

ROUGH TYPE

[home](#) | [archives & search](#) | [rough type store](#) | [nicholasgarr.com](#)

« [India's online Office knockoff](#) | [Main](#) | [Understanding Google](#) »

Microsoft extends data center buildout to Siberia

November 26, 2007

In a further sign of the vast scope of the battle to dominate the emerging utility computing grid, Microsoft today announced that it plans to build a large data center in Siberia, [notes](#) Data Center Knowledge. According to a local press [report](#), the center will be located in Irkutsk (at a site to be determined), will hold "tens of thousands of servers," and will cost approximately \$500 million to build and outfit.

The Siberia announcement is another sign that Microsoft is picking up the pace of its buildout. Earlier this month, the company confirmed that it will [construct](#) a "mega data center" near Dublin, Ireland, and also announced that it will build its largest data center yet - the size of eight football fields- in the Chicago suburb of Northlake. These centers, all dedicated to supplying the company's Live-branded software applications over the internet, supplement server farms already under construction in Quincy, Washington, and San Antonio, Texas.

Microsoft is playing catchup with Google, which is already reported to have dozens of data centers throughout the world and has this year announced new centers in North Carolina, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Iowa, and the Netherlands. (Today's Des Moines Register has a long [article](#) with some new details on the Iowa plant, which Google appears to view as an important "hub" for its North American network.) Altogether, the new data centers announced by Google and Microsoft this year represent capital investments of more than \$4 billion.

Both Microsoft and Google are looking for creative ways to reduce the electricity consumed by their big computing plants. Google located its center in The Dalles, Oregon, beside the Columbia River in order to use the river's water to cool its computers, reducing the need for air conditioning. One of the reasons Microsoft chose the Chicago area for its largest center is the cold climate. A Microsoft spokesman [said](#) "the cool weather can be tapped in innovative ways to cheaply and efficiently cool down racks and racks of tens of thousands of computers that generate loads of heat." One assumes that Siberia holds a similar attraction.

If local communities are hoping these giant centers will create a lot of new jobs, they'll probably be disappointed. Microsoft has revealed that the Chicago facility, which may be the biggest data center on earth when it's completed next year, will employ a grand total of between 35 and 50 people.

Posted by nick at November 26, 2007 10:22 AM

Advertisement: Are you ready for "The Big Switch"? *Fast Company* calls Nicholas Carr's new book "compulsively readable - for nontechies, too." *Salon* says it's "magisterial." [Order now](#) from Amazon.com.

Comments

Of course, instead of going to Siberia, MS might consider using server that contain low power consumption CPUs. Remember, TransMeta and the Crusoe processor? As I recall, server blades using low power processors were estimated to consume about 15 watt/hour compared to Intel based one that used 70-90watt/hour. Then, they could put them in Holland and run them off windmills....

Posted by: Linuxguru1968  at November 26, 2007 01:16 PM

You know, the only other thing I know about Irkutsk is that it's a region in the popular board game Risk: The Game of World Domination.

Take that as you will.

Posted by: EzraBall  at November 26, 2007 09:39 PM

Well, electricity is really cheap there. The top problem is connectivity: Russian long-haul market is next to monopolistic, 10Mbit/s may cost >\$10000 a month. MS will need a cable to Japan.

Posted by: [Victor Grishchenko](#)  at November 26, 2007 10:51 PM

Unless there is a huge market, wouldn't the Siberian server suffer from lag? It's probably a few microseconds away from the North of China--but it's further away then any other server further South, wouldn't it be?

Posted by: [Bertil](#)  at November 29, 2007 10:15 AM

Post a comment

You are not signed in. [Sign in](#)



[Subscribe to Rough Type](#)



Nick's new book: *"Future Shock for the web-apps era" -Fast Company*

"Ominously prescient" -Kirkus Reviews

"Riveting stuff" -New York Post

[Order from Amazon](#)

[Visit Big Switch site](#)

[Read Q&A with Nick](#)

Greatest hits

[The amorality of Web 2.0](#)

[The editor and the crowd](#)

[Avatars consume as much electricity as Brazilians](#)

[The great unread](#)

[The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock's avatar](#)

[Sharecropping the long tail](#)

[The social graft](#)

[Steve Jobs' devices](#)

[MySpace's vacancy](#)

Other writing

[The ignorance of crowds](#)

[The recorded life](#)

[The end of corporate computing](#)

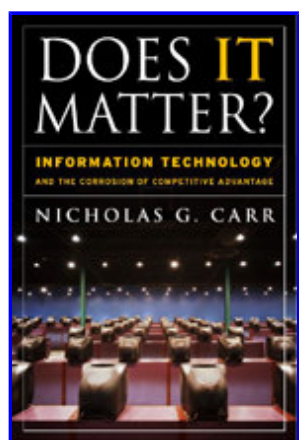
[IT doesn't matter](#)

[The parasitic blogger](#)

[The sixth force](#)

[Hypermediation](#)

[More](#)



Nick's last book: [Order from Amazon](#)

[Visit book site](#)

Rough Type is:

Written and published by

[Nicholas Carr](#)

Designed by [Tim Swan](#)

[What?](#)