

Google buys Skybox Imaging for \$500m

SAN FRANCISCO, USA: Google announced plans to buy the satellite group Skybox Imaging for \$500m, in a move to improve mapping and other services using geospatial data.



Skybox Imaging produces high resolution images that are used in a wide number of applications ranging from mapping to natural disaster monitoring.
Image: Skybox Imaging

"We've agreed to buy Skybox Imaging, and we look forward to welcoming them to Google," a statement from the company said.

"Skybox's satellites will help keep our maps accurate with up-to-date imagery. Over time, we also hope that Skybox's team and technology will be able to help improve Internet access and disaster relief, areas Google has long been interested in."

Skybox said in a blog post that the goal of the five-year-old firm wants to revolutionise access to information about the changes happening across the surface of the Earth.

"We've built and launched the world's smallest high-resolution imaging satellite, which collects beautiful and useful images and video every day. The time is right to join a company which can challenge us to think even bigger and bolder and who can support us in accelerating our plans," Skybox said.

Silicon Valley-based Skybox currently has just one operational satellite but has plans to deploy 24 of them.

High-resolution images

The company's technology enables businesses and others to get highly detailed, up-to-date imagery that can be used for supply chain monitoring, maritime tracking, and environmental and humanitarian relief monitoring.

In December, Skybox released the first high-resolution, high-definition video of Earth taken by a commercial remote

sensing satellite, with images of Tokyo, Bangkok, Baltimore, Las Vegas, and Aleppo, Syria.

The company founders wrote the first business plan as part of a Stanford University graduate entrepreneurship course.

The news comes two months after Google announced a deal to buy Titan Aerospace, a manufacturer of solar-powered drones that could be used to boost Internet access to remote areas.

Google has also been working on its Project Loon, which uses large balloons for transmitting Internet signals to regions that are not currently connected.

Google said the all-cash deal is subject to regulatory approval.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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