



**GOODBYE**

**2024**

**HELLO**

**2025**

# MOOHAN



**S**amsung and Google, along with Qualcomm, have been working together in order to bring their new Android XR platform to market. They state XR is an umbrella term, combining virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR).

The first headset from Samsung, pictured to the left and called 'Project Moohan' will be the first to bring this experience to life. Supposedly it will feature state of the art displays; Passthrough capabilities; and natural multi-modal input. Samsung are describing it as "your spatial canvas to explore Google Maps, enjoy a sports match on Youtube, or plan trips with the help of Gemini AI". It certainly sounds like they are aiming to compete with Apple, although based on sales figures for Apple Vision Pro, that won't be hard. In fact, the bigger competitor in this space currently is Meta with their headset now in it's third generation, and with a huge ecosystem of apps available. Also a price that is actually affordable compared to the high price of the Apple headset. It seems from early impressions that Samsung's aim for 'Project Moohan' is that it's a cross between Meta Quest and Apple Vision Pro.

Samsung's press release also points to a headset that will be comfortable and lightweight, something that does sound like a poke at Apple, with one of the biggest complaints around Apple Vision Pro being it's weight and comfort, or lack thereof over long sessions.

The headline feature, as it stands at the moment, is the integration of Gemini AI that will have a "contextual understanding of the world" around the user and utilise a conversational user interface for a more natural interaction. Gemini does not require users to be as specific as say Siri, so the instructions can be a lot looser and Gemini still knows what the user wants. On the other hand, Siri tried to take me to somewhere in Margate the other day, when I wanted to go to somewhere in Eastbourne. An extra distance of 60miles and in the wrong direction!

Also demoed were very early prototypes of a new set of Google Glasses, but there is no date set for these as yet. What Google and Samsung are saying is that there will not be just one product - Android XR will be at the centre of an array of devices.

Samsung's headset is due to launch in 2025. More details to follow.

# SWITCH 2

## W

e are inching ever closer to the official

Nintendo announcement of the Switch 2, and there have been some quite compelling info drops this month. The third party accessory manufacturer Dbrand shared some information, as well as Nintendo YouTube channel SwitchUp receiving a mock-up from another Chinese accessory manufacturer, which presented a 3D printed mock-up of what the Switch 2 will actually look like!

First up, Dbrand have announced their KillSwitch 2 case on their website that features a mock-up of the hardware within their case.

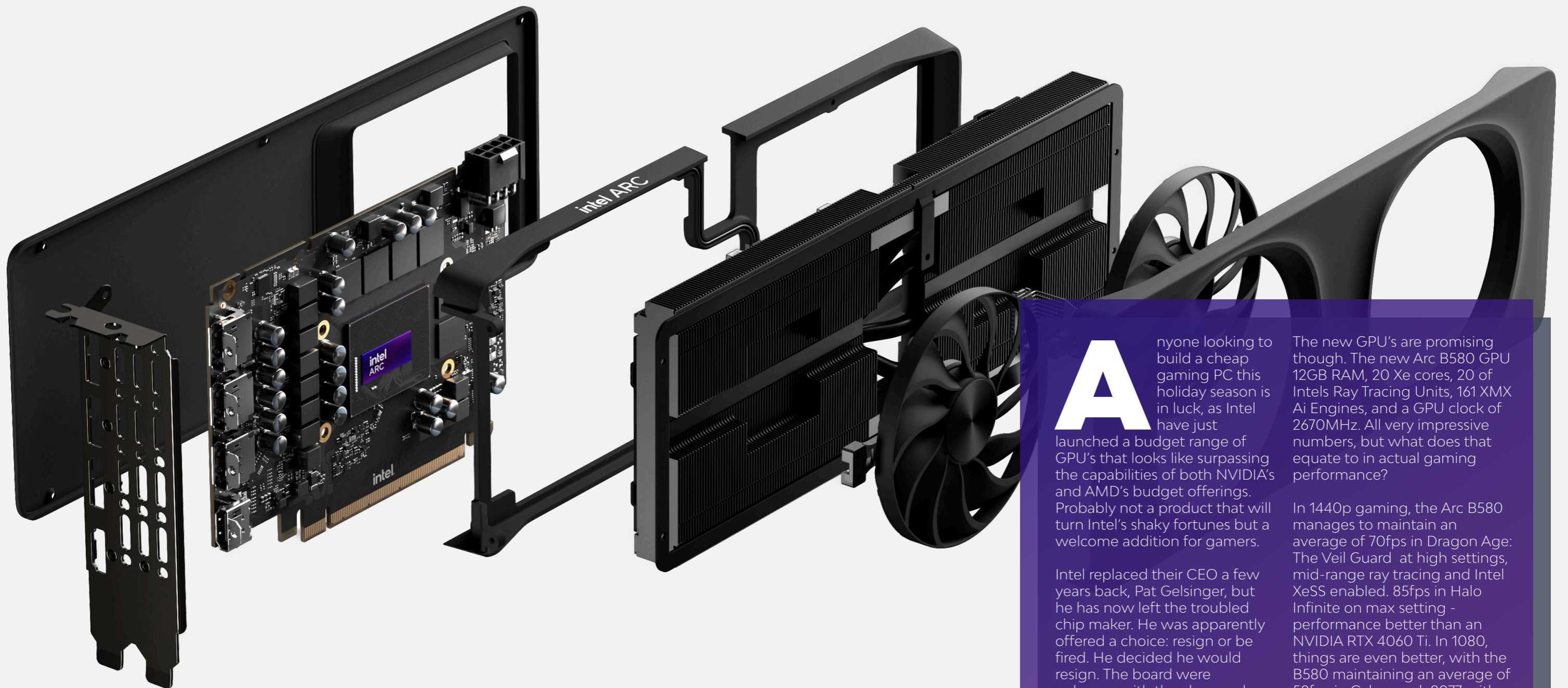
There are some notable differences to consider. Dbrand CEO, Adam Ijaz has shared some information though. A new button appears on the right Joy-con controller under the 'Home' button with the letter 'C' engraved on to it. It's unclear what the purpose of the button is, as the capture button still looks to be on the left Joy-con, but it could be a nod to the 'C' button from the N64 days. Another thing Ijaz shared is that the Joy-cons attach magnetically to the main console with an ejection button

on the top of the new style controllers - the new button that can be seen near the shoulder buttons.

SwitchUp's hands on reveals even more information about the upcoming console. A second USB-C port on the top of the system being top of that list, which means that the system will be able to be charged whilst in use in Tabletop mode. He also does a size comparison of the Switch 2 mock-up with a Steam Deck and it highlights a system that is still smaller than Valve's handheld PC, but still matches the larger 8-inch display of the Steam Deck. Seemingly Nintendo have looked at the ever growing market of handheld PCs that have larger screens.

There is nothing official from Nintendo on the system, other than the fact it will be backwards compatible. It is also heavily rumoured that we could hear from Nintendo over the Christmas period, or in early January. This could tie up with the likes of Dbrand's Ijaz stating a March/April release for their KillSwitch 2 case.





# ARC

# A

nyone looking to build a cheap gaming PC this holiday season is in luck, as Intel have just launched a budget range of GPU's that looks like surpassing the capabilities of both NVIDIA's and AMD's budget offerings. Probably not a product that will turn Intel's shaky fortunes but a welcome addition for gamers.

Intel replaced their CEO a few years back, Pat Gelsinger, but he has now left the troubled chip maker. He was apparently offered a choice: resign or be fired. He decided he would resign. The board were unhappy with the changes he had made in the last few years to try and change the fortunes of the company, which has seen a 33% drop in revenue; a 66% drop in it's stock price; and an increase in debt!

Despite this, Intel are still a popular choice for gamers and PC enthusiasts with processors that are still competitive with AMD's offerings. It could be argued that if they don't innovate, they could become really unstuck, especially with AMD not showing any major signs of slowing down.

The new GPU's are promising though. The new Arc B580 GPU 12GB RAM, 20 Xe cores, 20 of Intels Ray Tracing Units, 161 XMx Ai Engines, and a GPU clock of 2670MHz. All very impressive numbers, but what does that equate to in actual gaming performance?

In 1440p gaming, the Arc B580 manages to maintain an average of 70fps in Dragon Age: The Veil Guard - at high settings, mid-range ray tracing and Intel XeSS enabled. 85fps in Halo Infinite on max setting - performance better than an NVIDIA RTX 4060 Ti. In 1080, things are even better, with the B580 maintaining an average of 58fps in Cyberpunk 2077 with Ultra settings and with ray tracing enabled. This is arguably better performance than what the PlayStation 5 Pro can reach. Better yet, it seems that Intel's XeSS 2 Ai upscaling performs better than even AMD's FSR 3 can manage, but NVIDIA DLSS 3 is still the king in this regard.

Not bad for a GPU that comes in at the \$250.00-\$300.00 price point. Also good news for Intel, who seem to be currently struggling to keep up with demand!

# AIDEN

**F**ellow, a company whose aim is to try and bring the cafe experience to the home with a range of kettles and grinders, has released its first proper coffee machine. The Fellow Aiden is essentially a drip cup coffee maker but, as is typical with the brand, the Aiden goes further than most to make it the best out there.

Aiden requires just one button press to brew a single serving or up to 10, and will even suggest how much ground coffee is required based on how many servings with the coffee maker coming with two different baskets: one for up to three cups and another for larger brews. Aiden automatically recognises which basket is installed and prompts the user to turn the first of its kind dual shower head to the appropriate colour coded setting. This shower head ensures the water is evenly distributed across the ground coffee. After this, it's time to select from one of the two modes: Instant brew or Guided. Instant brew mode works like a standard drip cup

coffee maker. Guided brew allows the user to tinker with settings like the type of coffee being brewed: light, medium or dark roasts, cold brew and suggests dosage brewing only the amount of coffee specified. Aiden has an advanced temperature control system that is accurate to within a degree, and can even alter temperatures mid brew without affecting water flow. A far cry from the basic systems in other drip cup makers.

Users have access to in-built Brew Profiles from Fellow, or can even create their own. Coffee shops and roasters can even share their own profiles. Fellow Drops club members can even have Aiden download the latest weekly drop when the machine is connected. Finally, users can even dive deep into the advanced settings changing brew temperatures; bloom ratios; number of pulses; or even time between pulses.

The Fellow Aiden is available now and can be purchased from Amazon UK for £365.00 or from various retailers in Australia for \$AU629.00.





# W

hilst the analogue revival has been going on, people have also been buying more CDs in the last couple of years, with CD sales growing in 2023 by 2%, and in the first half of 2024 by 3.2%. So perhaps people are just getting a little nostalgic for actual things they can pick up, as opposed to how hands off streaming can sometimes feel.

Whilst portable CD players have been around, most options have

been cheap plasticky models. This is where HiFi manufacturer FiiO come in with their new portable CD player: the DM13.

Not much bigger than a Sony Discman, the DM13 features a high quality CS43198 DAC; built-in battery; USB-C charging; Hi-Res Bluetooth; dual headphone sockets (3.5mm and 4.4mm) that also allow for connection to active speakers or amplifiers as well as optical and coaxial outputs for connecting to an external DAC for improved sound quality. Quite the array of features, but it does not stop

there, as the DM13 also allows for CD ripping into WAV files that can be stored on a portable storage device or computer.

A switch on the back enters the CD player into Desktop Mode, bypassing the in-built battery, prolonging it's usable life.

The FiiO DM13 is currently available to pre-order in just the silver finish but an array of colours will be available including some with transparent lids so the CD art can be seen. Prices start at €169.00/AUS\$240.00.

# CD