# AI goes mainstream as 'AI PCs' hit the market

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HP's new AI-geared laptop runs on a SnapDragon X Elite chip, built by the California-based chip giant Qualcomm.

A new line of PCs specially made to run artificial intelligence programs hit stores on Tuesday as tech companies push toward wider adoption of

ChatGPT-style AI.

Microsoft in May announced the new AI-powered personal computers, which will use the company's software under the Copilot Plus brand.

The idea is to allow users to access AI capabilities on their devices without relying on the cloud, which requires more energy, takes more time, and makes the AI experience clunkier.

The PCs feature a neural processing unit (NPU) chip that helps deliver crisper photo editing, live transcription, translation, and Recall –- a capability for the computer to keep track of everything being done on the device.

However, Microsoft removed Recall at the last minute over privacy concerns and said it would only make it available as a test feature.

For now, the devices built by hardware makers like HP and ASUS run exclusively on a new line of processors called SnapDragon X Elite and Plus, built by the California-based chip giant Qualcomm.

"We are redefining what a laptop actually does for the end user," Qualcomm's senior vice president Durga Malladi told AFP at the Collision tech conference in Toronto.

"We believe this is the rebirth of the PC."

At the May launch, Microsoft predicted over 50 million such "AI PCs" would be sold in 12 months, given the appetite for ChatGPT's powers.

Best Buy, the US retail giant, said it had trained tens of thousands of staff to sell and maintain the new line of PCs.

Some industry experts are more hesitant, predicting the actual benefit of upgrading to an AI laptop isn't compelling enough yet and will need more time.

"AI's evolutionary features aren't revolutionary enough to disrupt traditional buying patterns," said analysts from Forrester.

"For most information workers, there aren't enough game-changing applications for day-to-day work to drive rapid AI PC adoption."

Microsoft has aggressively pushed out generative AI products since ChatGPT's release in late 2022, with new AI features available across products including Teams, Outlook and Windows.

Feeling the pressure, Google quickly followed suit while Apple entered the game earlier this month, announcing its own on-device AI capabilities rolling out to premium iPhones in the coming months and year.

The latest MacBooks and iPads already have the capability to run high-performing AI features, but Apple has been slower to highlight those powers.

"I guess we missed the boat to name it an AI PC," Craig Federighi, Apple's senior vice president of Software Engineering, joked recently about the latest generation of MacBook.

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