

Microsoft-Facebook laying trans-Atlantic Internet line

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Microsoft and Facebook are working together on a new sub-sea "MAREA" cable aimed at meeting growing demand by the tech companies' customers for fast, reliable data connections

Microsoft and Facebook on Thursday announced they will work together to lay a high-speed Internet cable across the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.

A new, sub-sea "MAREA" cable was expected to be completed by late 2017, with the aim of meeting growing demand by the tech companies' customers for fast, reliable data connections.

"As the world is increasingly moving toward a future based on [cloud computing](#), Microsoft continues to invest in our cloud infrastructure to meet current and future growing global demand for our more than 200 [cloud services](#), " Microsoft data center strategy general manager Christian Belady said in a release.

MAREA will be the highest-capacity sub-sea cable ever crossing the Atlantic, with an expected capacity of some 160 terabytes per second of data, according to the companies.

The 6,600 kilometer cable system will also be the first connecting the United States and southern Europe, running from Northern Virginia to Bilbao, Spain, Microsoft and Facebook said.

From Spain, the data [network](#) will link to hubs in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and other parts of Europe, according to the companies.

Microsoft and Facebook said that they are working with global communications company Telxius, owned by Telefonica, on the cable project.

"We're always evaluating new technologies and systems in order to provide the best connectivity possible," said Facebook vice president of network engineering Najam Ahmad.

"We want to do more of these projects in this manner—allowing us to move fast with more collaboration."

Microsoft bought into Facebook nine years ago, paying \$240 million for a 1.6 percent stake in the leading social network.

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