

Google online maps go back in time

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The Google Maps app is seen on an Apple iPhone 4S on December 13, 2012, in Fairfax, California

Google on Wednesday added virtual time travel to its Internet offerings.

The technology titan began letting people turn back the clock on Street View images to show how places have changed over the seven years it has been collecting pictures for its free online map service.

"If you've ever dreamt of being a time traveler like Doc Brown, now is

your chance," Street View product manager Vinay Shet said in a blog post, referring to a character from the 1985 comic fiction film 'Back to the Future.'

Historical images from Street View archives dating back to 2007 can be explored at Google Maps on desktop computers in what Shet depicted as a "digital time capsule of the world."

Examples displayed included the 2014 World Cup Stadium taking shape in Brazil and reconstruction in Japan after a devastating earthquake and tsunami in 2011.

"If you're a kid today, 50 years from now you'll be able to walk through the memories of your old neighborhood," Google senior vice president of infrastructure Urs Holzle said of the "cool new feature" in a post at Google+ social network.

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