Google to release first in-house smartwatch next year: reports

Google is reportedly planning to release its first in-house smartwatch next year, reveals a report by Insider.

Even though the company has released wearable companion platforms for Android devices since 2014, this will be the first official smartwatch made by Google, should the project see daylight.

While no official name has been confirmed yet, Insider reports that the watch currently goes by the codename 'Rohan' and is being made by Google's Pixel group, famous for making Google Pixel smartphones and earbuds.

The watch will contain features such as a heart monitor and step counter; the basics of fitness tracking apps. Reports also state that Google will introduce Fitbit integration with the new smartwatch once it is officially released.

Google completed its Fitbit acquisition at the beginning of this year for $2.1 billion and reports suggest that the Google smartwatch will cost more than Fitbit devices. With this new smartwatch, Google plans on reintegrating the Wear OS 3 platform.

Take your pick from Apple's most downloaded apps of 2021

On 2 December, Apple revealed the list of their most downloaded apps this year, as well as choosing 15 apps and games, the winners of the App Store Awards 2021. The top three most downloaded free iPhone apps were TikTok, YouTube and Instagram. Here are the full lists below.

TOP FREE IPHONE APPS

TikTok
YouTube
Instagram
Snapchat
Facebook
Messenger
Google Maps
Gmail
ZOOM
Amazon
Shopping

TOP PAID IPHONE APPS

Procreate Pocket
HotSchedules
The Wonder Weeks
TouchRetouch
Facetune
Shadowrocket
75 Hard
Dark Sky
Weather
Autosleep
SkyView

TOP FREE IPHONE GAMES

Among Us!
Roblox
Project Makeover
Call of Duty: Mobile
Subway Surfers
High Heels!
Magic Tiles 3: Piano Game
Water Sort Puzzle
Shortcut Run
Bridge Race

TOP PAID IPHONE GAMES

Minecraft
Heads Up!
Bloons TD 6
Monopoly
Geometry Dash
My Child Lebensborn
Plague Inc.
True Skate
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas
Incredibox

Selise partners with smart contract platform Fantom

Switzerland and Bangladesh based technology house SELISE has announced a partnership with Fantom Foundation, which supports one of the largest public blockchain networks in the world.

Attended by distinguished guests, the two organisations signed their official partnership in a ceremony held on 30th November in Dhaka.

Fantom uses distributed ledger technology (DLT) with their unique Lachesis asynchronous Byzantine Fault-Tolerant (aBFT). It draws on the Ethereum Virtual Machine (EVM) open source technology stack for dApp developers.

SELISE partnered with Fantom Foundation to initially tackle critical bottlenecks in the global financial services industry. By using Fantom's powerful network, SELISE aims to implement digital solutions in mobile payment, securities exchange, insurance, and banking.

Infobip acquires Peerless Network; raises additional $500m

Infobip Group, a global cloud communications platform company for customer engagement announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement with global VoIP provider Peerless Network, marking Infobip's fourth acquisition in under a year. The transaction is expected to complete upon receipt of regulatory approvals in 2022 and will be financed with a combination of Infobip shares and cash. Peerless Network management will roll parts of its holdings into Infobip.

Launched in 2008, the Peerless Network portfolio delivers a robust suite of cutting-edge voice, UCaaS, SIP Trunking, Messaging, APIs, MS Teams integration, and other collaboration products and services. With its own nationwide voice network, Peerless Network is trusted by enterprises, Fortune 500 companies, world-leading MNOs, MVNOs and IXCs, and the nation's largest CLECs and VOIP Service Providers.

The acquisition builds on Infobip's ongoing investments and earlier acquisition of US messaging heavyweight OpenMarket, which closed in December 2020. Q1 2021 Revenue grew 55% y/y, a function of continued usage growth in its core business plus contributions from the $300m acquisition of OpenMarket. Other acquisitions include the developer Shift Conference franchise, purchased in April, and the world's number one SMS firewall provider, Anam, in May 2021.

In September 2021, Infobip also secured, through direct loan placement, additional funding in the amount of $500m, advised by Morgan Stanley, and led by funds managed by the Credit Group of Ares Management Corporation, and funds and accounts managed by BlackRock. The direct loan placement puts Infobip alongside an exclusive group of high growth, high-value technology companies, which utilised the same structure. This is Infobip's second funding round, following One Equity Partner's EUR 300m investment in H2 2020.