

Google to fund digital journalism innovation

WASHINGTON: Google, which has had strained relations with some US newspaper publishers, announced on Tuesday (26 October 2010) it was donating five million dollars to encourage innovation in digital journalism.



"Journalism is fundamental to a functioning democracy," said Nikesh Arora, president of Google's global sales operations and business development.

"So as media organisations globally continue to broaden their presence online, we're eager to play our part on the technology side," Arora said.

"But while we're mostly focused on working with news organisations to develop better products for users, we also believe it's crucial to encourage innovation at the grassroots level," he said.

"That's why we're giving five million dollars in grants to non-profit organisations that are working to develop new approaches to journalism in the digital age," Arora said.

He said two million dollars would go to the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which runs a number of programs promoting journalism, innovation and training.

"We're eager to do even more internationally, so we will be investing the remaining three million dollars in journalism projects in other countries through a similar partnership," Arora said.

"We look forward to working with the journalism community to help digital news move forward," he said.

The Mountain View, California-based Google and its news aggregator website Google News have drawn fire from some US newspaper owners for linking to their articles without sharing advertising revenue.

Google argues that it drives traffic to newspaper websites and newspapers can easily prevent the web search engine from accessing their content if they choose to do so.

Source: AFP