

NEWSLETTER

ITECH COMMITTEE

Project Loon



These helium-filled balloons are designed by Google to reach an altitude of almost 13 miles, nearly twice the flight height commercial airplanes reach. Once airborne, the balloons provide a reliable and cost-effective way to beam Internet service from the sky to places lacking it, providing educational and economic opportunities that come with Internet access for 4.3 billion people who are still offline. By the end of 2015, Google plans to launch enough balloons to test Internet coverage for a few regions in the Southern Hemisphere.

Galaxy S6 Edge, S6 Edge+



In a bid to challenge the likes of the iPhone 6 and newly announced HTC One M9, Samsung has redesigned the Galaxy S6 Edge and Galaxy S6 from the ground up. The smartphone has a metal body clad in Gorilla Glass 4, much like the Sony Xperia Z3, which is 50 percent tougher than those used in other smartphones on the market, according to Samsung. The firm took a dig at Apple with the claim that the S6 "will not bend". In terms of size, the Galaxy S6 Edge is 7mm thick and weighs 132g. Galaxy S6 Edge in white The Galaxy S6 Edge's stand-out feature is, of course, the curved display. The 5.1in 2560x1440 Super AMOLED display offers the same sharpness and vibrancy as the

Galaxy S6, with the addition of curved 'Edge' displays down the right and left hand sides. These additional displays provide functionality such as the ability to access favourite contacts and to quickly view information such as the date and weather. The Galaxy S6 Edge features a Samsung-branded Exynos processor, which is the first 14nm smartphone chip. This comes with 3GB RAM. Of course, the Galaxy S6 Edge will ship running Google's Android 5.0 Lollipop operating system

and, as rumours had suggested, comes with a stripped-back version of Samsung's TouchWiz user interface. The firm has reworked the interface, equipping it with a simpler, flatter design and less bloatware. The smartphone ships with just two Samsung apps pre-loaded. Samsung's software does debut Samsung Pay, however, a mobile payments service that looks to challenge Apple Pay. For its rear-facing camera, Galaxy S6 uses the same image sensor with optical image stabilization as the Galaxy Note 4, albeit with a f/1.9 aperture, object tracking autofocus, real-time HDR, and using the infrared of the heart rate sensor for calibrating white

balance. Samsung claimed that the camera upgrades would allow it to have better low-light performance. The front-facing camera was also upgraded to 5 megapixels with a similar aperture. The fingerprint scanner in the home button now uses a touch-based scanning mechanism rather than swipe-based; double-tapping the Home button activates the camera app.

4K TVs



Ultra-high-definition or 4K televisions are picking up steam, with all the major manufacturers now in full-blown push mode on the higher-resolution panels. Aside from packing more pixels onto screens, however, the TV makers, including Sony, Samsung and LG, are also adding high-dynamic-range technology, resulting in better colour ranges and whiter whites. Tracking firm IHS expects global sales of the higher-end sets to hit 96 million by 2019, up from just 12 million in 2014. In the professional world, 4K is a digital cinema standard that calls for a 4096 x 2160 pixel resolution. That first number is a horizontal measurement, the

4K, because the horizontal measurement is in the four thousand neighborhood and is double the prior 2K (2048 x 1080) standard.

Instagram Stories



In August 2016, Instagram launched Instagram Stories, a feature that allows users to take photos, add effects and layers, and add them to their Instagram story. Images uploaded to a user's story expire after 24 hours. The media noted the feature's similarities to Snapchat.

Instagram Stories appear in a bar at the top of your feed and all Instagram accounts will be able to share stories, from your best friends to your favorite popular accounts. When there's something new to see, their profile photo will have a colorful ring around it. To view someone's story, you simply need to tap on their profile photo, and their story will appear full-screen, showing you all of the content they've posted in the last 24hrs, the content will play in chronological order from oldest to newest. Once you're viewing a story, you can tap to go back and forward or swipe to jump to another person's story. Unlike regular posts, there are no likes or public comments.

A Drone With Mass Appeal



and better photographers. But for the most part, they're still too big and bulky to carry around comfortably, which can turn off more-casual consumers. Not so with DJI's Mavic Pro, which debuted in September; it's got all the trimmings of a state of the art drone—obstacle-avoidance technology, a 4K camera and the ability to track subjects while -flying—but it can also fold down to the size of a loaf of bread, smaller than any of its competitors. Realizing that goal required DJI's engineering team to “rethink all the aspects” of a typical drone, says Darren Liccardo, who helped lead the project. But ultimately, he adds, the effort paid off: because of its smaller size, the Mavic Pro is more nimble and less prone to accidents—yet another selling point that could attract new users.

The first 1TB SD card



I still remember when the first 1TB USB flash drives were coming out—it wasn't so many years ago. The fact that we can now stuff that same storage capacity in a tiny SD card is truly mind-boggling. We don't quite know the price yet, but it won't be cheap. The SanDisk 512MB SD card currently goes for \$345, so expect it to be significantly more than that. Storage capacity is one of those categories that is just constantly innovating and pushing forward with more and more storage in smaller packages for cheaper prices.