

Google CEO Pichai sees the end of computers as physical devices

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Google CEO Sundar Pichai's vision for the future has no space for computers. "Looking to the future, the next big step will be for the very concept of the device to fade away," Pichai said in Google's Founder's Letter.

"Over time, the computer itself -- whatever its form factor -- will be an intelligent assistant helping you through your day," Pichai said in his letter, breaking an annual tradition that has seen founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin penning letter to employees on the company's progress and priorities during the year.

Instead of smartphone touchscreens, Pichai sees artificial intelligence powering increasingly formless computers. "We will move from mobile first to an AI first world," he wrote.

"You should be able to move seamlessly across Google services in a natural way, and get assistance that understands your context, situation, and needs--all while respecting your privacy and protecting your data," Pichai said.

Pichai's letter follows the massive restructuring that Google underwent in August last year in which it separated its core internet business from its other 'moonshot' projects and clubbed them all under a new umbrella company called Alphabet.

The letter starts with a small introduction from Google co-founder Page, where he praises Pichai for his performance as new Google CEO. In his message, Pichai outlines six core areas of focus for Google across product lines.

Below is the letter with Page's introduction (as it appeared on Google blog):

This year's Founders' Letter

Every year, Larry and Sergey write a Founders' Letter to our stockholders updating them with some of our recent highlights and sharing our vision for the future. This year, they decided to try something new. - Ed.

In August, I announced Alphabet and our new structure and shared my thoughts on how we were thinking about the future of our business. (It is reprinted here in case you missed it, as it seems to apply just as much today.) I'm really pleased with how Alphabet is going. I am also very pleased with Sundar's performance as our new

Google CEO. Since the majority of our big bets are in Google, I wanted to give him most of the bully-pulpit here to reflect on

Google's accomplishments and share his vision. In the future, you should expect that Sundar, Sergey and I will use this space to give you a good personal overview of where we are and where we are going.

- Larry Page, CEO, Alphabet

(Pichai's letter begins)

When Larry and Sergey founded Google in 1998, there were about 300 million people online. By and large, they were sitting in a chair, logging on to a desktop machine, typing searches on a big keyboard connected to a big, bulky monitor. Today, that number is around 3 billion people, many of them searching for information on tiny devices they carry with them wherever they go.

In many ways, the founding mission of Google back in '98 "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" is even truer and more important to tackle today, in a world where people look to their devices to help organize their day, get them from one place to another, and keep in touch. The mobile phone really has become the remote control for our daily lives, and we're communicating, consuming, educating, and entertaining ourselves, on our phones, in ways unimaginable just a few years ago.