

Financial Daily Dose 9.14.2020 | Top Story: Oracle Bests Microsoft In Pursuit of TikTok

If not immune to surprise at this point in 2020, that might be the appropriate feeling at the apparent emergence of late-stage suitor Oracle as the winner of the TikTok sweepstakes. Though terms between ByteDance and Oracle are apparently still in flux, it appears the deal “will look more like a corporate restructuring than the outright sale Microsoft had proposed” – Bloomberg and NYTimes and WSJ

Still in sell mode as it seeks a turnaround from a dismal start to 2020, SoftBank is in talks to sell British chip designer Arm to Nvidia for \$40 billion, a deal that “would raise billions for the Japanese technology investor and create a powerhouse in the semiconductor industry.” At current projected pricing, SoftBank could net upwards of \$8 billion on the sale, which could also “raise concerns from antitrust regulators around the world and from customers of arm’s chip designs” – NYTimes and WSJ and Bloomberg

Meanwhile, biotech drugmaker Gilead is closing in on a more-than \$20 billion acquisition of Immunomedics Inc., a New Jersey-based biotech known for its “prized breast-cancer drug” Trodelvy, “which would be attractive to several large drugmakers, many of which have set their sights on adding more fast-growing oncology therapies to their portfolios” – WSJ and Bloomberg

Just days after Nikola stock soared on news of a major equity stake from General Motors, short-seller-released oppo research “detailing what it called ‘dozens of lies’ about the company’s capabilities, partnerships or products” (and a closer look at previous reporting about Nikola’s “pattern of discrepancies”) sent the electric and hydrogen-powered truck maker’s shares down nearly 25% – Bloomberg

A recently revealed covert recording of an Independent Petroleum Association of America 2019 discussion could spell trouble for the oil and gas industry, as remarks captured on tape contradicted the industry’s public assurances that its companies “had [natural gas] emissions under control” – NYTimes

The Times gives us this deeper dive on fraud (and basic math) problems with the federal government’s Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, the initiative meant to “push unemployment benefits to free-

lances, part-timers and others lacking a safety net in the coronavirus pandemic.” The problem, in short: authorities are doing a terrible job of keeping track of how many people are being paid through the program, and the numbers they do have, when compared to pesky things like actual state populations, suggest that there’s been both tremendous fraud in the program and a miscalculation of the “scale of the pandemic’s economic impact” – NYTimes

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga won an overwhelming majority to become the new leader of Japan’s Liberal Democratic Party and, in turn, the country’s new prime minister – Bloomberg and NYTimes

The good news for Google, as it prepares for the looming specter of state and federal antitrust lawsuits as soon as later this month, is that CEO Sundar Pichai really is a stand-up guy. The bad news? That may not be nearly enough to see the company through the coming crucible – WSJ

Meet the woman taking on one of the most unenviable jobs in America at the moment—that would be Vanessa Pappas, the 41-year-old newly minted interim global head of TikTok, who assumed the role after CEO Kevin Mayer announced his abrupt departure from the company after just 4 months – NYTimes

A pair of former Deutsche Bank traders will start trial this week on spoofing charges related to their alleged rigging of precious metals prices by “bluffing other traders into thinking supply or demand has changed.” With a 1 for 3 record going into the trial, federal prosecutors are in the hot seat here in their years-long effort to make spoofing a prosecutable fraud offense – WSJ and Law360

It’s harder than ever for us to find common ground in America these days. But surely we can [nearly] all enjoy a pinch of schadenfreude at Tommy B’s dismal debut for the Bucs, no? – HuffPost

Stay safe,
MDR