

India a laggard in Internet revolution, Google chairman says

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Google chairman Eric Schmidt, pictured during a gathering at the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) in New Delhi, on March 20, 2013. Schmidt later warned that India is lagging badly behind in harnessing the power of the Internet because of its failure to invest in high-speed telecom networks.

Google chairman Eric Schmidt has warned that India is lagging badly behind in harnessing the power of the Internet because of its failure to invest in high-speed telecom networks.

"It is well behind in the web services model that the rest of the world is adopting," Schmidt told the CNBC-TV18 [television channel](#) late Wednesday during a trip to India.

"It is crucial for India to invest and enable fast fibre Internet connectivity within the country, between the country and the other countries," he added.

When asked to explain why only 150 million out of 1.2 billion Indians had access to the Internet, he said that the government had perhaps grown complacent due to the country's success in producing large software and IT companies.

"My guess would be that having been satisfied with the great success of IT, the Indian government and the leadership has made the same mistake that companies do, they rested on their own laurels," he said.

Experts say India has enjoyed a telecom revolution that has brought cheap mobile phones to the majority of the country, but fast [Internet connections](#) remain limited to a small minority in cities.

As well as being slow in rolling out fibre-optic networks, [Internet entrepreneurs](#) also complain that an uncertain regulatory environment has hampered the development of Internet businesses, experts say.

Schmidt is in New Delhi for the first "[Google Big Tent](#)" event to be held in India, a forum that brings together policymakers and Internet experts.

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