



NEWS LETTER

In This Issue.....

- Facebook to use AI to map world population
- Google is turning its Maps service into major cash machine
- SpaceX Falcon Heavy Rocket Launched in Company's First Commercial Mission
- Google Assistant Can Now Read Your Work Calendar
- TikTok App Ban Would Harm Free Speech, China's Byte dance Tells Supreme Court
- Intel Optane Memory H10 Hybrid SSD with QLC Flash Coming to Thin and Light Laptops Soon

Facebook to use AI to map world population

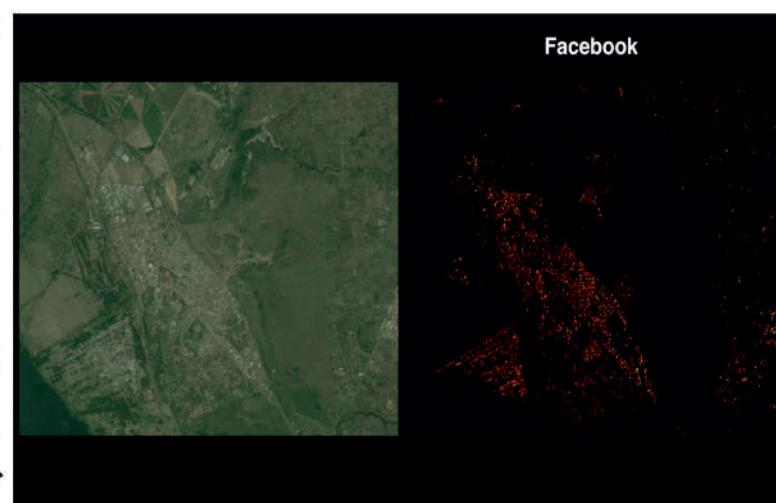
Aiming to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create accurate maps, Facebook said its maps now cover “majority” of Africa and that its project would eventually map nearly the whole world's population.

In 2016, Facebook had created population maps for 22 nations.

“When it is completed, humanitarian agencies will be able to determine how populations are distributed even in remote areas so that healthcare workers can better reach the households and relief workers can better distribute aid. “Offering open data for free in a responsible way also enables Facebook researchers to better understand the many applications of their work and to guide their research in the right directions,” Facebook said in a blog post late on Tuesday.

The census and satellite data used contain no personally identifiable information, Facebook said. Since Facebook released the first set of maps two years ago, they have improved how nonprofits do their work, how researchers learn and how policies are developed.

“For example, in Malawi, the Red Cross and the Missing Maps programme, in partnership with the Malawi Ministry of Health, used Facebook maps to inform a measles and rubella campaign. By showing that 97 per cent of the land space was uninhabited, the Red Cross was able to deploy 3,000 trained local volunteers to specific areas in need,” Facebook said.



Google is turning its Maps service into major cash machine

Google became the world's most profitable internet company on the back of search advertising. Now, it's turning another popular web service into a major cash machine. [Google Maps](#) is an indispensable part of life for more than 1 billion people, who use it to commute, explore new cities or find a hot new restaurant. The service has been mostly free, and free from ads, since it launched 14 years ago.

Interviews with Google executives and customers show this is changing as the internet giant increases the ways advertisers can reach Maps users, while raising prices for some businesses that use the underlying technology. The app now regularly highlights sponsored locations, and shows extra paid listings when people look for nearby gas stations, coffee shops or other businesses. 'Sometimes I say the most under-monetized asset that I cover is Google Maps,' Brian Nowak, an analyst at Morgan Stanley, said while interviewing Google's business chief Philipp Schindler at a recent conference. 'It's almost like a utility where it's kind of waiting for you to flip the switch on.'

Schindler's response showed that Google isn't waiting anymore. He sliced the opportunity in four areas. Basic directions are a 'utility' that can't be messed with much.

Second are requests for things nearby; followed by broader, personalized recommendations; and finally searching neighborhood business listings. If you think about Maps monetization from those four different angles -- a little bit more caution obviously on the first one, not disrupting the utility aspect and all the other three -- I think it's a really, really interesting playground going forward,' Schindler said. There's also a chance this Maps initiative steers Google into regulatory roadblocks that are growing every day. Europe has pounded the company for violating competition law, and there are rising calls in the U.S. for regulating Google's data collection, privacy standards and ads business. Milking more money from Maps -- where millions of people share personal information daily -- could invite even more scrutiny.

The company is betting that adding more data about places and businesses to Maps will lead people to spend more time on the service. As users expect more from Maps, Google has extra space to introduce more ads. "We want to be able to highlight things that are around you and surface them nearby to you in a way that's not disrupting your experience," said Rajas Moonka, director of product management for Google Maps.

SpaceX Falcon Heavy Rocket Launched in Company's First Commercial Mission

The most powerful operational rocket in the world, SpaceX's Falcon Heavy, launched its first commercial mission on Thursday from Florida in a key demonstration for billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk's space company in the race to grasp lucrative military launch contracts. The 23-story-tall Heavy, which previously launched [Musk's](#) cherry red Tesla roadster to space in a 2018 debut test flight, blasted off from Florida's Kennedy Space Center carrying its first customer payload.

"T plus 33 seconds into flight, under the power of 5.1 million pounds of thrust, Falcon Heavy is headed to space," [SpaceX](#) launch commentator John Insprucker said on a livestream.

Roughly three minutes after clearing the pad, Heavy's two side boosters separated from the core rocket for a synchronised landing at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, sparking boisterous cheers from SpaceX engineers in the company's Hawthorne, California headquarters. The middle booster, after pushing the payload into space, returned nearly 10 minutes later for a successful landing on SpaceX's seafaring drone ship 400 miles (645 km) off the Florida coast. In the 2018 test mission, Heavy's core booster missed the vessel and crashed into the Atlantic Ocean.

"The Falcons have landed" Musk wrote on Twitter, inaugurating the first successful recovery of all three rocket boosters, which will be refurbished and re-fly in another Falcon Heavy mission this summer to carry a swarm of military and science satellites for the Air Force. Liftoff with Heavy's new military-certified Falcon 9 engines was crucial in the race with Boeing-Lockheed venture United Launch Alliance and Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin as Musk's SpaceX, working to flight-prove its rocket fleet one mission at a time, aims to clinch a third of all US National Security Space missions - coveted military contracts worth billions. The US Air Force tapped SpaceX in 2018 to launch for \$130 million (roughly Rs. 900 crores) a classified military satellite and in February added three more missions in a \$297 million contract.

SpaceX and [Boeing](#) are vying to send humans to space from US soil for the first time in nearly a decade under [NASA's](#) Commercial Crew Program. SpaceX's Crew Dragon capsule, atop a Falcon 9 rocket, cleared its first unmanned test flight in March ahead of its crewed mission planned for July, while the first unmanned test for Boeing's Starliner capsule is slated for August on ULA's Atlas 5 rocket. Falcon Heavy carried a communications satellite for Saudi-based telecom firm Arabsat, which will beam internet and television services over Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Privately owned SpaceX, also known as Space Exploration Technologies, was founded in 2002 by Musk, who is also a co-founder of electric car maker [Tesla](#).



Google Assistant Can Now Read Your Work Calendar

Google Assistant is finally coming to G Suite, starting with the Calendar app in beta within Google's enterprise platform.

In a blog post, which coincided with the announcement at the company's Cloud Next conference in San Francisco, the tech giant outlined how the integration will work.

"Users with [G Suite](#) accounts can start testing with Assistant starting today," [said](#) the company.

"G Suite is integrating with [Google Assistant](#), specifically with Calendar," said David Thacker, Vice President of Product Management, G Suite.

"Now when you sign in and switch to your G Suite account, you can use your Assistant to help you prepare for the work day," he said.

Assistant integration for the G Suite Calendar app applies for both mobile as well as desktop users.

Since the integration is just an enterprise feature, it would not work on Assistant-compatible device synced to an individual's personal account.

In addition, the company is also bringing other improvements including third-party connectivity in Cloud Search, updates to Hangouts Meet to help businesses stay connected, and "connected sheets" feature to let workers collaborate on up to 10 billion rows of data right from within Sheets, the post noted. There is also a 'Visitor sharing in Drive' feature that allows for inviting users to collaborate via a pincode. Voice is now also generally available to G Suite customers in select markets.

Also [announced](#) were G Suite Add Ons, allowing users to access workplace apps in the G Suite side panel. Google also announced Office editing is allowed in Docs, Sheets, and Slides. Also announced were [Access Transparency](#) for logs of action taken by G Suite staff, [data regions for G Suite](#), and the ability for admins to create rules for automating alerts and taking actions.



Meet your Google Assistant

Now available on eligible Android devices

TikTok App Ban Would Harm Free Speech, China's Byte dance Tells Supreme Court

An Indian court's call for a ban on the popular video app TikTok will hurt free speech rights, China's Byte dance Technology has said in a request for the Supreme Court to quash the directive.

Byte dance is one of the world's most valuable start-ups and its TikTok app lets users create and share short videos with special effects. It has become popular in rural India, where most of a population of 1.3 billion lives.

TikTok, whose video-only interface makes it easier to use than platforms such as Facebook or Twitter, has been downloaded more than 240 million times in India, says app analytics firm Sensor Tower.

A ban "amounts to curtailing of the rights of the citizens of India...who have been using the platform everyday to express themselves and create content," the company said in a court filing reviewed by Reuters, asking for the order to be quashed.

The company's Monday filing is not public and has not previously been reported. The Supreme Court has set next Monday for a hearing.

Bytedance did not respond to a request for comment. India's information technology ministry also did not respond.

Last week, a court in Tamil Nadu asked the federal government to ban TikTok.

TikTok's inappropriate content was a dangerous aspect of the app, it added.

Jokes, clips and footage related to India's movie industry dominate the platform, along with videos in which young people, sometimes scantily clad, lip-sync and dance to music.

Bytedance said users flagged only a tiny proportion of TikTok videos, showing that a "very minuscule" proportion of its content was considered inappropriate or obscene. TikTok was primarily used to circulate amusing videos, it added.

It also argued that it could not be held liable for content posted by users.

Some of TikTok's content was "unbearable", M. Manikandan, the minister for information technology in Tamil Nadu told Reuters in February, and a Hindu nationalist group close to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has also called for a ban.

In its filing, the company said TikTok had experienced immense success in India, which fuelled controversy. Bytedance employs more than 250 people in India and plans more investment as it expands the business, it added.



Intel Optane Memory H10 Hybrid SSD with QLC Flash Coming to Thin and Light Laptops Soon

HIGHLIGHTS:-

- The Intel Optane Memory H10 will first be seen in thin-and-light laptops.
- New laptops and SFF PCs will be announced this quarter
- Intel says it is ideal for typical consumer workloads

Intel has announced details of the upcoming Optane Memory H10 SSD that it first unveiled at CES 2019. This device combines an Intel's high-speed 3D X point memory with high-density QLC (Quad Level Cell) NAND flash on a single M.2 module. Intel has announced that this drive will soon come to the market in pre-built PCs from multiple major manufacturers including Dell, HP, Acer, and Asus this quarter, and will also be available in retail. Intel had earlier indicated that the Optane Memory H10 is most suitable for thin-and-light laptops and small-form-factor desktops which only have room for one M.2 slot, so it's likely that manufacturers will launch such products first.

While the QLC flash will serve as the primary storage space, the smaller [Optane Memory](#) chip will allow for accelerated reads and writes. [Intel's](#) software prioritises operating system files and learns what else a user accesses frequently, and caches as much as possible on the Optane Memory media. You can read all about what makes QLC Flash interesting in [our review of the Samsung SSD 860 QVO](#).

The Optane Memory H10 SSD is not yet ready to ship, and Intel has not disclosed any performance figures. The company is calling this a technology announcement on the sidelines of [CES 2019](#), not a product announcement. It is expected to launch in laptops from multiple major brands by the second quarter of this year, and plans for retail availability are not yet decided.

Three different capacity options will be available: 16GB + 256GB, 32GB + 512GB, and 32GB + 1TB, with the smaller figures referring to Optane Memory and the larger ones referring to QLC Flash. Intel says the QLC being used is the same as what's in the previously announced Intel SSD 660p. This should not be confused with [Intel's Optane SSD drives](#), which use Intel's [super-fast Optane media](#) for storage.

Although the two physical components and their respective controllers and circuitry live on the same M.2 module, they do not interact directly. Each one has access to two PCIe lanes, which could have some impact on general performance. It remains to be seen how the Optane Memory H10 SSD stacks up against a standard SSD in terms of cost and performance.

