

Google exec: technology wave leaving many behind

June 19 2012, by BLAKE SOBCZAK

(AP) — Google's executive chairman Eric Schmidt on Tuesday warned that vast numbers of the world's population are missing out on the advantages brought by the Internet.

Schmidt said that about 2 billion people, less than a third of the world's population, have Internet access, and 1 billion have smartphones.

"The World Wide Web has yet to live up to its name," he said.

"Technology does not produce miracles, but connectivity, even in modest amounts, changes lives."

Schmidt served as Google's chief executive from 2001 to 2011, leading it through its initial public offering and transforming it into one of the world's largest and most influential companies. He stepped down as CEO last year and has been executive chairman since then. Google turned into a huge company "with its goal of making information accessible to the masses," he said.

Schmidt was in Israel to attend an annual conference sponsored by President Shimon Peres. Despite his concerns, Schmidt delivered an optimistic message, saying that the tremendous growth of smartphones can quickly reduce the gaps between haves and have-nots.

"All of us are blessed with a capacity for innovation_connectivity will help unlock that potential," he said. He pointed to the Internet's ever-widening reach and its educational potential, citing the Khan Academy's

3,000 video lessons on YouTube. The Khan Academy, which receives funding from Google, is a nonprofit organization that offers free online lectures in subjects ranging from physics to American history and algebra.

Schmidt also warned about Internet privacy, saying the "lack of a delete button" online meant incriminating posts could spell disaster for unwary Web users. "If you upload a video of your young friend drunk without their permission, you may be ruining their life."

Israel is a high-tech powerhouse and hosts research operations for many of the world's top technology companies, including Google.

During his visit, Schmidt met with Peres and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and presented the two with digital photos of the Dead Sea Scrolls in commemoration of a [Google](#) project that has preserved portions of the ancient collection online.

Netanyahu's office said the two men also discussed cooperation in medicine, science and defense against cyber-attacks.

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