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Essential Timeline

From the emergence of AI to the narrative thresholds of 2050

FACTS, SYNTHESSES, REGULATIONS, AND SCENARIOS

Aligned with the revised English interior · Documentary snapshot July 2026 ·
Resource version EN-US-R2.3

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METHOD This timeline selects milestones that help readers navigate the book. Each entry identifies its status as a historical fact or synthesis, regulatory fact, narrative scenario, or author’s proposal. Technical publications are identified within historical facts. Legal dates after July 30, 2026 are marked scheduled.

Date or period	Milestone and qualification
1950	Historical fact. Alan Turing publishes ‘Computing Machinery and Intelligence’ and replaces the abstract question ‘Can machines think?’ with the imitation game, shifting attention to observable behavior.
1955-1956	Historical fact. John McCarthy, Marvin Minsky, Nathaniel Rochester, and Claude Shannon prepare the proposal for the Dartmouth summer workshop; the expression artificial intelligence becomes the banner of a new field of research.
Late 1950s	Historical synthesis. Frank Rosenblatt’s perceptron encourages the idea that a machine can learn from examples, while hardware, data, and methods remain limited.
1966	Historical fact. Joseph Weizenbaum presents ELIZA, a simple program able to produce, through rules and keywords, a surprising impression of listening.
1969	Historical fact and synthesis. Marvin Minsky and Seymour Papert analyze the limitations of simple perceptrons. Later AI winters also reflect the gap among promises, funding, computation, and results.
1969	Infrastructure history. ARPANET transmits its first message between two nodes, making a packet-switched network concrete and opening the way to broader communication architectures.
January 1, 1983	Infrastructure history. ARPANET completes the transition to TCP/IP: different networks can communicate through a common family of protocols, a decisive step toward the Internet as a network of networks.
1986	Historical fact. David Rumelhart, Geoffrey Hinton, and Ronald Williams demonstrate influentially how backpropagation can train multilayer networks.
1989-1991	Infrastructure history. Tim Berners-Lee proposes the World Wide Web at CERN in 1989, develops the first browser and server, and in 1991 the project begins to leave the laboratory, opening the network to hypertext navigation.
1997	Historical fact. Deep Blue defeats Garry Kasparov in a six-game match, making the power of computation in a closed-rule domain visible to a broad public.
1990s to early 2000s	Historical synthesis. The Internet, the Web, and mobile services transform the network from a specialist environment into everyday infrastructure; archives, identities, communications, and services increasingly depend on interconnected systems.
2012	Historical fact. AlexNet achieves a markedly better result in the ImageNet competition using graphics processors and makes the acceleration of deep learning in image recognition visible.
2017	Historical fact. ‘Attention Is All You Need’ presents the Transformer architecture, which will become central to large language models and many generative systems.
November 30, 2022	Historical fact. ChatGPT is introduced to the public as a research preview and makes conversational AI accessible at everyday scale.
2010s and 2020s	Historical synthesis. Cloud services, data centers, APIs, platforms, and connected objects combine into increasingly invisible infrastructure on which work, health care, government, mobility, and information depend.
August 1, 2024	Regulatory fact. Regulation (EU) 2024/1689, known as the AI Act, enters into force. Its provisions apply progressively; the date does not mean that all obligations take effect at once.
February 2, 2025	Regulatory fact. The AI Act’s prohibited-practice provisions and original AI-literacy obligation begin to apply. The July 2026 amendment later recasts Article 4 as an obligation to support the development of AI literacy. [SRC-S34-001] [SRC-EU-AI-OMNIBUS26]
May 15, 2025	Historical fact, technical standards. W3C publishes the Verifiable Credentials Data Model v2.0, Verifiable Credential Data Integrity 1.0, and Securing Verifiable Credentials Using JOSE and COSE as Recommendations. [SRC-W3C-VC20] [SRC-W3C-DI] [SRC-W3C-JOSE]
July 9, 2025	Historical fact, technical specification. OpenID for Verifiable Presentations 1.0 becomes a final specification for credential-presentation flows. [SRC-OID4VP]
July 10, 2025	Regulatory fact, voluntary guidance. The final General-Purpose AI Code of Practice is published to support compliance with the AI Act. The code is a voluntary instrument. [SRC-S34-021]
July 2025	Historical fact, technical standard. NIST publishes the final Digital Identity Guidelines, Special Publication 800-63-4. [SRC-NIST-ID4]

Date or period	Milestone and qualification
August 2, 2025	Regulatory fact. The AI Act's Article 53 obligations for providers of general-purpose AI models begin to apply, subject to scope and transitional provisions. Models placed on the market before this date have a later compliance deadline. [SRC-S34-001] [SRC-S34-021]
September 16, 2025	Historical fact, technical specification. OpenID for Verifiable Credential Issuance 1.0 becomes a final specification for credential-issuance flows. [SRC-OID4VCI]
June 10, 2026	Regulatory fact, voluntary guidance. The final Code of Practice on Transparency of AI-Generated Content is published. It provides guidance on marking and labeling, but adherence alone does not establish compliance with Article 50. [SRC-S34-020]
July 8, 2026	Regulatory fact. Regulation (EU) 2026/1744, the Digital Omnibus on AI, is adopted. Adoption is distinct from publication and entry into force. [SRC-EU-AI-OMNIBUS26]
July 23, 2026	Historical fact, technical framework. Version 3.0.0 of the European Digital Identity Wallet Architecture and Reference Framework is released. The technical framework supports implementation and is distinct from the legal obligations. [SRC-S34-009]
July 24, 2026	Regulatory fact. Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 is published in the Official Journal of the European Union. [SRC-EU-AI-OMNIBUS26]
July 27, 2026	Regulatory fact. Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 enters into force. The AI Act's obligations remain subject to their respective application dates and transitional provisions. [SRC-EU-AI-OMNIBUS26] [SRC-S34-001]
August 2, 2026	Scheduled regulatory date. Article 50(1), (2), (4), and (5) transparency obligations are scheduled to apply, subject to exceptions and transitions. The Commission's enforcement powers for general-purpose AI models are also scheduled to apply from this date. [SRC-S34-001] [SRC-S34-020] [SRC-S34-021]
December 2, 2026	Scheduled regulatory date. Member States are due to transpose the Platform Work Directive. This is also the scheduled end of the Article 50(2) transition for providers of covered synthetic-content systems placed on the market before August 2, 2026. [SRC-S34-012] [SRC-EU-AI-OMNIBUS26] [SRC-S34-001]
December 31, 2026	Scheduled regulatory date. Specified Authorized IC Designer status and application deadlines are scheduled to fall on this date under the BIS rule published April 9, 2026 and effective April 7, 2026. Applicability depends on the transaction and the rule's scope. [SRC-BIS-IC-DESIGNER26]
August 2, 2027	Scheduled regulatory date. Providers of general-purpose AI models placed on the market before August 2, 2025 are due to comply with the applicable AI Act obligations. [SRC-S34-001] [SRC-S34-021]
Around 2050	Narrative scenario. The vignettes, arranged by theme, span several years. Fourteen- and eighteen-month intervals belong to Asha's thread; six-month reviews concern Marta and Lidia, and Davide. Future dates, costs, times, quantities, capacities, and geopolitical arrangements are scenario parameters, not forecasts or observed values. The scenarios include projects that are limited, stopped, and not adopted.
Proposals in the book	Author's proposal. The 2050 Test, proof minimization, the operational twin, the living license, and the post-mortem digital directive are tools to test, correct, or abandon: they are not accomplished facts, uniform law, or predictions.

How to cite the timeline

Historical and regulatory entries refer to the searchable bibliography in the Resource Center. Use the SRC codes to locate the sources for the added milestones. Scenes around 2050 remain narrative parameters, not predictions. Test the book's proposals against evidence and context, then decide whether to correct or abandon them.