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## **A Tale of Two AI Announcements: Governments Glum, Google Gritty**

By Paul Steidler

Yesterday there were two notable announcements about the future of Artificial Intelligence that were diametrically at odds in tone and outlook.

Governments worldwide are talking down AI and trying to figure out what it is, where it is going, and what they should do about it. U.S. private tech companies are carefully researching and applying the technology, taking big market risks, and helping the public capture the profound benefits.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), U.S. Department of Justice, the European Commission and a UK regulator issued the first announcement which was a downer and said little. For starters, it implied AI was like any run-of-the-mill government program, saying, "At their best, these technologies could materially benefit our citizens, boost innovation and drive economic growth."

The announcement was long on potential, theoretical AI problems and assured readers that the bureaucracies would work well together, though they have not figured out how to at this point.

After the stock market closed, Alphabet, Inc the parent company of Google, announced its earnings and held a conference call which addressed its AI work.

Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai was clear and upbeat, saying, "Our AI infrastructure and generative AI solutions for cloud customers have already generated billions in revenues and are being used by more than two million developers." Earlier in December he said, "developers are using our models and infrastructure to build new generative AI applications, and startups and enterprises around the world are growing with our AI tools."

Mr. Pichai added yesterday, "We are innovating at every layer of the AI stack, from chips to agents and beyond ... we have committed to this leadership long term." He also gave numerous examples of specific companies that are benefiting from Alphabet's AI work.

FTC regulators and others hostile to large tech companies like to associate themselves with Teddy Roosevelt. However, Roosevelt would likely be embarrassed by that association today.

After all, he famously said, "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood."

Today, Google and other AI businesses are in the arena while regulators largely carp and criticize with little understanding of what is transpiring, and providing little value to the public.

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