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The Open Daily

The open AI tools that actually work for your business

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FRONT PAGE · AI AGENTS

An open-source assistant now buys, books and fills out forms from iMessage

OpenInstinct is free, installs in your own account and asks before it spends. For a small business, the value isn't the app. It's the way of working it shows.

BY NATHAN ROMANO · PUBLIEXPERT

Merit Systems released OpenInstinct, an assistant that lives in an iMessage thread. You text it like a member of your team (“place this week’s order”) and it opens a cloud browser, goes to the real website, signs in, fills out the form or gets all the way to checkout. When it’s done, it sends a screenshot and a summary to the same thread.

The interesting part is the brakes. Before buying, it posts the merchant, the item and the total in the thread and waits for your “yes.” Sending email, creating events or deleting anything also needs your approval. Passwords and cards are encrypted before they are stored, and the browser fills them from a vault without the AI model ever seeing them.

On Monday, Sam Ragsdale, CEO of Merit Systems, announced that it now supports Link, Stripe’s payment wallet: “You own your instance, you own your data,” he wrote. The code is open source (MIT license) and, accord-

ing to the site, it installs in your own Vercel account in about five minutes. All you need is a Vercel account and an iPhone.

What does it mean for your business?

1. The pattern is here. Asking for something in a chat and having an agent do it on real websites is no longer a demo. Supply orders, bookings and repetitive forms (vendor portals, sign-ups, paperwork) are the first candidates.

2. Demand the same brakes. Any agent working in your company should ask for approval before paying or sending, store credentials encrypted and keep a log of what it did. If a vendor can’t explain that to you, it isn’t ready.

3. Read the fine print. It’s for you or your team, not for serving customers. It lives in iMessage, so your customers won’t reach it on their usual chat app. Link’s agent wallet is US and Canada only for now. And setting it up takes someone technical.

QUICK FACTS

WHAT IT IS

Personal AI assistant in iMessage

LICENSE

MIT (open source)

RUNS ON

Your own Vercel account

YOU NEED

A Vercel account and an iPhone

COST

No subscription; pay for usage

WHAT’S NEW

Link payments (Stripe)



SITE
openinstinct.sh



ANNOUNCEMENT
x.com/samrags_
MON, OCT 5,
2026

NATHAN’S TAKE

I love that the brakes come standard: the agent proposes, you approve. That’s how any AI that touches your business’s money should work.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

EDITOR’S NOTE

Welcome to issue No. 1. Every morning I go through the new AI tools and tell you, straight, which ones work for a business like yours and which aren’t ready yet. We check everything at the source before it goes to print, and every story comes with my take. Disagree? Tell me on X: @nathanromano.

— NATHAN ROMANO, PUBLIEXPERT

BRIEFS · TEAMWORK

Claude joins Slack group DMs

Dan Fein of Anthropic announced on Monday that you can now add Claude to Slack group DMs the same way you’d add anyone else. It answers in a thread and keeps following it, so anyone in the DM can reply there, and it can use the personal connectors of whoever asks.



SOURCE
x.com/dfeinition
MON, OCT 5, 2026

NATHAN’S TAKE

The point isn’t Slack. It’s that AI now joins the team conversation like one more coworker. Expect to see this in every work chat soon.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

New tools

NEW · AI ON YOUR PHONE

Sightless: an AI that operates your iPhone for you, by voice or from your Mac

Sightless is a Mac app that puts an AI in charge of your iPhone or iPad. You tell it what you need in a continuous voice conversation, or let your computer-side agents (Codex, Claude, Hermes or OpenClaw) run it from the app's Device View. It works in every app, including tasks that span several, over Wi-Fi or cellular, and you can interrupt or redirect it by voice, touch or text.

It uses OpenAI models (sign in with your ChatGPT plan) or whatever model your agents already use. It costs US\$49.99 for one year on one Mac, a one-time payment with no auto-renewal, with a 7-day trial and no card required. Requirements: an Apple-silicon Mac on macOS 26.6 or later, and an iPhone or iPad on iOS/iPadOS 27 or later. Your Mac has to stay on and connected.



SOURCE
sightlessai.com
SEEN ON X MON, OCT 5, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

What gets me: it operates apps that only live on your phone, like your bank's app or WhatsApp Business. If you have tasks stuck on your iPhone, the free trial is worth it.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

VIDEO · MARKETING

Product demo videos for under a dollar, with no screen recording

Elie Steinbock, creator of Inbox Zero, posted on X the prompt his AI agent uses to produce his product videos. You paste it into a coding agent (he mentions Claude Code and Codex), fill in a few blanks with your product details and the agent does the rest.

Each video is an animated web page: an automated browser captures every frame

and ffmpeg stitches them into an mp4, using the app's real interface. The recipe adds a generated voice, music and a "judge" that reviews the video before delivery. That's how they made their hero video (about 55 seconds) and about 15 walkthroughs, each for well under a dollar in API calls. That dollar doesn't include the time of whoever sets it up.



SOURCE
x.com/elie2222
MON, OCT 5, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

A good demo video sells while you sleep. If your competitors still record their screen with a phone, this is an edge that costs cents in API calls.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

AGENTS · DESKTOP

arc-cua: an agent that uses Mac apps without taking your mouse

An open-source (MIT) project by developer Shiv that lets AI agents use desktop software on macOS. Its **arc-driver** piece lets your agent (Claude Code, Codex or any MCP cli-

ent) read an app and act on it in the background, without moving your pointer. A large model plans and a fast one does the clicking. It's new, so test it on a separate computer.



SOURCE
github.com/shhivv/arc-cua
REPO CREATED SEP 20, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

Tons of small businesses run on old software with no API. An agent that clicks through it for you is exactly what was missing. Test it on a separate machine first.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

OPEN SOURCE · BOTS

OpenMausBot: your own team of AI bots, free

A free, open-source (Apache 2.0) desktop app where you build a team of AI bots, each with its own chat and job: research, writing, planning. You bring your own account or API key (Claude, Codex, Grok, Kimi and more), switch models mid-conversation and connect it to Gmail, Slack, Notion and hundreds of apps. On GitHub it bills itself as an open-source Grok Bot alternative. You pay your provider for model usage.



SOURCE
openmausbot.com
LAUNCH BLOG: TUE, OCT 6, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

A team of bots, each with its own job, in a chat app, for free. If you already pay for an AI subscription, it's a cheap way to start delegating.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

BRIEFS · INSPIRATION

The newspaper that inspired this one

Karen X. Cheng built The Morning Newspaper: a personalized paper that prints at your home while you sleep. It runs on Grok bot on your computer, and she warns it uses a lot of tokens. Yes, we were inspired. No, Grok didn't make this one.



SOURCE
newspaper.karenx.com
MON, OCT 5, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

I borrowed Karen's idea with full respect: a short paper made for you, read with your coffee. Tell me what you want in the next editions.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

GLOSSARY

MCP

Model Context Protocol: the standard "plug" an AI agent uses to connect to tools and apps. If something says "MCP-compatible," your agent can use it.

Open models & security

— OPEN MODELS

Mistral Large 4: open weights, frontier level

Mistral launched a preview of its largest model: one trillion parameters (49 billion active), multimodal and trained in its own data centers in Europe. You can try it today through the API on Mistral Studio, and the weights drop at the end of the month so any company can run it on its own infrastructure.



SOURCE
mistral.ai/news
TUE, OCT 6, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

A model this strong with open weights means more options and better prices for everyone. If you guard your data, running it in-house is gold.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

— OPEN MODELS

Beam, Reflection's first open-weight model

Reflection introduced Beam: 501 billion parameters (23 billion active), built for coding, reasoning and agentic work, with a focus on using little compute per answer. It's in final testing: early access is open by sign-up, and the weights and technical report ship later this month.



SOURCE
reflection.ai/blog
MON, OCT 5, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

Two giant open models in two days. Competition is pushing the cost of AI down faster than most businesses can even try it.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

— LOCAL AI

A 125-billion-parameter AI on your gaming PC

Strata (open source, MIT) installs Qwen3.8-Flash-Next on a Windows or Linux PC with an NVIDIA or AMD card with 12 GB or more, 32 GB of RAM and about 80 GB of disk. It chats, codes and reads images, and nothing leaves your computer. In its own tests, an RTX 5070 wrote 53 to 94 tokens per second.



SOURCE
github.com/Niko1221/Strata
TRENDING ON HACKER NEWS, SUN, OCT 4, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

A big AI on a gaming PC, with nothing sent to the cloud. For firms with sensitive data (accountants, lawyers, clinics) this opens the door.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

— SECURITY · YOUR WEBSITE

Wikipedia calls out AI agents that misbehaved

The Wikimedia Foundation reported agents it believes were operated by OpenAI: test edits without the approval its rules require, failed attempts to use its Etherpad as a proxy and millions of automated requests to its APIs. It is asking AI companies to make their agents easy to identify and block.



SOURCE
diff.wikimedia.org
MON, OCT 5, 2026

NATHAN'S TAKE

If you have a website, AI agents are already visiting, and not all of them behave. Check your traffic and forms: what happened to Wikipedia can happen to a small business.

Talk to me on X → @nathanromano

TIP OF THE DAY

Don't let a missed call become a lost customer

People who call and get no answer usually dial the next name on the list. Cover it with an AI receptionist:

- 1 Check how many calls you missed last week, and when.
- 2 Forward "no answer" and "busy" calls to the AI receptionist.
- 3 Give it a script: hours, services, base prices and when to hand off to a person.
- 4 Make every call end in a booked appointment or a summary texted to your team.

PubliExpert AI Guild

Learn to use AI in your business and your life

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YellowPencil: edit your WordPress design with no code

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Why I recommend it: if your site runs on WordPress, it saves you paying for every small design tweak. If you don't use WordPress, it's not for you.

1.envato.market/OJBzNV Affiliate link: I earn a commission if you buy through it. Your price is the same.