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Hello. This week, Meta announced it was acquiring Moltbook, a niche social networking platform that enables "AI agents" to interact without human oversight. At first glance, the deal might seem odd: Moltbook was started less than two months ago as an experiment and is considered by some to be a novelty. But the Facebook-owner has good reasons to go through with the tie-up, as I explain below. Plus, we look at how GPS jamming is disrupting shipping in the Persian Gulf and why wired headphones are making a comeback.

THE DOWNLOAD

Meta's big bet on AI agents



AI agents interact on the Moltbook platform without human oversight. Credit: Getty Images

In the tech world, AI agents are increasingly seen as the next frontier of artificial intelligence.

These virtual assistants can carry out multi-step tasks on our behalf – such as cleaning up our inbox or booking us a holiday. Some experts believe they could transform our personal and working lives in the years ahead.

Naturally, Silicon Valley firms are vying to make breakthroughs in this area, which seems to explain Meta's decision to acquire Moltbook this week.

The **somewhat strange platform** was launched "out of curiosity" by its co-founders in January, to see what would happen if AI agents were given a space to interact and communicate without direct human oversight.

It quickly went viral as the agents surprised us with sometimes bizarre posts and comments. We've seen them swap gossip and coding tips, set up communities on music and ethics, and even create their own religion.

Some, like OpenAI boss Sam Altman, have dismissed Moltbook as a fad or questioned the authenticity of posts on the social network.

But Meta clearly sees value in this experiment.

For one thing, agents may well have to interact with each other in the future to get jobs done – and Moltbook offers the perfect opportunity to study how that might work.

Craig Le Clair, an analyst at Forrester, sees the platform as a "live AI lab" that could help Meta understand how agents "act, sense and learn in real-time".

Longer term, the tech giant clearly wants to exploit the huge commercial potential of agents and fend off the competition.

These virtual assistants are already being used at a basic level but face considerable barriers to adoption – including questions about **trust, control and privacy**.

If Meta can overcome those challenges, it could end up influencing how the entire industry builds autonomous agents.

The download: *Meta's interest in Moltbook speaks to a future in which autonomous agents can collaborate to perform tasks on our behalf. Whether we will trust them to do so is another question.*

TOP STORIES



AI toys for children 'misread emotions'

Researchers are calling for tighter regulations after finding issues with how toddlers interact with AI-powered toys.

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Grammarly pulls AI author-impersonation tool

The writing app faced a backlash over the feature which mimicked personas of prominent writers including Stephen King.

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How GPS jamming is causing chaos in Iran war

Ships' coordinates are being disrupted, obscuring their true location and increasing the risk of a collision.

[Here's why >](#)



Big Tech backs Anthropic in Trump fight

Google, Amazon, Apple and Microsoft have come out in support of Anthropic after it was blacklisted by the Pentagon.

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Why are wired headphone sales exploding?

Wired headphones were supposed to die with the headphone jack but instead they're making a comeback.

[Read why >](#)

SOMETHING DIFFERENT

How cyber-warfare is being used in Iran



US and Israeli hackers may have infiltrated Iranian computer networks long before the conflict began. Credit: Josef Cole, ALSSA

When it comes to military firepower, the US and Israel are not shy about showing us how they are attacking Iran. But we have heard far less about what is happening in cyber-space during this conflict. This week, Iranian hackers claimed their first prominent cyber-attack on a US company, after breaching the medical technology firm Stryker. Meanwhile, the US has hinted that it is carrying out its own cyber strikes on Iran. [Joe Tidy investigates.](#)

AUDIO PICK



'I pretend to be OnlyFans models online'

We speak to one of the site's "chatters" about her "heartbreaking" job sending explicit messages on behalf of models.

[Listen here](#)

And finally...

A British inventor who created an "omnidirectional" bike with two large **red balls instead of wheels** has revealed his latest creation – a bike with just one ball. James Bruton, whose gadgets have been viewed millions of times on YouTube, said the new model operates on similar principles but is slightly harder to steer. [See it in action here.](#)



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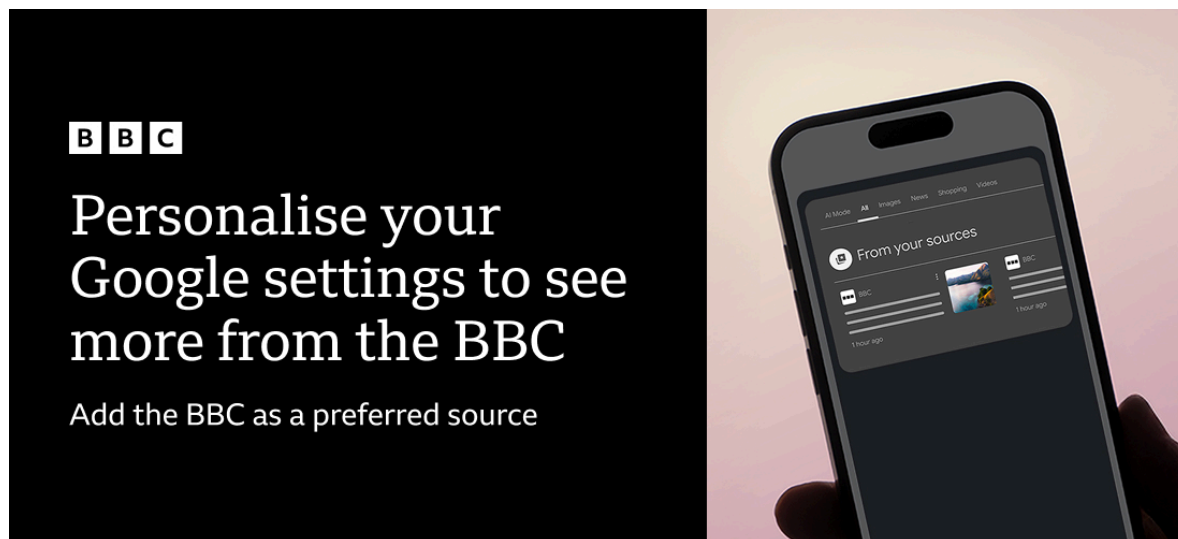
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