

Santa tracked by Google, Microsoft

25 December 2015



The Santa tracker at right, photographed in 2013, has been activated again for Christmas 2015 by the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), a US-Canada joint operation working in concert this year with Microsoft

Google and Microsoft had their virtual eyes on Santa Claus and his gift-laden sleigh on Thursday.

Each of the rival technology giants continued their separate Internet holiday traditions that allow children, no matter how grown up they might be, to track Santa online as he makes his way around the world on Christmas Eve.

"Google's Santa Tracker launches today—And it's time to follow the jolly man's sleigh," the California-based Internet firm said in a blog post playfully penned in rhyme.

"The elves have been working hard for this night, Santa's village is abuzz—tonight's the big flight."

The santatracker.google.com [website](#) includes an animated map and a running tally of the number of gifts delivered.

Microsoft once again partnered with the North American Aerospace Defense Command on an interactive website at noradsanta.org where

Santa's reindeer-drawn sleigh can be seen making its way over countries around the world.

NORAD's involvement began 60 years ago when a wrong telephone number printed in a newspaper advertisement resulted in children calling for Santa.

The commander on duty that day had staff provide callers with updates on Santa's location and the tradition evolved into the NORAD Santa-tracking website.

"Throughout the year, we can be pretty cynical," Matthew Quinlan, marketing director for Bing, Microsoft's search engine, said in a blog post.

"But this is one moment where we can see things again through a child's eyes, and it gives us a fresh sense of wonder."

The NORAD Santa-tracking website includes games and allows people to ask Cortana, Microsoft's virtual assistant software, where Santa is at any given moment.

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