

Alibaba joins global chatbot race

Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba is joining a plethora of global tech companies rushing to match the popular AI-powered chatbot, as it recently announced that it started working on a rival to ChatGPT. The announcement comes days after Chinese search giant Baidu said it would complete testing of its AI chatbot in March.

ChatGPT has given rise to a boom in artificial intelligence technology, with tech giants Microsoft, Google and China's Baidu all working to develop chatbots that can mimic human speech. Alibaba is now working on a ChatGPT-style conversation bot of its own that is being tested by employees, according to AFP.



Microsoft's Bing search engine is now powered by ChatGPT

The same AI technology that powers the chatbot ChatGPT has been upgraded and added to the latest version of Microsoft's Bing search engine. A new experience for browsing the web and finding information online is promised by the company as it introduces the product alongside new AI-enhanced features for its Edge browser.

'Chat' and 'Compose' are two of the new features of its Edge browser. Edge's sidebar will contain these embedded. While 'Chat' allows users to sum up the website or document they're viewing and ask questions about its contents, 'Compose' serves as a writing assistant, helping to generate text, from emails to social media posts, based on a few initial prompts.

The new Bing now has a chat start button in its toolbar, which takes you to a conversational interface akin to ChatGPT. One important thing to keep in mind is that while Bing's ChatGPT bot is much more current and can handle queries related to far more recent events, OpenAI's ChatGPT bot was trained on data that only covers 2021. The announcement comes on the back of Microsoft recently investing heavily in OpenAI, and Google launching its own rival to ChatGPT called Bard.

Bangladesh has the '4th largest unconnected population' in the world

Over 105 million Bangladeshis remain 'unconnected' from internet access, according to the Digital 2023 Global Overview Report by global data reference library Data Reportal. As of January 2023, Bangladesh has 105,138,000 people (roughly 61.1% of the total population) who do not have access to the internet across the country and ranks 4th in terms of unconnected populations worldwide.

However, at the start of 2022, there were 114.5 million people who did not use the internet (roughly 68.5% of the population). This indicates that more than 9 million new users have used the internet in the past year in the country. According to the report, India has the highest number of people, with more than 730 million people not using the internet at the start of this year. China comes in second with around 375 million remaining away from the internet.



EDITOR'S NOTE

A real page turner

It goes without saying that mankind wouldn't be where it is now without the existence of books. However, for quite a while now, modern readers have been opting for the electronic versions over the physical page turners. Why is that the case? We explore the ever present argument of books vs ebooks in this week's Cover Story.

Turn this week's pages to find, as always, a variety of topics, from a list of in-demand skills for freelancing jobs in Next Step to an inside look into the new Runner three-wheeler factory in Shift. We also reviewed Samsung Galaxy Flip 4 in Bytes. Be sure to check 'em all out.

Until then. See you next weekend.

Shams Rashid Tonmoy
Sub-editor & Feature Writer

TOGGLE

Editor and Publisher
Mahfuz Anam

Editor (Toggle)
Shahriar Rahman

Team
Zarif Faiaz
Shams Rashid Tonmoy
Tanzid Samad Choudhury

Graphics
DS Creative Graphics

Production
Shamim Chowdhury

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Yahoo to lay off over 20% of their workforce

Yahoo has recently announced that they are going to lay off more than 20% of their entire workforce by the end of 2023. About 1000 of these cuts are to be made by the end of this week, further states the company.

According to reports from CNBC and Reuters, these cuts will affect about 50% of employees from Yahoo for Business division. As per a Yahoo spokesperson, the Yahoo for Business division "struggled

to live up to our high standards across the entire stack". As such, the layoffs are planned to better optimise Yahoo's advertising unit in an effort to restructure the company.

Yahoo is currently owned by the private equity firm Apollo Global Management since the \$5 billion buyout in 2021. According to the US-based news portal Axios, the latest layoffs will eliminate the jobs of over 1,600 Yahoo employees.

Zoom lays off 1,300 employees

Video conferencing platform Zoom will be letting go of 1,300 employees from its organisation, according to a memo by Zoom CEO and Founder Eric Yuan to the staff. This will account for 15% of the global staff that the popular video conferencing app currently has under its wing.

According to the memo, Zoom's laid-off employees in the US will receive up to 16 weeks' salary and healthcare coverage as well as other benefits. The support for 'Zoomies' outside the US will be similar and will take local laws into account.



Zoom becomes the latest tech company to let go of its employees, as tech giants Microsoft, Meta, Google, and Amazon have laid off part of their staff in the past couple of months.