

Saudi threatens to ban WhatsApp, Viber and Skype: sources

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Local telecommunication providers have been told to ask the operators

of the services to furnish means of control, an official at the kingdom's Communications and Information Technology Commission said, requesting [anonymity](#).

Another source at [telecom operator](#) Saudi Telecommunications Co. (STC) said the commission gave service providers one week ending on Saturday to respond, warning it would "take measures to ban them" if they failed to comply.

An industry source said telecom operators were behind the move, accusing the STC, along with Mobily and Zain, of asking the commission to impose [censorship](#) due to the "damage" caused by the free-of-charge applications.

In neighbouring UAE, most Skype applications and Viber are blocked but WhatsApp messenger remains accessible.

The two countries in 2010 threatened to ban BlackBerry instant messaging and demanded installing local servers to censor the service. The services remain uninterrupted but it was not clear how far the RIM Canadian maker did comply.

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