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A Running List of the Tech CEOs Donald Trump Claims Are Calling Him to Suck Up

Some of the most powerful people in Silicon Valley appear to be quietly sitting out the presidential election cycle. But Trump says that in private, it's a different story.



PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY IMAGES

With only a few days left until the US presidential election, Donald Trump is claiming that some of Silicon Valley's most powerful billionaires and tech leaders are seeking him out.

Many of these leaders, like Google CEO Sundar Pichai and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, became figureheads for Trump's ire over what he believed to be censorship of conservative speech online. Now, as some of the most powerful people in Silicon Valley appear to be quietly sitting out the presidential election cycle, Trump is saying they've grown more complimentary of the former president as polls continue to show Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris neck and neck. Influential business leaders are hedging their bets and preparing themselves and their interests just in case Trump wins, according to the Washington Post.

Of course, it's not all just hearsay—Tesla CEO Elon Musk has explicitly thrown his money and support behind the former president in recent weeks.

Here's a running list of the Silicon Valley CEOs Trump says are courting him in the lead-up to the election:

Google CEO Sundar Pichai

On Joe Rogan's podcast on Friday, Trump claimed that Google CEO Sundar Pichai called to congratulate the former president on his viral McDonald's stunt. "This McDonald's thing, I want to tell you, it's one of the biggest things we've seen on Google," Trump said Pichai told him.

Trump repeated the claim again during a Saturday rally in Pennsylvania: "I actually got a call from Sundar, Sundar, who's great, from Google, he's a great guy, very smart. The head of Google," he said. "And he said, 'Sir, I just want to tell you, what you did with McDonald's was one of the single biggest events we've ever had at Google.'"

Trump once again described the alleged call during a Sunday evening rally at Madison Square Garden in New York City. Pichai has not publicly confirmed if this conversation took place. Google has not responded to requests for comment from WIRED.

Apple CEO Tim Cook

Earlier this month, Trump said that Cook had called him to complain about a multibillion-dollar fine Apple received from the European Union this year.

“[Cook] said something that was interesting,” Trump said. “He said they’re using that to run their enterprise, meaning Europe is their enterprise.” I said, “That’s a lot ... But Tim, I got to get elected first, but I’m not going to let them take advantage of our companies—that won’t, you know, be happening.”

Trump’s relationship with Apple CEO Tim Cook is one of the most congenial the former president has shared with a Silicon Valley leader. Cook maintained a relationship with Trump during his time in office, often meeting with the president and serving on advisory panels influencing policy decisions that affect Apple’s business, such as tariffs and immigration.

Cook has not publicly confirmed that this most recent call took place. Apple did not immediately respond to a request for comment from WIRED.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg

Shortly after the assassination attempt against Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania, this summer, the former president claimed that Zuckerberg called him. In an interview with New York magazine, Trump claimed that Zuckerberg said, “I will never vote for people running against you after watching what you did.”

A Meta spokesperson contested what Trump told the magazine, saying, “As Mark has said publicly, he’s not endorsing anybody in this race and has not communicated to anybody how he intends to vote.” (Zuckerberg did not endorse any candidate in the 2016 and 2020 elections and has said that he won’t this cycle either.)

While Meta wouldn’t detail the contents of the call, Zuckerberg confirmed he had called Trump after the assassination attempt, calling the former president “bad ass” in July.

“Seeing Donald Trump get up after getting shot in the face and pump his fist in the air with the American flag is one of the most badass things I’ve ever seen in my life,” Zuckerberg said.

Under Trump, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg sustained countless attacks from the Trump administration and conservative lawmakers over censorship allegations. In 2020, Zuckerberg donated \$350 million in pandemic support to election departments around the country. Republicans accused these “Zuckerbucks”

donations of being unfairly distributed to Democratic districts. In 2021, following the January 6 riot at the Capitol, Trump was banned from Facebook and Instagram.

Blue Origin CEO and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos

Former Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has been under fire in recent days after he decided that the Washington Post would no longer endorse presidential candidates, despite the paper having a Harris endorsement in the works.

Trump has long criticized Bezos for his ownership of the Washington Post, but Trump said that Bezos had called him after this summer's assassination attempt. "It is the most incredible thing I've ever watched," Trump said Bezos told him. "I said, 'Despite the fact you own the Washington Post, I appreciate it.'" Amazon's CEO, Andy Jassy, reportedly called Trump after the July shooting as well.

Much of Bezos' and Amazon's business interests rely on government contracts, especially with Amazon Web Services, Amazon's cloud computing arm, and Blue Origin.

Amazon and Blue Origin did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk

Two years after acquiring Twitter to bring "free speech" back to the platform, Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk has gone full MAGA. Musk formally endorsed Trump on X after the July assassination attempt, writing, "Last time America had a candidate this tough was Theodore Roosevelt."

Since then, Musk has become one of Trump's largest donors, spending more than \$110 million to bolster the former president's campaign. The Musk-backed America PAC is aggressively canvassing across battleground states to turn out the vote for Trump. Musk has also joined Trump on the campaign trail, spending the past few weeks stumping for Trump in states like Pennsylvania.

Musk has also been using X to support Trump's campaign, frequently reposting campaign material and links for users to register to vote. X CEO Linda Yaccarino has not endorsed Trump, but has tweeted messages of support after the July shooting and previously served on a Trump administration council promoting public health.

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