

The Downfall of Computers: Why Computers will disappear by 2050

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There is no current national or global consensus on Computers. Such a consensus would be absurd considering computers are in everything. Yet as we approach mid 2026, the actual existence of computers themselves, both classical and quantum, are at severe risk of disappearing entirely.

There was, a definite outcry and anxiety when computers first showed up in offices, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. There weren't quite riots in the streets like the Luddites smashing machines in the 1800s, but people were genuinely worried.

The media called them “mechanical brains” or “giant brains” — machines that could think faster than humans, tirelessly, and without mistakes. That hype freaked out white-collar workers. They thought these things would make their jobs obsolete. Cartoons from the era nailed it: one showed a boss yelling, “Get busy! We don’t pay you to think here — we’ve got an electronic brain for that!”

There was even a 1957 romantic comedy called Desk Set with Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn, where a company installs a giant computer that everyone’s terrified is going to fire the whole research department.

By the early 1960s, a group called the Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution sent a memo to President Lyndon Johnson warning that computers and automation were about to create massive unemployment. Labor folks and some economists were seriously ringing alarm bells about “technological unemployment.”

The reality? The hype was way ahead of the tech. Early computers were huge, expensive, and mostly good for payroll or simple math — they didn’t replace people nearly as fast as feared. Companies mostly retrained or reassigned workers instead of firing them. Still, the fear was real and it shaped how people talked about computers back then.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, the biggest fears shifted from “computers will replace us” to “I’m scared of these machines” and “the internet is dangerous.”

There was a ton of talk about *technophobia* — straight-up fear of using computers. A 1994 Dell survey found over half of Americans were technophobic to some degree. People were freaked out about breaking expensive tech, couldn’t figure out how to program their VCRs, and some women in computer classes even nicknamed the machines “Satan.” Older folks and women reported it more.

When the internet exploded in the mid-1990s, new worries kicked in: kids seeing porn online — there was a full-blown cyberporn panic — privacy issues with cookies and tracking, online predators, and whether this weird new network was safe or trustworthy.

Some skeptics, like astronomer Clifford Stoll in a famous 1995 Newsweek piece, thought the whole online shopping and cyberbusiness thing was overhyped nonsense.

Then came Y2K — the millennium bug. In 1999, tons of people seriously worried that computers wouldn’t understand the year 2000 and everything from banks to power grids would crash on New Year’s. Some folks stocked up on food, water, and guns.

Overall it was less “computers are evil overlords” and more “this stuff is confusing, scary, and might break society.”

By the mid-2010s, the outcry had shifted again — this time toward smartphones, social media, and the big tech companies themselves.

The Snowden leaks in 2013 kicked things off, making people seriously worried about mass surveillance and privacy. Lots of people started changing their online habits, using more encryption, and losing trust in both governments and the tech giants that handed over their data.

Around the same time, a famous 2013 Oxford study claimed nearly half of all U.S. jobs could be automated by computers in the coming decades. That brought back old fears about technological unemployment, especially for routine office and driving jobs.

But the biggest everyday panic was smartphone addiction. People were freaking out that phones were hijacking our attention, ruining kids’ mental health, wrecking sleep, and turning us into distracted zombies. Ex-tech insiders started publicly criticizing the addictive design of apps and feeds they’d helped create.

This all fed into what people later called the "techlash" — growing anger at Facebook, Google, and others for privacy invasions, spreading misinformation, and just having too much unchecked power. It really heated up in 2016–2017 with election interference scandals and things like the #DeleteUber campaign.

Now in the mid-2020s, while desktop computers powered by traditional operating systems like Windows continued to receive updates, a noticeable shift in priorities occurred within the tech industry. Major companies and governments began pouring billions of dollars into artificial intelligence development, seemingly at the expense of further advancing conventional desktop computing.

This strategic pivot suggests that industry leaders viewed AI not merely as a tool, but as the foundation for the next evolution of computing — a voice-driven, mobile interface that could eventually replace traditional mouse-and-keyboard interactions.

However, as public backlash against AI grows, both the public and government sectors are pushing to slow down or regulate the very technology that was meant to drive computing forward. This sudden reversal has created a significant obstacle, effectively stalling the natural progression of computer technology by undermining the AI systems positioned to succeed traditional desktops.

The problem here is that AI technology has been over invested and has outpaced that of traditional computers so much so that by the time “the AI bubble pops” we will see a regression of global technological progress of 20 years. The consequences are going to be enormous.

In my previous paper, “Why AI appears to be biased”, I outline the limitations of Social Media and its impact on AI computing reliability. Social Media relies heavily on the current classical computer Operating System *version and year*, and its utility has changed minimally. Instead of an outright ban on social media platforms, critics instead attack the very thing that gives it a platform. AI frequently cites Opinion sites like Facebook and Reddit for information. Simple calculations are construed by a Reddit opinion.

Once AI is gone by regulation, which it does look like it may happen sooner than you think, classical and quantum computing will have nowhere to go. If the current trend of AI investment and stagnant classical operating system investment continues, if in 10 years the bubble finally bursts because a Redditor USA or European President is afraid of an AI cat video on his or her Meta Feed, we are going to witness an end to computing entirely as we know it. In 50 years *Computers*, not AI will be seen as a bust, a demonic and long forgotten technology. This cannot happen, as the real and true threat to our existence is social media.

May god have mercy on us all.