



Has Xbox really lost the console wars?

FTC v. Microsoft day two was all about console wars and whether Xbox is really in a distant third place.

TOM WARREN JUN 24

Top Stories

1

Making sense of the EU's fight for user-replaceable smartphone batteries

JON PORTER JUN 24

2

Command Line: Musk versus Zuckerberg

ALEX HEATH JUN 24

3

Final Fantasy XVI's lack of diverse characters makes a huge world feel small

ASH PARRISH JUN 24

4

Google Pixel devices finally have a real default weather app

DAN SEIFERT JUN 24

5

E3 is dead – how big was it, anyhow?

SEAN HOLLISTER JUN 24

● Today's Storystream

FEED REFRESHED 5:47 AM GMT+7

BONESAW IS READY

FORMULA E

Formula E team caught using RFID scanner that could grab live tire data from other cars

WES DAVIS 5:47 AM GMT+7



WES DAVIS 3:32 AM GMT+7

LG is going to support that hotel AirPlay thing. It wasn't the biggest announcement at [WWDC](#) this year, but Apple debuting TV AirPlay in hotels is a welcome thing, and LG [announced Thursday](#) it'll support it on LG Pro:Centric Smart Hotel TVs later this year (via [MacRumors](#)).

When you encounter one, you'll be able to connect and start AirPlaying TikToks or whatever by scanning a QR code on the TV.



AirPlay is coming to hotels.

JAY PETERS JUN 6



RICHARD LAWLER 3:10 AM GMT+7

Russian “rebellion” attempt ends with a post on

Telegram. The apparent coup attempt that Wagner private military group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin said was a “march of justice” on Moscow is over (via Interfax, NYT).

Late Saturday in Russia, Prigozhin announced his forces were “turning around our columns and returning to field camps according to plan” after coming within 200km (125 miles) of Moscow without any bloodshed. That Telegram post currently has over 192,000 clown emoji reactions.

Russian state news agency TASS reports charges against Prigozhin will be dropped and that he will leave for Belarus.



Telegram message posted by Concord Group, a company partially owned by Wagner leader Yevgeny Prigozhin. Image: Telegram / Concord Group



WES DAVIS 2:48 AM GMT+7

The Titan submersible’s hull was apparently made of expired carbon fiber. *Travel Weekly* EIC Arnie Weissman wrote a series of articles about a May trip he almost took aboard the OceanGate Titan (via Insider).

He says OceanGate CEO Stockton Rush told him the sub’s hull used discounted Boeing carbon fiber that was “past its shelf life for use in airplanes” and claimed Boeing, NASA, and the University of Washington (UW) were involved in Titan’s design and testing.

Boeing and UW have both denied involvement, and NASA says it only served in a consulting capacity, per Insider.



WES DAVIS 1:57 AM GMT+7 

A submarine expert tried to warn OceanGate's CEO

Stockton Rush his sub was flawed. In 2019, after taking a trip on the ill-fated OceanGate Titan, submersible expert Karl Stanley said he heard an increasingly loud cracking sound over the two-hour trip down, according to The New York Times. He tried to warn Rush:

In the April 2019 email to Mr. Rush, Mr. Stanley said the loud cracking sounds that they had heard during their dive “sounded like a flaw/defect in one area being acted on by the tremendous pressures and being crushed/damaged.” He wrote that the loud, cracking noise signaled there was “an area of the hull that is breaking down.”

Stanley said experts confronted Rush about the safety of his sub at a 2018 crewed submersible conference, but he was “determined” to build it anyway. Shortly after, over three dozen industry experts wrote Rush, urging him to put his sub through certification.

Submersible Expert Raised Safety Concerns After 2019 Trip on Titan

[THE NEW YORK TIMES]

Goodnight Phone

GINA WYNBRANDT JUN 22

Most Popular

MOST POPULAR

1 Microsoft acquired Bethesda after hearing Starfield would be exclusive to PlayStation

TOM WARREN JUN 23

2 Google Pixel devices finally have a real default weather app

DAN SEIFERT JUN 24

3 Has Xbox really lost the console wars?

TOM WARREN JUN 24

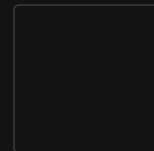
4 Microsoft opened the FTC hearing with a Sony bombshell

TOM WARREN JUN 22

MICROSOFT

FTC v. Microsoft: all the news from the big Xbox courtroom battle

TOM WARREN JUN 21



JAY PETERS 1:19 AM GMT+7




Reddit shared a roadmap of planned accessibility features for moderators that are coming to its app.

Many will arrive by July 1st — the day after some popular third-party Reddit apps are set to shut down. Reddit is promising to share another update on Friday.

I'm planning to write more about these updates soon. Stay tuned!





WES DAVIS 12:23 AM GMT+7 

Mark Zuckerberg wants more fans? A write-up in *The Washington Post* says the Zuck's latest attempt at image rehabilitation (remember the "only eating meat from animals he'd personally killed" phase?) is, in part, a bid to win over Musk stans.

Zuckerberg has appeared on podcasts hosted by provocateur Joe Rogan and AI researcher Lex Fridman, both popular among fans of Twitter owner Musk. He has posted sweaty action shots on Instagram displaying his jujitsu skills. And this week, he accepted Musk's challenge to a cage fight after news reports on Meta creating a Twitter competitor.

But Zuckerberg has really ramped it up over the past year, one of the people said, courting the same "tech bros" who have been captivated by Musk — who is suddenly Zuckerberg's competition in more ways than one.


The cage match between him and Musk may just be the most recent part of his new pitch, even before Instagram's "sane" Twitter alternative arrives.

Inside the AI Factory

How many humans does it take to make tech seem human? Millions.

JOSH DZIEZA JUN 20



WES DAVIS JUN 24 

Google AI raters that were laid off for complaining about working conditions have gotten their jobs

back. On May 31st, a group of six AI chatbot trainers employed by Google subcontractor Appen were fired after they spoke out about how their poor working conditions could make Google's Bard chatbot dangerous.

The Alphabet Workers Union now says the workers' jobs have been reinstated with backpay. Advocacy group the Worker Agency provided *The Verge* with a copy of the email from Appen's RaterLabs explaining the decision:

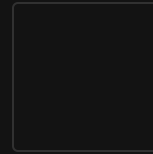
Based on our continuing consideration and review of our business needs, we have determined that some recent reductions of our workforce were not necessary and can be reversed. Consequently, we are pleased to offer you the option to return to work with RaterLabs.

Internal complaints about Bard previously called it "a pathological liar" and begged the company not to launch it.

TRANSPO

Tesla's NACS plug will be required at EV charging stations in Washington and Texas

WES DAVIS JUN 24



TECH

[SEE ALL TECH](#)

Someone please fix the FCC, FFS

MAKENA KELLY JUN 23

- Across the Spider-Verse's animators allegedly worked under unsustainable conditions

CHARLES PULLIAM-MOORE JUN 23

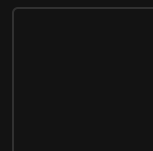
- Mark Zuckerberg is ready to fight Elon Musk in a cage match

ALEX HEATH JUN 22

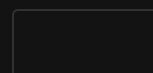
DEALS

This weekend is your last chance to save on a bunch of fantastic Switch games

ANTONIO G. DI BENEDETTO
AND BRANDON WIDDER JUN 24



TECH



How to tell everyone on Gmail if you're in – or not

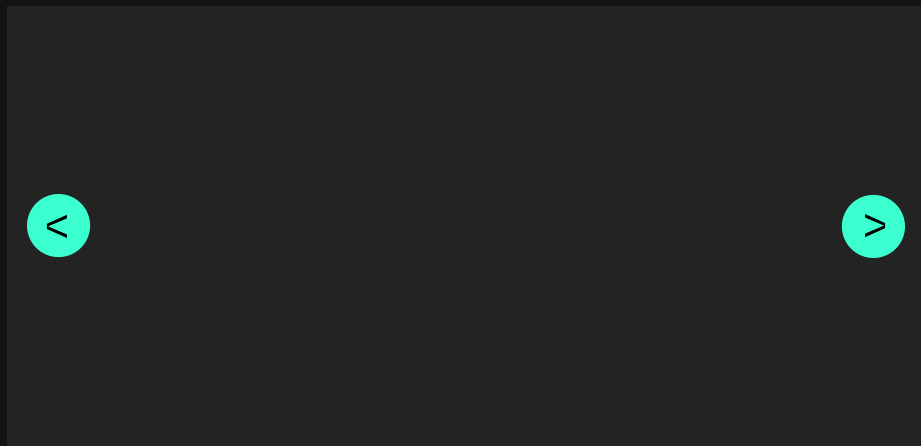
BARBARA KRASNOFF JUN 24



ANDREW WEBSTER JUN 24 [Link](#)

Final Fantasy, only edgier. The big release this week is *Final Fantasy XVI* on the PS5, which takes the long-running RPG series and turns it into something like *Game of Thrones*, with mixed results. You can keep up with all of our coverage [right here](#).

There's also plenty new streaming: *Secret Invasion* on Disney Plus, *I'm a Virgo* on Prime Video, and *Skull Island* on Netflix. And if you're a Switch owner, you can check out the first two *Pikmin* games and the GBA version of *Fire Emblem*.



1/6 *Final Fantasy XVI*. Image: Square Enix

Reddit blackout protest updates: all the news about the changes infuriating Redditors

Changes to the Reddit API are forcing beloved apps like Apollo to shut down, and following the protests, mods are feeling threatened by Reddit.

RICHARD LAWLER JUN 24 

Russian ISPs cut off access to Google News as Putin responds to “armed rebellion.” As the [New York Times](#), [CNN](#), and [BBC](#) report, the Wagner private military group of mercenaries that had supported [Russia’s invasion of Ukraine](#) has apparently taken control of facilities in two key cities, Rostov-on-Don and Voronezh.

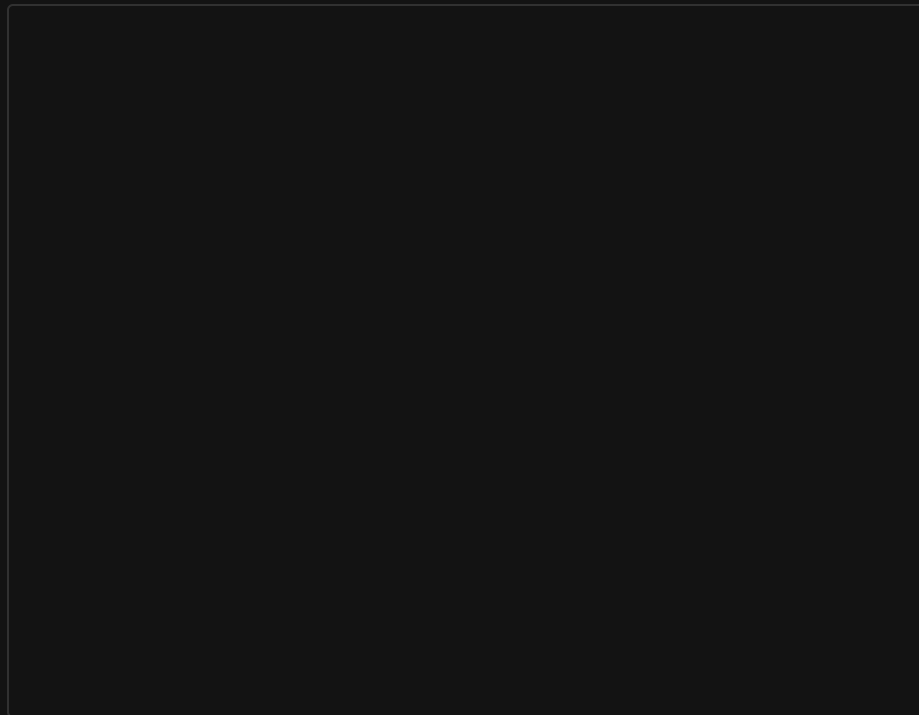
Vladimir Putin called for an end to the “armed rebellion” in a [video released on Telegram](#), but as Wagner leader (and accused financial backer of the [Internet Research Agency “troll farm”](#)) Yevgeny Prigozhin threatened to march on Moscow, Netblocks noted that Russian ISPs were restricting access to information from Google News.

Update 3:20PM ET: Progozhin has [announced](#) the Wagner troops will return to their bases, ending the “march of justice” toward Moscow. The president of Belarus [announced](#) that it was the result of his negotiations with Progozhin.

RICHARD LAWLER JUN 24 

The “In Real Life” app is shutting down because it “it didn’t have real users.” When [we checked out IRL in 2021](#), the company claimed to have 12 million monthly active users, and [The Information](#) reports that lately, it’s put the number at 20 million. Now, the outlet [reports](#), the board of directors of the Softbank-backed company has concluded 95 percent of those were fake. A spokesperson said it will shut down and return capital to shareholders.

IRL's founder and CEO Abraham Shahi has been suspended for the last two months for the alleged misconduct.



IRL

Podcasts

PODCASTS

[SEE MORE PODCASTS](#)



Gary Vaynerchuk is 'petrified' of Slack

NILAY PATEL JUN 22



On The Vergecast: the humans who make your AI, and the right way to start a smart home.

DAVID PIERCE JUN 21



On The Vergecast: The future of Reddit, as a company and a community.

DAVID PIERCE JUN 16



This week's Decoder on private equity in America really touched a nerve.



On The Vergecast: the war for Reddit, the future of Twitter, and the new MacBook Air.



RICHARD LAWLER JUN 15

Twitter hacker 'PlugWalkJoe' handed a five year prison sentence. Joseph James O'Connor, aka PlugWalkJoe, is a UK citizen connected to a massive 2020 breach on Twitter that pushed crypto scam ads through accounts for Barack Obama, Elon Musk, Apple, and others, as well as other social media account breaches.

Today a New York federal court judge sentenced him to five years in prison for his crimes minus 28 months for time already served. TechCrunch reports he will also forfeit at least \$794,000 to his victims.



JAY PETERS JUN 24

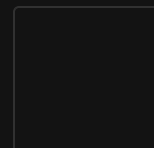
TikTok might improve shipping for items bought through TikTok Shop. The company has signed logistics deals to be able to better compete with e-commerce rivals like Temu and Amazon, according to The Information. Right now, deliveries for TikTok Shop items bought in the US can take more than a week.

TikTok Inks U.S. Warehouse Partnerships in Bid to Rival Amazon and Temu

[THE INFORMATION]

GOOGLE

Google is launching its Perspectives search feed



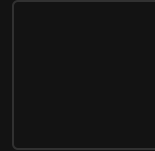
that's designed to show
results from humans

JAY PETERS JUN 24

GADGETS

**Alexa can now play local
weather news videos on
Echo Shows – no cable
subscription required**

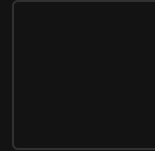
JENNIFER PATTISON TUOHY JUN 24




MICROSOFT

**Microsoft acquired
Bethesda after hearing
Starfield would be
exclusive to PlayStation**

TOM WARREN JUN 24



VICTORIA SONG JUN 24 

It's a miracle, Google Assistant is finally coming to Fossil smartwatches. Huzzah! Fossil says that its Wear OS 3 Gen 6 watches should get Google Assistant compatibility in an update later this month. The catch is that it's for Android users in supported countries only, even though Fossil Gen 6 watches are among the few Wear OS 3 watches that also support iOS.

Still! This is a sign that perhaps Google Assistant may soon arrive on other third party Wear OS 3 watches as well. At least, one can hope.

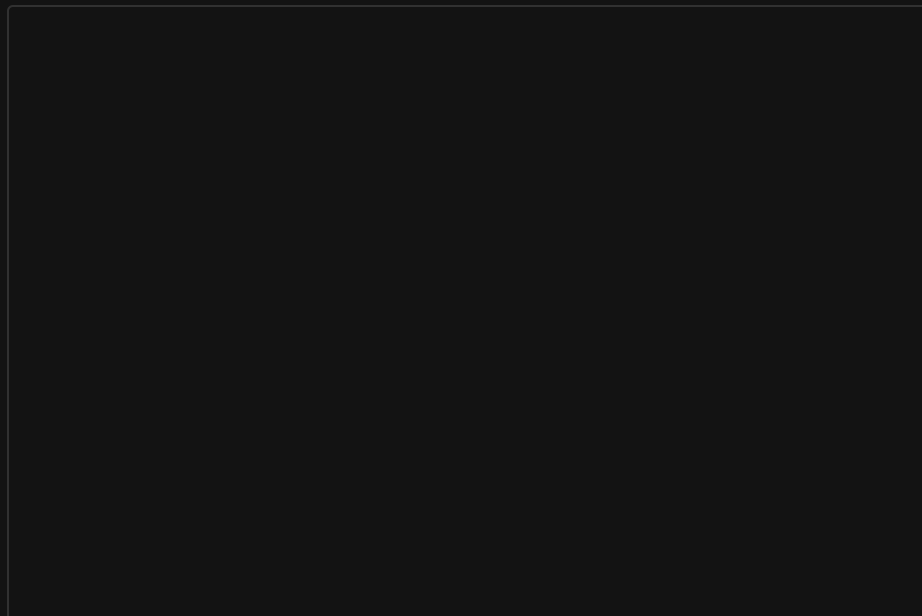


Photo by Amelia Holowaty Krales / The Verge

Motorola Razr Plus review: the right moves

ALLISON JOHNSON JUN 22

- Sennheiser SoundProtex earplugs review: concert safety without sacrifice

CHRIS WELCH JUN 22

- Razer Blade 14 (2023) review: this pricing is silly

MONICA CHIN JUN 20



JAY PETERS JUN 24 [link](#)

Reddit's traffic is leveling out. It dipped during the height of the protests, but it's starting to come back, according to Similarweb data shared [with Gizmodo](#). Interestingly, traffic to Reddit's ads portal is apparently down:

Before the first blackout began, the ads site averaged about 14,900 visits per day. Beginning on June 13, though, the ads site averaged about 11,800 visits per day, a 20% decrease.

[Reddit's Traffic Is Going Back to Normal After the Subreddit Blackout](#)

[GIZMODO]



RICHARD LAWLER JUN 24 [link](#)

James Cameron's perspective on the Titan implosion as a member of the "submergence community." Director James Cameron has given [another](#) interview, had a lot to say to CNN [about the Titan](#), including that there's an indication the sub dumped ballast and started to ascend before ever

reaching the sea floor. He also apparently knew of [the implosion sounds picked up by Navy listening devices](#) as early as Monday.

However, despite OceanGate's [claims](#) that they could detect any problems in the carbon fiber-based hull using “real-time (RTM) hull health monitoring,” Cameron said that well-known issues with composite materials and the risks of progressive degradation made it the wrong choice for constructing a submersible.



JAY PETERS JUN 24 [Link icon](#)

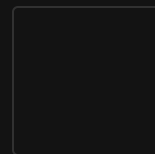
Second Life is turning 20. The “original metaverse” is hosting a celebration with more than 500 “live performances” to mark the occasion. Second Life still has around 750,000 users, [according to a press release](#).

[Original Metaverse Second Life Celebrates 20th Birthday](#)
[BUSINESSWIRE]

[SMARTWATCH](#)

My Garmin’s fatal flaw is it refuses to acknowledge my naps

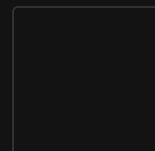
VICTORIA SONG JUN 24



[TECH](#)

Reddit is about to get a little less accessible

JAY PETERS JUN 24



A first-of-its-kind climate trial just ended – will it work?

JUSTINE CALMA JUN 22

- **Pollution from gas stoves can be worse than secondhand smoke**

JUSTINE CALMA JUN 21

- **Satellite internet is on the way after Arctic fiber cut unplugs panel**

JUSTINE CALMA



DAN SEIFERT JUN 24

Here's one way to make the Pixel Tablet a useful smart home dashboard.

One of the things I was disappointed with on the Pixel Tablet was its inability to be an always-on smart home dashboard — all it lets you do is launch a page of device toggle shortcuts.

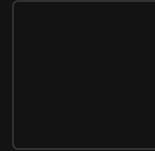
But if you use Home Assistant and set up a webpage-based dashboard for it, you can install a kiosk app on the Pixel Tablet to show that page even when it's docked and locked. Then you can have instant access to smart home controls, climate settings, and even live feeds from cameras. My favorite thing about it might be that it uses the Pixel Tablet's camera to wake the screen whenever you walk in front of it.

Bonus: it doesn't interfere with any of the Pixel Tablet's voice control or smart display functions.

TECH

Satellite internet is on the way after Arctic fiber cut unplugs part of Alaska

EMMA ROTH JUN 24



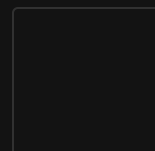
DAN SEIFERT JUN 23 

I see your iOS 17 dev beta running on your primary iPhone and raise you Mac OS System 7 on a PocketChip. ThisDoesNotCompute has a fun video on running Mac OS System 7 on a [PocketChip](#), a handheld computer from 2016 that was powered by a board similar to a Raspberry Pi. Bonus: the video includes a bit of history about the PocketChip and the board inside of it, including the downfall of the company that made it.

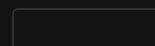
TRANSPO

Hyundai is considering adopting Tesla's EV plug as it readies its next-generation platform

UMAR SHAKIR JUN 23



LABOR



Across the Spider-Verse's animators allegedly worked under unsustainable conditions

CHARLES PULLIAM-MOORE JUN 23



ANDREW WEBSTER JUN 23 [link](#)

One of the year's best horror movies hits theaters this summer. Director Laura Moss' *Birth/Rebirth* is a haunting reinvention of the Frankenstein myth, and it was one of our favorite movies out of this year's Sundance Film Festival. You can see it for yourself soon — it's coming to theaters on August 18th.

Birth/Rebirth takes the Frankenstein myth back to its feminist horror roots

CHARLES PULLIAM-MOORE JAN 25

Creators

CREATORS

[SEE ALL CREATORS](#)

Five AI tools creators should know

BECCA FARSACE JUN 22

- YouTube is making it easier for creators to choose that perfect thumbnail

JON PORTER JUN 23

- Reddit blackout protest updates: all the news about the changes infuriating Redditors

JAY PETERS JUN 21



ANDREW J. HAWKINS JUN 23 [link](#)

‘Foul play’ suspected in electric truck fire. Nikola Motors says “multiple” battery-electric trucks were damaged in a fire at its facility in Arizona. But while there have been several incidents of EV battery fires in recent years, the company claims that these fires may not have been accidental.



JAY PETERS JUN 23 

“Mr. Huffman said he did not plan to change course.” *The New York Times* interviewed Reddit CEO Steve Huffman this week, and despite beloved third-party apps preparing to shut down, more than 2,500 subreddits remaining dark in protest, other subreddits reopening but with vastly revised rules, dissatisfaction from the platform’s accessibility community, and moderators feeling increased pressure from Reddit employees, Huffman apparently does not plan to make any changes to the company’s current plans.

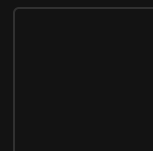
Reddit’s Chief Says He Wants It to ‘Grow Up.’ Will Its Community Let It?

[THE NEW YORK TIMES]

TECH

The best ebook reader to buy right now

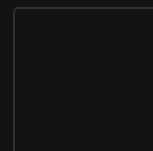
SHEENA VASANI JUN 23




POLICY

Someone please fix the FCC, FFS

MAKENA KELLY JUN 23



J JUSTINE CALMA JUN 23 



3M's pollution will cost it \$12.5 billion While that seems like a lot, 3M faced up to \$30 billion in legal liability for products it made with forever chemicals. It'll now pay up to \$12.5 billion to settle hundreds of lawsuits from cities whose water sources have been contaminated with the chemicals. Forever chemicals, or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), have been linked to a higher risk of developing certain kinds of cancer, liver damage, and reproductive health issues. The chemicals, which 3M said it would stop using in products like Scotchgard fabric protector, are notoriously hard to destroy and disproportionately pollute Black and Hispanic neighborhoods.

[3M Settles 'Forever Chemicals' Litigation for Up to \\$12.5 Billion](#)
[WSJ]

[MORE STORIES](#)

The Verge

[TERMS OF USE](#) / [PRIVACY NOTICE](#) / [COOKIE POLICY](#) / [DO NOT SELL OR SHARE MY PERSONAL INFO](#) / [LICENSING FAQ](#)
/ [ACCESSIBILITY](#) / [PLATFORM STATUS](#) / [HOW WE RATE AND REVIEW PRODUCTS](#)

[CONTACT](#) / [TIP US](#) / [COMMUNITY GUIDELINES](#) / [ABOUT](#) / [ETHICS STATEMENT](#)

THE VERGE IS A VOX MEDIA NETWORK

[ADVERTISE WITH US](#) / [JOBS @ VOX MEDIA](#)

© 2023 VOX MEDIA, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED