

AI Competition Turns to Agent Scale, Health Performance, and Compute Independence

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GPT-5.6's health evaluation, China's expanding domestic AI-compute infrastructure, and Codex's rapid user growth lead this brief. It also covers research in open-ended creativity and robotics, new multimodal products, and the governance and infrastructure moves shaping enterprise AI.

Top Stories

Why it matters: the competitive focus is shifting toward the cost, reliability, and operational scale of agentic systems—not just headline benchmark scores.

- **GPT-5.6's health results emphasize performance per dollar.** OpenAI-associated reporting says the small Luna variant, at its lowest reasoning setting, outperformed GPT-5.5 at its highest setting while costing $25\times$ less; Sol set a new high bar at cost. In a blinded physician comparison across 20,000 axis ratings, GPT-5.6 models were reported to have fewer flaws than physician-written responses across accuracy, communication, completeness, instruction-following, and decision helpfulness. [1]
- **China Telecom deployed an Ascend 910C training cluster with 11,520 Huawei chips and 9,000 PFLOPS in Guangdong.** The stated aim is to reduce dependence on overseas high-end compute supply. An industry analysis identifies HBM memory as the immediate constraint on China's Ascend production, estimating 1.4 million units this year and projecting that 200,000 wafers per month of HBM capacity by 2028 could support 1.2 million chips monthly. [2, 3]
- **Codex is becoming a large-scale developer product, not just a**

model interface. A developer AMA recap says Codex has surpassed 5 million weekly users—double its count three months earlier—and shipped 150 improvements. Planned work includes a Linux desktop app, better agent persistence, lower code complexity, and connectors for Slack, GitHub, and Notion. [4]

Research & Innovation

Why it matters: researchers are testing where autonomous systems still fall short—and how model design can move from text generation into robust physical and creative workflows.

- **Sakana AI, MIT, and NYU used vision-language agents to recreate Picbreeder, an open-ended collaborative image-evolution experiment.** Agents tended to revisit similar concepts and make smaller leaps than people, but diverse agent personalities substantially improved exploration and semantic diversity. The researchers conclude that humans remain better at turning unexpected outcomes into sustained creative discoveries. [5]
- **Mistral open-sourced Leanstral 1.5, a formal-mathematics model.** The project reportedly saturates miniF2F, solves 587 of 672 PutnamBench problems, sets new results on FATE-H/X, and found five previously unknown bugs across 57 tested repositories. [6]
- **LingBot-VA 2.0 targets robot control with a video-action model trained natively for control.** Its sparse video stream has 13B total parameters but activates 1.9B per token; the project reports 93.6 average on RoboTwin 2.0, adaptation from 10–15 demonstrations, and 142ms per action chunk after systems optimization. [7, 8, 9, 10]

Products & Launches

Why it matters: multimodal models are increasingly shipping as specialized creative and production tools.

- **Runway introduced Characters**, which turns one reference image into a conversational expressive character. Its GWM-1 model generates lip-sync, facial movement, and head motion in real time at 24fps for photorealistic and stylized outputs. [11]
- **BytePlus made the Seedream-5.0 Pro API available for enterprise visual production.** The company positions it for image generation and editing; Arena rankings place it #2 in multi-image editing, #4 in image editing, and #11 in text-to-image, all major gains over Seedream-4.5. [12, 13, 14, 15]
- **Kyutai and MireloAI released MuScriptor**, an open model for converting recordings across genres into separate instrument MIDI tracks.

[16]

Industry Moves

Why it matters: governance and infrastructure partnerships are becoming part of the competitive AI stack.

- **Anthropic added former U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke to its Long-Term Benefit Trust**, extending the external oversight body’s membership. [17]
- **Cohere partnered with Nvidia and CoreWeave** around enterprise AI reliability, security, and infrastructure protection—an indication that enterprise positioning is increasingly tied to operational trust as well as model capability. [18]

Quick Takes

Why it matters: these signals point to the practical requirements of the next agent wave.

- Robbyant open-sourced **LingBot-World 2.0**, a real-time causal world model tested for 60 uninterrupted minutes across 20 scenes at 720p/60fps. [19]
- UC Berkeley researchers argue that near-zero inference costs will require data systems built for agent query swarms, multi-agent memory, and coordination. [20]
- OpenAI reset ChatGPT Work and Codex usage limits after reporting its fastest-ever traffic growth. [21]
- Sam Altman said he believes AI has so far been net job-creating, while noting that the trend could continue or change. [22]

Sources

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