

Inside AI



For June 06, 2024

Here's a look at today's AI briefing:

- U.S. antitrust agencies to investigate Microsoft, OpenAI, Nvidia.
- AI Pin maker Humane in talks to sell to HP.
- NewsBreak app published false AI-written stories.
- Survey: People significantly prefer human- over AI-produced news.
- WhatsApp to test AI assistant for businesses.
- M&A roundup.

Beth

[p/beth-duckett](#)

1

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) agreed to [split investigations](#) into Microsoft, OpenAI, and Nvidia for possible antitrust violations. The DOJ will investigate Nvidia's dominance in high-end AI chips, while the FTC will probe OpenAI and business partner Microsoft, the ChatGPT maker's [largest investor](#).

More:

- The DOJ and FTC jointly enforce U.S. antitrust laws that crack down on anti-competitive business practices.
- Under the tentative agreement, each agency would investigate the AI companies' conduct and recent deals.
- The agreement, negotiated for nearly a year, could be finalized this week.
- Under the terms, the FTC will also keep its oversight of Amazon, and the DOJ will maintain its control over Google, both of which [face antitrust lawsuits](#).

Zoom out:

- The FTC is now [already investigating](#) Microsoft's deal with Inflection AI.
- In March, Microsoft agreed to [a \\$650M deal](#) with Inflection to license the startup's AI models and hire most of its staff.

- Regulators are concerned the deal was structured in a way to avoid merger rules.



2

Humane has engaged in talks to [sell to HP](#) after its wearable AI Pin received poor reviews, The New York Times reports. Humane also received around 10,000 AI Pin orders by April, far short of its 100,000 goal for the year, according to The Times.

More:

- Previous reports noted Humane was [seeking a buyer](#) at a sale price between \$750M and \$1B.
- The potential deal comes only weeks after Humane launched its "[AI Pin](#)", a \$699 device that clips onto clothing and has an AI voice assistant for communicating.
- The hardware, touted as a smartphone replacement, was [widely panned](#) by critics for failing to meet expectations.

Zoom out:

- Humane has since warned customers about [potential fire risks with its charging case](#) and overheating issues with its laser display.
- Humane is now in [talks with HP and other firms](#), including telecom companies, and has hired Tidal Partners to advise on the potential sale.



3

NewsBreak, a news aggregator app, has published at least 40 false stories, many of which were AI-generated, a [Reuters investigation](#) found. The app publishes licensed content from news outlets like CNN and Fox, as well as local news and press releases obtained through AI-powered web scraping, which it rewrites using AI.

More:

- Last year, NewsBreak published a false story about a shooting in Bridgeton, New Jersey, which local police quickly debunked.
- In another case, a Pennsylvania charity said NewsBreak published two false AI-generated stories claiming it was holding a foot-care clinic for the homeless.
- Another food bank, Food to Power in Colorado, had to turn people away due to inaccurate food distribution times posted by the app.
- NewsBreak said it removed the articles, claiming they were based on incorrect information from sources.

Zoom out:

- Despite being a U.S.-based company with U.S. investors, NewsBreak's algorithms are primarily developed by China-based engineers, according to Reuters.
- NewsBreak is listed as the top news app on the [Google Play Store](#), with 50+ million downloads, and the [third most popular](#) Apple Store news app.



A [Reuters Institute report](#) finds people significantly prefer news from human journalists over AI-produced news. The study surveyed readers across six countries — Argentina, Denmark, France, Japan, the U.K., and the U.S. — about their [views of generative AI in news](#).

Comfort Levels with AI-Produced News Across Six Countries

■ In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced in each of the following ways?

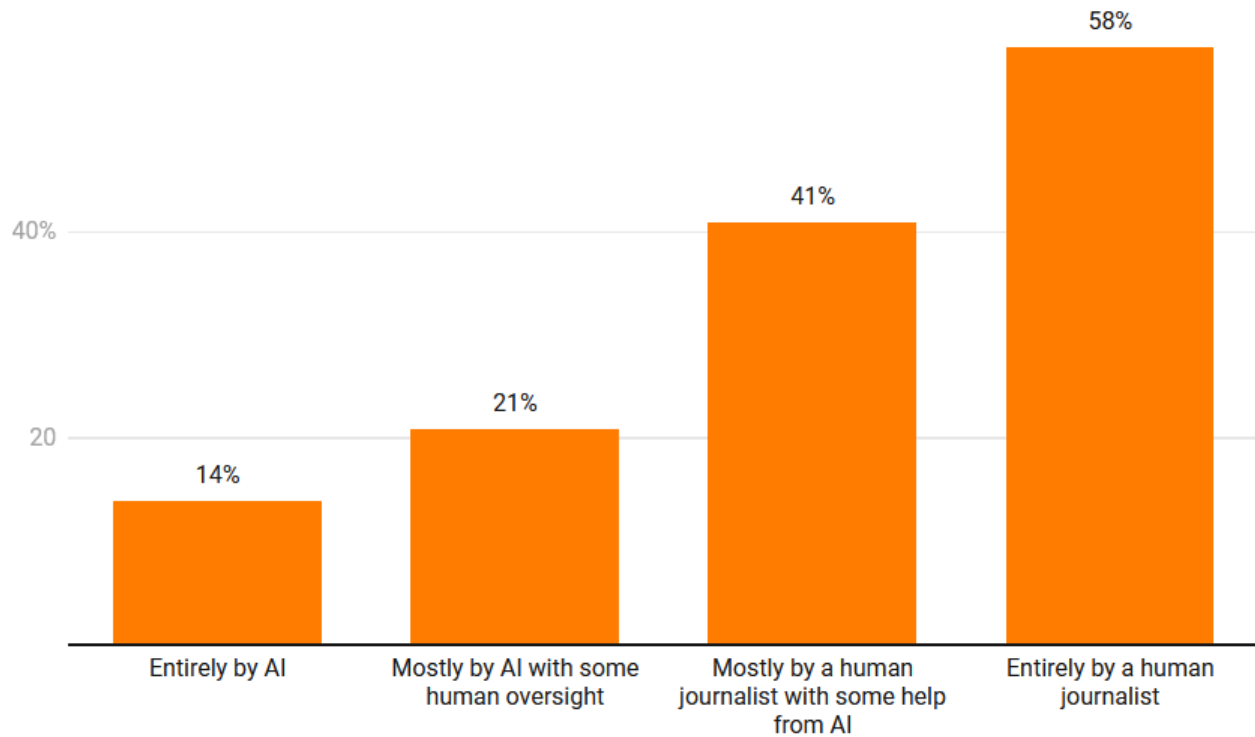


Chart: Inside.com • Source: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism • Created with Datawrapper

What the numbers show: People in the U.S. and Argentina showed slightly more comfort with AI-generated news, but were still by-and-large skeptical, according to the report. However, younger people were noticeably more comfortable with news being generated in part or wholly by AI. When broken down by tasks, respondents were more comfortable with journalists using AI for editing, spelling, and grammar (+38%) and translation (+35%) over creating an image if a real photo is not available (-13%) and artificial presenters and authors (-24%).

The bigger picture: [Across all countries](#), most respondents said journalists are currently “always” or “sometimes” using GenAI “with some human oversight.” Looking forward, two-thirds of respondents said they believe generative AI will significantly impact the news media industry.



Meta will begin testing an [AI assistant for businesses](#) for WhatsApp. WhatsApp's AI will be able to sell products through chat, answer shoppers' questions, and [create targeted ads](#).

More:

- Additionally, the AI could remind customers about cart items or offer discounts on purchases.
- Meta says 200 million businesses could access the AI assistant in WhatsApp for customer communication.
- The company will begin testing with businesses in India and Singapore followed by Brazil.

Zoom out:

- Separately, a European privacy group has [filed complaints with](#) EU data protection authorities about Meta's use of personal data for training AI models.
- The group, NOYB (none of your business), claims Meta's new privacy policy allows the company to use data like personal posts dating back to 2007 for its AI technology.



M&A Roundup:

- **Data analytics software maker Databricks plans to [acquire](#) data-management company Tabular for \$1B to \$2B.** Databricks and rival Snowflake aid companies in managing and storing data, which is crucial for AI/ML workloads.
- **Data lake software firm Cloudera [will acquire](#) AI startup Verta for an undisclosed sum.** Verta develops software infrastructure for enterprise teams to create and deploy ML models.

- German business software giant SAP has [acquired](#) Israeli SaaS company WalkMe for \$1.5B in cash. The deal is [expected to boost](#) SAP's AI offerings for enterprise customers.



7

Quick Hits:

- Join industry's leading AI conference - free passes available! [Register Now!](#) [passes are selling quickly.](#)**
- Salesforce said it will open its [first flagship AI center in London](#), part of its [\\$4B commitment](#) to the U.K.
- Privacy-focused search engine DuckDuckGo [launched AI Chat](#), a new tool aggregating different AI chatbots.
- Google's AI-powered research tool, [NotebookLM](#), [now runs on Gemini 1.5 Pro](#) and accepts Google Slides and web URLs.
- Ashton Kutcher has [faced criticism](#) for [promoting OpenAI's Sora tool for filmmaking](#). The actor, who has a beta version of the text-to-video generator, said Sora can create footage that "could easily [be used] in a major motion picture or a television show."

**This is sponsored content.*



[Beth Duckett](#)

AI and technology writer

Beth is a contributing editor and writer of Inside's [AI](#) and [Tech](#) newsletters. She has written for publications including USA Today, the Arizona Business Gazette, and The Arizona Republic, where she received recognition with a Pulitzer Prize nomination and a First Amendment Award for collaborative reporting on state pension cost increases. You can reach her at Beth.Duckett@yahoo.com.

This newsletter was edited by [Beth Duckett](#)