

Facebook wants to beam the Internet from the sky

March 27 2014



Facebook's creator Mark Zuckerberg speaks at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, on February 24, 2014

Facebook revealed Thursday it has a lab working on using drones, satellites and solar-powered planes to provide web access around the world.

"We've been working on ways to beam Internet to people from the sky,"

Facebook co-founder and chief Mark Zuckerberg said in a post on the leading social network.

The team at the Connectivity Lab builds on a quest by Facebook-launched Internet.org to make access to basic online services available everywhere on the planet.

"Connecting the whole world will require inventing [new technology](#) too," Zuckerberg said.

"That's what our Connectivity Lab focuses on, and there's a lot more exciting work to do here."

The team at the lab comprises experts in aerospace and communications technology, including former members of the NASA Jet Propulsion Lab and Ames Research Center, according to Facebook.

And it just added talent from a Britain-based startup behind long-flying solar powered, unmanned aircraft.

The lab is looking at varying tactics to achieve its mission. For remote regions or spread-out populations, the team is interested in using satellites orbiting the Earth.

Suburban populations could be given access to Internet service from gear in planes continually circling about 20,000 meters overhead, Facebook's Yael Maguire said in a YouTube video posted by Internet.org.

The planes would fly above the weather and, powered by the sun, could remain in the sky for months at a time, according to Maguire.

The team is looking at "tying it all together" using lasers to transmit data between satellites, aircraft, or other points.

"We are just at the beginning," Maguire said. "We have some amazing people on the team and there are some awesome problems to solve."

© 2014 AFP

Citation: Facebook wants to beam the Internet from the sky (2014, March 27) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-03-facebook-internet-sky.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.