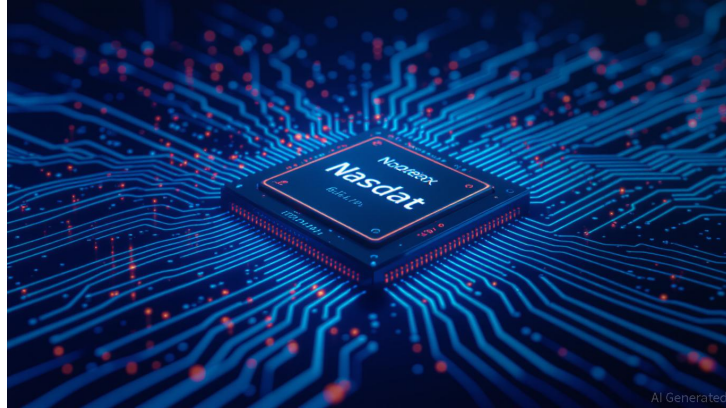

Tech Stocks Lead Gains as Nasdaq Surges Amid Rate-Cut Optimism



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On Monday, technology shares and chipmakers drove gains on Wall Street, pushing the Nasdaq composite up nearly 2%, easing investor concerns about a potential AI-driven market bubble.

Semiconductor companies Advanced Micro Devices and Micron were among the strongest performers, while Tesla and Alphabet, the parent company of Google, rose more than 5%,

reinforcing the tech rally.

Market optimism was bolstered by renewed expectations that the Federal Reserve may lower interest rates in the coming month. While Boston Fed President Susan Collins indicated no urgent need for a cut, New York Fed President John Williams suggested a short-term reduction could be warranted. Fed Governor Christopher Waller also signaled support for a rate adjustment, helping lift futures-based expectations of a cut above 75% on Monday, up from around 40% earlier.

Internationally, European defense stocks fell following White House remarks on progress in Ukraine peace talks, and European natural-gas futures eased. In cryptocurrency markets, Bitcoin hovered near \$86,000, remaining below the \$90,000 mark after experiencing its worst weekly loss since February.

In Asia, Alibaba shares gained, boosting Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index, while Japanese markets were closed for a holiday. Analysts said the rally reflects investor sensitivity to Fed signals and the resilience of the technology sector amid ongoing economic uncertainty.