

## Google's Year in Search 2015

Google has released it's list of [2015's biggest moments](#), and the searches that ensued:

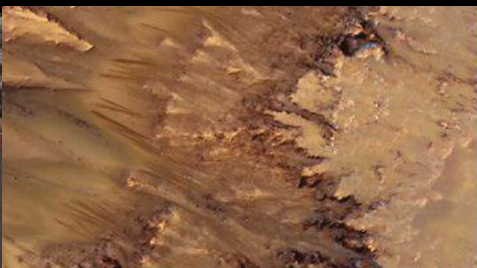
**December**  
Star Wars (155M+ searches)



**November**  
Paris Under Attack (897M+)



**October**  
Water on Mars (10M+)



**September**  
Volkswagon Emmisions Scandal (13M+)



**August**  
Migrant Crisis (23M+)



**July**  
Greece on the Brink (35M+)



**June**  
China Crisis (12M+)



**April**  
FIFA in Crisis (42M+)



**April**  
Nepal Earthquake (85M+)



**March**  
Cricket World Cup (323M+)

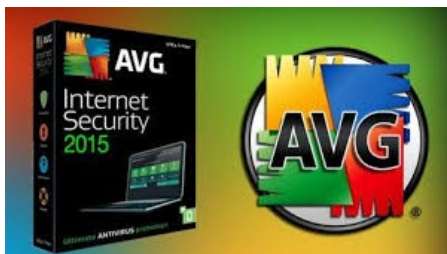


**February**  
87th Academy Awards (406M+)



**February**  
Farewell to Stars (123M+)





### AVG Puts Millions of Google Chrome Users at Risk

Well known for its free and commercial security products that offer a wide range of security-related safeguards and services, cybersecurity company [AVG](#) has put millions of Chrome users at risk.

AVG, like many other cybersecurity companies offering free products, uses different strategies to earn revenue from its free offerings. One revenue stream was getting customers to upgrade from the free version of AVG to paid versions. The free version works, but is also used as a way to advertise its upgraded (aka paid) version, which offers advanced features such as anti-spam or enhanced firewall.

Customers who installed AVG software on their PC got a prompt to safeguard their browsers. A click on “ok” installs [AVG Web TuneUp](#), and in turn, changes the home page, new tab page, and default search provider. The customer is also prompted to grant permission to make a total of 8 changes.

The reason for the requested changes? Not security, but money. AVG earns revenue when users make searches and click on the ads on the custom search engine AVG created.

Combined with a recently [announced company policy](#) that it will collect and sell “non-identifiable user data to third-parties”, you end up with a very scary “cyber-security” product.



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### Edmonton Uber Passenger Charged More Than \$1,100

An Edmonton Uber passenger is calling for an [Uber](#) fare cap, and clearer warnings on fare hikes after a ride across Edmonton cost more than some all-inclusive vacations.



Unaware of Uber's "surge pricing" policy, Matt Lindsay accepted a ride at 8.9 times the regular fare while trying to get home from a wedding. The bill for \$1,114 landed in his inbox after the ride.

Uber uses "surge pricing" during periods of high demands, to entice more drivers on the road to serve passengers. Customers are supposed to be warned about the increased price in the app prior to accepting the ride, but many are still caught by surprise.

A spokesman for the Alberta Taxi Group of drivers stated that the metered fare that Lindsay took would be roughly \$65 - \$70 in a traditional taxi. A limo ride for the same distance would be just over \$100. Edmonton transit ran for free on New Year's Eve.

In a [blog post Jan 2/16](#), Uber reported millions of riders used the Uber app to hail a ride on New Year's Eve, more than 150,000 people were in an Uber at the stroke of midnight, and in the U.S. 13% of riders paid 3 or more times the regular price.

Uber reports it warns customers about the price increase in the app, and also sent out a description of surge pricing to every customer by email, 10 days prior to New Year's Eve. Customers who see the warning and wait 10 minutes typically see the price go back to normal.

Uber officials have confirmed the company is refunding half of the money.

### Dating App 'Hinge' Allows Users to Connect over Shared Events

In an effort to further differentiate themselves from rival [Tinder](#), Hinge allows users to connect over shared events and experiences.

[Hinge](#), an online dating app that calls itself the "[less random Tinder](#)", allows users to connect over shared experiences such as "being a leftie", "partying at Mardi Gras", or being "suspended from school".

Hinge works similar to Tinder, users swipe right to indicate their interest in a profile, except members are only paired if they share at least 1 Facebook friend. This is meant to hold users accountable for their actions on the dating site, to real world markers, including last names, education, work and social circles.

The company released the shared experiences "people are most likely to bond over" as well as those least likely to inspire further connection.

Using the shared experiences, "being suspended from school", "southeast Asia", "being a cyclist" or "being a leftie" is apparently a good way to get a follow-up message/phone number, while "interest in board games", "sea creature attack", or "love of cooking" aren't likely to encourage connection.

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### Fallout 4 Addict Blames Game for Loss of Wife, Job

A 28-year old Siberian gamer is blaming the game developer for building a fun game.

[According to RT](#), the unnamed man downloaded Fallout 4 with the intention of paying it sporadically, and instead, went on a 3-week gaming binge while ignoring the real world. This includes skipping work, ignoring friends and wife, and sleeping and eating only minimally.

Though this isn't the first lawsuit of its kind, it is the first to come from Russia. The man and his lawyer are seeking 500,000 rubles (or approx. \$7,000). The man's defense argument? "If I knew that this game could have become so addictive, I would have become a lot more wary of it. I would not have bought it, or I would have left it until I was on holiday or until the New Year holidays."

A [similar case](#) was filed in federal court in Hawaii by Craig Smallwood sued NCsoft of South Korea over his addiction to Lineage II, in which he spent over 20,000 hours playing. The judge ruled in favor of the plaintiff in this instance.

The law firm representing the Siberian gamer is looking to "see how far we can go regarding this case."

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