

## 72. Active Investor

In this chapter titled "Active Investor" from a period stretching from January to April 2022, we delve into the noteworthy accomplishments and restless antics of Elon Musk, a figure whose multifaceted endeavors have marked significant advancements in technology and space exploration. Coming off a triumphant year, Tesla, under Musk's leadership, saw a 71% increase in sales over the past twelve months, achieved without traditional advertising. Tesla's stock valuation soared, elevating the company's worth above the next nine auto manufacturers combined. This was partly due to Musk's aggressive management style, particularly in securing microchip supplies amid a global shortage, allowing Tesla to sustain its production momentum.

Simultaneously, SpaceX, another of Musk's ventures, dominated space launches, significantly outpacing global competitors in payload mass delivered to orbit. The company's achievements included manned missions to the International Space Station and extensive deployments of its Starlink satellites, aiming to provide global internet coverage.

Despite these successes, Musk found himself uneasy in the calm that followed, likened to a video-game addict restless after a win. This restlessness led him to contemplate Twitter, a platform fitting Musk's impulsive and irreverent communication style, as his next venture. With substantial financial liquidity, Musk began confidentially acquiring Twitter shares in January, drawn to the platform's unfiltered public discourse potential. His past engagement with Twitter oscillated from disinterest to a prolific presence, marked by moments of controversy and whimsy alike.

In early 2022, Musk's critique of Twitter, particularly over free speech and what he perceived as the "woke-mind virus," saw him contemplating more direct involvement with the platform. Encouraged by peers and sensing an opportunity to influence its direction, Musk entertained joining Twitter's board after private discussions with its members and CEO, Parag Agrawal. Despite initial reservations and a complex negotiation surrounding board membership terms, Musk opted to join, buoyed by an uncomplicated final agreement.

Musk's integration into Twitter's board was seen as a potential turning point for the platform, with substantial discourse on free speech, content prioritization, and user verification. Discussions between Musk and his associates explored the balance between unregulated dialogue and curated content, and the viability of transforming Twitter into a more comprehensive digital platform, even envisioning it as a payment system.

This chapter concludes with Musk's ambitious opening of the Giga Texas factory, juxtaposing the celebratory event with his ongoing contemplation of Twitter's future. The simultaneous narration of Musk's tangible achievements with his ventures and his speculative exploration of Twitter's potential underscores a relentless drive towards innovation, tempered by an underlying quest for greater influence in digital public discourse.