

Facebook Builds First European Data Center in Lulea, Sweden

Facebook today announced that it will locate its third data center in Lulea, Sweden, which lies near the Arctic Circle. The data center is Facebook's first data center in Europe and will serve more than 800 million Facebook users. "After a rigorous review process of sites across Europe, we concluded that Lulea offered the best package of resources – including a suitable climate for environmental cooling, clean power resources, available land, talented regional workforce and supportive business and corporate environment", says Tom Furlong, Director of Site Operations at Facebook.

Facebook is the number one social media site in the world, with more than 800 million users globally. The Facebook data center in Lulea will be the largest of its kind ever built in Europe, and the northernmost data center of this magnitude on Earth.

The Swedish city of Lulea has the same latitude as Fairbanks, Alaska, USA, and is the coldest region in Sweden – a crucial factor since cooling servers is a major issue for data centers.

Lulea's historic industrial roots lie in pulp, mining and steel, which are still important for the region. The tough requirements set by these industries have over the years created a very robust infrastructure. When competing for the industries of tomorrow, this is an advantage of utmost importance.

During the last two years, local Lulea authorities have been working hard to make the Facebook establishment in Lulea happen. And Facebook's decision is a major milestone in the history of Lulea.

"Facebook's data center in Lulea marks the beginning of a new era, as we are now entering a digital industrial age", says Mayor Karl Petersen, himself an enthusiastic Facebook user with more than 1,350 friends on the social network.

"The City of Lulea, the Ministry of Enterprise, and Invest Sweden has been tremendously persuasive in helping us make this decision. We look forward to joining the community and working with them to provide faster, more reliable and more robust service to people around the world who rely on Facebook to connect and share", continues Tom Furlong.

The Lulea Data Center will consist of three server buildings with an area of 28 000 m² (300 000 ft²) each. Construction takes place in three phases and begins instantly. The first building is to be operational within a year and the entire facility is scheduled for completion by 2014. About 300 full-time positions will be required during the first three years.

One key requirement from Facebook is that the data center should run primarily on hydropower.

"Facebook required a certificate verifying that the energy consumed by the facility primarily should come from renewable resources. Thanks to our main river Lule river, we can guarantee this. In fact, Lule river generates nine percent of Swedish electricity through hydropower", says Petersen.

The establishment of Facebook's new data center will make the region a major node for data traffic in Europe, and this fact has generated a new epithet for the Lulea region – The Node Pole.

"We hope other global companies see the innate climate qualities and benefits of The Node Pole region, and choose to follow in Facebook's path. Facebook thoroughly investigated a great number of locations all over the world, and found that Lulea was the best place to be", says Karl Petersen.

The Node Pole region is being established to meet the future demands that cloud computing will put on data center capacity. An increasing amount of data is moving from local servers and hard drives to the cloud. The massive amount of data in the cloud needs to be managed in huge data centers with excellent infrastructure for connectivity and computing.

“Companies need reliable and cost-efficient energy, stable conditions and natural cooling for modern data centers. It’s an enormous opportunity for the region and the companies who choose to invest here”, says Matz Engman, CEO of Lulea Naringsliv AB.

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Facebook facts

- ➔ People spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook.
- ➔ Facebook has more than 690 billion page views per month.
- ➔ There are over 900 million pages, groups, events and community pages on Facebook.
- ➔ Users upload 100 million photos each day.
- ➔ Each month, over 30 billion pieces of content are shared.
- ➔ 700 status updates are made every second.
- ➔ More than half of all Facebook users return every day.
- ➔ Facebook has more than 200 million mobile users each month.

About Facebook

Founded in February 2004, Facebook’s mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. Anyone can sign up for Facebook and interact with the people they know in a trusted environment. Facebook is a privately held company and is headquartered in Palo Alto, Calif.

About Luleå

Luleå is one of Scandinavia’s leading ICT centers with Luleå University of Technology and the Aurorum Science Park, with the vision to become a world leader in high-tech, power-intensive industries. The city of 74 000 residents is situated close to the Arctic Circle at the same latitude as Fairbanks, Alaska and Yakutsk, Russia. The location holds a combination of ideal inherent qualities for data storage. Besides having an extremely stable electricity infrastructure, the climate in Luleå provides natural cooling and renewable hydropower. The region is also one of the most geologically, politically and socially stable areas in the world. These qualities, the geographical position and the fact that the establishment of Facebook’s new data center will make the region a major node for data traffic in Europe, has generated a new epithet for the Luleå region – The Node Pole.