Google 'applying for China mapping licence'
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A man walks past the Google company logo outside Google China headquarters in Beijing. Google and its joint venture partner in China have applied for a licence to operate an online mapping service in the world's biggest web market, according to a news report.

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The State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping was reviewing the application from Beijing Guxiang Information Technology Co., which operates Google's mapping service in China, Dow Jones Newswires said, citing an official.

Google declined to confirm the report when contacted by AFP and calls to the government agency were not answered.

"We're in discussions with the government about how we could offer a maps product in China," Google's Beijing-based spokeswoman Marsha Wang told AFP, repeating an earlier statement.

Beijing angrily denied the charge.

There was no indication whether the Gmail spying campaign was related to a China-based cyberattack on Google that prompted the company early last year to stop bowing to Internet censors and reduce its presence in the country.

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