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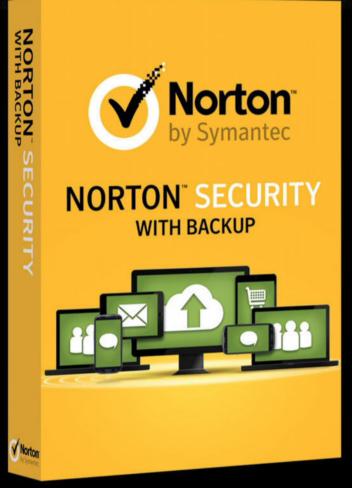
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HOW GOOGLE CHROMEBOOKS CONQUERED SCHOOLS

The Google Chromebook, a type of strippeddown laptop, isn't a practical mobile device for many people - mostly because it basically turns into an expensive paperweight whenever it can't find a Wi-Fi connection.

Yet Chromebooks have defied expectations and made major inroads in an unexpected environment - U.S. schools.

In retrospect, that shouldn't be too surprising. Chromebooks are cheap and easy to manage, making them popular with budget-constrained schools with limited tech-support staff. And Wi-Fi is now common enough in U.S. schools and homes to make an internet-dependent device practical for students.

Google doesn't want to stop there. It's releasing new models in partnership with Samsung that are designed to appeal to a broader range of consumers. They have several tablet-like features, including a stylus, touch controls and a 360-degree hinge that allows you to turn the screen faceup. One starts selling last Sunday for \$449; a more powerful version comes out in April for \$100 more.

Google and its manufacturing partners are trying to shed the Chromebook's perception as underperforming budget devices. But even with premium models, expanding beyond U.S. schools won't be easy.

CHROMEBOOKS GET SCHOOLED

For personal computers and tablets, Chromebook's share of the U.S. education market was 49 percent last year, up from 40 percent in 2015 and 9 percent in 2013, according to IDC figures released this week.

But education accounts for just 14 percent of the 110 million devices shipped in the U.S. last year - and Chromebooks make up just 9 percent of that broader total. Their numbers are also low abroad, even in schools.

The Chromebook's popularity in U.S. education is also largely limited to grades K-12, analysts say. Macs and Windows laptops are still dominant on college campuses.





ROUGH START

Chromebooks use a lightweight operating system designed to get people online faster, without having to wait around for the computer to start up. Much of the heavy lifting on Chromebooks gets done on Google's remote servers, so Chromebooks themselves don't need fast chips or lots of storage.

Early on, though, that made Chromebooks seem cheap and underpowered, which "soured consumer expectations right off the bat," IDC analyst Linn Huang said.

Online storage for photos and documents online was much less common in 2011 when Chromebooks launched, so their limited local storage was initially unappealing. And the few apps available for Chromebooks didn't work offline, at least at the time.



DIFFERING NEEDS

But what constrains consumers can actually be liberating in education. Most kids don't need laptops on the bus or other locations where they can't connect to Wi-Fi. And they don't miss business software like Microsoft Office; Google's online apps for documents and spreadsheets do just fine for homework.

"What surprised us was how quickly it took off in education," said Kan Liu, who oversees Chromebooks at Google.

Apple's iPad was hot at the time, but Google sold the Chromebook on convenience. They're easier for classrooms to share; just sign in with a Google account, and a student's apps and documents instantly appear. Teachers also have online tools to lock down what apps and sites students can use.







And with models available for less than \$200, schools can get a few Chromebooks for the price of an iPad or a rival laptop.

"It allows us to put more devices in students' hands," said Aaron Slutsky, chief technology officer for McDowell County Schools in North Carolina.

FAR FROM UNIVERSAL

But Chromebook's success story in schools is largely an American one, and it's likely to stay that way. Gartner analyst Mikako Kitagawa notes that Chromebooks are useless in China because the device depends on Google services that aren't available there. And in emerging countries, where a budget laptop would be ideal, she said internet access isn't reliable enough.

Even in the U.S., the iPad is better for many creative tasks such as recording and editing movies. Students studying engineering, robotics and graphics won't be able to use Chromebooks to run the kind of specialized software that's available for Macs and Windows laptops.

"But that's not needed for 98 percent of our students," said Tracy Dabbs, coordinator of technology and innovation at the Burlington-Edison School District near Seattle.

Many school districts limit Apple and Windows computers for the students who specifically need them, then provide Chromebooks for the rest. McDowell County, for instance, has 5,500 Chromebooks, 1,200 iPads - and only 100 Macs and 200 Windows PCs.

RIVALS STAGE A COMEBACK

Last year, Apple gave iPads in schools some Chromebook-like features unavailable to the general public. That includes ways to let multiple people use a single tablet and management tools for tech-support staff. A new Classroom app lets teachers control what apps students run and track their progress.

Apple also provides classroom tools for teachers and students. Free e-books offer teachers step-by-step guides on using iPad apps and curriculum suggestions for everyday subjects. A separate app lets kids learn programming using the same language developers use to build iPad apps.

Meanwhile, Microsoft announced last month new online apps and management tools for schools, along with Windows PCs priced similarly to Chromebooks.

BEYOND SCHOOLS

Huang said some businesses are giving Chromebooks a second look, especially in retail, banking and other settings where people share computers.

But in many offices, the lack of business software such as Office is a major hurdle. Google's alternative lacks many advanced capabilities found in Office, and habits are hard to change.

Google is trying to make Chromebooks more palatable by letting them run Android apps designed for phones and tablets. It's testing this capability on a handful of Chromebook models, including the new ones from Samsung. That makes it possible to install Office, Adobe Photoshop and many apps on a Chromebook, though these tablet versions have limited features compared with versions for Macs or Windows laptops.









UP, UP AND AVVAY: PASSENGERCARRYING DRONE TO FLY IN DUBAI

Up, up and away: Dubai hopes to have a passenger-carrying drone regularly buzzing through the skyline of this futuristic city-state in July.

The arrival of the Chinese-made EHang 184
- which already has had its flying debut over
Dubai's iconic, sail-shaped Burj al-Arab skyscraper
hotel - comes as the Emirati city also has
partnered with other cutting-edge technology
companies, including Hyperloop One.

The question is whether the egg-shaped, four-legged craft will really take off as a transportation alternative in this car-clogged city already home to the world's longest driverless metro line.

Mattar al-Tayer, the head of Dubai's Roads & Transportation Agency, announced plans to have the craft regularly flying at the World Government Summit. Before his remarks this week, most treated the four-legged, eight-propeller craft as just another curiosity at an event that views itself as a desert Davos.

"This is not only a model," al-Tayer said. "We have actually experimented with this vehicle flying in Dubai's skies."

The craft can carry a passenger weighing up to 100 kilograms (220 pounds) and a small suitcase. After buckling into its race-car-style seat, the craft's sole passenger selects a destination on a touch-screen pad in front of the seat and the drone flies there automatically.

The drone, which has a battery allowing for a half-hour flight time and a range of up to 50 kilometers (31 miles), will be monitored remotely by a control room on the ground. It has a top speed of 160 kph (100 mph), but authorities say it will be operated typically at 100 kph (62 mph).

Al-Tayer said the drone would begin regular operations in July. He did not elaborate.

The Road and Transportation Agency later issued a statement saying the drone had been examined by the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and was controlled through 4G mobile internet. The agency did not immediately respond to further questions.

The United Arab Emirates already requires drone hobbyists to register their aircraft. However, drone intrusions at Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, has seen it shut down for hours at a time in recent months.

EHang did not respond to a request for comment. In May, authorities in Nevada announced they would partner with EHang to test the 184 to possibly be cleared by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration.









The drone may be a techno curiosity for now but Dubai - the commercial capital of the oilrich UAE and home to the long-haul carrier Emirates - has bold visions for the future and the 184 fits right into its plans.

Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, announced in April he wanted 25 percent of all passenger trips in the city to be done by driverless vehicles in 2030. To that end, Dubai already has had the box-shaped driverless EZ10, built by France's EasyMile, cruise nearby the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building.

In October, Dubai signed a deal with Los Angeles-based Hyperloop One to study the potential for building a hyperloop line between it and Abu Dhabi, the Emirati capital.

A hyperloop has levitating pods powered by electricity and magnetism that hurtle through low-friction pipes at a top speed of 1,220 kph (760 mph). Elon Musk, the co-founder of Tesla who appeared on Monday at the Dubai conference, first proposed the idea of a hyperloop in 2013.

Musk, who took no questions from reporters on Monday, later launched his Tesla car brand in Dubai at an event organizers said was not open to international media. Musk has come under criticism for serving on a business council advising U.S. President Donald Trump.

Online:

Dubai Road and Transportation Agency's promotional drone video

FACT CHECK: GATES DIDN'T SAY TRUMP WOULD BE LIKE REAGAN

A story shared widely on social media falsely attributes to Bill Gates a tweet saying Donald Trump would be regarded as "one of the greatest presidents," like Ronald Reagan.

Gates' office says the awkwardly-worded tweet, which misspelled the word "minutes," was not sent out by him. The site that posted the story, **departedmedia.com**, included only a screenshot of the purported tweet, which also claimed Gates and the president spoke on the telephone for 17 minutes.

In a December interview with CNBC, the Microsoft founder did say Trump had an opportunity to establish "American leadership through innovation." Gates pointed to President John F. Kennedy's rallying the country around the space program and told the CNBC that Trump's administration could get rid of "regulatory barriers."

YAHOO ISSUES ANOTHER WARNING IN FALLOUT FROM HACKING ATTACKS

Yahoo is warning users of potentially malicious activity on their accounts between 2015 and 2016, the latest development in the internet company's investigation of a mega-breach that exposed 1 billion users' data several years ago.

Yahoo confirmed Wednesday that it was notifying users that their accounts had potentially been compromised but declined to say how many people were affected.

In a statement, Yahoo tied some of the potential compromises to what it has described as the "state-sponsored actor" responsible for the theft of private data from more than 1 billion user accounts in 2013 and 2014. The stolen data included email addresses, birth dates and answers to security questions.

The catastrophic breach raised questions about Yahoo's security and destabilized the company's deal to sell its email service, websites and mobile applications to Verizon Communications.

The malicious activity that was the subject of the user warnings revolved around the use of "forged cookies" - strings of data which are used across the web and can sometimes allow people to access online accounts without re-entering their passwords.

A warning message sent to Yahoo users Wednesday read: "Based on the ongoing investigation, we believe a forged cookie may have been used in 2015 or 2016 to access your account." Some users posted the ones they received to Twitter.

"Within six people in our lab group, at least one other person has gotten this email," Joshua Plotkin, a biology professor at the University of Pennsylvania, said. "That's just anecdotal of course, but for two people in a group of six to have gotten it, I imagine it's a considerable amount."

Plotkin said in a telephone interview that he wasn't concerned because he used his Yahoo email for messages that were "close to spam." In the message he posted to Twitter, he joked that "hopefully the cookie was forged by a state known for such delicacies."







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MOST DRIVERS, NOT JUST YOUNG, ARE TAKING RISKS

Young drivers aren't alone in behaving badly on U.S. roads, a trend that could be contributing to a spike in highway deaths.

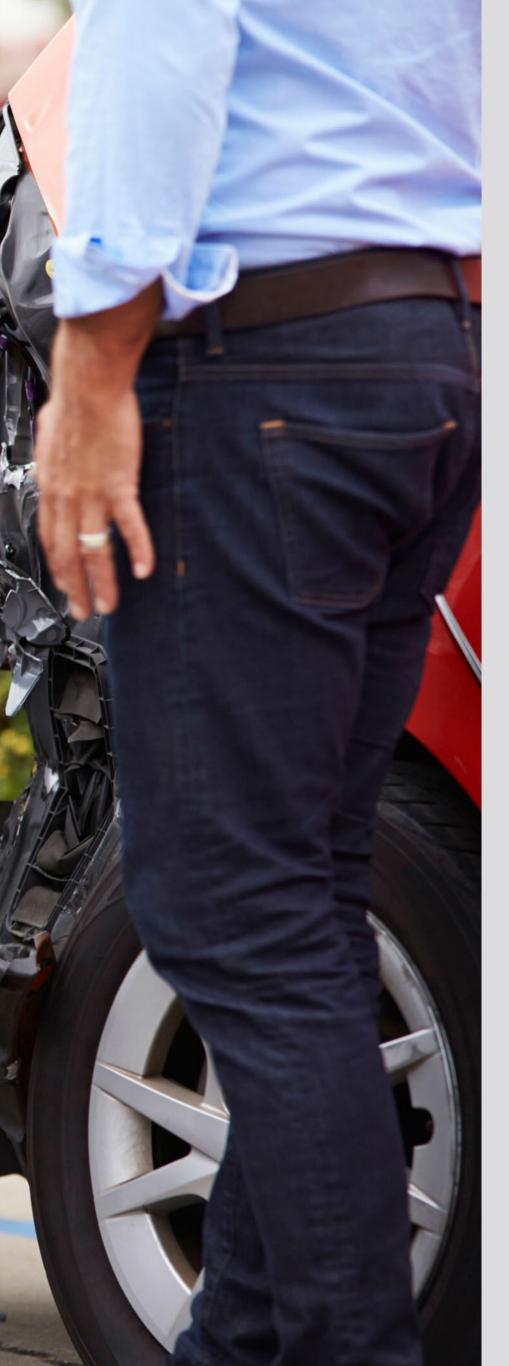
Well over half of drivers in every age group have texted behind the wheel, run a red light or driven faster than the speed limit in the last 30 days, according to a new study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.

Younger drivers are the worst offenders. Eightyeight percent of drivers ages 19 to 24 admitted to at least one of those behaviors. But even mature drivers skirted the rules more often









researchers expected. For instance, 10 percent of drivers between 60 and 74 have texted or sent email from behind the wheel, while 37 percent of drivers over 75 said they'd driven through a light that had just turned red.

"It was a surprise that there were relatively high rates of these behaviors among the drivers we think of as safer," said Lindsay Arnold, a research associate with the AAA Foundation.

Arnold said the responses were similar to those in past years, indicating a troubling trend. In 2015, U.S. traffic deaths rose 7 percent to 35,092, the largest single-year increase in five decades. They're expected to rise again in 2016 when that data is finalized.

"It points to the need to improve driver behavior if we're going to reverse this alarming trend,"

Arnold said.

Teen driver education campaigns have had some success, foundation spokeswoman Tamra Johnson said. Now the organization is considering the best ways to reach drivers of other ages.

The study found broad agreement on some issues. Eighty-seven percent of drivers said they have never driven when they thought they were close to the legal alcohol limit. Ninety-five percent said they had never driven within an hour of using marijuana. Eighty-eight percent of drivers say it's unacceptable to drive without a seat belt, and 82 percent support laws requiring motorcycle riders to wear helmets.

But drivers' behavior sometimes contradicted their own instincts. More than three-quarters of drivers say it's unacceptable to text or email





while driving, but 31 percent had done so in the last month and 8 percent do so often. Ninety-six percent of drivers say drowsy driving is a serious safety threat, but 29 percent had recently driven when they were so tired they had trouble keeping their eyes open.

The study questioned 2,511 licensed drivers aged 16 and over. Among its findings:

- The youngest drivers those ages 16 to 18 were less likely to engage in speeding, running red lights or texting while driving than drivers in their 20s through 50s.
- Eighty-three percent of drivers and 86.5 percent of drivers 75 or older said they were more careful than other drivers on the road.
- Just over half of drivers feel seriously
 threatened by drivers talking on cell phones, but
 68 percent made a call while driving in the last
 30 days.
- Drivers ages 40-59 were the most likely to use a hands-free phone in the car. Drivers ages 16-18 and 75 or older were the most likely to hold their phones and talk while driving.
- Twenty-three percent of drivers and 36 percent of those ages 19 to 24 think it's acceptable to drive 15 mph over the speed limit on a freeway. Forty-six percent of drivers say they have driven that fast on a freeway in the last 30 days.
- Sixty percent of drivers say people who drive after using illegal drugs are a serious threat, but just 34 percent say the same about people who drive after using prescription drugs.

THE ZUCKERBERG MANIFESTO: HOW HE PLANS TO DEBUG THE WORLD

Mark Zuckerberg's long-term vision for Facebook, laid out in a sweeping manifesto, sometimes sounds more like a utopian social guide than a business plan. Are we, he asks, "building the world we all want?"

While most people now use Facebook to connect with friends and family, Zuckerberg hopes that the social network can encourage more civic engagement, an informed public and community support in the years to come. Facebook now has nearly 2 billion members, which makes it larger than any nation in the world.

"Facebook stands for bringing us closer together and building a global community.... Yet now, across the world there are people left behind by globalization, and movements for withdrawing from global connection," Zuckerberg, who founded Facebook in a Harvard dorm room in 2004, wrote in a post on his page on Thursday. "In times like these, the most important thing we at Facebook can do is develop the social infrastructure to give people the power to build a global community that works for all of us."

In a phone interview with The Associated Press, Zuckerberg stressed that he wasn't motivated by any one particular event - not even the U.S. election - to write the 5,500-word missive, which he's been working on for the past month on nights and weekends. Rather, he said, it's the growing sentiment in many parts of the world that "connecting the world" - the founding idea behind Facebook - is no longer a good thing.

Zuckerberg, 32, said he still strongly believes that more connectedness is the right direction for the world. But, he adds, it's "not enough if it's good for some people but it's doesn't work for other people. We really have to bring everyone along."

The letter is short on specific details and plans Facebook has in the works. And it does not mention anything about Facebook as a business, its billions in advertising revenue or the targeting it is often criticized for. Zuckerberg said Facebook provides regular updates on how its business is doing and product launches -and this is meant to be different.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Facebook began as a way for Harvard students to connect with other Harvard students online. Over the years it expanded to include other college and university students, high schoolers, then people who were no longer in school ... and then everyone, really. At least those lucky enough to have an internet connection and a computer or smartphone. Or even an old, basic phone for a "lite" version available in developing countries.

Today, most of Facebook's 1.86 billion members
- about 85 percent - live outside of the U.S.
and Canada. The Menlo Park, Californiabased company has offices everywhere from
Amsterdam to Jakarta to Tel Aviv. (It is banned
in China, the world's most populous country,
though some people get around it.) Naturally,
Zuckerberg takes a global view of Facebook and
sees potential that goes beyond borders, cities
and nations.

People use Facebook to share photos of babies and pets, to connect with strangers who have the same rare disease, to post political diatribes, to share news links (and sometimes fake news links). Facebook has also pushed its users to register to vote, to donate to causes, to mark themselves safe after natural disasters, and to "go live." For many, it's become a utility. Some 1.23 billion people use it daily.

How people use Facebook is evolving.
Increasingly, people use it to connect with strangers based on shared interests. In groups, people talk about everything from knitting to parenting to political activism. More than 100 million people are in at least one Facebook group, though Zuckerberg wants way more. He laments the fading of traditional social communities such as churches, labor unions and local groups.

"A healthy society needs these communities to support our personal, emotional and spiritual needs," Zuckerberg wrote. "In a world where this physical social infrastructure has been declining, we have a real opportunity to help strengthen these communities and the social fabric of our society."

LONG VIEW

Zuckerberg has gotten Facebook to this position of global dominance - one that Myspace and Twitter, for instance, never even approached - partly thanks to his audacious, long-term view of the company and its place in the world.

Rather than getting fixated on the next quarter's profit or the next day's user uproar, he tends to consider Facebook 5, 10 or more years into the future. It's as grandiose as it's been successful, at least so far.

"For the past decade, Facebook has focused on connecting friends and families. With that foundation, our next focus will be developing the social infrastructure for community - for supporting us, for keeping us safe, for informing us, for civic engagement, and for inclusion of all," he wrote.

Last fall, Zuckerberg and his wife, the doctor Priscilla Chan, unveiled the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, a long-term effort aimed at eradicating all disease by the end of this century. Then, as now, Zuckerberg preferred to look far down the road to the potential of scientific and technological innovations that have not been perfected, or even invented yet. This includes artificial intelligence.

"The long term promise of AI is that in addition to identifying risks more quickly and accurately than would have already happened, it may also identify risks that nobody would have flagged at all - including terrorists planning attacks using private channels, people bullying someone too afraid to report it themselves, and other issues both local and global," he wrote. "It will take many years to develop these systems."

Speaking to the AP, Zuckerberg said he understands that we might not "solve all the issues that we want" in the short term.

"One of my favorite quotes is this Bill Gates quote, that 'people overestimate what they can get done in two years and underestimate what they can get done in 10 years.' And that's an important mindset that I hope more people take today," he said.

VIENNA CAFE BILLS PATRONS TO CHARGE CELLPHONES OVER DRINKS

A Viennese cafe owner has a message for customers who dawdle over drinks while charging their cellphones: Pay up.

And Galina Pokorny says that instead of complaining when they see a power charge on their bills, customers should read the menu: "Electricity, 1 euro" is printed there.

Pokorny said Thursday that a quick plug-in remains free at Terassencafe, "but this is meant for people who come in and sit for hours while charging their phones."

Pokorny spoke after Austrian media reported complaints from two women who were charged for charging over wine spritzers. She thinks the fuss will die down and other establishments will follow her example.

She notes the grumbles that greeted cafes starting to charge for serving a glass of water with coffee a few years ago were short-lived.





FORD BETS \$1B ON STARTUP FOUNDED BY VVAYMO, UBER VETS

Ford Motor is spending \$1 billion to take over a budding robotics startup to acquire more expertise needed to reach its ambitious goal of having a fully driverless vehicle on the road by 2021.

The big bet announced last Friday comes just a few months after the Pittsburgh startup, Argo Al, was created by two alumni of Carnegie Mellon University's robotics program, Bryan Salesky and Peter Rander.

The alliance between Argo and Ford is the latest to combine the spunk and dexterity of a technologically savvy startup with the financial muscle and manufacturing knowhow of a major automaker in the race to develop autonomous vehicles. Last year rival General Motors paid \$581 million to buy Cruise Automation, a 40-person software company that is testing vehicles in San Francisco.

The Argo deal marks the next step in Ford's journey toward building a vehicle without a steering wheel or brake pedal by 2021 - a vision that CEO Mark Fields laid out last summer.

The big-ticket deal for the newly-minted company clearly was aimed at getting Salesky and Rander. Salesky formerly worked on self-driving cars at a high-profile project within Google - now known as Waymo - and Rander did the same kind of engineering at ride-hailing service Uber before the two men teamed to launch Argo late last year.

"When talent like that comes up, you don't ignore that ability," said Raj Nair, who doubles as Ford's chief technical officer and product development head.

The two will develop the core technology of Ford's autonomous vehicle - the "virtual driver" system, which Nair described as the car's "brains, eyes, ears and senses."

The decision to turn to Argo for help is a tacit acknowledgement that Ford needed more talent to deliver on Fields' 2021 promise, said one expert familiar with Salesky and Rander.

"This is likely a realization that Ford is behind relative to companies like GM, Audi, Volvo,





Waymo and Uber, and is trying to catch up," said Raj Rajkumar, a Carnegie Mellon computer engineering professor who leads the school's autonomous vehicle research.

Salesky said Argo expects to have 200 workers by the end of the year. Argo employees will be given stock in the subsidiary as part of their compensation packages so they will be enriched if Argo's technology becomes a hot commodity.

The equity should set Argo apart from other companies in recruiting scarce tech workers. "There's a war for talent out there," Fields said.

By joining with Ford, Argo gets strong capital backing and expertise on other components needed to run autonomous cars, as well as product development and manufacturing knowledge, Salesky said. In return for its funding, Argo will design its driverless system exclusively for Ford and then have a chance to license the technology to other automakers in the future.

Competitors such as NVIDIA have developed artificial intelligence that learns about different situations as it's tested on roads, something that is almost essential for an autonomous car to function in heavy traffic on city streets.

Ford isn't just racing General Motors and other automakers to gain robotics experience. Uber bought autonomous trucking startup Otto for an estimated \$680 million last summer primarily to get Otto's engineers on its team working on driverless vehicles. Otto co-founder Anthony Levandowski, another former Google engineer, is now overseeing Uber's testing of driverless cars in Pittsburgh and Arizona.









FROM PROTESTS TO 'PUSSY HATS,' TRUMP RESISTANCE BREWS ONLINE

The revolution may not be televised - but it apparently will be tweeted. And Facebooked. And Instagrammed.

Not long after President Donald Trump temporarily barred most people from seven majority-Muslim countries from entering the U.S., social activist Dex Torricke-Barton took to Facebook. "I'm thinking of organizing a rally," he posted. Within a few hours, more than 1,000 people expressed interest. The resulting protest a week later, in front of San Francisco's City Hall, drew thousands more.

Torricke-Barton is far from alone. From organizing protests on the fly to raising money for refugee and immigrant rights groups, people have been using social media to fuel the resistance against Trump in ways their organizing predecessors from the 1960s could have hardly imagined.

ROOTS OF PROTEST

In Queens, New York, for instance, a group of 27 women met up to write postcards to their state and local representatives during a "Postcard-Writing Happy Hour" organized through Facebook.

And on Ravelry, the social network for knitters and crocheters, members have been trading advice and knitting patterns for the pink "pussy hats" that emerged as a symbol during the Women's March on Washington and similar protests elsewhere after Trump's inauguration.

"This is an incredible project because it's mixed between digital and physical," says Jayna Zweiman, one of the founders of the Pussyhat Project. "We harnessed social media for good."

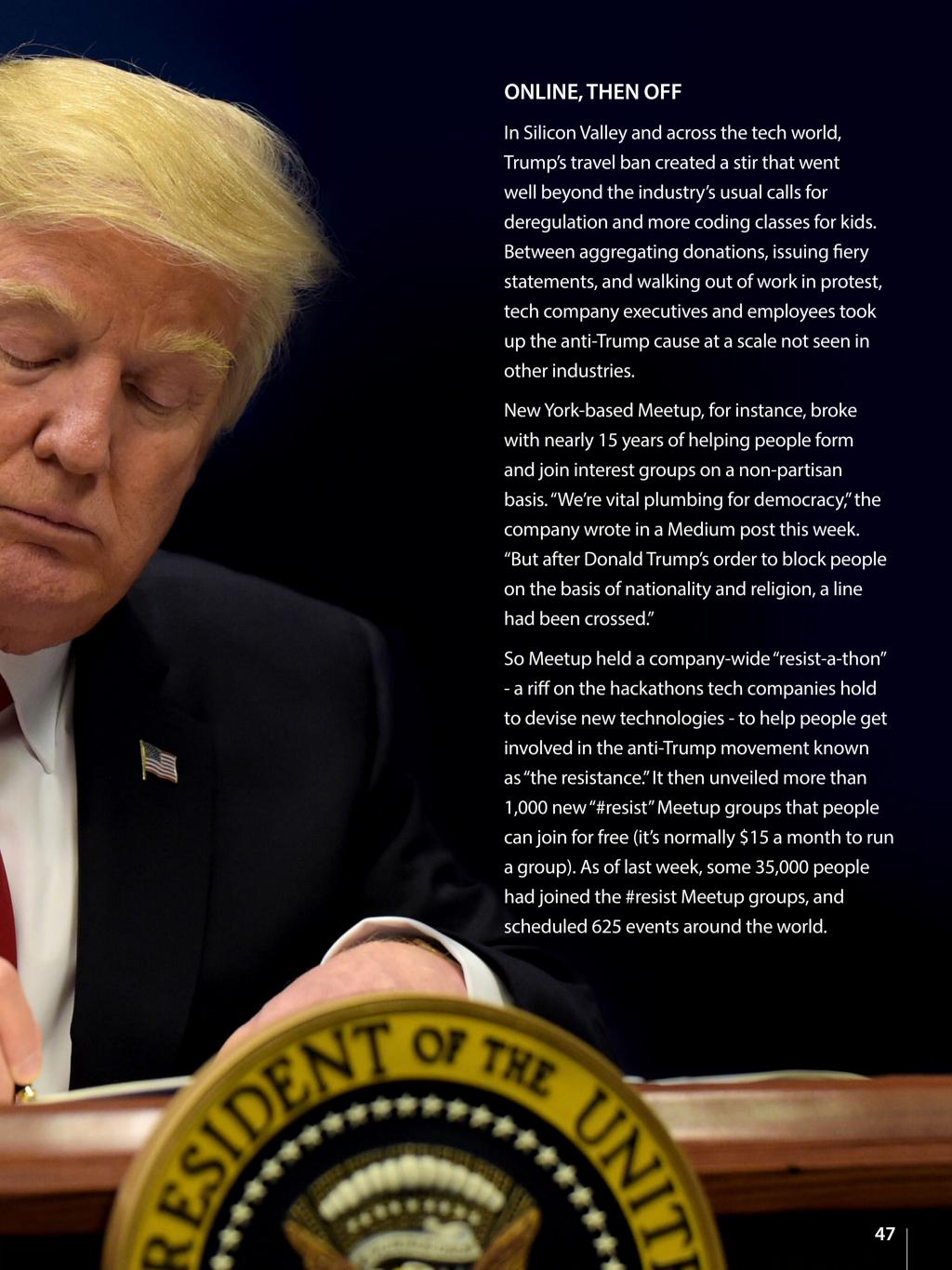
In 1969, activists planned massive marches around the U.S. to protest the war in Vietnam. The protests, called the Moratorium, drew millions of people around the world. But "it took months, a lot of effort, a national office of the organization to get it off the ground," says Christopher Huff, a Beacon College professor focused on social movements of the 1960s. "The women's march was achieved at a much larger scale at a fraction of the time."

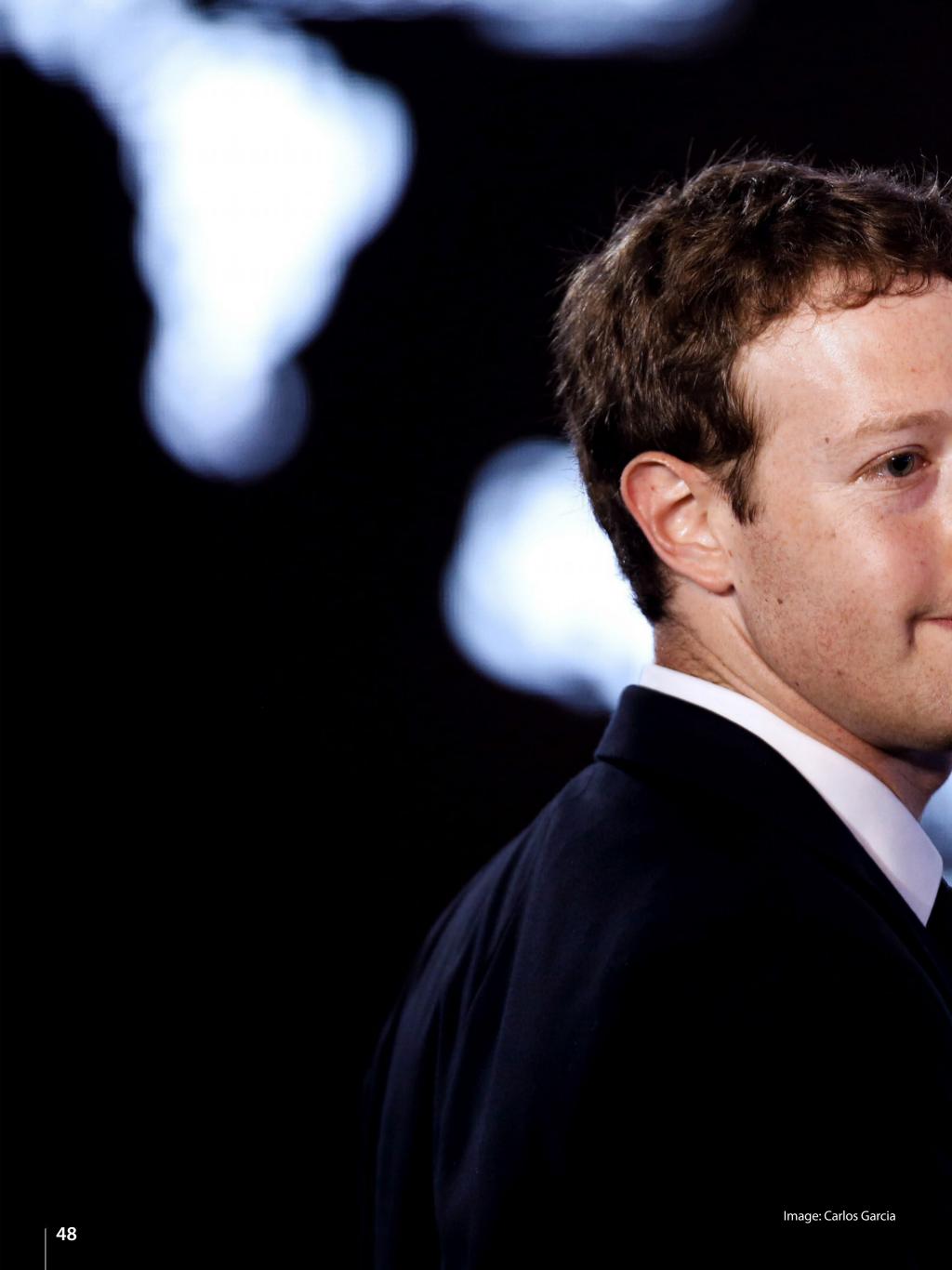
This immediacy is both an asset and a disadvantage. While online networks help people rally quickly around a cause, Huff says, they don't necessarily help people grasp the "long-term effort" required to sustain a movement.













Torricke-Barton, who in earlier incarnations wrote speeches for Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Alphabet Chairman Eric Schmidt, said he and two sisters of Iranian descent organized their last-minute protest using Facebook groups and Messenger. That's quite a contrast to Torricke-Barton's earlier experience protesting violence in Darfur more than a decade ago.

Back then, "lawyers, marketers, communications people would help you get (the protests) off the ground ... networks had to be created in advance," he said. "Now, protests can start without any kind of infrastructure."

FOLLOW THE MONEY

Shortly after Trump's order, the venture capitalist Bijan Sabet tweeted a link to the fundraising platform Crowdrise alongside an explanation of his support for the American Civil Liberties Union- and then asked his followers to do the same.

Sabet figured it might take as long as two months to reach his \$50,000 goal. It took three days. That weekend, the ACLU raised \$24 million, far more than the \$4 million it receives in a typical year.

Sabet, whose father is from Iran, says he's seeing civic involvement "level up," and that social media is pushing that along. Previously, he said, people would maybe say, "yeah, I'm a bit frustrated, but I don't have all the information, I don't know how to get involved." Now, there's no excuse.

LITTLE THINGS

The effects of social media aren't limited to huge efforts.

A week or so after the election, Marisa Frantz, an art director in Cerrillos, New Mexico, teamed up with her sister-in-law Sarah Bailey Hogarty to create a private Facebook group called "America is Watching." To join, all people had to do was comment "yes." If they then posted their zip code in comments, Frantz would send them contact information for their senators and representative, Hogarty explained in an email.

"Like many of us, I was floundering around feeling terrible and afraid," said Hogarty, a digital producer for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. "I wanted to do something, but I had no idea where to start."

Hogarty called the group her "foothold to resistance." Now, the group has more than 1,000 members across the U.S. and organizes weekly "calls to action," such as contacting senators and representatives about a particular issue determined by a poll of the group.

Groups like this demonstrate how social media has helped "lower the barrier to entry" into social activism, in the words of Tarun Banerjee, a sociology professor at the University of Pittsburgh.

"What social media can do really well is spread awareness," Banerjee said. "Can people make President Trump back down because of social media? Probably not. But it can shine the light."









APPLE'S TIM COOK: FAKE NEVVS IS 'KILLING PEOPLE'S MINDS'

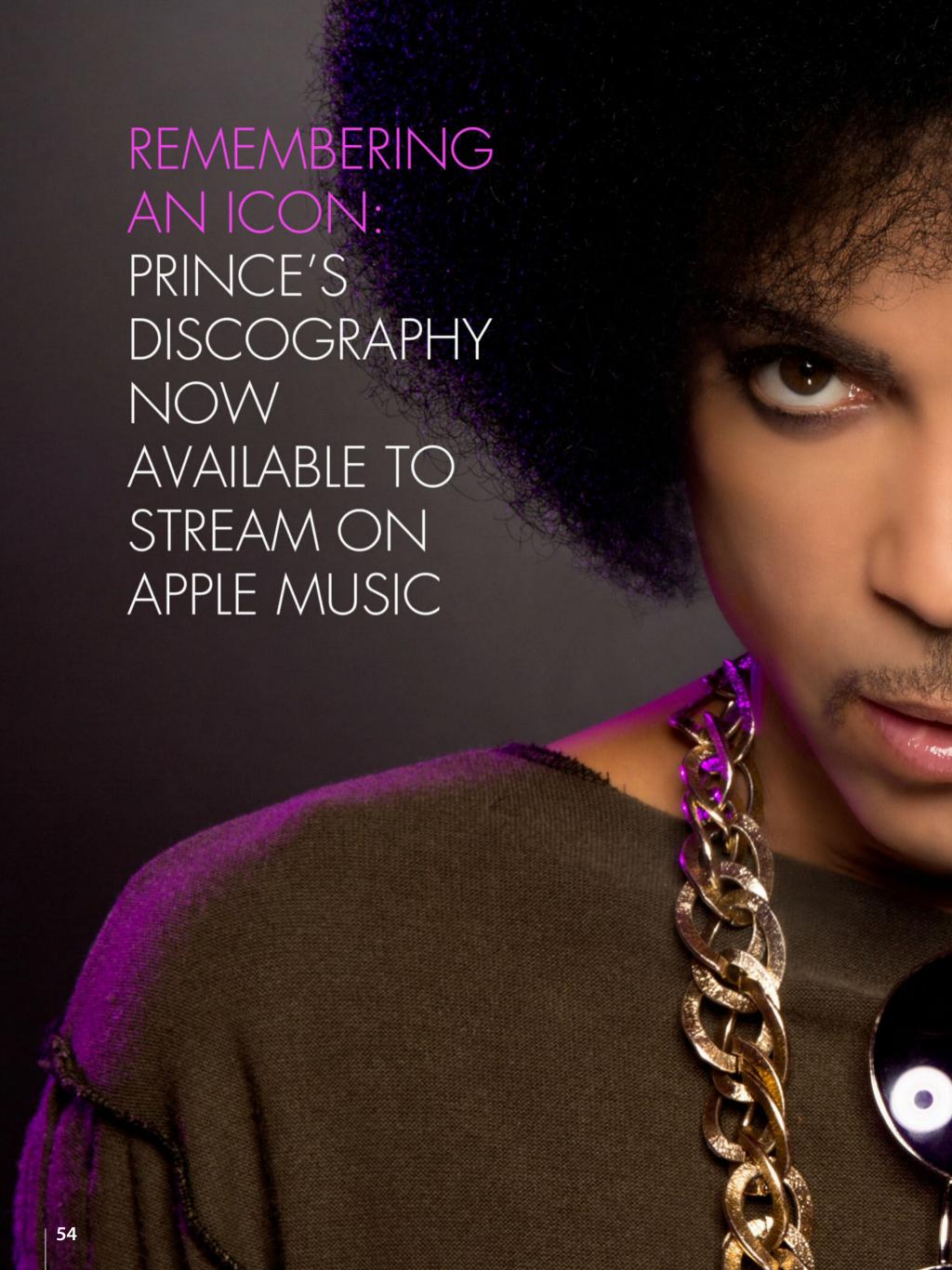
Apple chief executive Tim Cook says fake news is "killing minds," and governments and tech firms must act to stop it.

Cook told the Daily Telegraph newspaper that falsehoods are being spread by people who want "to get the most clicks, not tell the most truth. It's killing people's minds in a way."

Tech companies have been criticized for doing too little to weed out fake news. Cook says firms have a duty to "create some tools that help diminish the volume of fake news" without curbing free speech.

In an interview published last Saturday he calls for a "massive" campaign to raise awareness of untrustworthy news stories.

Cook says "we need the modern version of the public service announcement campaign. It can be done quickly if there is a will."





For many, (the artist formerly known as) Prince was more than just a musical artist. He was an icon, a sex symbol, a rebel, a prodigy, an innovator who brought us an oeuvre that transcended boundaries of musical style, textures, and genres. He was known for his flamboyancy both on and off stage, playing with signifiers of gender and defying racial stereotypes that led the Los Angeles Times to crown him the "first post-everything pop star." Taking influences from artists and musicians including the likes of Miles Davis, Joni Mitchell, Jimi Hendrix, Chuck Berry and David Bowie, every album that Prince released showed growth in style and musical diversity. Through a constant experimentation with different sounds, Prince went on to be revered as a contemporary artist who brought differences together to form one cohesive whole.





PAYING TRIBUTE TO A TRUE VISIONARY

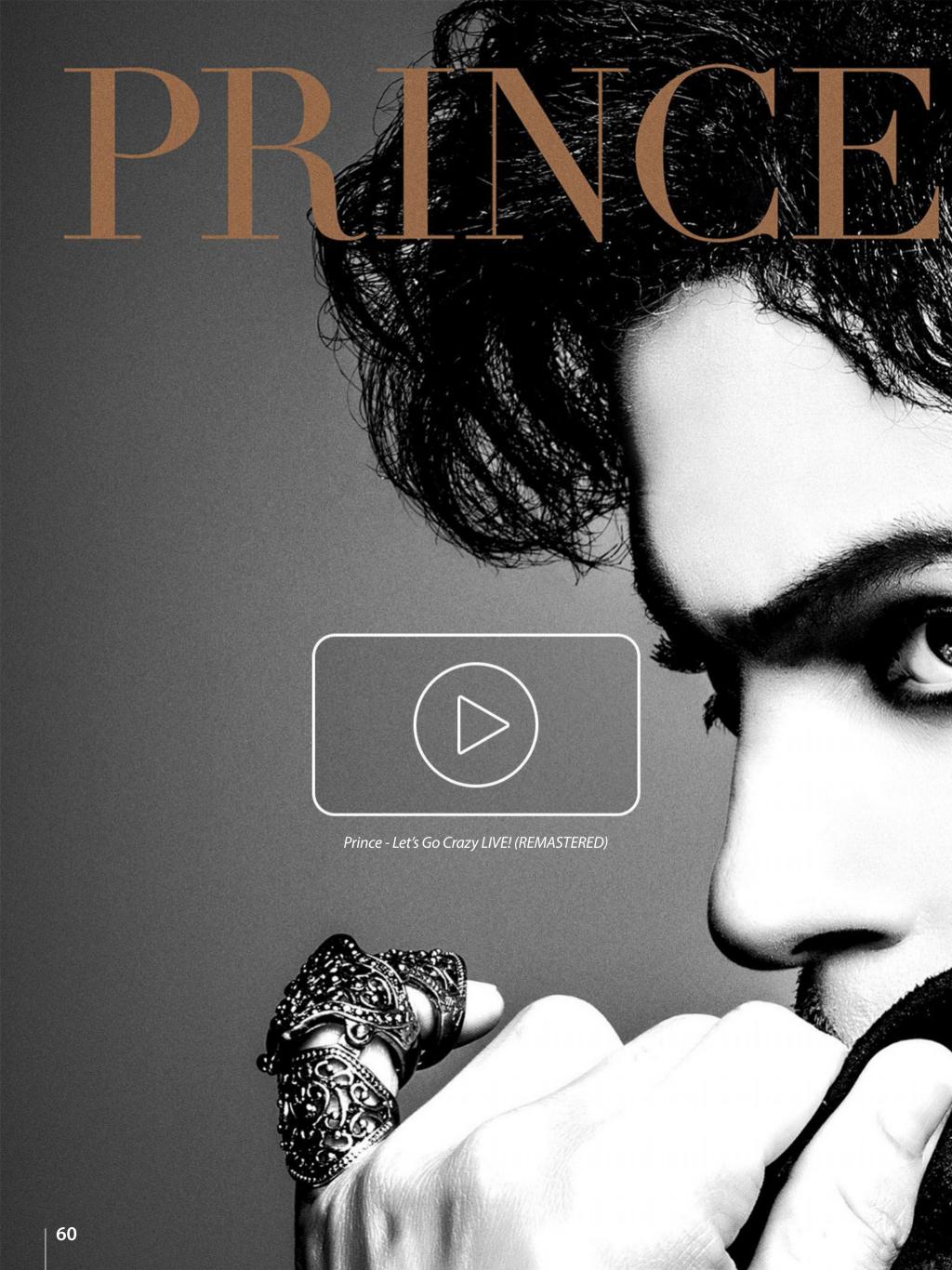
To coincide with the 59th Grammy Awards, which saw a tribute to the late star from artists **Bruno Mars and The Time**, streaming services such as Apple Music, Spotify and Pandora announced the release of Prince's catalog of hits which were previously only available through Tidal. Now subscribers can listen again to a number of Prince's greatest hits including 'Purple Rain," Let's Go Crazy and 'When Doves **Cry**' as well as outtakes, demos, live recordings and the opportunity to follow specially curated playlists that pay tribute to such a visionary artist. This digital showcase has come as a sigh of relief for many of Prince's fans who have petitioned for his music to return to such streaming services for months. Prince's contract with Warner Bros expired in 1996, and after that, he went on to experiment under his own label by selling music directly to fans through his website. Then, as of a 2014 contract between the two, Warner Bros again owned the licensing rights to the majority of the discography which is what we'll see on Apple Music and other streaming services. The rest of his music, including albums released after 1996, will be auctioned off by Prince's estate and are said to be priced at between \$40-50 million with the three label giants Universal Music, Sony Music and Warner all due to compete in what is likely to be a tight battle.

So, why now? Prince was known for constantly clashing with record labels (and later digital music companies) for one reason or another.

Before his death in 2016, Prince issued a request for all streaming sites to take down his music, giving Jay-Z's platform Tidal exclusive rights for









Prince - When Doves Cry





the next 19 months. This happened in 2015, and since then, Warner Bros have continued to petition to return the catalog to popular streaming sites. In a statement released on Sunday, the company thanked Prince's estate for helping to achieve this.

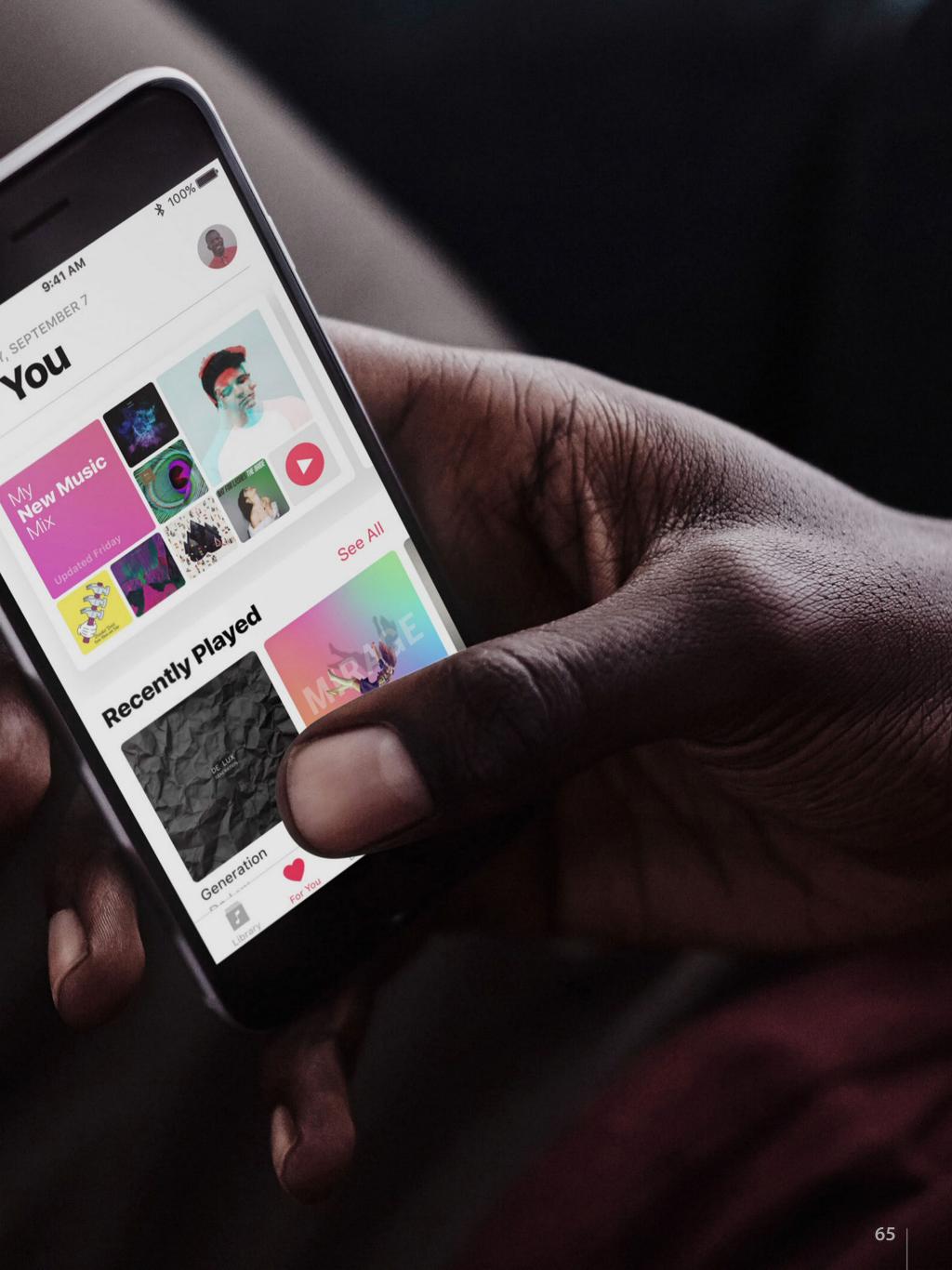
"Prince recorded his most influential and popular music during his time with Warner Bros., and we are deeply aware of our responsibility to safeguard and nurture his incredible legacy," Chairman and CEO Cameron Strang said.

"Warner Bros. is thrilled to be able to bring Prince's music to his millions of fans around the world via streaming services, fittingly on music's biggest night."

APPLE MUSIC CONTINUES ITS IMPRESSIVE EXPANSION

As of October 2016, **Apple Music was said to** have at least 20 million subscribers, which isn't a vast amount compared to Spotify's base of 40 million, but impressive when considering this much younger streaming service only went live in June 2015. Now available in more than 100 countries worldwide including the U.S, Canada, the U.K, Australia, Japan, India, and Brazil, with a \$10 per month subscriber fee, users are allowed access to the entire iTunes library of roughly 40 million songs, 24-hour radio stations and a vast amount of expertlycurated playlists. There is even an option for a three month free trial alongside a **family plan** that comes at a discounted rate. Other competitors such as Amazon's Music Unlimited and Tidal are no match for Apple Music, which also allows users to integrate their iTunes library with their Apple Music library, meaning that transferring previously ripped CDs or albums already purchased in the iTunes Store has never been easier. Additionally, as long as your device has enough space to hold them all, you can save as many songs as you want to listen to offline. This is a great option for those who want to keep track of their date consumption or who are traveling with their phone in Airplane mode.

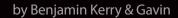
An especially impressive feature of Apple Music is that it will recommend music based on your tastes. So if you're a fan of Prince, expect to see similar artists in your For You section thanks to intelligent algorithms that are, according to Apple, built by real people. These people will soon know your musical preferences intimately, continuously improving and curating new playlists for you every day that can depend on your mood, likes or artists that your 'recently played' have taken their inspiration from. Something that Apple has put a lot of emphasis on is the streaming service's 24-hour live radio station Beats 1, which gives you access to



broadcasts from DJs based in New York, Los
Angeles and London and again, curates and
delivers songs, news and interviews with artists
you're interested in. Recent updates with this
feature now allow you to listen to Beats 1 shows
off-air with on-demand episodes that you can
add to your music library or download to listen
to offline. There's also a social networking aspect
to Apple Music via Connect. This lets you follow
your favorite artists who will share exclusive
content with their fans.

There is a great joy in the discovery section of Apple Music, which lets subscribers choose from lists of new music, curated playlists, videos, top charts, and genres. Choose a list to explore, and you'll be faced with an elegantly designed interface that showcases album artwork in the same way as the app store. The **A-List playlists** bring together over 50 songs of a particular genre, all of which are covered by the cost of your subscription. Plus signs next to songs allow you to save them quickly and easily to your ever-growing library and even create your own playlists with the added personalized touch of including photos.

Most of all, Apple Music gives you the opportunity to have an excess of high-quality music at your fingertips, so much so that it may become an addictive pursuit for those of us who get our thrills from discovering new artists. Now, more than ever, the capability to stream music wherever we are is something that could lead us into a sense of prolonged captivation, however musically diverse and enriching that may be.







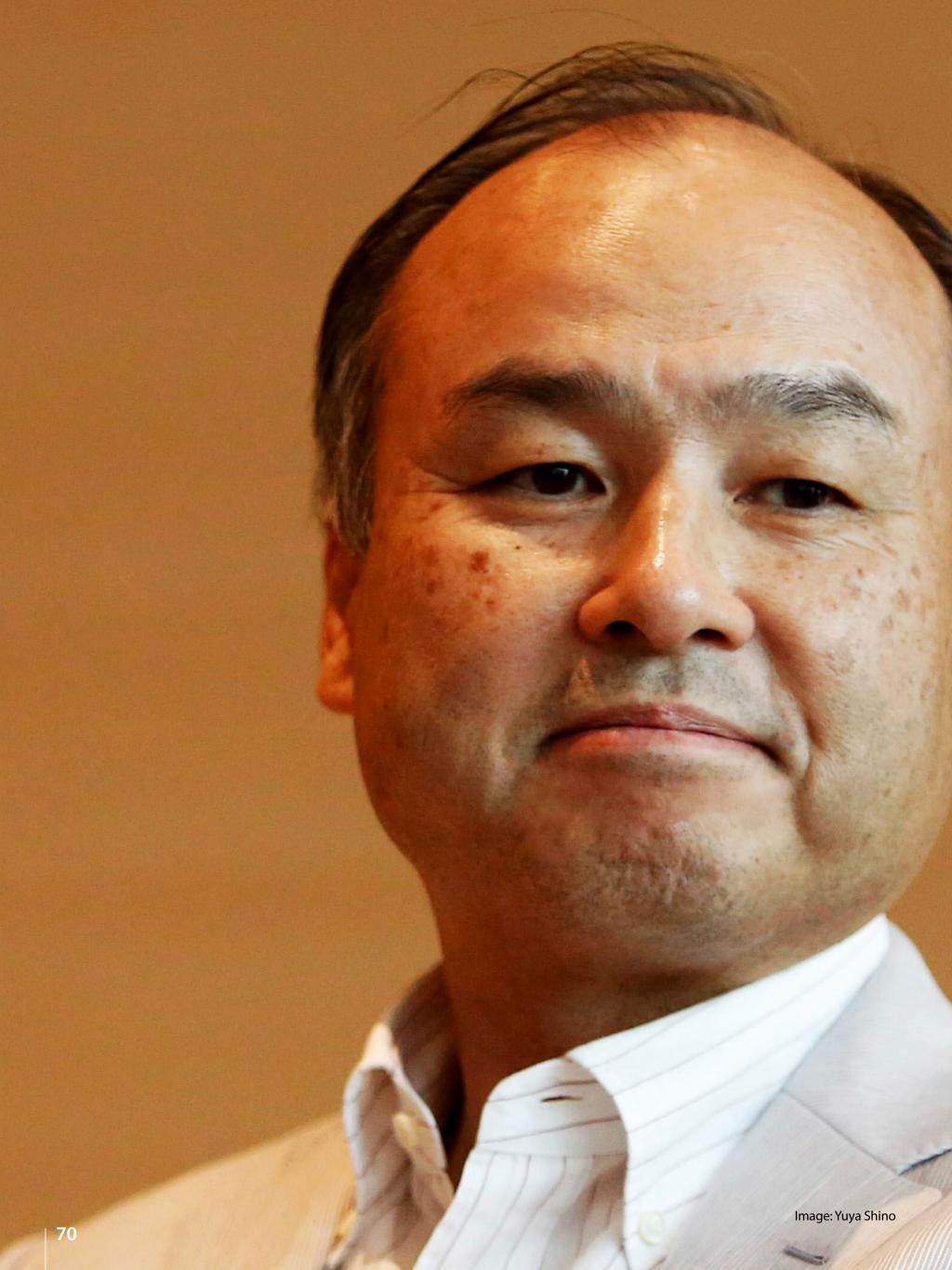


SOFTBANK ADDS FORTRESS INVESTMENT TO GROVVING TECH EMPIRE

The \$3.3 billion acquisition by SoftBank Group Corp., the Japanese telecommunications, internet and solar energy giant, of Fortress Investment Group marks tycoon Masayoshi Son's latest step in building a technology investment empire.

Son said the deal, announced by both sides Wednesday, will immediately contribute to his strategy for growth and complement his Softbank Vision Fund plan for investing in leading technologies including artificial intelligence and the "internet of Things," which links devices through the Internet.

"Fortress' excellent track record speaks for itself, and we look forward to benefiting from its leadership, broad-based expertise and world-class investment platform," Son said in a statement.



partners for the billion private fund for \$100 billion. Tokyo trading. U.S. startups to create 50,000 jobs. and in technology used in smartphones. stay to keep up its fund performance. will benefit shareholders. innovation," they said in a joint statement.

Tokyo-based Softbank has been aggressive in global acquisitions and has been seeking technology investments that it says may grow to

Its shares jumped 1.6 percent Wednesday in

Those ambitions dovetail with Son's promise to President Donald Trump to invest \$50 billion in

Softbank also owns the U.S. wireless company Sprint Corp. and Britain's ARM Holdings, which is known as an innovator in the "internet of things,"

New York-based Fortress, which manages global investments, said its senior professionals will

Fortress co-chairmen Pete Briger and Wes Edens praised Son as "visionary." They said the companies have much in common, and the deal

"We join a company with tremendous scale and resources, and a culture completely aligned with our focus on performance, service and

SoftBank, the first carrier to offer the iPhone in Japan, also sells the Pepper human-shaped companion robot. The company, founded in 1981, has within its investment empire financial technology and ride-booking services.

Last week, the company reported its October-December profit soared to about 40 times what it was a year ago.

FOREIGN HACKER GETS 8 YEARS IN \$55M US SCAM CASE

A prolific foreign hacker behind sophisticated cyberattacks that netted an estimated \$55 million was sentenced to eight years in prison in rare win for law enforcement officials who have identified, but failed to arrest, hundreds of others like him.

Prosecutors in federal court in Brooklyn had sought up to 14 years behind bars for Ercan Findikoglu, a Russian-speaking Turkish national so skilled with computers that he tracked the sprawling international heist in real-time to make sure a small army of thieves wouldn't cheat him out of his share of the proceeds.









U.S. District Judge Kiyo Matsumoto opted for the lesser sentence after noting that Findikoglu could serve another 19 years in Turkey for an unrelated cyber theft.

"I could have used my skills for something good," Findikoglu said before hearing his sentence. "Instead, I wasted them. ... I only have myself to blame."

He also wiped away tears while describing his anguish over being separated from his Russian wife and 5-year-old in Turkey, where they've have been denied U.S visas needed to visit him.

"It is tragic that he has not and will not see his son," the judge said.

Before his capture by the U.S. Secret Service, Findikoglu had gone to great lengths to obscure his cyber fingerprints and stay out of the reach of American law, according to court papers.

It wasn't until Findikoglu made an ill-advised trip to Germany in December 2013 that he was arrested at the request of U.S. authorities. After losing a court challenge, he was eventually extradited.

Foreign hackers "know their safe havens and some are more challenging to get to," said Robert Sica, who retired last year as the special agent in charge of the Secret Service's New York field office. "Inevitably they make a mistake."

According to prosecutors, Findikoglu masterminded three complex financial crimes by hacking into different credit card processors, eliminating the limits on prepaid cards and then texting access codes to crews of so-called "cashers" who within hours withdrew thousands of dollars from ATMs.

In one December 2012 hack, they say, 5,000 cashers in 20 countries withdrew a total of \$5 million - including \$400,000 in 700 transactions from 140 New York ATMs - in less than three hours, according to court papers.

A percentage of the stolen cash was then kicked back to Findikoglu via wire transfers and deliveries to co-conspirators in Turkey, Romania and Ukraine, prosecutors charge.

The Secret Service investigates financial crimes committed by international hackers.

The FBI goes after state-sponsored hackers in counter-intelligence cases and has faced similar difficulties putting foreigners behind bars.

In 2014, U.S. authorities indicted five members of the Chinese military on hacking charges, though experts say it's unlikely they'll ever be extradited to the U.S.

Russian hacker Evgeniy Mikhailovich Bogachev is on the FBI's most-wanted list, has a \$3 million bounty on his head and is believed to be living freely in Russia.





UK OFFERS TEENS CYBERSECURITY CLASSES TO FIGHT ATTACKS

Britain plans to give afterschool cybersecurity training to thousands of teenagers in a bid to protect the country from online attacks.

The government says it has earmarked 20 million pounds (\$25 million) for a Cyber Schools Program, due to start in September.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport said it hopes almost 6,000 students aged 14 to 18 will complete the extracurricular course by 2021 and that many will go on to cybersecurity careers.

Culture Minister Matt Hancock said the "these extracurricular clubs will help identify and inspire future talent."

Parliament's Public Accounts Committee said last week that Britain's electronic spy agency, GCHQ, dealt with 200 cyberattacks a month in 2015, double the number in 2014.

The committee said skills shortages are undermining Britain's ability to block cyberattacks.





SNAP VALUES ITSELF AT UP TO \$22B AHEAD OF IPO

The parent company of the social network Snapchat is valuing itself at up to \$22 billion as it prepares for the tech industry's biggest initial public offering in years.

Snap Inc. said in a regulatory filing Thursday that the IPO is likely to be priced between \$14 and \$16 per share. Had the IPO price matched the \$30.72 per-share price obtained in its last round of financing, Snap would have a market value of about \$30 billion, based on the quantity of outstanding stock listed in its IPO documents.

Snap's highly anticipated IPO would be the largest since China's Alibaba Group went public in 2014. But Snap, based in Los Angeles, draws comparisons to social networks like Facebook and Twitter. Facebook raised \$16 billion when it went public in 2012.

Snap said that it's offering 145 million Class A shares, while existing stockholders are offering an additional 55 million Class A shares. Snap

won't receive any proceeds from shares sold by those stockholders. Underwriters of the IPO have an option to buy up to an additional 30 million shares.

Co-founders Evan Spiegel and Robert Murphy will have controlling power over all matters at Snap through a special class of stock that gives them 10 votes for every share they own. The Class A stock being sold in the IPO has no voting power, while another class has one vote per share.

Snap anticipates its net proceeds will be \$2.1 billion, or about \$2.3 billion, if underwriters buy all the shares they are entitled to. These amounts are based on the IPO being priced at \$15 per share.

Snapchat, whose hallmark is messages that vanish after they are sent, has millions of daily users. The app has adapted nimbly over to users' whims and demands, just as Facebook has. This,

as both companies have discovered, is key to outlasting social media fads. Snapchat is no longer just about disappearing messages.

For example, it's added a "Discover" section where a diverse group of publishers - including People, the Wall Street Journal, CNN, Vice and Food Network - post video-heavy stories aimed mostly at millennials.

Another feature, "Stories," lets people create a narrative from messages, videos and photos from the past 24 hours. It's so popular that Facebook's Instagram now has a version of it, too.

Snapchat's "Lenses," lets people add animated overlays to photos and videos. It was one of the company's few missteps when some of those lenses were perceived as racist. It quickly ditched those lenses.

Snap is expected to trade on the New York Stock Exchange under the "SNAP" ticker.





VERIZON PULLED BACK INTO UNLIMITED DATA GAME

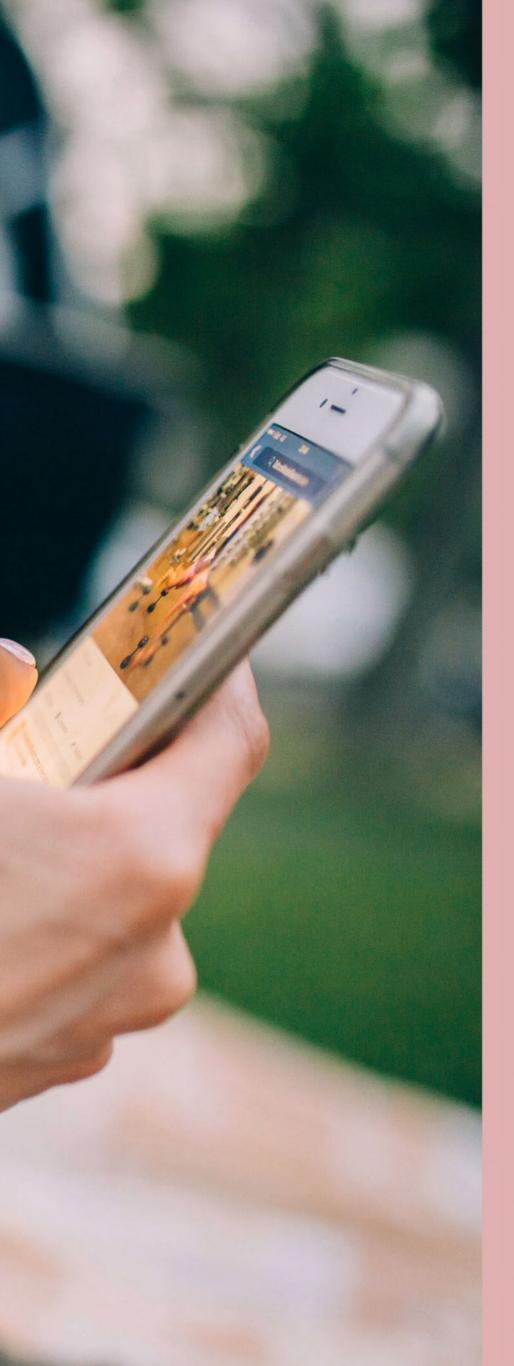
Verizon, in a major reversal, has joined other carriers in offering an unlimited data plan.

As recently as January, Verizon's chief financial officer said unlimited plans were "not something we feel the need to do" even though rivals had made inroads against Verizon by offering them. Verizon stopped offering such plans to new customers in 2012 and has been trying to push longtime customers off those old plans through rate hikes.

The arrival of the iPhone and other smartphones made unlimited plans more of a rarity as carriers saw opportunities to make money by charging customers based on how much data they use.

But Sprint and T-Mobile recognized in unlimited data an opportunity to snare customers from heavyweights Verizon and AT&T. Because carriers must poach each other's customers to grow, the competition has intensified.





AT&T also started offering unlimited plans after discontinuing them, but they are available only to customers who also subscribe to DirecTV, which AT&T owns. Its prices are similar to Verizon's for a family; Verizon is cheaper for an individual.

Verizon's new unlimited plan replaces several higher-data plans and starts at \$80 for one person, not counting fees and taxes. (Existing customers can keep their plans.)

For a family of four, unlimited costs \$180 at Verizon. To compare, Sprint just launched a new promotion for new customers that costs \$90 a month for four lines, and T-Mobile, which includes taxes and fees in its total price, is \$160. AT&T costs \$180 for four but also requires a TV subscription.

Verizon is trying to differentiate itself by letting customers watch high-definition video with the unlimited plan, while competitors run streaming video at DVD-level quality.

T-Mobile responded this week by saying that it would include HD video as well starting on last Friday (10). Before, customers had to pay extra for HD streaming.

T-Mobile also said that, like Verizon, it would offer 10 gigabytes of high-speed data for a mobile hotspot, so that people can connect on laptops or tablets on the go. After that, slower 3G data will be available for a hotspot.

Of course, like all so-called unlimited plans, Verizon's is not really unlimited. If customers use more than 22 gigabytes of data in a month, their speeds may be slowed if the network is busy.





ARETHA IS RETIRING: SINGER PLANS 1 MORE ALBUM

At 74, the Queen of Soul has decided to take it a little easier.

Aretha Franklin is planning to retire this year, she told Detroit TV station WDIV Local 4, the city's NBC affiliate. The singer says she will make one more album, with several tracks produced by Stevie Wonder, and will otherwise limit herself to "some select things, many one a month, for six months out of the year" as she devotes more time to her grandchildren. She also says 2017 will be her "last year in concert."

""This will be my last year," Franklin said. "I will be recording, but this will be my last year in concert. This is it."

A representative for Franklin confirmed her remarks made to WDIV.

Franklin, whose many hits include "Respect" and "Think," added that she did not want to do "just nothing." But she said that she is otherwise "very satisfied" with her career and is ready to step back. She has had health problems in recent years, including surgery in 2010 for undisclosed reasons that left many fearing her life was in danger.

"I feel very, very enriched and satisfied with respect to where my career came from, and where it is now," Franklin said.

But she hasn't convinced longtime friend Clive Davis, who executive produced many of her albums.

"I don't believe her," Davis said in an interview Thursday while promoting his annual pre-Grammy Awards party in Beverly Hills, California.

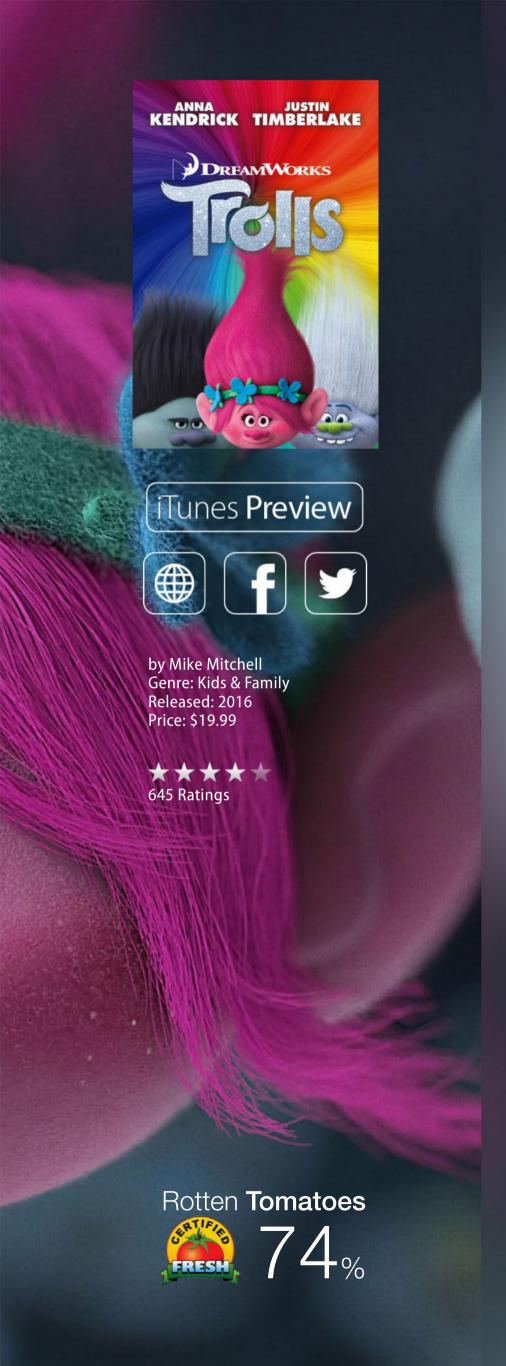
"I think that what she might have meant was that she doesn't plan an extensive tour -- still not flying and still traveling by bus, it's just hard to stay on that bus," the music mogul said. "Aretha is still magical in person and still has the Godgiven voice that she has. I don't believe that she's retiring. I just believe that she's cutting back, judiciously."

Her presumed last album would be a kind of homecoming. Franklin and Wonder, a fellow Detroit hero, have known each other for decades. In the 1970s, she had a hit with a cover of "Until You Come Back to Me (That's What I'm Gonna Do)," which Wonder helped write.









Trolls

From the creators of Shrek, Trolls tells the story of Poppy (Anna Kendrick), the happiest troll ever born, who, alongside Branch (Justin Timberlake), must set off on a journey to rescue their friends from the scary Bergens.

FIVE FACTS:

- **1.** This is DreamWorks' first musical film since The Road to El Dorado in 2000.
- **2.** The movie's lead single 'Can't Stop the Feeling' was performed by Justin Timberlake, who also provides the voice of Branch.
- **3.** Anna Kendrick, who provides the voice of Poppy, was referred to as a troll throughout her filming of Pitch Perfect 2 in 2015.
- **4.** Both Chloë Grace Moretz and Jason Schwartzman were potentially set to star in the film during its early stages of development.
- **5.** This is the fourth DreamWorks animation to have a female protagonist after Chicken Run (2000), Monsters vs. Aliens (2009) and The Croods (2013).



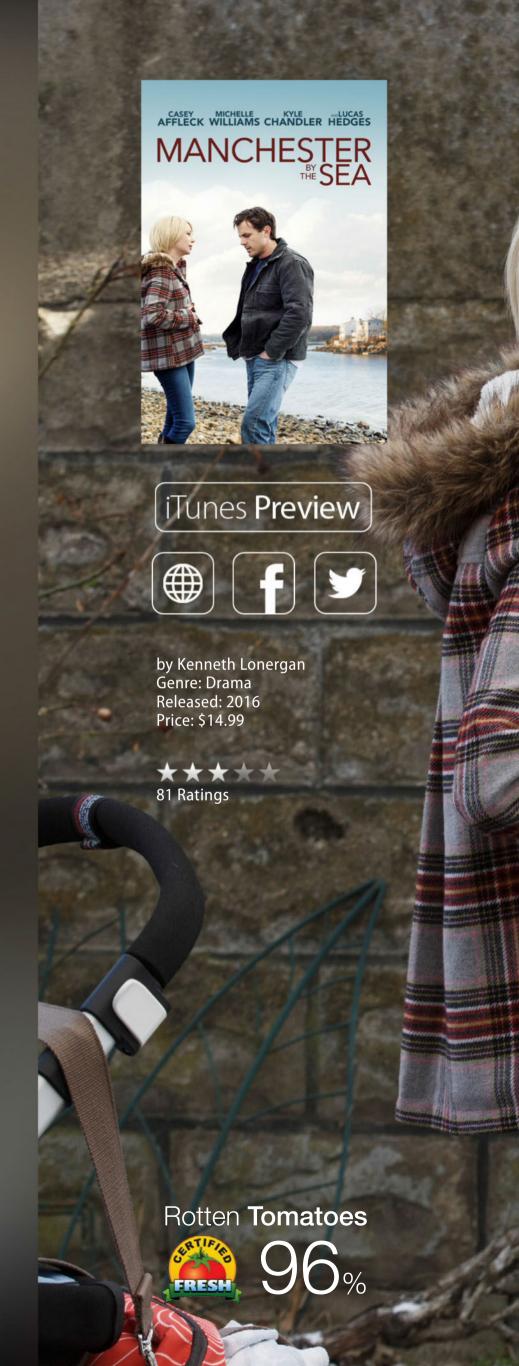


Manchester by the Sea

After a solitary janitor (Affleck) gets news that his brother has suddenly passed away, he must become the sole guardian of his 16-year-old nephew, forcing him to come to terms with his past.

FIVE FACTS:

- **1.** Manchester-by-the-sea is a real town situated on the north shore of Massachusetts.
- **2.** The film premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival.
- **3.** This is Kenneth Lonergan's first film as director in 11 years.
- **4.** Kevin Grondin plays a funeral director in the film, and this also is his profession in real life.
- **5.** The screenplay was featured in the 2014 Blacklist, a list of most liked unmade scripts of the year.













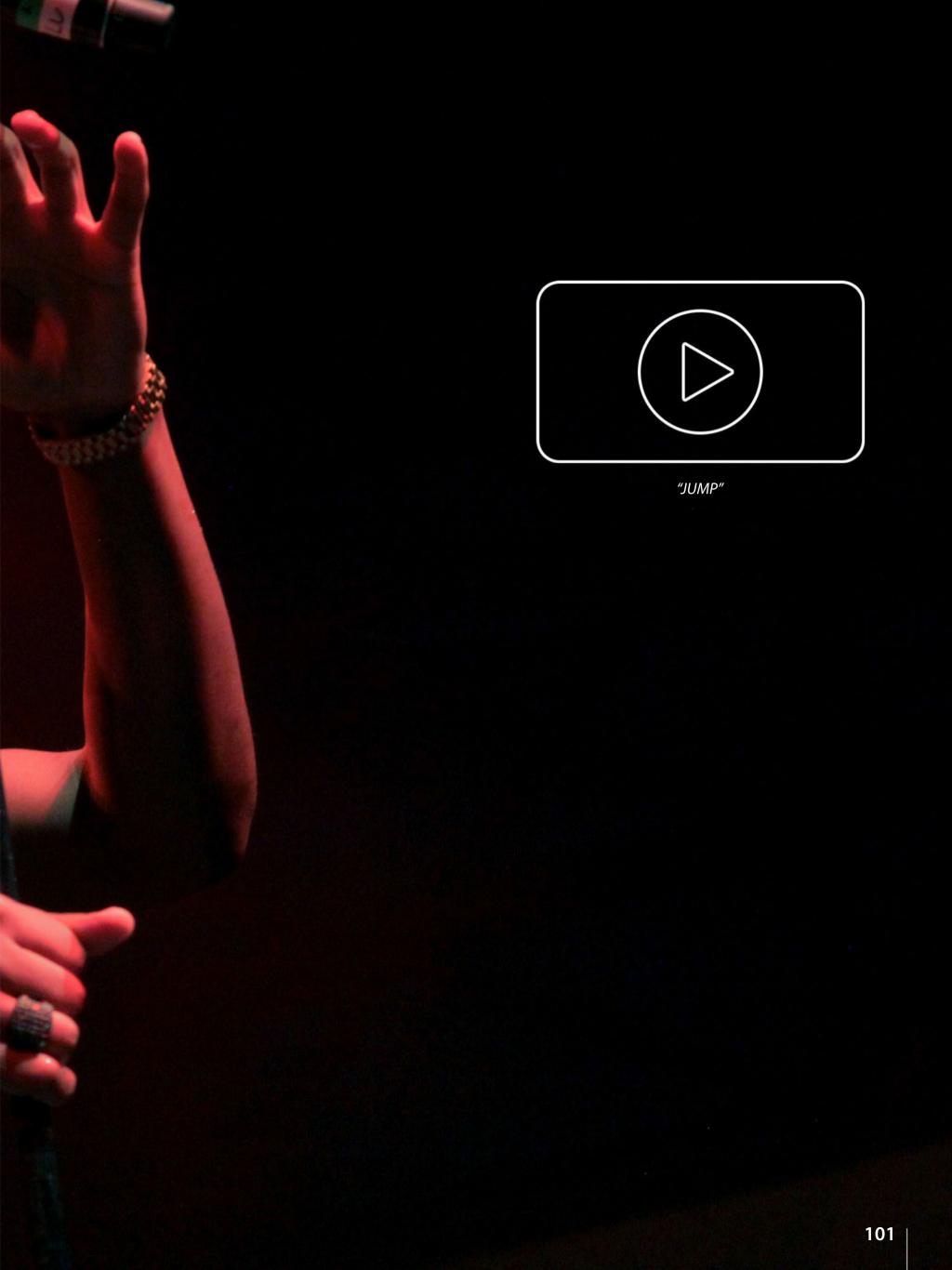
DROGAS Light Lupe Fiasco

Chicago MC Lupe Fiasco returns after two years with DROGAS Light, an album that ranges from trap to electro-funk and provides a convincing tracklist about staying true.

FIVE FACTS:

- **1.** DROGAS Light is the first album of a trilogy set to be released by Lupe later this year.
- **2.** The character on the front of the album is the Japanese kanji character for "light".
- **3.** Lupe sites some of his influences as Nas, Jay-Z, Common, Mos Def, De La Soul and N.W.A.
- **4.** In 2010, Lupe recorded a benefit single for victims of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake.
- **5.** Atlantic Records delayed the release of Lupe's third album Lasers for months because they were not happy with it. Over 16,000 fans signed an online petition for immediate release of the album which then went to number one, selling 200,000 copies in its first week.





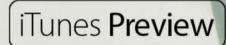
Themes for a Dying Earth Teen Daze

Formed in 2008 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Teen Daze is the moniker of producer Jamison. Under his new label FLORA, this album is an ambient journey that moves organically from one song to another perfectly demonstrating Jamison's intimate and personal songwriting.

FIVE FACTS:

- **1.** Teen Daze first gained acclaim via songs posted on Tumblr.
- **2.** Jamison has a second musical project titled Two Bicycles.
- 3. His second EP, 'A Silent Planet', was inspired by a seven-week stay in the Swiss Alps where Jamison studied philosophy and read C.S Lewis' Out of the Silent Planet'.
- **4.** Teen Daze played South by Southwest festival in 2011.
- 5. Themes for a Dying Earth' has been released on vinyl with 300 limited edition copies all including an exclusive photo taken by Jamison of the natural world that inspired the album.











Genre: Alternative Released: Feb 10, 2017 11 Songs

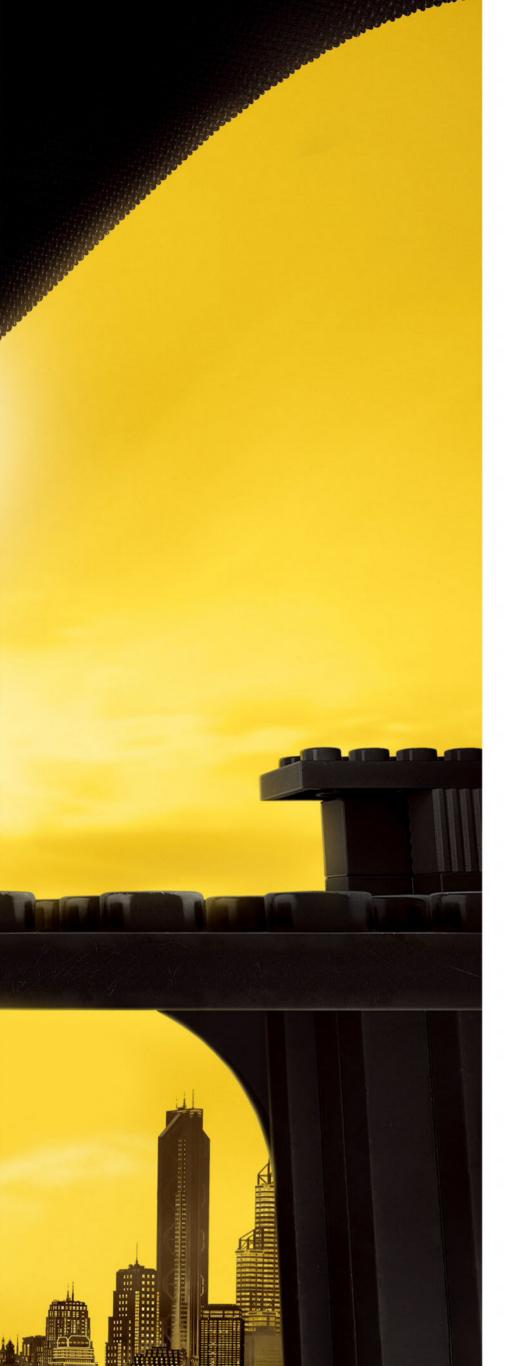
Price: \$9.99











BOX OFFICE TOP 20: 'LEGO BATMAN,' 'FIFTY SHADES' OPEN ON TOP

Three new openers dominated the box office this weekend - each with its own robust audience. The animated "Lego Movie" spinoff "The Lego Batman Movie" topped the charts with \$53 million, slightly less than the studio estimates from Sunday, while the "Fifty Shades of Grey" sequel "Fifty Shades Darker" opened in second with \$46.6 million.

"Fifty Shades Darker" didn't come close to the heights of the first film's \$85.2 million debut in 2015 when Valentine's Day fell on a Saturday, but it still managed to entice a significant audience to the cinema. In third place, "John Wick: Chapter Two" earned \$30.4 million - more than double what the first film made in its opening weekend.

The thriller "Split" and the NASA drama "Hidden Figures," both holdovers, rounded out the top five.

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by comScore:

1 "The Lego Batman Movie," Warner Bros., \$53,003,468, 4,088 locations, \$12,966 average, \$53,003,468, 1 week.

*## Shades Darker," Universal, \$46,607,250, 3,710 locations, \$12,563 average, \$46,607,250, 1 week.

3 "John Wick: Chapter Two," Lionsgate, \$30,436,123, 3,113 locations, \$9,777 average, \$30,436,123, 1 week.

4 "Split," Universal, \$9,525,935, 2,961 locations, \$3,217 average, \$112,498,205, 4 weeks.

5 "Hidden Figures," 20th Century Fox, \$8,002,670, 2,667 locations, \$3,001 average, \$131,454,920, 8 weeks.









6 "A Dog's Purpose," Universal, \$7,271,430, 3,025 locations, \$2,404 average, \$42,501,105, 3 weeks.

7 "Rings," Paramount, \$5,649,575, 2,931 locations, \$1,928 average, \$21,321,861, 2 weeks.

6 "La La Land," Lionsgate, \$4,943,811, 2,065 locations, \$2,394 average, \$125,954,156, 10 weeks.

"Lion," The Weinstein Company,\$3,950,610, 1,337 locations,\$2,955 average, \$30,236,332, 12 weeks.

10 "Sing," Universal, \$1,703,625, 1,479 locations, \$1,152 average, \$265,408,620, 8 weeks.

1 1 "The Space Between Us," STX
• Entertainment, \$1,686,364,
2,758 locations, \$611 average,
\$6,511,522, 2 weeks.

12 "xXx: The Return Of Xander Cage," Paramount, \$1,514,592,
1,178 locations, \$1,286 average,
\$43,126,640, 4 weeks.

13 "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story," Disney, \$1,495,988, 929 locations, \$1,610 average, \$527,162,956, 9 weeks.

14 "Resident Evil: The Final Chapter,"
Sony, \$1,386,438, 1,213 locations,
\$1,143 average, \$25,251,868, 3 weeks.

15 "I Am Not Your Negro," Magnolia Pictures, \$820,831, 115 locations, \$7,138 average, \$1,839,871, 2 weeks.





16 "Jolly LLB 2," Fox International Productions, \$774,355,
173 locations, \$4,476 average,
\$774,355, 1 week.

1 "Moana," Disney, \$734,927, 461 locations, \$1,594 average, \$243,189,793, 12 weeks.

18 "The Founder," The Weinstein Company, \$723,998, 454 locations, \$1,595 average, \$11,205,243, 4 weeks.

19 "Fences," Paramount, \$723,054, 454 locations, \$1,593 average, \$53,943,781, 9 weeks.

Manchester By The Sea,"
Roadside Attractions, \$702,053,
454 locations, \$1,546 average,
\$45,102,041, 13 weeks.

Universal and Focus are owned by NBC Universal, a unit of Comcast Corp.; Sony, Columbia, Sony Screen Gems and Sony Pictures Classics are units of Sony Corp.; Paramount is owned by Viacom Inc.; Disney, Pixar and Marvel are owned by The Walt Disney Co.; Miramax is owned by Filmyard Holdings LLC; 20th Century Fox and Fox Searchlight are owned by 21st Century Fox; Warner Bros. and New Line are units of Time Warner Inc.; MGM is owned by a group of former creditors including Highland Capital, Anchorage Advisors and Carl Icahn; Lionsgate is owned by Lions Gate Entertainment Corp.; IFC is owned by AMC Networks Inc.; Rogue is owned by Relativity Media LLC.









CASTING OSCAR: FOUNDRY BUILDS EACH STATUETTE AS VVORK OF ART

Every Oscar fist-pumped or tearfully cradled by Academy Award winners is first cast, buffed and fussed over at a foundry far from Hollywood.

Workers at the Polich Tallix fine art foundry, about 50 miles north of New York City, began work in late September on the awards to be handed out Feb. 26. Each of the 60 Oscars shipped from the hangar-like production floor is 13½ inches tall with the same distinctive Art Deco features polished to a mirror finish. Each glossy black base lacks only a winner's nameplate, which is added after the ceremony.





Polich Tallix, which began making the awards last year, tweaked the look of the stylized knight with an eye toward the original statuettes handed out in 1929. The path of these new statues from a small town in upstate New York to center stage in Hollywood might not be the stuff of movies.

But it's worth a close-up.

CASTING CALL

Every Oscar starts with a version made of wax, which is repeatedly dipped into a cream-colored ceramic slurry. The ceramic hardens and the wax is melted out to make way for molten bronze.

What's left once the ceramic mold is chipped away is a sort of rough-hewn version of the elegant icon.

John Menzie and other workers make sure every surface detail - from Oscar's hairline to the film reel it stands on - is hand-sanded and polished to a fine finish.

Menzie said it's a kick to see the pieces you worked on for hours handed out on TV, like he did last year while watching the Academy Awards.

"When Leonardo DiCaprio gave his speech and he was holding his Oscar I was just thinking ... I might have worked on that one," Menzie said. "I wish in his acceptance speech, he would have said the serial number that was on the back, you know? So I could say, "That's the one I worked on!"

BEST VISUAL EFFECTS

When Polich Tallix took over production from a Chicago company, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences asked the foundry to





create a statue truer to the original. Foundry artist Daniel Plonski made 3-D scans of an early statue and a recent statue, and took desired qualities from each for the newest iteration.

Oscar's restoration was subtle; his stylized facial features are more defined, there's a greater hint of his ears and a hair part, and his sword rests in sharper relief between his legs.

"The trick was not to make it too shockingly different," Plonski said.

The most substantial difference is one people don't see. The statue is once again cast in bronze, instead of a pewter-like alloy.

AND THE AWARD GOES TO

The statues are shipped to Brooklyn for 24-karatgold electroplating at Epner Technology, which also is in its second year of Oscar making.

President David Epner said that before his company became involved in Oscar production, actor F. Murray Abraham and a couple of other award winners had asked him to plate gold finishes that were wearing off. He vows that won't happen under his process, which includes copper plating and nickel plating each statue before gold plating.

"The gold is guaranteed - not for the life of the recipient, but for the life of the statue," Epner said

Polich Tallix has one more task after the nominees are announced: making a nameplate for each possible winner. The award winners are handed an Oscar on stage with no nameplate on it. Winners can later take their statue to a table backstage to get their nameplate affixed.

The unused plates are destroyed.





CAN INTERNET-BEAMING BALLOONS OUTMANEUVER SHIFTING WINDS?

For its next trick, an internet-beaming balloon factory spun out of Google believes it can outmaneuver the wind.

In doing so, the 4-year-old "Project Loon" says it will be able to bring remote parts of the world online more quickly with a smaller fleet of the balloons than it previously thought.

Engineers involved in the eccentric project, a part of the X Lab owned by Google's corporate parent Alphabet Inc., say they have come up with algorithms that enable the high-flying balloons to do a better job anticipating shifting wind conditions so they hover above masses of land for several months instead of orbiting the earth.

X now expects to need fewer balloons to fulfill its goal of delivering internet service to billions of people living in unconnected regions in the world, ranging from small villages in Africa to the woods of California.

The need for fewer balloons should lower Project Loon's costs and accelerate plans to start selling internet-services subscriptions to consumers and businesses.

The X lab, like other parts of Alphabet that are funded by Google's highly profitable digital advertising network, is under pressure to start making money on its own. The Alphabet subsidiaries operating outside Google, a hodgepodge of far-flung projects, have lost a combined \$7.1 billion during the past two years. In an acknowledgement of their lofty goals and risky nature, Alphabet CEO Larry Page calls them "moonshots."

Astro Teller, who runs the X Lab, declined to provide a specific timetable for when Project Loon might start selling internet access plans.

Meeting with reporters Thursday at X's headquarters in a former shopping mall in Mountain View, California, Teller said the project hopes to team up with a telecommunications provider within the next few months to begin testing how well the balloons' new navigational system will work. He likened the newly

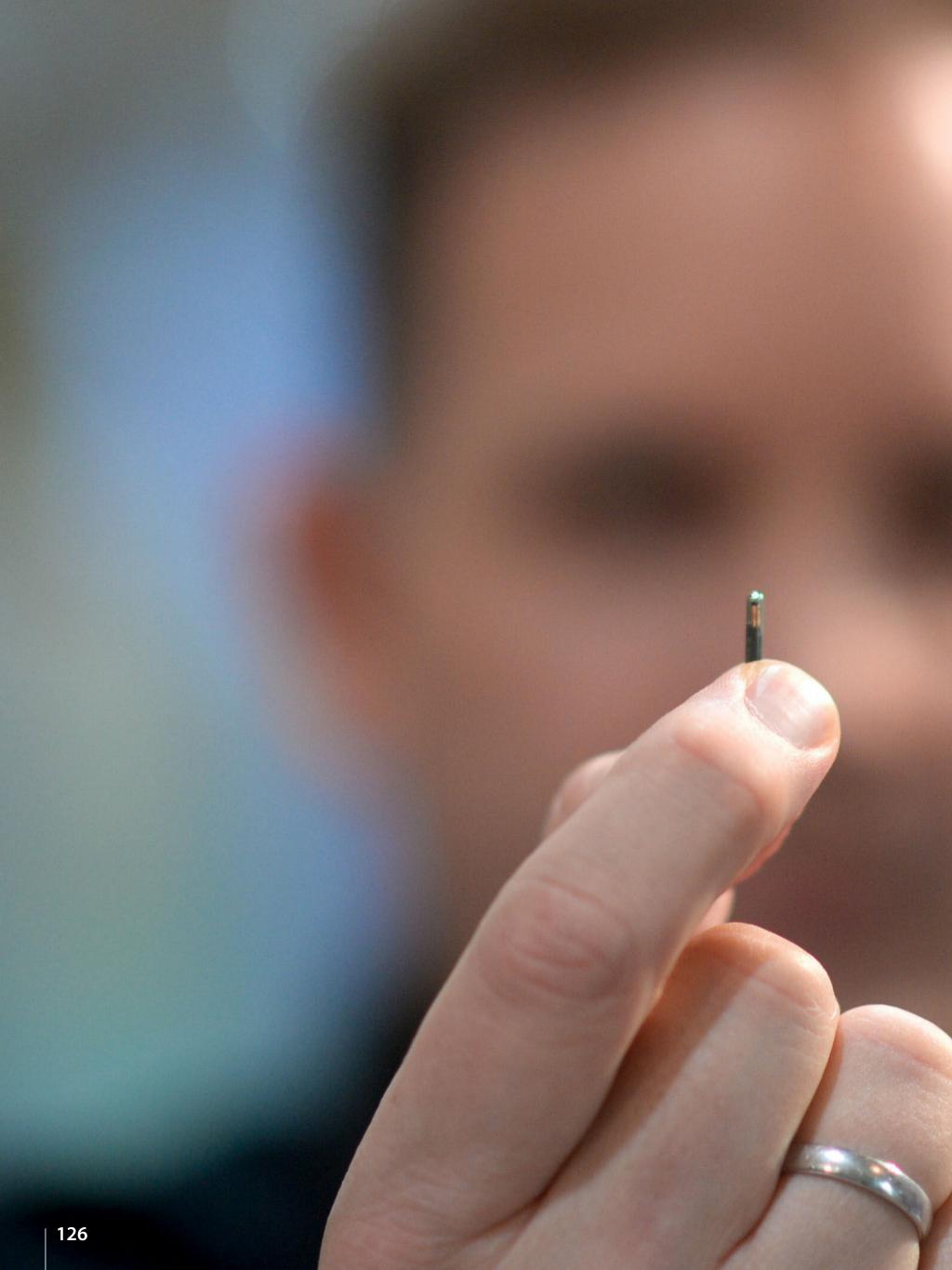
developed algorithms' objectives to "a game of chess with the wind."

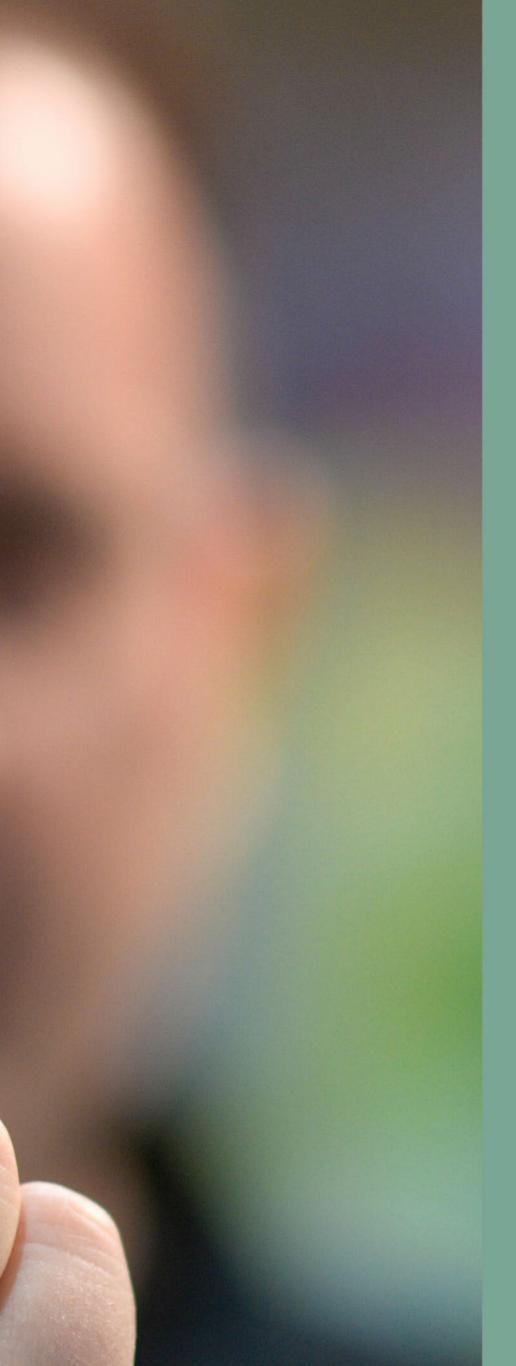
If the algorithms prevail in their metrological battle, Project Loop hopes to need only 10 to 30 beams floating about 60,000 feet above the earth to transmit high-speed internet signals to a target market, instead of up to 400 balloons orbiting around the globe. Keeping the balloons in smaller clusters will also make them easier to locate and retrieve once they descend back to land after several months in the stratosphere, Teller said.

Project Loon has been doing most of its testing recently in South America, although Teller said that isn't necessarily where it will team up with a telecommunications provider to determine the effectiveness of its wind-defying technology.

Since launching in New Zealand in 2013, the balloons have traveled 19 million kilometers, or nearly 12 million miles, according to Project Loon.

Alphabet frames Project Loon as a noble endeavor striving to enable people currently without reliable internet service to tap into the vast reservoir of knowledge, entertainment and conveniences available online. But it could also enrich Google by expanding the potential audience that can query its search engine, watch video on YouTube, correspond through Gmail and click on digital ads.





LAVVMAKER SEEKS PRECAUTIONARY BAN ON HUMAN MICROCHIPS

Computer chips used to track goods, find lost pets and make no-swipe credit card purchases could not be implanted in humans without consent under a bill Nevada state lawmakers weighed.

Lawmakers on a judicial panel considered whether Nevada should join at least four other states in banning mandatory identification markers in people as a precaution to keep the emerging technology from creeping into workplaces, prisons or hospitals.

Republican Sen. Becky Harris of Las Vegas, sponsor of the legislation, said she's worried computer chips could pose serious risks to human rights and public health.

"This is a completely new issue," Harris said.
"I just want a safety measure in place until
we better understand the technology and

the reasoning behind people's desire to require implanting chips."

ACLU of Nevada Policy Director Holly Welborn said there's no impending need to protect people against mandatory microchipping, but there's no question the technology would violate rights to personal autonomy and privacy.

"There really aren't, under any circumstance, any justifications for that type of a tracking device on a human being," Welborn said.

Sean Sullivan, Washoe County deputy public defender, said the bill may also prohibit radiologists from using tattoos as permanent identifiers of where on patients to aim treatment. Others voiced concerns that it would forbid families and legal guardians of Alzheimer's patients from deciding to put computer chips in those patients, who often wander in later stages of the disease.

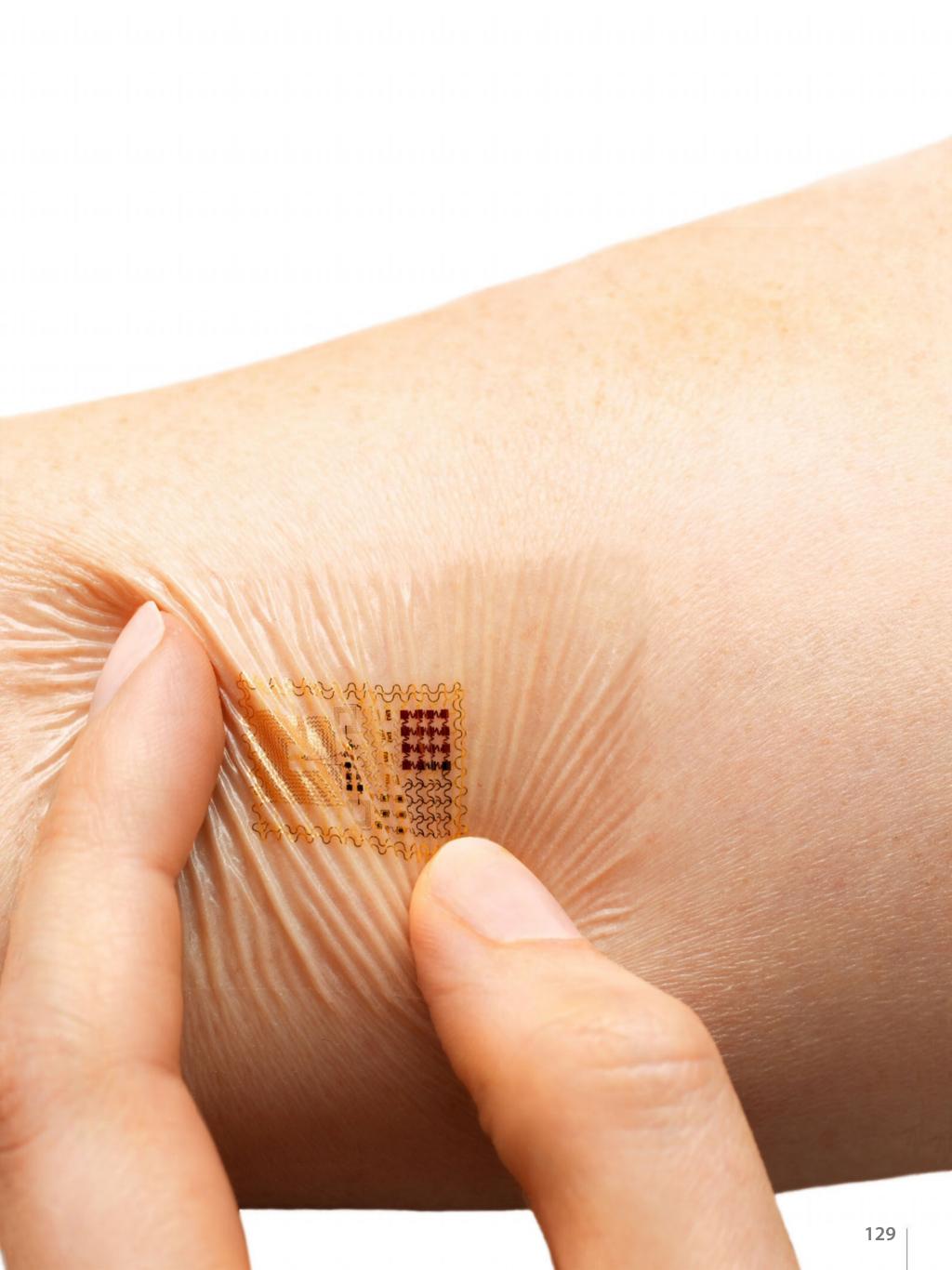
The Senate Committee on Judiciary did not vote Monday on Senate Bill 109.

Radio frequency identification or RFID technology can be encapsulated in glass pills roughly the size of two grains of rice.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the chips for use in humans in 2004. Wisconsin, North Dakota, California and Oklahoma enacted legislation banning any required implantations, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Welborn said municipalities in Canada, Sweden and Australia have considered, but not enacted, laws mandating the chips for certain groups, such as criminals considered a potential threat to society.









BRITAIN: 65 PERCENT OF LARGE COMPANIES SUFFERED CYBERATTACKS

Britain's treasury chief has warned that cyberattacks are increasing in severity and sophistication as authorities open a new center devoted to thwarting such threats.

Philip Hammond has urged businesses to "sharpen" their approach as the attacks intensify.

Hammond says 65 percent of large businesses have reported a cyber breach or attack in the past 12 months - but that many businesses don't have plans in the event of a breach.

The new center's technical director, lan Levy, says the government will act as "a guinea pig for all the measures we want to see done by industry at national scale." The government underpinned the new facility with a 1.9 billion pound (\$2.3 billion) cash injection.

Queen Elizabeth II will open the new facility in central London on Tuesday.

TTALIAN TAXI DRIVERS STAGE WILDCAT STRIKE OVER PRO-UBER BILL

Taxi drivers in Rome, Milan and Turin are staging wildcat strikes to protest proposed Italian legislation they say will favor Uber and other carsharing services.

Commuters were stranded when the walkout began Wednesday. The ANSA news agency reported that with taxis still idled Thursday, Rome's airports arranged for extra shuttle services to get passengers into town.

Drivers say the legislation, which suspends until the end of 2017 norms to control car-hire and car-share services, would help Uber's "irregular" inroads into Italy's rigidly regulated taxi industry. Supporters say Italians want greater choice in ride-sharing options.

A Milan court in 2015 ruled that Uber's
UberPop service, which allowed drivers
without professional licenses to hook up with
passengers via a smartphone app, created
unfair competition.

'ROGUE ONE' STARS AMONG ACADEMY AWARDS PRESENTERS

Stars of "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" are heading to the Academy Awards.

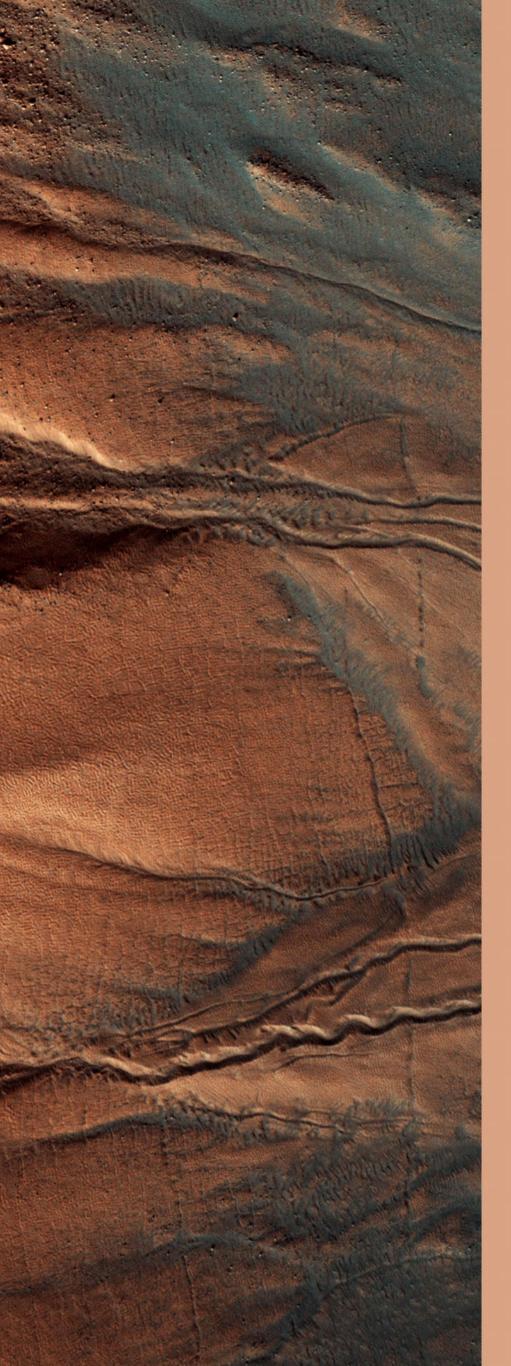
Oscar telecast producers announced Thursday that Felicity Jones and Riz Ahmed will serve as presenters at the Feb. 26 ceremony.

Past Oscar winners Javier Bardem and Charlize Theron are also set to take on presentation duties at the show. Last year's Oscar winning actors - Brie Larson, Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Rylance and Alicia Vikander - will also appear on the telecast.

They will join previously announced presenters including Samuel L. Jackson, Shirley MacLaine, Gael Garcia Bernal, "Fifty Shades of Grey" stars Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan, and Kate McKinnon of "Saturday Night Live."

Jimmy Kimmel is hosting the show, which will air on ABC.



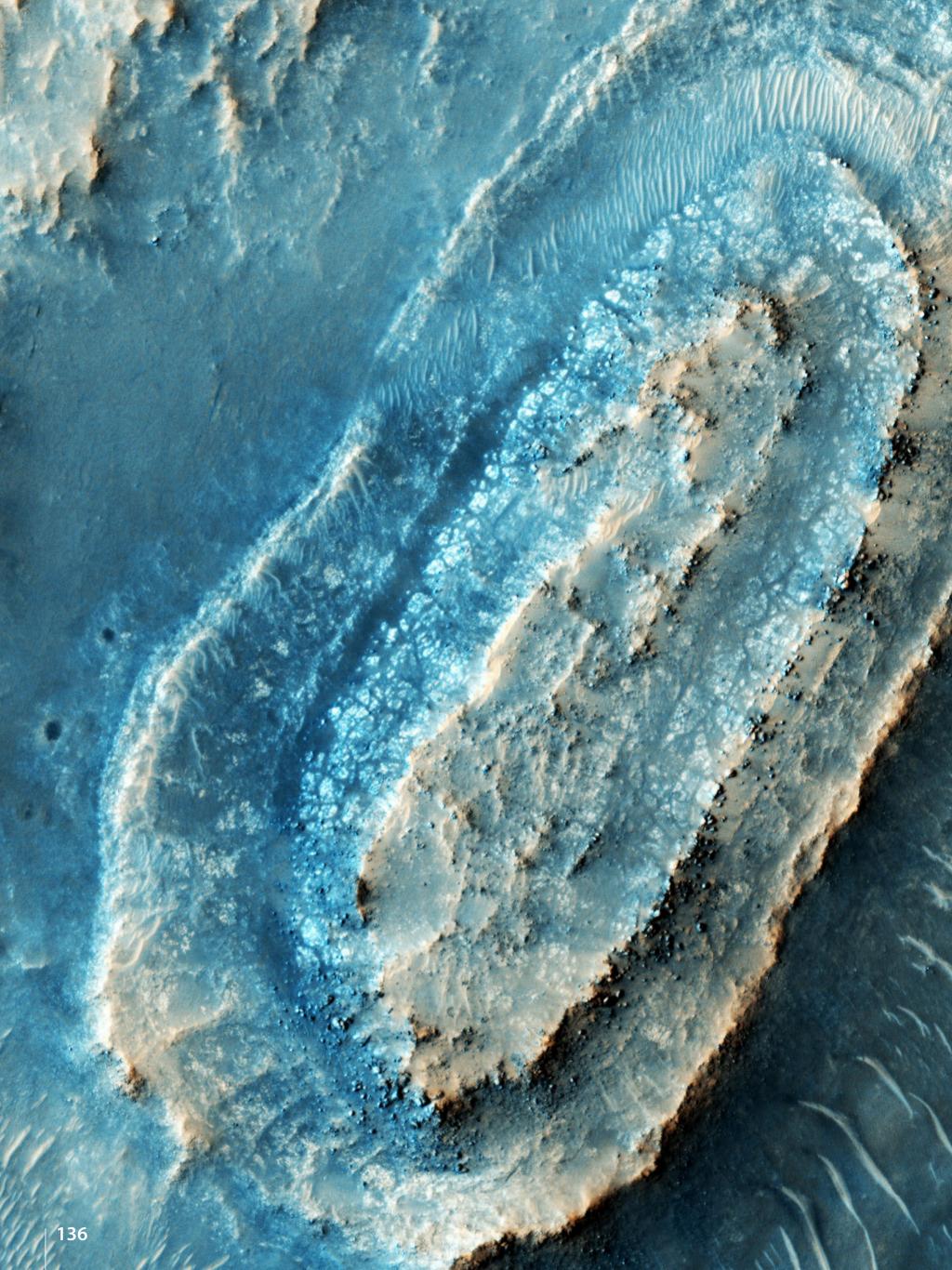


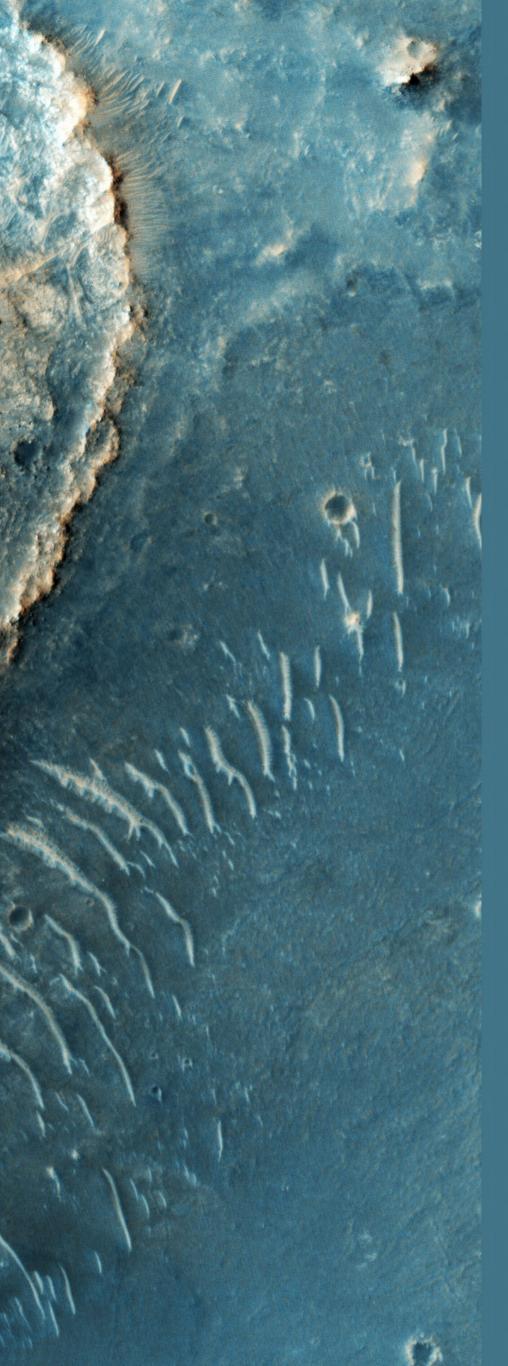
SCIENTISTS SHORTLIST THREE LANDING SITES FOR MARS 2020

Participants in a landing site workshop for NASA's upcoming Mars 2020 mission have recommended three locations on the Red Planet for further evaluation: Northeast Syrtis, Jezero crater, and Columbia Hills.

-Northeast Syrtis (**full image/caption**) was once warmed by volcanic activity. Underground heat sources made hot springs flow and surface ice melt. Microbes could have flourished here in liquid water that was in contact with minerals. The layered terrain there holds a rich record of interactions between water and minerals over successive periods of early Mars history.

-Jezero Crater (**full image/caption**) tells a story of the on-again, off-again nature of the wet past of Mars. Water filled and drained away from the crater on at least two occasions. More than 3.5 billion years ago, river channels spilled over the crater wall and created a lake. Scientists see evidence that water carried clay minerals from





the surrounding area into the crater after the lake dried up. Conceivably, microbial life could have lived in Jezero during one or more of these wet times. If so, signs of their remains might be found in lakebed sediments.

-At Columbia Hills (**full image/caption**), mineral springs once burbled up from the rocks. The discovery that hot springs flowed here was a major achievement of the Mars Exploration Rover, Spirit. The rover's discovery was an especially welcome surprise because Spirit had not found signs of water anywhere else in the 100-mile (160-kilometer)-wide Gusev Crater. After the rover stopped working in 2010, studies of its older data records showed evidence that past floods that may have formed a shallow lake in Gusev.

Mars 2020 is targeted for launch in July 2020 aboard an Atlas V 541 rocket from Space Launch Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida. The rover will conduct geological assessments of its landing site on Mars, determine the habitability of the environment, search for signs of ancient Martian life, and assess natural resources and hazards for future human explorers. It will also prepare a collection of samples for possible return to Earth by a future mission.

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory will build and manage operations of the Mars 2020 rover for the NASA Science Mission Directorate at the agency's headquarters in Washington.

For more information about NASA's Mars programs, visit:

http://www.nasa.gov/mars





COULD GENE EDITING HELP AVOID DISEASE? MAYBE

Don't expect designer babies any time soon but a major new ethics report leaves open the possibility of one day altering human heredity to fight genetic diseases, with stringent oversight, using new tools that precisely edit genes inside living cells.

What's called genome editing already is transforming biological research, and being used to develop treatments for patients struggling with a range of diseases.

The science is nowhere near ready for a huge next step that raises ethical questions - altering sperm, eggs or embryos so that babies don't inherit a disease that runs in the family, says a report from the National Academy of Sciences and National Academy of Medicine.

But if scientists learn how to safely pass alterations of the genetic code to future generations, the panel said "germline" editing could be attempted under strict criteria, including that it targets a serious disease with no reasonable alternative and is conducted under rigorous oversight.

"Caution is absolutely needed, but being cautious does not mean prohibition," said bioethicist R. Alta Charo of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"This committee is not saying we will or should do germline - heritable - editing. What we are saying is that we can identify a set of strict conditions under which it would be permissible to do it," Charo added. "But we are far, far away from being ready to try."

Genome editing should not go beyond healing the sick and enhance traits such as physical strength, what's commonly called "designer babies," the panel stressed.

But the public should get involved in these debates now, to say what might one day be acceptable.

The long-awaited report offers advice
- the prestigious academies cannot set
policy. But it is considered a step toward
creating international norms for responsible
development of this powerful technology. The
U.S. National Academies and its counterparts
in Britain and China have been holding
international meetings with the hope of doing
just that.

"Genome editing is a new tool for gene therapy and it has tremendous promise," Charo said.





But, she added, it has to be pursued in a way that promotes well-being and is responsible, respectful and fair.

Genome editing is essentially a biological version of cut-and-paste software, allowing scientists to turn genes on or off, repair or modify them inside living cells. There are a few older methods but one with the wonky name CRISPR-Cas9 is so much faster, cheaper and simpler to use that it has spurred an explosion of research.

Under development are ways to treat a range of diseases from sickle cell and hemophilia to cancer. In lab experiments using human cells or animals engineered with humanlike e disorders, scientists are unraveling how gene defects fuel disease - and are even trying to grow transplantable human organs inside pigs.

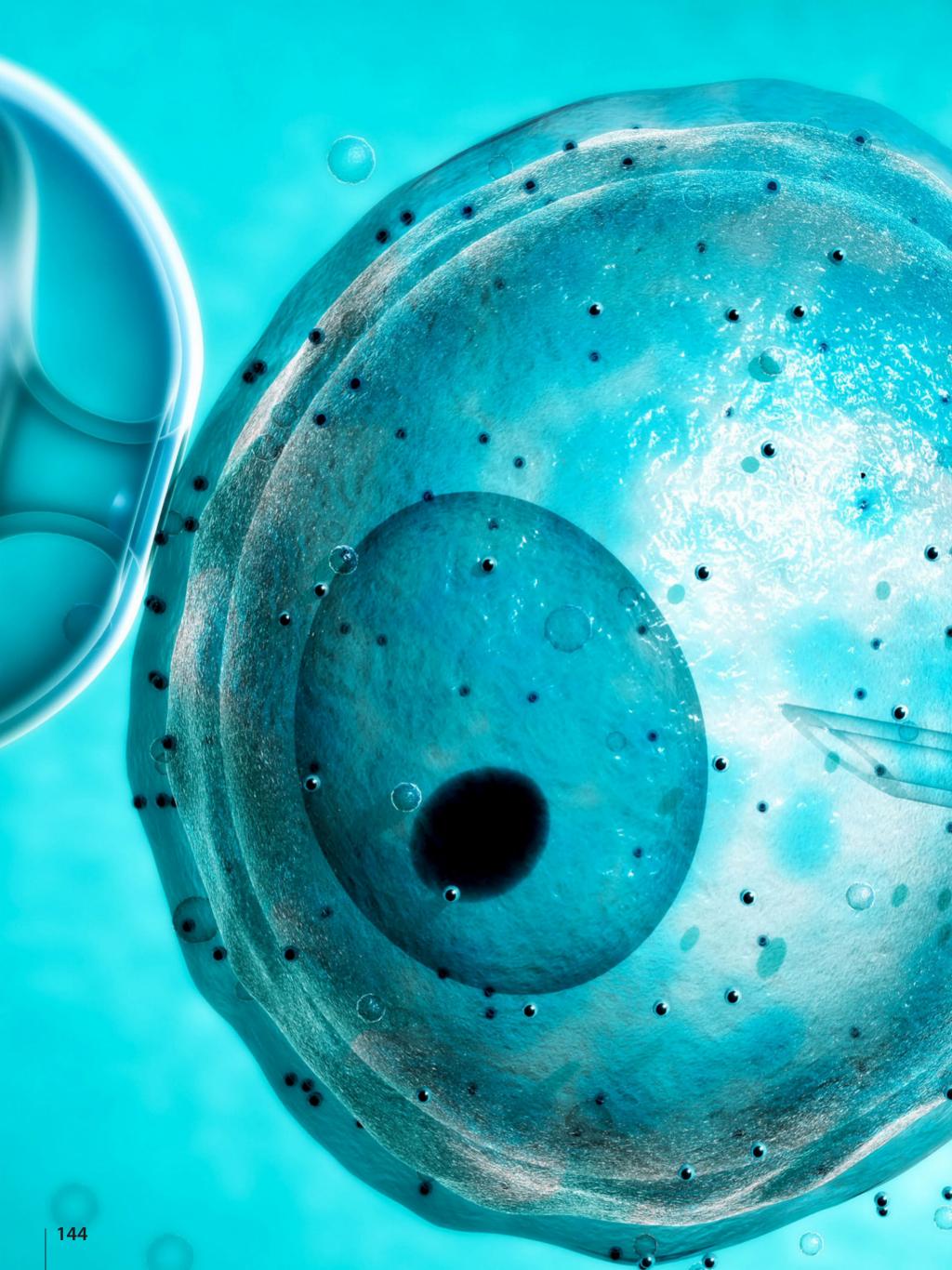
That kind of research is very promising, is adequately regulated today and should continue at full speed, the National Academies panel concluded.

When it comes to the more sci fi-sounding uses, it's quite possible scientists will learn how to perform germline editing in five to 10 years, said panel co-chair Richard Hynes of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Safety is one reason for caution, he said, as scientists will have to learn whether editing one gene has unwanted downstream effects.

Some critics argue that families plagued by inherited diseases already have other alternatives - adopt, use donated eggs, or undergo in vitro fertilization and discard resulting embryos that inherit the bad gene.













DISNEY ENDS DEAL VVITH YOUTUBE STAR OVER ANTISEMITIC STUNT

Disney's Maker Studios and Google's YouTube are distancing themselves from a top YouTube star after he made jokes construed as anti-Semitic and posted Nazi imagery in his videos.

Felix Kjellberg, known online as PewDiePie, has the most popular YouTube channel, with more than 53 million subscribers. The Swedish YouTube star rose to fame by posting videos of him playing and commenting about video games. More recently, he branched out into non-gaming videos that show him performing skits, stunts or making jokes.

Disney, whose Maker Studios runs Kjellberg's channels and network, said he crossed the line with some of his videos. One video from January shows two Indian men paid by Kjellberg to hold up a sign that says "Death to all Jews." Kjellberg said the video was meant to demonstrate how far people will go if they get paid to do something, but he didn't think they would actually do it. Other videos show Nazi imagery in a satirical way.

In blog post Kjellberg said he was making jokes, but realizes now that they were offensive.

Kjellberg's channel was already part of Maker Studios when the Walt Disney Co. bought Maker in 2014 for \$675 million. Maker contracts with individuals such as Kjellberg to produce videos for various YouTube channels.

Kjellberg (pronounced SHEHL'-burg) pulled the video showing the two men displaying the anti-Semitic sign, but it is excerpted in a Wall Street Journal video. Other videos still on the site show Nazi imagery being used satirically.

Maker Studios said in a statement that while Kjellberg's channel is popular because he is irreverent and provocative, the studio is ending its affiliation with him because he went too far.

YouTube spokeswoman Michelle Slavich said YouTube has canceled the release of the second season of Kjellberg's reality show "Scare PewDiePie" and removed the PewDiePie channel from its Google Preferred advertising program, which aggregates top YouTube content for advertisers to buy time on.







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