

# US cable TV giant adding Skype calls

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US cable TV giant Comcast on Tuesday announced plans to add video chat to television viewing through a partnership with Skype.

US cable TV giant Comcast announced plans to add video chat to television viewing through a partnership with Skype.

Comcast said customers would soon be able to make and receive video calls through high-definition televisions using Skype.

"TV has evolved into a [social experience](#), and Comcast and Skype will be delivering a product that personalizes the TV experience even more," said [cable company](#) president Neil Smit.

"Our unique relationship with Skype not only will change how our customers interact with their TV, but also will create new and meaningful ways to bring our customers closer to the people they care

about," he added.

Comcast envisioned enabling people to make low-cost Internet video calls on "the biggest screen in the house" while watching big televised events or celebrating special occasions.

"We can bring video calling to the heart of the home, allowing people to share life's experiences both big and small," said Skype chief executive Tony Bates.

The service will work on [high-definition television](#) screens using an adaptor box, a video camera, and a [TV remote control](#) adapted for text messaging.

Comcast planned to begin testing the Skype service with customers in the coming months.

The partnership came in the wake of Microsoft cutting a deal to buy Internet voice and video leader Skype for \$8.5 billion dollars.

The purchase of Skype, which reportedly also attracted interest from Cisco, [Facebook](#) and [Google](#), is the largest ever by Microsoft and gives it control of one of the few companies whose name has become a verb, as in to "Skype."

Skype, one of the top applications on Apple's [iPhone](#) and on smartphones powered by Google's [Android](#) software, has some 170 million users who will now be able to "Skype" using Windows-powered phones or even Xbox game consoles.

"Together we will create the future of real-time communications so people can easily stay connected to family, friends, clients and colleagues anywhere in the world," Microsoft chief executive Steve

Ballmer vowed while announcing the Skype acquisition last month.

Microsoft said Skype will become a new business division within Microsoft with Skype CEO Bates assuming the title of president of the Microsoft Skype Division, reporting directly to Ballmer.

Skype users can make low-cost or free phone calls over the Internet using their computers or smartphones. Skype bypasses the standard telephone network by channeling voice and video calls over the Web.

"At Microsoft we see tremendous opportunity to bring together what people want all on a single screen," Ballmer said. "We are committed to optimize Skype for TV with Xbox and Kinect, for the phone and for the PC."

[Skype](#) was founded in 2003 and acquired by online auction giant eBay in September 2005. It was sold to the investment group led by Silver Lake in November 2009 in a deal that valued the company at \$2.75 billion.

The acquisition is subject to regulatory approvals which the companies said they expect to obtain this year.

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