

Asian owner-operators and the AI inflection point



Owens Huang, Partner and Senior Research Analyst for Dalton's Asia equity research team with NVIDIA's Jensen Huang



Jamie Rosenwald, Co-founder of Dalton and Chief Investment Officer, with Owens Huang and Accton Founder AJ Huang

Perception is strong and sight weak

Miyamoto Musashi, The Book of Five Rings

Claude Code and OpenClaw have catalyzed the long-anticipated agentic AI inflection point – extending AI's value proposition beyond chatbox, content generation and multi-step reasoning, into autonomous, real-world task execution. This structural shift is driving an enormous inference compute demand, with Jensen Huang framing the dynamic at GTC 2026: a single agentic job can consume up to one million times more tokens than a standard generative prompt, effectively redefining data centers as token factories whose output maps directly to corporate revenue and GDP. Now, we are witnessing a new industrial revolution for the IT stack. Amazon, Alphabet, Meta, Microsoft, and Oracle are collectively on track to deploy over \$600 billion in capital expenditures this year – a 65% year-over-year increase and, notably, the third consecutive year of 50%-plus growth – with over 60% of that spend directed at AI

infrastructure: GPUs, custom accelerators, storage, networking and other hardware components. The message from all five cloud operators is unified: Demand for AI computing is far outpacing supply. Anthropic's \$30 billion annualized revenue run rate — up from \$9 billion at year-end 2025 and just \$1 billion in January 2025 — is the clearest leading indicator of what monetization at scale looks like for AI providers. Another good example is Meta; Mark Zuckerberg said that AI tools have made engineers 30% more productive. Meta now has less headcount than it had in 2022, despite revenues being up 72% and earnings per share more than doubling since 2022.

Global investors are rapidly (albeit belatedly) discovering the reality of this AI inflection point, with enormous global capital rotation from SaaS companies into US semiconductor and AI infrastructure plays. Asian titans such as TSMC and Samsung have also seen the benefit of this trend, but global investors continue to be underexposed to the slightly smaller family and entrepreneur-owned Asian companies which are similarly exposed to the AI, Datacenter and Digitalization trend. Dalton has been a long-term investor in these dynamic Asian "owner operator" companies, including Key enablers across the AI hardware stack, such as open-networking provider Accton (Taiwan), power/thermal leader Delta Electronics (Taiwan), HBM (high bandwidth memory) leader SK Hynix/SK Square (Korea), and precision wafer-processing toolmaker DISCO (Japan). These sector leaders in Taiwan, Korea, and Japan contribute critical technology to the AI revolution, across AI accelerators, high bandwidth memory, semi equipment, networking and power management.

In NVIDIA GTC 2026, Jensen Huang doubled his prior revenue commitment, projecting cumulative demand from its Blackwell GPU and next generation AI platform Vera Rubin exceeding \$1 trillion from 2025 through 2027 — a figure that proves CAPEX growth momentum will continue in 2027 — while GPU supply remains sold out at least through the end of 2027. The deeper thesis, however, is structural: the AI scaling law has expanded from pretraining to encompass post-training, inference, and agentic compute — and as models begin to reason and reflect, inference demand has grown approximately 10,000-fold over two years, transforming the "token" into the fundamental unit of economic output. The Asian semiconductor and hardware supplier owner operator companies, in which Dalton invests, are critical tool makers for this token economy.

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