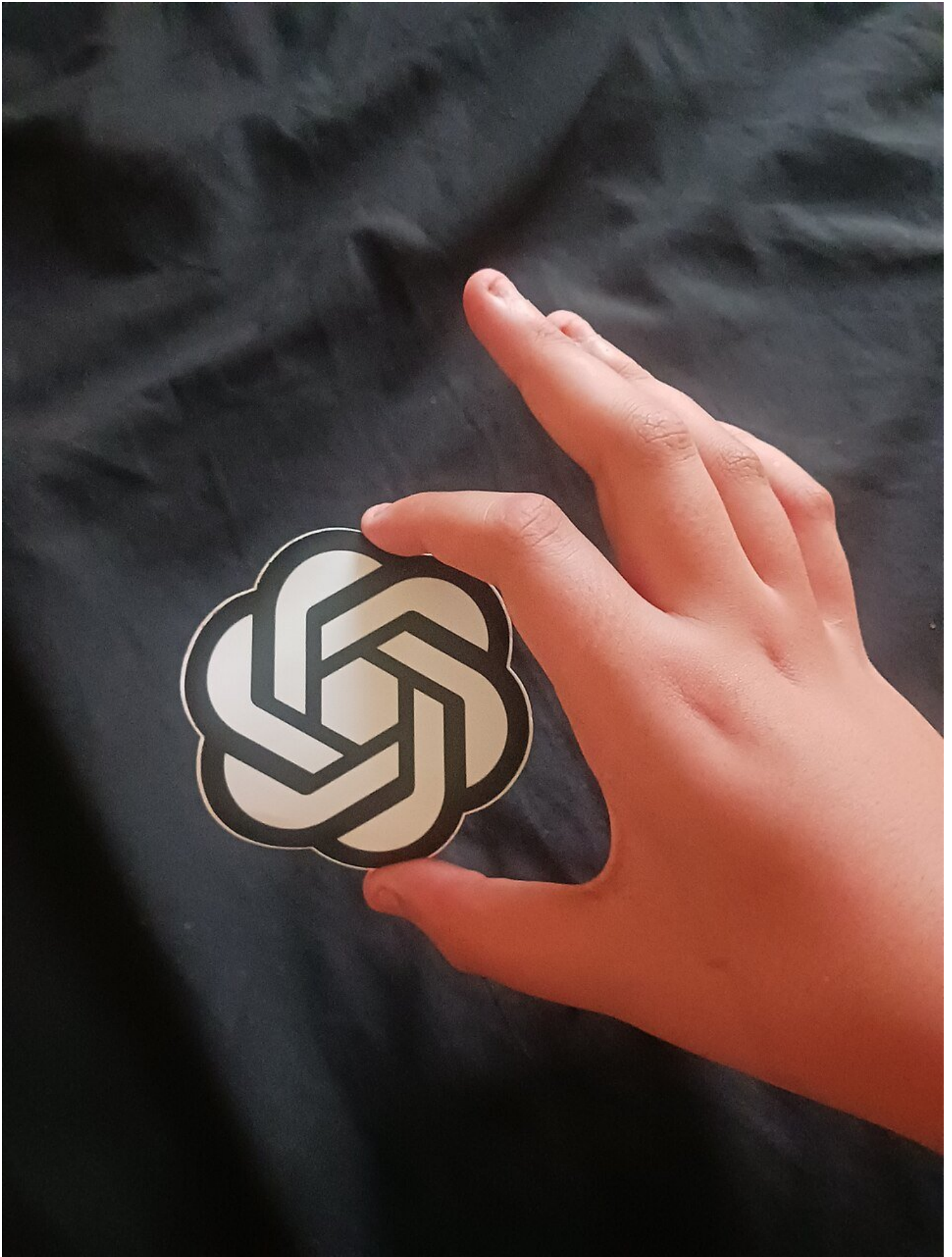


NEWS | TECHNOLOGY

OpenAI makes 'near-top' AI 80% cheaper

— and puts the top layer with its always-on agents behind a paywall.

By **Manasee Kurlekar** | September 30, 2026



OpenAI just made near-top AI 80% cheaper, and kept the always-on version for the rich.

At its annual developer conference, DevDay, OpenAI launched "Dots," AI agents that work in the background around the clock, alongside GPT-6.1 Sol, a model it says comes close to its best one at a fifth of the price. The split is clear: cheap intelligence for everyone, and the most capable agents only for premium subscribers.

Key details:

- **When:** DevDay was held 29 Sep 2026 in San Francisco. The keynote started at 1 PM ET (10:30 PM IST).
- **Dots:** always-on agents built on OpenAI's top model, GPT-6.1 Astra. Each has its own cloud computer and browser, and works in ChatGPT, Slack, Microsoft Teams and over voice calls. They connect to 4,000+ apps, and users set "Custom Rules" to approve or block what the agent does.
- **Who gets Dots:** only Pro (\$200 and \$500 plans) and Business Premium subscribers. Enterprise, Education and Healthcare workspaces get beta access. One dot is included; extra dots cost more.
- **GPT-6.1 Sol:** OpenAI says it delivers "near-Astra" intelligence at one-fifth of Astra's input and output token prices. It is aimed at agentic coding and at computer use, where the AI operates software itself.
- **Ultrafast tier:** up to 8× faster in Codex, OpenAI's coding tool (about 300 tokens per second), and up to 6× faster in the API. It costs 6× standard pricing.
- **Plan changes:** Pro 500 offers 25× the ChatGPT Plus allowance. New subscribers on the \$200 Pro plan now get 10× usage, down from 20×.
- **Also launched:** ChatGPT Space (shared team workspaces), Pages (a document editor humans and agents both write in), computer use in the Agents API, a new Decisions API, and an OpenAI Marketplace covering 32+ partner products.
- **Competition:** Dots goes up against Meta's Muse, which has free, \$20 and \$100 plans, and SpaceX's Grok Bot.
- **Same day:** AI CEOs, OpenAI's included, signed a voluntary "Accord on Superintelligence" at the White House.

Read online: <https://worldbusinesswatch.com/news/13/190/openai-makes-near-top-ai-80-cheaper-.html>

© 2026 World Business Watch. All rights reserved.