

ZEITGEIST SCORES

LENS	SCORE	STATUS	VS AVG	TREND
AI & Agents	9	HOT	avg 6.8	↑
Quantum & Compute	5	HEATING	avg 5.9	↓
Digital Markets & Assets	9	HOT	avg 6.1	↑
Digital Trust	8	HOT	avg 7.5	↑
Interface & Spatial	5	HEATING	avg 6.0	↓
Bio-Human	6	HEATING	avg 5.8	→
Business Finance & Policy	8	HOT	avg 7.1	↑
Consumer	5	HEATING	avg 5.9	↓
Horizon Scanner	7	NEW	avg 6.1	↑

AI & Agents [HOT]

The AI Arms Race Goes Political — And Public

The Anthropic-Pentagon standoff has become the defining story in AI. The DoD's supply chain risk designation is unprecedented for an American company, and marks the moment AI governance stopped being theoretical. Microsoft, Google, and Amazon confirmed Claude remains available to non-defence customers, but the chilling effect on the broader AI industry is real. Forbes reports Claude downloads are up 55%, with Anthropic now leading app stores in 20+ countries.

Meanwhile, the coding tools market is exploding. Cursor hit \$2B ARR this week, doubling in just three months — the fastest growth of any developer tool in history. Enterprise customers now account for 60% of revenue. Karpathy confirmed what many suspected: he's now 80% agent coding, up from 20% in November. The a16z paper "Some Simple Economics of AGI" introduces the "codifier's curse" — as top verifiers train AI systems, they create the labels for their own displacement.

So what: The Anthropic standoff will define the template for every future government-AI company relationship. The coding market data confirms that AI agents are now the default productivity layer, not the exception.

Sources: CNBC, NPR, Forbes, Bloomberg, Cursor, Karpathy/X, a16z crypto

Quantum & Compute [HEATING]

The Five-Layer AI Stack and the Minerals Beneath It

Nvidia VP Kimberly Powell's POLITICO interview laid out the five-layer AI infrastructure model: energy → chips/systems → orchestration → models → applications. The key insight is that models in isolation are "overhyped" — the real value lies in the integration layers above and below. Edison Scientific demonstrated this with an agentic system that reads 1,500 papers, writes 40,000 lines of code, and generates a research report in 16 hours — work that would take a PhD six months.

The UN Security Council heard that critical minerals trade hit \$2.5 trillion in 2023 and demand could triple by 2030 and quadruple by 2040. The Diff highlighted MNX, a new exchange built to trade the full AI infrastructure commodity stack.

So what: The compute supply chain is becoming as geopolitically contested as energy. The minerals underpinning AI infrastructure are becoming strategic assets.

Sources: POLITICO, UN Security Council, Fortune, The Diff, MNX

Digital Markets & Assets [HOT]

Agent-First Fintech Is Born: Cards, Stablecoins, and the New Financial Stack

This was a landmark week for digital financial infrastructure. Visa and Stripe's Bridge are launching stablecoin-backed cards with full API controls for agents, launching to 100+ countries by month-end. Kraken released "AI Operator," an autonomous agent that can execute trades, manage portfolios, and make financial decisions within risk parameters. A \$5B TPV market in stablecoin-linked cards has emerged in just two quarters.

Fintech Brainfood's Simon Taylor provided the definitive framework: agents will use virtual cards first (controls, acceptance, speed), then debit cards, then credit cards. The convergence of frontier models, regulatory clarity (CLARITY Act breakthrough), and infrastructure readiness has created a full stack for an agent economy.

So what: The financial infrastructure for an agent economy is being built this week, not next year. The convergence of Frontier Models + Stablecoins + Virtual Infrastructure = Real Economy Participation.

Sources: Fintech Brainfood, Fortune, Kraken, CoinDesk, CNBC, x402.org

Digital Trust [HOT]

When AI Hunts Bugs and Hackers Hunt Cameras

Anthropic's Claude found 112 bugs in Firefox over two weeks, including 22 CVEs with 14 rated high-severity. The first vulnerability hunted entirely by AI and verified by humans represents a threshold moment: machine-led security audits are now more effective than human-led efforts. Mozilla reported finding more bugs in two weeks than in typical annual audits.

On the offensive side, Iranian hacking crews are systematically targeting Hikvision and Dahua security cameras across Israel, Palestine, and Lebanon — with 40,000 cameras already compromised. The tactics suggest state-level coordination and real-time kinetic intelligence gathering.

So what: AI-powered security research is arriving faster than AI-powered threats, but the gap is narrowing. The camera-hacking campaign is a preview of kinetic-intelligence fusion.

Sources: *Anthropic/Mozilla, The Register, TechCrunch, Axios, Cyber Safety, NPR, POLITICO*

Interface & Spatial [HEATING]

Indonesia Draws the Line on Children's Digital Lives

Indonesia announced it will ban social media access for children under 16, following Australia's lead but with a more nuanced enforcement mechanism. Rather than age-gating at the platform level, Indonesia is requiring device-level controls via operating system updates to Apple and Google. This shifts the liability and engineering burden directly to the platforms.

The Diff highlighted a broader cultural pattern: Gen Z's media consumption is increasingly unmoored from time and context. What was a "platform" is now an operating system, and what was "advertising" is now "behavioral modification infrastructure."

So what: The global regulatory tide against children's social media access is accelerating. Indonesia — the world's fourth most populous nation — just made it law.

Sources: *TechCrunch, POLITICO, The Diff, Kompas*

Bio-Human [HEATING]

The AI Lab Closes the Loop Between Hypothesis and Experiment

Nvidia's Kimberly Powell described the emerging closed-loop AI research cycle: AI scientists generate hypotheses, digital lab automation executes experiments at scale, results inform the next hypothesis. This isn't AGI — it's the systematization of the scientific method.

LeCun's new paper — "AI Must Embrace Specialization via Superhuman Adaptable Intelligence" — argues that chasing AGI is a distraction. The real value is in narrow superhuman systems that can operate independently in specific domains.

So what: The AI-driven research lab isn't a future vision — it's operational today. The closed-loop model (hypothesis → automation → result → hypothesis) is the new competitive moat in R&D.;

Sources: *POLITICO (Powell interview), LeCun et al. arxiv paper, The Decoder, a16z crypto*

Business Finance & Policy [HOT]

War, Oil, and the Return of Geopolitical Risk Pricing

Oil hit \$84.31 as the Iran conflict intensified, with Qatar halting LNG production and the Strait of Hormuz shipping under direct threat. Goldman Sachs raised its oil price target to \$100+ if supply disruptions persist. The broader macro picture: every asset class is repricing for geopolitical instability.

The a16z "Some Simple Economics of AGI" paper models two futures: a "hollow economy" where AI displaces junior workers without creating new value chains, and a "thickening economy" where AI enhances human expertise. The data so far points to the latter — but policy will determine which outcome we get.

So what: The Iran conflict is repricing risk across every asset class. Combined with the Anthropropic supply chain designation, we're seeing the return of Cold War-style geopolitical risk vectors.

Sources: CNBC, Bloomberg, NPR, Forbes, Goldman Sachs, a16z crypto, Seeking Alpha

Consumer [HEATING]

The Fintech Power Rankings Reveal a Market in Flux

Fintech Takes' annual player rankings paint a consumer landscape in transition. Robinhood is having "the best season of its life" with \$46B customer deposits. Meanwhile, legacy brokers are bleeding retail customers to AI-first platforms. Betterment continues to consolidate wealth management users through superior automation.

The broader consumer pattern: AI-first financial products are winning. Quinn, an SEC-registered AI financial advisor, reported institutional-grade returns in private testing with retail users. The bar for human financial advisors just went up.

So what: The consumer fintech market is consolidating around AI-native players. Legacy fintech companies that can't integrate agents into their core product are becoming infrastructure.

Sources: Fintech Takes, Fintech Brainfood, Forbes

Horizon Scanner [NEW]

When Machines Verify Machines: The Verification Economy Takes Shape

The a16z paper's "verification economy" thesis is the most important framework to emerge this week. As AI automation costs approach zero, the cost of verification becomes the binding constraint. Specialized verification services (formal proofs for AI outputs, human spot-checks, test suite automation) are becoming a venture category.

The Diff's Chris Walker argues maximalist AI replacement scenarios miss the difficulty of context engineering — humans remain the bottleneck for translating business intent into machine-checkable specifications. The compute commodity market is emerging: MNX is building the first exchange to trade H100 rental rates, frontier model API access, and—eventually—verification credits.

So what: Three emerging markets to watch — verification-as-a-service, compute commodity trading, and AI-powered forensic accounting.

Sources: a16z crypto, The Diff, MNX, Bloomberg (Stake investigation)

KEEP AN EYE ON

- ▲ Anthropic supply chain risk designation — will Hegseth push for a full Claude ban by March 31? Polymarket says watch this space
- ▲ Stablecoin yield debate — Trump sided with crypto over banks, but CLARITY Act breakthrough proved elusive
- ▲ Cursor's \$2B ARR trajectory — at this rate, \$4B by Q3 2026. Can GitHub Copilot's 20M user base hold?
- ▲ Indonesia's social media ban takes effect March 28 — enforcement mechanics still unclear
- ▲ EU banks' euro-pegged stablecoin (Qivalis) — in advanced talks with crypto exchanges
- ▲ Iran conflict oil price trajectory — Goldman says \$100+ if Hormuz disruption extends
- ▲ Canada AI Safety Institute risk evaluation of OpenAI — first regulatory stress-test of a frontier lab
- ▲ LeCun's SAI framework — gaining academic traction — direct challenge to OpenAI's AGI narrative
- ▲ "Liability as software" as a venture category — agent insurance and verification markets forming
- ▲ MNX compute exchange — will compute futures become a tradable asset class in 2026?

DATA POINTS

\$84.31

Brent crude oil price, up sharply on Iran conflict

CONFIRMED

\$2B

Cursor annualized recurring revenue, doubled in 3 months

CONFIRMED

112

Bugs found by Claude in Firefox over two weeks

CONFIRMED

22

CVEs issued from Claude's Firefox audit, 14 high-severity

CONFIRMED

1M+

Daily Claude signups during Pentagon controversy

CONFIRMED

100+

Countries for Visa-Bridge stablecoin-backed cards

CONFIRMED

\$2.5T

Global critical minerals trade in 2023

CONFIRMED

3x

Projected mineral demand increase by 2030

REPORTED

40,000

Vulnerable security cameras in Middle East conflict zone

CONFIRMED

-453

DOW Jones daily change

CONFIRMED

54%

Anthropic odds on Polymarket

"best AI model"

CONFIRMED

\$115-135B

Meta planned 2026 AI

infrastructure capex

REPORTED

60%

Cursor revenue from enterprise
customers

CONFIRMED

\$5B

Stablecoin-linked card TPV, up
from \$1B in two quarters

CONFIRMED

16 hours

Time for Edison Scientific's AI to
produce research report

REPORTED

X RADAR

[@karpathy](#)

Confirmed 80% agent coding workflow, noted programmer skill atrophy beginning.

[AI & Agents]

[@ylecun](#)

Published SAI paper challenging AGI concept; combative exchanges on X defending position.

[Bio-Human]

[@benedictevans](#)

Quiet period (account appears restricted/private).

[@caitlinlong_](#)

Background: ongoing Fed/stablecoin regulatory commentary.

[Digital Markets & Assets]