big tech firms to stake their claim to this industry is growing, and Meta cannot afford to be left behind.*

## TOP STORIES



### BBC threatens to sue AI company over content

The BBC is threatening to take legal action against Perplexity AI, accusing it of reproducing BBC content "verbatim" without its permission.

[Read more >](#)



### Texas Instruments pledges 'historic' investment

The chip giant will invest more than \$60bn in seven US factories, as President Donald Trump pressures big tech firms to increase manufacturing in the country.

[Read more >](#)



### 'Virtually impossible' to make Trump phone in US

Experts cast doubts on the Trump Organization's claim that its new gold smartphone would be entirely made in America.

[Read more >](#)



### Amazon boss says AI will replace jobs at tech giant

Andy Jassy said "efficiency gains" would enable the shopping giant to reduce its corporate workforce, but urged staff to "be curious" about the technology.

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### Another SpaceX rocket goes up in flames

The Starship rocket had experienced a "major anomaly" on its test stand, according to SpaceX, which confirmed no one was injured in the blast.

[Watch the test >](#)

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## SOMETHING DIFFERENT

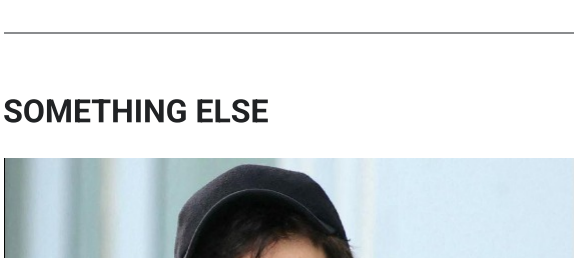
### How 3D-printed guns are spreading online



3D-printed firearms are often described as a type of "ghost" gun. Credit: Getty/BBC

3D-printed guns are untraceable firearms that can be assembled using a 3D printer, downloadable blueprints and some basic materials. Designed to evade gun-control laws, the technology has advanced rapidly in the last decade, and one expert told the BBC the firearms could become "the weapon of choice" for criminals and violent extremists. **Read about how they are spreading fast online.**

## SOMETHING ELSE



### Pavel's 100 children

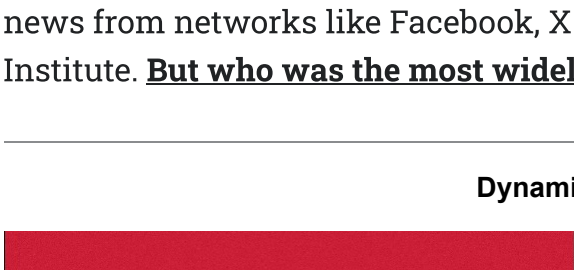
Pavel Durov, founder of messaging app Telegram, says the more than 100 children he has fathered via sperm donations will get to share his estimated \$13.9bn fortune.

[Read more](#)

## And finally...

**Read all about it!** Social media and video networks have become the main source of news in the US, overtaking traditional TV channels and news websites, research suggests. More than half of people (54%) now get their news from networks like Facebook, X and YouTube, according the Reuters Institute. **But who was the most widely-seen personality on these platforms?**

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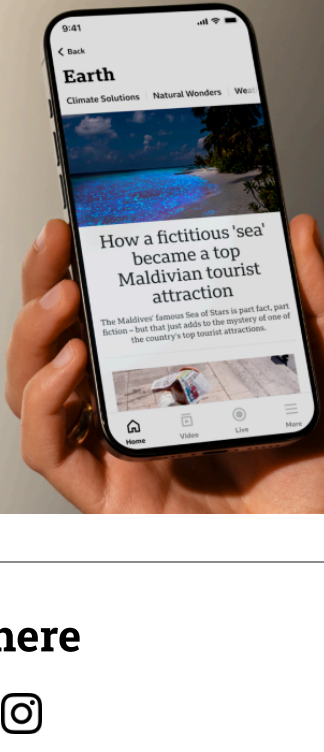
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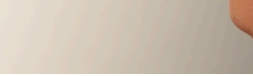
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