

Asus bets on AI PCs as Bangladesh market enters 'high growth' phase

Peter Chang, General Manager, Asia Pacific, Consumer Business at Asus, speaks to The Daily Star about the company's latest AI PC lineup, Bangladesh's growth potential, component price pressures, and why he believes AI PCs are more than a marketing trend.

ZARIF FAIAZ

Asus is looking to strengthen its position in Bangladesh as the global PC industry shifts towards AI-enabled devices. Following the launch of its latest AI PC lineup, Peter Chang, General Manager, Asia Pacific, Consumer Business at Asus, said the company sees Bangladesh as a high-potential market, driven by low PC penetration, a young consumer base, and growing interest in new technologies. In an interview with The Daily Star, Chang discussed Asus's plans to bring AI features into mainstream laptops, the challenges of rising memory and storage costs, and the company's ambition to become the country's leading computer vendor.

The Daily Star: Asus has launched a new lineup of devices in Bangladesh. What is new for consumers?

Peter Chang: We have launched a new generation of AI PCs, covering the Zenbook series, Zenbook Duo, Zenbook S, Zenbook, and Vivobook series. AI is a very popular trend right now. Many people are using AI to support their work. We believe the AI PC category is still at a growing stage. By introducing these latest technologies in Bangladesh, we want users here to experience what AI PCs can offer.

TDS: Do you have market data showing that AI PCs are growing in demand in Bangladesh?

PC: If we look at the Asia Pacific or the global market, under the broader definition of AI PCs, penetration is already around 30 to 40 percent. We expect it could reach more than 60 percent by the end of this year. Most laptops will come with AI-capable CPUs inside. That is the broad definition of an AI PC.

TDS: AI PCs are often seen as premium products. What is Asus's pricing strategy for a market like Bangladesh?

PC: It is true that when AI PCs were first launched, they came



Peter Chang.

IMAGE: ASUS

at higher price points. But since last year, we have already started introducing AI into our mainstream devices. That is why we also launched products in the Vivobook series, which is our mainstream lineup. This shift is already happening. We are trying to bring AI solutions to more mainstream price points.

TDS: Do you think AI PCs are now an industry-wide trend?

PC: Yes. Whether it is silicon vendors or Microsoft, everyone is trying to push this category into the market. I think AI will become another important use case for computers. In the past, the internet changed the way people used computers. Now, with AI, we are entering a different scenario.

TDS: Some consumers argue that AI PCs are more of a marketing strategy than a genuine hardware upgrade. How do you respond to that?

PC: For sure, it is not just a marketing thing. Even in Bangladesh, many people are starting to use AI solutions

such as ChatGPT or Gemini. As long as end-user behaviour changes, this cannot remain just a marketing topic. Something is actually happening. Of course, we also need to help users understand the benefits. If we only define an AI PC by the hardware inside the device, users may not immediately feel the difference. After all, with cloud services, they can already use some AI solutions. So what we are working on is understanding users' needs in this new AI era. We are looking at how we can redesign devices, integrate AI into vendor solutions, and improve the user experience. AI PC demand is still at a very early stage. The devices we see now may not yet be fully optimised. So this will be a continuous evolution, and we will keep developing.

TDS: What is Asus's vision for on-device AI, especially when many AI tools still depend on cloud connectivity?

PC: On-device AI will definitely happen. But at this moment, the industry is still trying to predict

how it will evolve. The interesting thing about AI is that even when people make predictions, many of them are not accurate. For Windows devices and laptops, different vendors are still thinking about different solutions. It is not yet very concrete. But this is something everyone is looking at, and we hope there will be continuous development.

TDS: AI is increasing the demand for memory, while the industry is facing RAM and SSD shortages. How is Asus responding?

PC: It is true that the industry is facing shortages and price increases for RAM and SSDs. Asus also has to face this. But we have a strong supply chain management and procurement team, so we are still able to secure RAM supply. That said, we also need to deal with price increases.

We are looking at how to combine this with our product roadmap and minimise the impact. With new products, some price increases may still happen.

TDS: Do you expect price increases to affect market demand?

PC: We are aware of that possibility, but since it has not fully happened yet, what we are focusing on now is user education. We need to explain why users may need to pay more and justify the value they are getting. We hope this can minimise the impact. So far this year, although there have already been some price increases in the market, the situation is still under control.

TDS: You have worked across markets in Asia, Europe, and other regions. What makes South Asia, particularly Bangladesh, different?

PC: In most emerging markets, one common factor is that young people make up a large share of technology users. Because of this, we have to think about their budget and the kind of technology they like. That is why we focus a lot on gaming. Gaming is one of the product categories through which we can reach young audiences. Young consumers like technology, but many of them are students, so their budgets need to be considered. They may not be able to buy fully premium products. So we are trying to integrate some premium technologies into more mainstream choices.

TDS: What is your outlook for Bangladesh's PC market and AI PC adoption?

PC: Bangladesh is a very potential market. The PC penetration rate is still very low, so we believe the market will grow substantially in the next few years. As the overall situation becomes more stable, we see strong potential here. Asus is already one of the leaders in the Bangladesh market. We hope to strengthen this leadership and become the absolute number one computer vendor in Bangladesh. If we combine the growth potential of the market with our current position, I believe we can see very high growth in the coming years.

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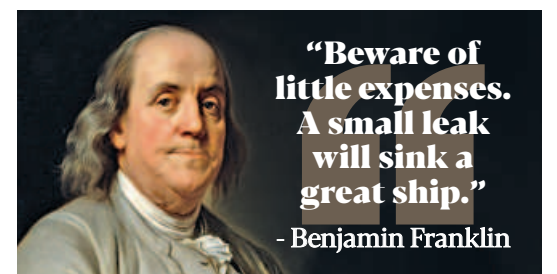
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A third of all new websites since 2022 are AI-generated, study finds

NEXT STEP DESK

A major new study drawing on data from the Internet Archive has found that roughly one in three websites created since 2022 was generated by AI, marking what researchers describe as one of the most rapid transformations in the history of the internet. The paper, titled 'The impact of AI-generated text on the internet' and co-authored by researchers from Stanford, Imperial College London, and the Internet Archive, found that by mid-2025, approximately 35% of newly published websites were classified as AI-generated or AI-assisted, up from zero before the

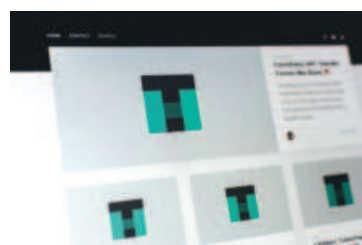


IMAGE: UNSPLASH

launch of ChatGPT in late 2022.

The researchers tested six widely held theories about the effects of AI-generated text on the web, including whether it was producing more disinformation, creating a homogenised writing style, or producing text with lower factual accuracy. Contrary

to expectations, the study found that only two of the six hypotheses held up. AI-generated content was making the internet less semantically diverse and notably more positive in tone overall, but was not causing a measurable increase in verifiably false statements and was not reducing the rate at which websites cite their sources.

The researchers said they are working with the Internet Archive to turn the study into a continuous monitoring tool rather than a static snapshot, and plan to add more granularity by examining which categories of websites are most affected and how impacts differ by language.

Meta acquires humanoid robotics firm Assured Robot Intelligence



IMAGE: REUTERS

NEXT STEP DESK

Meta has purchased Assured Robot Intelligence, a startup focused on teaching humanoid machines to anticipate and react to human behaviour, as per reports from several tech news outlets. The financial details of the acquisition remain private. The small firm's entire group, including its two founders, will move into Meta's Superintelligence Labs, the division responsible for advanced artificial intelligence research, states a report by TechCrunch on the matter.

Both founders bring substantial robotics experience. Xiaolong Wang spent time on chip design at Nvidia and later taught at the University of California, San Diego. Lerral Pinto held a faculty position at New York University and previously helped launch Fauna Robotics, a startup making child-sized humanoid robots that Amazon absorbed last month. Meta signalled that the acquisition would strengthen its ability to design models for full-body robot control and self-supervised learning.

Anthropic finalising \$1.5bn joint venture with Wall Street firms: report

NEXT STEP DESK

Anthropic is finalising a joint venture worth approximately \$1.5 billion with Blackstone, Goldman Sachs, and a handful of other Wall Street firms to sell artificial intelligence tools to private-equity-backed companies, the Wall Street Journal recently reported, citing people familiar with the matter.

Anthropic, Blackstone, and Hellman & Friedman are anchoring the deal, each expected to invest roughly \$300 million, the report said. Goldman Sachs is also set to be a founding investor, putting in around \$150 million. An announcement could come within this week, the cited sources shared. The venture aims to market AI capabilities to companies owned by private equity firms, though further details on the structure were not disclosed.



It's Musk vs Altman, and the future of AI at stake

The feud that built AI's biggest lawsuit, explained



NEXT STEP DESK

The years-long public war between Elon Musk and Sam Altman has entered its most consequential phase, with a federal trial now underway in Oakland, California, that could reshape the structure and leadership of OpenAI and carry significant implications for the future of artificial intelligence.

Altman and Musk co-founded OpenAI in 2015 alongside several other Silicon Valley figures. The company was launched as a non-profit with the stated goal of advancing artificial intelligence in a way that was most likely to benefit humanity, unconstrained by financial return. Disagreements arose between the pair over the company's direction in subsequent years, with Musk exiting in 2018 and providing no further financing. Following Musk's departure, OpenAI launched ChatGPT, secured billions in investment from Microsoft, and restructured towards a commercial hybrid model that retained a non-profit parent alongside a for-profit arm.

Musk filed the lawsuit against OpenAI, Altman, and president Greg Brockman in 2024, arguing that the company had broken from its original commitment to remaining a non-profit and that Altman had betrayed both him and the founding objective by turning it into a for-profit entity. Musk is seeking over \$134 billion in damages, funds which,

if awarded, would go to OpenAI's non-profit arm rather than to him personally. He is also pushing for Altman and Brockman to be removed from their positions and for the company to revert to its non-profit structure. Microsoft is also named as a defendant, with Musk alleging the company helped transform OpenAI into what he describes as a "get-rich-quick scheme." Microsoft has denied the claims.

OpenAI has called the lawsuit "baseless" and accused Musk of a "campaign of harassment," stating on a dedicated webpage that he was motivated by "jealousy, regret for walking away from OpenAI and a desire to derail a competing AI company." The company also said that Musk had in the past supported a for-profit entity as the next phase for OpenAI.

The trial began last week Monday, with jury selection taking place on the first day and opening statements beginning on Tuesday. Both Musk and Altman are expected to testify, spending at least six hours each on the stand. Brockman and Microsoft chief executive Satya Nadella have also been named in a list of witnesses who may be called. The trial is expected to last approximately three weeks. The case carries significant financial stakes for OpenAI, with potential damages and reputational costs that could complicate its push towards artificial general intelligence and its anticipated initial public offering later this year.



SoftBank eyes \$100 bln IPO for robotics unit: report

NEXT STEP DESK

SoftBank is reportedly preparing to establish a new robotics-focused company aimed at automating the construction of data centres, while also laying the groundwork for a potential initial public offering (IPO) valued at up to \$100 billion. According to reports by the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal, the Japanese conglomerate is developing a business called Roze AI. The unit is expected to focus on improving the efficiency of data centre construction in the United States, including through the use of autonomous robots to assist in building server facilities.

The Wall Street Journal reported that SoftBank is already considering an IPO for the venture, with some executives targeting a listing as early as the second half of 2026. The Financial Times reported that the prospective valuation could reach \$100 billion, and some individuals within SoftBank have raised concerns about the proposed valuation and the proposed timeline for the public listing. SoftBank has previously backed a range of technology ventures with mixed outcomes, including Zume, an AI-focused food delivery startup that ceased operations in 2023 after significant investment.