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Daily brief · 2026-02-19

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3 deep-dives you should really read

Alibaba's Qwen 3.5 397B-A17 beats its larger trillion-parameter model — at a fraction of the cost

VentureBeat – AI · Topic: **AI/Cloud/Quantum**

- **What it is:** Alibaba's Qwen 3.5 397B-A17B is a new highly efficient, open-weight multimodal AI model, utilizing a Mixture-of-Experts architecture with 397 billion total parameters but only 17 billion active.
- **Who:** Alibaba Group developed and released Qwen 3.5, their advanced open-source AI model, reinforcing their position as a significant player in the global AI landscape.
- **What it does:** This model outperforms larger, more expensive proprietary alternatives, delivering significantly faster inference speeds, dramatically lower operational costs, and robust native multimodal and agentic capabilities for diverse enterprise applications.
- **Why it matters:** Qwen 3.5 reshapes the enterprise AI landscape by offering a performant, cost-effective, and open-source alternative to proprietary models, significantly lowering operational expenditures and increasing deployment flexibility for businesses.
- **Strategic view:** This release signals a strategic shift towards efficient, open-source AI, empowering enterprises to deploy high-performing, cost-controlled solutions, thereby reducing vendor dependency and accelerating innovation across the TMT sector.

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New agent framework matches human-engineered AI systems — and adds zero inference cost to deploy

VentureBeat – AI · Topic: **AI/Cloud/Quantum**

- **What it is:** Group-Evolving Agents (GEA) is a novel AI framework where groups of agents collaboratively evolve, sharing experiences and innovations to autonomously enhance performance over time.
- **Who:** Researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara developed Group-Evolving Agents (GEA) to address the persistent challenge of deploying adaptive AI in enterprise environments.
- **What it does:** GEA enables groups of AI agents to learn from collective experiences, autonomously improving their code and structure to match human-engineered systems while adding zero deployment inference cost.
- **Why it matters:** This innovation addresses a key enterprise AI deployment challenge by enabling robust, self-adapting agents that reduce human engineering effort, improve throughput, and maintain cost efficiency.
- **Strategic view:** This collective AI evolution framework signals a future where autonomous agents will significantly reduce operational costs and human dependency in software development and complex task automation, reshaping workforce dynamics.

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When accurate AI is still dangerously incomplete

VentureBeat – AI · Topic: **AI/Cloud/Quantum**

- **What it is:** The article highlights that AI accuracy alone is insufficient for complex, high-stakes domains and outlines LexisNexis's advanced RAG and agentic AI strategies to ensure comprehensive and authoritative outputs.
- **Who:** LexisNexis, led by SVP and Chief AI Officer Min Chen, is developing advanced AI solutions for legal applications that prioritize completeness and reliability over mere accuracy.
- **What it does:** LexisNexis employs graph RAG, agentic graphs, and "planner" and "reflection" AI agents to enhance generative AI, ensuring responses are comprehensive, authoritative, and reliable for legal professionals.
- **Why it matters:** This approach matters because it tackles the critical risk of AI delivering accurate but incomplete or unauthoritative information in high-stakes environments, redefining AI quality beyond basic accuracy.
- **Strategic view:** TMT executives must strategically prioritize AI completeness, authority, and human-AI collaboration, evolving beyond simple accuracy metrics to build truly reliable and valuable AI systems, especially for high-stakes applications.

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