

Dropbox out to be a home in the Internet 'cloud'

April 10 2014



Drew Houston of Dropbox attends TechCrunch Disrupt SF 2013 at San Francisco Design Center on September 9, 2013 in San Francisco, California

Dropbox is out to be the hip home in the cloud for photos, documents, video and other digital possessions amassed by Internet-age lifestyles.

Dropbox on Wednesday ramped up services for sharing and collaborating on virtual belongings ranging from Excel spreadsheets to

family photos.

"This is a little glimpse into our new home; a home for life," Dropbox co-founder and chief executive Drew Houston said during an unveiling for press at a gallery in San Francisco.

He billed the improvements and new features as ways to go beyond simply storing files in the Internet cloud to "bringing it to life" by making it easy to share or collaborate, particularly using smartphones.

Along with launching Dropbox for Business; Carousel photo and video sharing service, and a version of email organizing application Mailbox for Android-powered devices, the company announced that former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has joined its board of directors.

"We're honored to be adding someone as brilliant and accomplished as Dr. Rice to our team," Houston said in a blog post.

Carousel was billed as a place for "precious memories" captured as pictures or video with Apple or Android-powered smartphones.

Tools built into Carousel allow for instant sharing of batches of images, which are stored on Dropbox servers and can also be accessed from desktop computers.

Dropbox for Business takes aim at companies with ways to safely store files in the cloud while making it simple for co-workers to collaborate on Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, or PowerPoint presentations.

Also introduced was a version of Mailbox email organizing software tailored for smartphones powered by Google-backed Android operating systems.

Online storage firm Dropbox a year ago bought Mailbox, a hot startup devoted to making it simpler to deal with email overloads.

Mailbox for organizing and managing Gmail on Apple iPhone or iPod Touch devices became an instant hit after it was made available early last year.

San Francisco-based Dropbox has become a preferred online location to store digital photos, documents, or videos in the Internet 'cloud' with the ability to access online from any computers.

It has reportedly attracted more than a half-billion dollars in venture capital funding, with some putting its valuation in the vicinity of \$10 billion.

There is heavy speculation that Dropbox could debut on the stock market next year.

Dropbox makes applications along with limited amounts of online storage space available free, then charges for added capacity.

The firm competes with online storage and sharing services by such technology titans as Google, Microsoft, and Apple.

Carousel also steps up as a challenger to Yahoo photo service Flickr as well as Google's Picasa.

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Citation: Dropbox out to be a home in the Internet 'cloud' (2014, April 10) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-04-dropbox-home-internet-cloud.html>

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