

Verizon to allow Skype calls over wireless network

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(AP) -- Verizon Wireless will let customers use the Internet phone service Skype to make free calls on some phones, an application that other wireless carriers have not allowed.

Under a deal announced Tuesday at the Mobile World Congress trade show, users of some Verizon phones who have a voice and data plan will be able to download a free [Skype](#) application in late March. That will let them call or instant message other Skype users for free or call regular phone numbers for a fee paid to Skype. These calls would go over Verizon's data network and would not use up minutes on a cell phone plan.

Initially, the mobile application will be available for nine Verizon

phones, including several BlackBerry models and Motorola Inc.'s Droid and upcoming Devour handsets.

John Stratton, Verizon's chief marketing officer, said the application will be able to run all the time in the background. This means other people should be able to contact you through Skype even if your phone is on standby.

Other [wireless carriers](#) have blocked the Skype app from running all the time. It's available on the [iPhone](#) only in Wi-Fi hot spots and not over AT&T's data network. Verizon's version of Skype mobile will not work over Wi-Fi, the companies said.

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