

Biggest Stories of the Week

Product/Technology Release: Meta launches AI-powered smart glasses with new connectivity features

Date: 2025-09-17

Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/09/17/tech/meta-ai-smart-glasses-connect>

Meta introduced its newest generation of AI-enabled smart glasses, positioning them as a major step in wearable technology. These glasses integrate advanced on-device AI chips capable of running language models locally, reducing latency and minimizing reliance on cloud servers. Key features include real-time voice translation, spatial audio for immersive experiences, and voice-driven commands designed for everyday tasks. The glasses also emphasize continuous connectivity, with the ability to sync seamlessly with other Meta platforms. Market reactions were cautiously optimistic—shares rose slightly and technology analysts applauded the innovation, though skepticism remains around adoption hurdles. Critics pointed to battery life limitations, device comfort, and premium pricing as potential barriers. This release underscores Meta's ambition to shift computing from smartphones to wearable AI, intensifying competition with Apple, Google, and other AR/VR players.

Earnings Call: Microsoft beats expectations, raises AI infrastructure guidance

Date: 2024-09-20

Source: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-07-30/microsoft-s-quarterly-cloud-sales-profit-exceeded-expectations>

Microsoft posted fourth-quarter earnings that surpassed Wall Street estimates, driven by a surge in cloud and AI-related revenues. Azure revenue grew 29% year-over-year, exceeding analyst expectations of 25%, with AI services contributing an estimated 12% of Azure's revenue. The company announced a \$2 billion increase in its fiscal year 2025 capital expenditure budget dedicated to AI infrastructure, reflecting confidence in long-term demand. CEO Satya Nadella emphasized that enterprise AI adoption was accelerating across industries, validating Microsoft's multi-year strategy to embed AI into productivity tools and cloud services. Markets responded strongly—Microsoft shares gained 5% post-earnings, boosting the entire technology sector, with ripple effects seen in Alphabet and other AI-linked names. Analysts highlighted that the results not only confirmed Microsoft's leadership in the cloud but also reinforced the thesis of a multi-trillion-dollar AI economy. Investor sentiment shifted further toward overweight allocations in technology and AI infrastructure plays, strengthening bullish narratives in the sector.

Rates/Markets: Wall Street bets on faster, deeper Fed cuts than policymakers project

Date: 2025-09-20

Source: <https://www.wsj.com/economy/central-banking/fed-cuts-rates-by-quarter-point-and-signals-more-are-likely-dba38600>

Investors in futures markets are increasingly pricing in a more aggressive Federal Reserve easing cycle than the central bank itself has indicated. Market expectations suggest the federal funds rate

could drop below 3% by the end of 2026, while the Fed's official 'dot plot' projects around 3.4%. The gap reflects investor optimism that inflation pressures will ease more quickly, allowing policymakers to cut rates sooner and more deeply. This divergence has already driven Treasury yields lower and supported equity markets, particularly in interest-rate-sensitive sectors such as housing and financials. However, strategists caution that inflation remains sticky and the Fed may not be willing to act as quickly as markets expect. If economic data surprises to the upside, investors may face sharp repricing risks. The mismatch between policy guidance and market pricing underscores heightened volatility potential in coming quarters.

Policy/Immigration: Administration plans \$100,000 annual fee for H-1B visas; unveils \$1m 'gold card'

Date: 2025-09-20

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/09/19/trump-h1b-visa-fee-immigration/>

The U.S. administration unveiled a controversial immigration policy package that includes a \$100,000 annual fee for H-1B visas and the introduction of a \$1 million 'gold card' residency program. The measures are intended to curb perceived misuse of the skilled-worker visa system while generating substantial revenue. Technology companies, which are among the largest users of H-1B visas, strongly criticized the plan, warning that it could stifle innovation, reduce competitiveness, and create barriers to hiring top global talent. Industry leaders highlighted that research and development efforts in areas such as artificial intelligence and cloud infrastructure rely heavily on skilled immigration pipelines. While proponents argue the policy would deter misuse and attract wealthy investors through the gold card, critics fear it could accelerate talent shortages in the U.S. tech sector. Markets reflected these concerns as large-cap tech stocks traded under pressure following the announcement.

Media/Regulation: Disney's abrupt suspension of 'Jimmy Kimmel Live!' followed affiliate pushback

Date: 2025-09-18

Source: <https://www.wsj.com/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-decision-behind-the-scenes-e1ecbbf2>

Disney abruptly suspended 'Jimmy Kimmel Live!' after major affiliates signaled they would indefinitely preempt the program. The move came amid regulatory scrutiny of broadcast content and increased pressure from local stations to adjust programming. Disney executives opted to cancel the show rather than risk prolonged affiliate conflicts and potential compliance issues. The decision highlights the shifting power dynamics in broadcast television, where networks are increasingly constrained by both affiliates and regulators. Although the direct financial impact was limited, the episode underscores the broader challenges facing legacy broadcasters as they balance affiliate relations, regulatory oversight, and the transition toward streaming-first models.

Fed Speech: Powell: risks to inflation are 'tilted to the upside' despite rate cuts

Date: 2025-09-20

Source: <https://www.wsj.com/video/fed-powell-on-rate-cut-risks-to-inflation-are-tilted-to-the-upside/EEE44DEC-E7E0-4E01-8631-61C8E54F2295>

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell delivered remarks cautioning that inflation risks remain tilted to the upside, even as the Fed begins to cut rates. His comments tempered expectations for an

aggressive easing cycle, reminding markets that policy will remain data-dependent. Powell emphasized the need to guard against premature easing, signaling that the Fed's priority remains achieving price stability. Markets responded with mixed reactions: short-term bond yields held steady, while equity markets lost some of their earlier gains. The speech reinforced the Fed's cautious stance and suggested that the pace of rate cuts would be slower than some investors anticipate.

Market Sentiment: Global equities hit records as 'FOMO' grips investors; credit spreads at cycle tights

Date: 2025-09-19

Source: <https://www.ft.com/content/02b4525e-79e6-4f73-ad82-bc32a714b8c7>

Global equities climbed to fresh record highs as risk-on sentiment spread across markets, while U.S. corporate credit spreads tightened to levels not seen in decades. Momentum buying, combined with easing yields, created an environment supportive of equities and credit markets. Investor enthusiasm was evident across multiple asset classes, reflecting confidence in continued economic growth and policy support. However, some analysts warned that extreme positioning and crowding into risk assets could increase vulnerability to sudden pullbacks. Despite these warnings, volatility remained subdued, further encouraging momentum-driven strategies. The rally highlights the growing influence of investor psychology, with fear of missing out (FOMO) driving allocations even as valuations stretch higher.

Product/Investing: Robinhood to offer retail access to a concentrated portfolio of unlisted start-ups

Date: 2025-09-17

Source: <https://www.ft.com/content/a39d0a2e-950c-4a54-b339-4784f7892720>

Robinhood announced plans to launch a new investment product aimed at retail clients, offering exposure to a curated basket of unlisted start-ups. The fund structure is designed to provide everyday investors with access to venture-style investments traditionally limited to institutional or high-net-worth participants. While the initiative could boost Robinhood's revenue and broaden its market appeal, it also raises concerns about investor protection. Key risks include liquidity challenges, valuation transparency, and potentially high management fees. Analysts note that while democratizing private markets may enhance retail engagement, it blurs the line between public and private investing, raising questions around regulatory oversight. The move reflects ongoing trends in fintech innovation, but also underscores the risks of exposing retail investors to complex, illiquid assets.