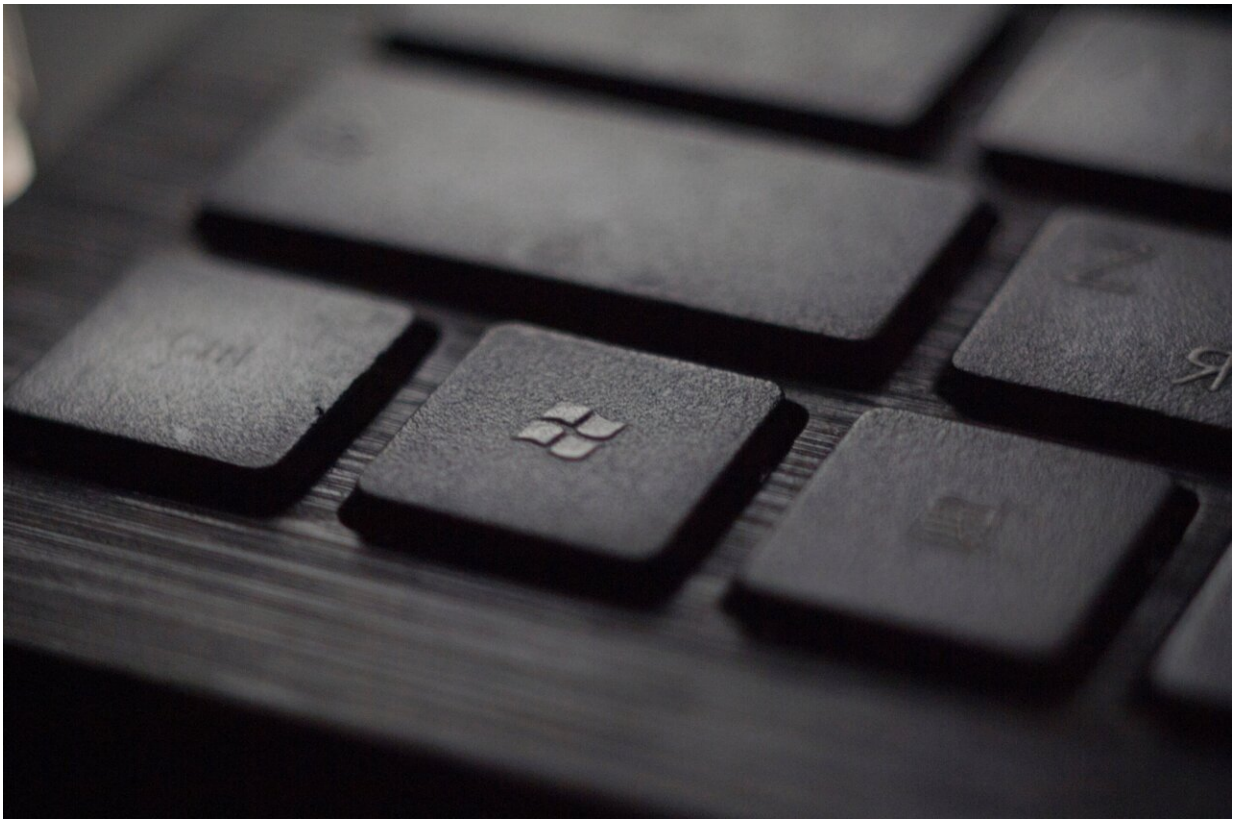
Microsoft's GitHub offers companies souped-up AI coding tool

February 28 2024, by Dina Bass, Jackie Davalos, Bloomberg News



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Microsoft Corp.'s GitHub is releasing a pricier paid version of its artificial intelligence software development tool that can answer questions based on a company's own programming code, a feature

designed to help new engineers get up to speed and enable veteran coders to work faster.

GitHub, which lets programmers collaborate on coding projects, has been infusing AI into products and services in an effort to attract more subscribers. The new Copilot Enterprise will cost $39 per user per month and offer AI chat features that should make it easier for engineers to resolve issues, modernize programs and more.

"A lot of things when you join a big corporation are quite different to how you learned it in your previous job—you have to go there and read up on the practices," GitHub Chief Executive Officer Thomas Dohmke said in an interview. "So you no longer have to do that. You can just ask questions and get the answers."

In the coming months, GitHub also will let engineers use their employer's own codebase to help autocomplete programs they're working on, Dohmke said. That could be especially useful for financial services firms or other companies that use in-house programming languages that aren't widely used elsewhere as well as customers with specific internal practices. Even Microsoft's own Office desktop apps use the C and C++ language in ways that aren't typically taught in coding school, he said.

Microsoft has been touting the successful adoption of GitHub Copilot, which relies on technology from partner OpenAI, in its quarterly earnings updates and has used the product as a template for overhauling most of its products, including Office and Windows, around similar technology and concepts. GitHub charges $19 a month per user for a more basic Copilot Business, which has 50,000 enterprise customers.

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Citation: Microsoft's GitHub offers companies souped-up AI coding tool (2024, February 28) retrieved 15 May 2024 from https://techxplore.com/news/2024-02-microsoft-github-companies-souped-ai.html

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