

Google set to be trusted Make in India partner

Tech giant commits to roll out first locally made Pixel phone by 2024

ASHUTOSH MISHRA & SOURABH LELE
New Delhi, 19 October

India on Thursday found its latest partner to join in the local manufacturing initiative with Google — arguably the last remaining tech major to do so — committing to roll out the first made in India Pixel phone by 2024.

Google will soon start producing Pixel 8, the latest of its premium smartphone series in India, with international as well as domestic manufacturing partners. The development assumes significance, as it follows an arrangement between global PC maker HP and Google to manufacture Chromebook laptops in India from October 2. During its annual Google for India summit, the company for the first time laid emphasis on development and supplies of its hardware products as a “trusted partner” to the country.

“It’s an early step towards expanding our production here to meet the local demand for Pixel devices and even more importantly, it’s a huge step forward in Google’s commitment to India. It helps us better serve the billion-plus people in India with our products and services every day,” said Rick Osterloh, senior vice-president at Google for devices and services.

Osterloh said that with the third highest shipments in the world, India’s premium smartphone market is booming. According to a report by International Data Corporation, India reported over 50 per cent year-on-year growth in the segment in 2022. “India is a priority market for Pixel and we are committed to bringing the best of Google’s hardware and software experiences to the country and we see an even greater opportunity to make Pixel’s incredible innovation and helpfulness available to more people across India,” Osterloh said.

Pixel forms a tiny part of the global smartphone shipments with 315,900 units — a share of just 0.5 per cent — sold in the first half of 2023. Still, Google has focused on providing special features like night sight for low light photography and computational photography to on-the-phone translations with its Tensor chips.

“We have invited Google to start manufacturing Tensor chips in an Indian fab within three years. Also, we want them to start producing Pixel Fold models locally. We also want a collaboration with Google to deepen the entire (electronic) compon-



Google's Rick Osterloh (centre) with IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday

Google Cloud to build super app

Google on Thursday announced that it will build a super app in collaboration with Axis My India to provide citizen-centric services. Termed “A”, the app will leverage Google Cloud’s generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) capabilities to provide a host of services in multiple languages. Google Cloud also announced plans to extend its partnership with the government-led Open Network for Digital Commerce to tap GenAI in order to help farmer produce organisations sell their produce online. Google also aims to train over one million professionals and students in GenAI, as a part of its upcoming collaboration with the Centre’s Bhashini platform.

ent ecosystem,” said Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw.

The announcement came days after Sundar Pichai, chief executive officer of Google and Alphabet, in a virtual meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed the company’s role in enhancing India’s electronics manufacturing ecosystem. The conversation also focused on

hardware manufacturing as the new chapter of Google’s partnership with India.

Merchant credit line, sachet loans on GPay

At Thursday’s event, Google also made a series of other announcements. The company has inked partnerships with banks and financing companies to increase credit penetration for GPay users and small businesses. The new partners include Axis Bank, Indifi Technologies and DMI Finance. While the credit is underwritten by accredited financial institutions, Google Pay collaborates with them to make it accessible, simple and convenient.

Earlier this year, Google Pay added the facility to add RuPay credit cards to the app, and use them to seamlessly make payments via Unified Payments Interface (UPI). Extending the function further, in collaboration with its payment service provider, ICICI Bank, users can avail credit lines from banks on UPI, and use it to make payments via Google Pay in the same way that they would with a UPI payment.

DigiKavach to combat online fraud

With a new early threat detection and warning system, Google unveiled DigiKavach, a flagship programme to identify and study emerging financial fraud patterns and develop and implement effective counter measures before they cause widespread harm.