

Google brings Earth into better focus

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Google Earth begins rolling out a new version that uses new techniques to process sharper images gathered by the satellite sent into orbit in 2013

Google's free online mapping service is bringing the world into better focus with an updated version of Earth that takes advantage of photos from a US Landsat 8 satellite.

The Internet giant introduced a "cloud-free mosaic" of this planet three

years ago at Google Earth, and on Monday began rolling out a new version that uses new techniques to process sharper images gathered by the satellite sent into orbit in 2013, as part of a collaboration between NASA and the US Geological Survey.

Google Earth previously relied on images from a Landsat 7 [satellite](#), which encountered a hardware problem that resulted in large diagonal gaps in pictures, according to program manager Chris Herwig.

"Landsat 8 captures images with greater detail, truer colors and at an unprecedented frequency," Herwig said in a blog post.

Google Earth creates unobstructed views of the surface of the planet by analyzing millions of [images](#) and stitching together the clearest bits, according to Herwig.

Google Earth is part of free online mapping services offered by California-based Alphabet.

Landsat has observed the Earth from space since 1972, gathering a wealth of information on the changes to the Earth's surface over time.

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