Is Mark Zuckerberg Actually TRYING to Destroy Meta?

He's driving his own company off a cliff.

By Victor Tangermann

Illustration by Tag Hartman-Simkins / Futurism. Source: Wally Skalij / Getty Images; Shutterstock

Back in the mid-2000s, Mark Zuckerberg had a pretty awesome product: a site called Facebook, which was still widely loved and not polluted with endless ads and scams.

The interceding years have been hard on Zuckerberg's empire. From a disastrous, multibillion-dollar foray into a pandemic-era virtual reality world nobody wanted to step a foot into to effectively abandoning content moderation and allowing demented AI slop to flood its social media platforms, Meta now feels more like a dilapidated strip mall than a hot tech property.

Lately, it almost feels like Zuckerberg is *trying* to destroy his own company. He's burning through mountains of cash in a desperate attempt to keep up in the AI race. Yet despite the untold billions it's spent so far, it's being destroyed by OpenAI and Anthropic. Its employees have even resorted to using AI models made by its competitors, a humiliating reality check for how far behind Zuckerberg's efforts have fallen.

It's also a financial nightmare. Capital expenditures have risen dramatically, erasing any appetite for Meta on Wall Street. Its stock price "has been dead money for more than a year," as *Yahoo Finance* notes, as investors continue to debate whether Zuckerberg is chasing the AI industry as it careens off a cliff — or edging ever closer to an AI-fueled industrial revolution.

This week's second quarter earnings, in particular, will serve as one of the biggest tests in Meta's recent history. Another major hike in AI spending — which is looking likely, given Zuckerberg's recent doubling down and soaring AI data center costs — could send its already flagging shares sinking even further.

It's a precarious moment for the industry as concerns over a massive AI bubble once again grip shareholders. The news comes after Alphabet shocked skeptical investors by raising its spending forecast past the $200 billion mark last week, indicating that Zuckerberg may try something similar.

"Prior to Alphabet recently raising FY26 capex guide, we think there were limited expectations for Meta to increase its current 2026 guidance of $125-$145 billion," Deutsche Bank analyst Benjamin Black wrote in a note. "However, now, it is likely investors fear an increase in FY26 outlook likely may be coming."

The debt keeps piling up as companies eye even bigger AI data center build-outs. As the *Wall Street Journal* reports, Meta executives told bankers and fund managers that it's looking to raise even more cash — in the "hundreds of billions of dollars" — to support the plans.

Meanwhile, spiking demand and steady interest rates have caused construction costs to soar, making these funding rounds an even bigger ask for tech execs.

Despite the massive AI spending, Zuckerberg appears to be painfully aware he's likely steering the company in the wrong direction. Earlier this month, he conceded to staff during a town hall that the "trajectory of the agentic development over at least the last four months hasn't really accelerated in the way that we expected."

Meta has also been struggling with rock-bottom morale. Despite earmarking over $100 billion on AI infrastructure, the company has been laying off thousands of workers in an apparent effort to replace them with the tech.

During the town hall, Zuckerberg admitted that the major culling were not "clean," adding that bets on restructuring "haven't come to fruition yet."

The company was also forced to halt a highly controversial plan to record everything workers do on their assigned computers to gather data for AI after leaking sensitive employee information.

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