

# Social media 'one part' of Google strategy: CFO

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Chief financial officer Patrick Pichette on Sunday said Google was at the centre of an exploding digital economy where computer power was "relentlessly, dramatically increasing" and innovation was crucial to survival.

"Search is clearly the core product of Google but many of our other products are having phenomenal trajectories," Pichette told Australian public television.

"The first driving principle of Google is in fact not money -- the first driving principle of Google is understanding that the Internet is changing the world," he added.

Pichette said Amazon and Apple were "winning" in the new technology race and Microsoft was a "formidable" competitor, but played down as media hype suggestions that [Facebook](#) was Google's next big rival.

"The digital world is exploding and it has so many chapters -- it has cloud computing, it has mobile, it does have social, it has searches, it has so many elements. Within that... social (networking) is just one chapter," said Pichette.

"Yes, absolutely it will be part of our strategy, yes it will be embedded in many of our products. But at the same time remember it's one chapter of an entire book."

It follows Facebook's launch of a next-generation messaging service this month, seen as a major challenge to Google's [Gmail](#) and fellow web-based email providers Yahoo! and Microsoft.

Microsoft's [Hotmail](#) currently has the most users, 361.7 million as of September, according to online tracking firm comScore, followed by Yahoo! with 273.1 million and Gmail with 193.3 million.

Pichette said Google's Android platform for mobile devices was a "fantastic opportunity" for the company, powering 200,000 handsets every 24 hours.

Android users also performed searches 50 times more frequently than people using other mobile devices, with obvious benefits for [Google](#), he added.

"Now that everybody has a smartphone everybody searches, so these few hundred engineers (who developed [Android](#)) have accelerated (a market that) would have taken 10 years to develop into a few years," he said.

"My payback is absolutely unreal."

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