



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Microsoft develops 'virtual commute' for remote workers amid Covid-19

Extremely bullish on India, it's a long-term investment, says Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky

Tech Mahindra sells Altiostar stake to Rakuten for \$45 million

Today's View

Artsy Robots

In today's ever-changing digital universe, robots are expanding their reach through creative pursuits like computer-aided performance arts, kinetic sculptures and automated installations. More advanced robots are even using deep learning, artificial intelligence, generative algorithms and computational creativity to make significant aesthetic decisions.

Some of these robots are becoming sophisticated enough to paint impressive-looking works. **Cornell University** researchers compared the response of human subjects to the AI-generated art. The results showed that people could not distinguish between the art created by the algorithm and art generated by contemporary artists.

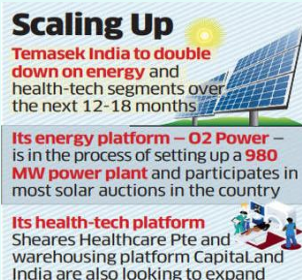
Similarly, **Kasetsart University** is leveraging haptic recording system to develop an engineer art creation called 'Full Bloom of Sakura'. The collaborative robot system records volumes of digital data about the position and force from the artists. It can learn skills of artists such as tapping method, blending method, stabbing method, scrubbing method, sliding brushstroke and line brushstroke. The robot was able to mimic the learned motions and the team could edit the software to improve the robot's movements and performance.

Akhil Handa
+91 22 6759 2873

Manish Kulkarni
+91 22 6759 2885
Manish.kulkarni@bankofbaroda.com

Temasek looking to expand its investments platform in India, eyes energy & health-tech segments

Temasek has made some follow-on investments, called as top-ups in the private equity parlance, in the last few months in its existing portfolio firms such as Zomato and UST Global.



Scaling Up
Temasek India to double down on energy and health-tech segments over the next 12-18 months

Its energy platform – O2 Power – is in the process of setting up a **980 MW power plant** and participates in most solar auctions in the country

Its health-tech platform Sheares Healthcare Pte and warehousing platform CapitaLand India are also looking to expand

Source – The Economic Times

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On the other hand, a robot called **CloudPainter** dips paint brushes on the end of its mechanical arm into a cup of paint. It spins around and adds a final dab of colour onto a canvas. French art collective **Obvious** is developing AI-generated art through Generative Adversarial Networks (GAN).

Even Big tech companies like **Google and Facebook** have come up with their own photo algorithm to tackle the last AI frontier, creative arts. Google's **DeepDream** is a machine-learning algorithm using a convolutional neural network to enhance pictures and detect faces, patterns and shapes. It's the same algorithm that allows Google or Apple to identify photos by their content in our phones.

Though critics argue that robots lack human experiences, imagination and emotions, which are necessary to give art meaning and value, many artists think robots can serve as a useful tool—like a paintbrush—to help them make better art. However, with fast-paced developments in technology, these robots are beyond being simple assistants, becoming creative collaborators for the art universe.

Today's News

Microsoft develops 'virtual commute' for remote workers amid Covid-19

Millions of employees now commute from their bed to a desk at home. After the initial euphoria of skipping traffic jams and cramped train compartments, a new reality has dawned in which the work day blends into the rest of life, like a never-ending video call. Microsoft has a solution for this.

The company's Teams collaboration software is adding the ability to schedule a "virtual commute". It won't start your car, but it will remind users about the end of the work day, suggest tasks to help workers wind down and create a little mental space before kids' homework, dinner, laundry and other obligations come crashing in.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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Extremely bullish on India, it's a long-term investment, says Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky

The travel and hospitality sector in India is among the worst hit following the Covid-19 pandemic, but that hasn't dented Airbnb cofounder and CEO Brian Chesky's optimism about the country.

"I'm extremely bullish on India. To invest in the Indian market is to be making a long-term investment," Chesky said in an interaction with Satyan Gajwani, vice chairman of Times Internet Ltd, at the ET Global Business Summit. "I think this is the early part of the very first chapter of the India community on Airbnb and I'm really excited to help the platform enable tens of thousands and, one day, millions of people become entrepreneurs as hosts on Airbnb in India and allow people in India to not only experience India but experience nearly every country in the world."

Source – *The Economic Times*

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The world should get a Covid-19 vaccine by early 2021, says Microsoft founder Bill Gates

Microsoft founder Bill Gates is optimistic that several Covid-19 vaccines will be approved by early next year. "I am optimistic that by early next year, of the six western constructs, probably three or four will have shown safety and efficacy, and four of those can be made at large scale and low cost, including AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Novavax and Sanofi," the co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation told the ET Global Business Summit.

While it's easier to develop a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 than tuberculosis or HIV, the challenge will be to get populations inoculated, he said.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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Competition Commission reviewing both online, offline aspects of Reliance-Future deal

India's antitrust body will examine the online and offline aspects of the Reliance-Future Group deal – separately and together – to ascertain their effect on competition, according to an official. Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd., a unit of Reliance Industries Ltd., sought the Competition Commission of India's approval on Monday for its Rs 24,713 crore acquisition of the online and offline businesses of the Future Group, which includes retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing operations.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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Post lockdown, local retailers are giving the big players a run for their money

There is no doubt online is growing but even in a large developed market like the US, it is still only 15% of total retail. What is happening is that the boundaries between online and offline are getting merged.

Retail is becoming omnichannel. In developed markets such as the US, the competition to pure online (ecommerce) is coming from large offline retailers. Walmart and other offline retailers are aggressively adding online capability while Amazon continues to expand offline (not just warehouses but physical retail concepts such as Amazon Go).

Source – Your Story

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Hopscotch raises \$25 million from Eduardo Saverin's investment arm EE Capital, others

Hopscotch, a fast-fashion kids' clothing brand, has raised \$25 million from Facebook cofounder Eduardo Saverin's investment arm EE Capital, Lionrock Capital, Rise Capital, RPG Ventures and IIFL Seed Ventures Fund, at a time of rising investor in new-age consumer brands.

Angel investors including Wei Yan, the cofounder of Diapers.com, and Techpro Ventures, the fund owned by Atul Nishar, the founder of Aptech, also participated in the investment round. Hopscotch is a children's clothing brand in the up-to-10 age group.

Source – The Economic Times

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Tech Mahindra sells Altiostar stake to Rakuten for \$45 million

India's fifth-largest IT services provider, Tech Mahindra, has sold its entire stake in US-based Altiostar Networks to Rakuten for \$45 million, making the Japanese company a majority shareholder in the virtualised radio access network (RAN) technology firm, according to a BSE filing. In 2018, Tech Mahindra invested \$15 million for a 17.5% stake in the vRAN firm as part of the US-based company's \$114 million Series C fund raise.

Tech Mahindra said in the regulatory filing on Wednesday that it had divested its holding of 18,518,518 C1 preferred shares in Altiostar Networks through subsidiary Tech Mahindra (Americas) to Rakuten USA. Altiostar provides 4G and 5G virtualized RAN software solutions for open interfaces to build an open and secure multivendor web-scale network. Tech Mahindra will continue to work closely with Altiostar following the stake sale, the Indian IT firm's managing director and chief executive CP Gurnani said.

Source – The Economic Times

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Smartphone imports fall, exports rise as local production ramps up

The local production of smartphones is inching closer to normalcy with exports recovering to pre-Covid levels and imports falling by around half from June highs, government data showed.

As per data released by the Ministry of Commerce (MoC) on Tuesday, smartphone exports in the month of August totalled Rs 1781.1 crore by value, higher than March's Rs 976.3 crore. Imports, though, were Rs 1050.1 crore, far higher than March's Rs 13.4 crore.

Source – The Economic Times

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U.S. Justice Department proposes changes to internet platforms' immunity

President Donald Trump met with nine Republican state attorneys general on Wednesday to discuss the fate of a legal immunity for internet companies after the Justice Department unveiled a legislative proposal aimed at reforming the same law.

Trump met with attorneys general from Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina, Texas, Utah and West Virginia.

Source – The Economic Times

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