

## THE PARALLELS BETWEEN THE INTERNET'S PAST AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE'S FUTURE

In conventional business wisdom, the first market entrant often secures dominance. Yet, the digital realm defies this norm. The volatile landscape of technological evolution reveals that latecomers tend to achieve more enduring success. Entering a new market harbors uncertainties, high costs, and unpredictable demands. Forecasting future regulations becomes an arduous task.

While existing patents and technologies grant initial market control, complacency births unpredictability in the face of potential competitors. Consequently, market dominators falter in meeting evolving expectations, inevitably fading into obscurity.

Consider the mobile phone market's shift from Nokia and Motorola to Apple and Samsung. Likewise, Yahoo's relinquishing of its throne to Google exemplifies this trend in search engines and web directories.

Microsoft's aggressive entry into the mid-1990s internet ecosystem against Netscape, the pioneer commercial browser, entrenched the notion that "everything on the Internet is free" with the gratis offering of Internet Explorer. Had Microsoft not intervened with a free browser, internet services like news sites, emails, instant communication apps, and social networks might've sought user fees. Consequently, rampant software, music, movie, and book piracy ensued, perpetuating the illusion of a *'free'* internet.

Consequently, online content providers resorted to offering free services while exploring alternative revenue streams like online advertising, sales, memberships, sponsorships, and product referrals for over two decades. However, users belatedly realized the hidden cost of "free" when their

personal data fell prey to tech giants, hackers, governments, and data-buying enterprises.

Today, barring news sites and social networks flooded with advertisements, almost no online content remains truly free. Users encounter paywalls or intrusive ads for streaming services. Even freemium online games coerce payments after initial free plays.

This historical internet development overview sets the stage for predicting how 'Artificial Intelligence' will echo this cycle. In September 2020, the Guardian published an article titled "*A robot wrote this entire article. Are you scared yet, human?*" by ChatGPT, marking its initial foray into columns [1]. Little did anyone anticipate its widespread adoption, even among primary school students, within two years. Similar uncertainty shrouded Google's inception from a Stanford project to an internet behemoth.

Presently, ChatGPT offers only limited features of its earlier version for free. Likewise, prevalent artificial intelligence applications in social networks operate on a pay-as-you-use model. Users now comprehend that obtaining AI-rendered services demands payment, reminiscent of the Netscape era where users had to pay to continue using the service.

However, history echoes as Microsoft integrates the fee-based ChatGPT-4 into Bing for free, reminiscent of their strategy against Netscape. Similarly, Google diversifies its offerings by incorporating free AI-based alternatives into its ecosystem via Bard, while Meta introduces Llama, and X unveils xAi.

These developments foreshadow challenges for businesses unaware of AI's pivotal future role. For individuals, the integration of artificial intelligence into daily life, akin to water, air, electricity, and the internet, seems inevitable. If AI's trajectory mirrors the concise history of the internet above, its future development is bound to follow a similar course.

**July 2023**

**Prof. Dr. Mustafa Zihni TUNCA**  
**Editor-in-Chief**

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