

TechZone

Big Tech’s Reckoning Bill

Meta, TikTok Hit With Billions in Settlements Over Child Safety

Meta and TikTok have agreed, within days of each other, to pay a combined \$18.4 billion over claims that their platforms harmed children and violated young users’ privacy — settlements experts say could reshape how apps for minors are built.

Meta, parent of Facebook and Instagram, accounts for most of that sum. It agreed to pay up to \$18 billion to settle claims from nearly every US state that it knowingly built addictive features for kids and teens while downplaying the risks. The deal came mid-trial in California, letting Meta avoid further courtroom disclosures. The company denies wrongdoing.

Beyond the payout, Meta must overhaul the teen experience on



Instagram and Facebook: a default two-hour daily limit, nighttime restrictions, quieter school-hours notifications, tighter age checks and stronger parental controls. Teens will also lose visibility of like counts and certain filters tied to use.

Only about 70 percent of the \$18 billion is guaranteed — the rest depends on rivals like TikTok and YouTube adopting similar protections and paying in too. TikTok’s settlement, reached

days earlier, is smaller but no less pointed: \$400 million to the Justice Department over claims it let children under 13 onto the platform and collected their data without parental consent. TikTok will boost age verification and parental oversight, without admitting fault.

Together, the cases mark a shift from policing content to policing design — algorithms, notifications and engagement features built to keep young users scrolling. Meta’s settlement is expected to set a precedent for looming cases against YouTube and Snapchat.

Critics, including states that rejected the Meta deal, say money alone won’t fix the problem — and that real change will require binding regulation, not settlements.



Vivo X500 Pro Max teased with 6.85-inch 2K display

Vivo has revealed new details about its upcoming X500 Pro Max, with the flagship set to feature a 6.85-inch BOE Q11 2K display.

The company claims the new panel can reduce motion blur by 93% compared with the previous-generation display, while improving colour uniformity by 43% and brightness uniformity by 22%.

Despite offering higher 2K resolution, Vivo says the screen consumes 21% less power than its previous 1.5K panel and has twice the expected lifespan.

The display will also feature an under-display multispectral sensor designed to improve automatic brightness adjustment by detecting different light conditions and colour temperatures.

Beyond the display, the X500 Pro Max is expected to feature a 2nm MediaTek Dimensity chipset and a 200-megapixel ZEISS super-telephoto camera.

Vivo is expected to reveal more specifications ahead of the phone’s official launch, with the X500 series expected to debut in China soon.

Five Android Camera Tricks the iPhone 18 Pro Should Just Copy Already

Apple’s September 9 event is almost here, and the iPhone 18 Pro line is expected to headline it — cameras and all. The iPhone 17 Pro already held its own against the Galaxy S26 Ultra and even a professional cinema camera, so Apple isn’t starting from behind. But after spending 15 years testing phones from every major brand, I keep coming back to the same thought: some of the best camera ideas right now aren’t on the iPhone. Here’s what Apple should borrow before it’s too late.

Start with the sensor. Xiaomi’s Leica Leitzphone — my pick for the best camera phone I’ve ever used — packs a much larger main sensor than anything Apple ships, plus LOFIC technology that captures huge dynamic range in a single shot instead of stitching exposures together

the way Apple’s Deep Fusion does. Rumors point to the 18 Pro getting a Sony IMX905 sensor instead, which reportedly skips LOFIC entirely. That would be a missed opportunity. The Leitzphone’s proper mechanical zoom lens is worth stealing too — it relies far less on digital cropping than the iPhone does.

Then there’s color. Samsung’s My Filters lets you lift the tones from any photo you like and turn them into a reusable filter. Apple’s Photographic Styles can’t touch that kind of creative flexibility, and Google’s Camera Looks on the Pixel 11 Pro already shows what’s possible when a company actually pushes this further.

Macro photography is another soft spot. Despite an otherwise underwhelming



camera system, the Nothing Phone 3 shoots gorgeous, natural-looking close-ups. The iPhone’s macro mode, which leans on the ultrawide lens, still looks a bit flat and forces you uncomfortably close to your subject. Hardware matters too.

Xiaomi’s camera grip and screw-in filter mount for its Ultra phones make shooting feel like using a real camera. Apple has nothing like it — the Leica Lux grip is the closest option, and it’s \$400, Mag-Safe-only, and locked to one app.

The wildest ask on my list was a variable aperture like the one in Xiaomi’s 14 Ultra, which produced genuinely cinematic starbursts at night. I figured Apple would never bother — yet rumors now suggest it’s coming to the 18 Pro Max.

If true, that alone could be the sleeper feature of the year. Apple doesn’t need to reinvent the camera. It just needs to stop pretending Android hasn’t already solved half these problems.

Samsung unveils four new Odyssey gaming monitors at Gamescom 2026



Samsung Electronics has unveiled four new gaming monitors under its Odyssey G series at Gamescom 2026, targeting gamers seeking higher refresh rates, sharper displays and improved HDR performance.

The lineup includes the 49-inch Odyssey OLED G9, 32-inch OLED G8, 42-inch curved OLED G7 and 27-inch Odyssey G6. The flagship G9 features a Dual QHD OLED display with a 360Hz refresh rate, while it can reach up to 720Hz at a lower resolution.

The OLED G8 offers multiple display modes, including UHD at 360Hz, QHD at 520Hz and FHD at 680Hz. The curved OLED G7 features a 165Hz refresh rate and a 0.03ms response time.

The Odyssey G6 stands out with a 1,100Hz refresh rate at HD resolution and 600Hz at QHD. Samsung has not yet announced pricing, release dates or market availability for the new monitors.

AI CORNER

Anthropic eyes record-breaking AI IPO

AI company Anthropic, the maker of Claude, could be heading for one of the biggest technology IPOs ever.

The company is reportedly considering raising more than \$100 billion through a public share offering, potentially surpassing SpaceX’s record \$85.7 billion IPO. If the deal reaches that level, Anthropic could be valued at around \$2 trillion.

Founded in 2021 by former OpenAI executives, Anthropic has positioned itself as a safety-focused competitor in the rapidly expanding AI market. Its Claude models and Claude Code, an AI coding assistant, have helped drive strong commercial growth.

The potential IPO could



also put Anthropic ahead of OpenAI, which is reportedly considering a public listing at a later stage.

However, the company faces challenges, including the enormous computing power required to run advanced AI models and a dispute with the US government over military access to its technology.

If successful, Anthropic’s listing could become a major milestone for the AI industry.

The first computer mouse was made of wood.



In 1964, engineer Douglas Engelbart and his team built one of the earliest computer pointing devices. It was a small wooden box with two wheels underneath that detected movement and allowed us-

ers to control a cursor on a computer screen.

It was initially called an “X-Y Position Indicator for a Display System” — a name far less catchy than “mouse.”

The simple wooden device became the foundation for the computer mice we still use today, although modern versions have replaced wheels with optical sensors and lasers.

TechZone fact: The computer mouse was invented decades before wireless mice, touchpads and smartphones — but its basic purpose remains the same: helping us interact with a computer more quickly, easily and intuitively.