

WhatsApp to drop renewal fees for the messaging service

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WhatsApp, a popular mobile messaging service owned by Facebook, says it will drop its 99-cent subscription fee over the next several weeks.

The company said Monday that charging the fee after one free year hasn't worked well.

It says that many [users](#) don't have a credit or [debit card](#) and are afraid of losing the service when it's time to renew.

WhatsApp says nearly a billion people around the world use the service.

Company officials say they don't plan to introduce ads to offset the loss of fees. They say they will start testing tools this year to let customers communicate with banks and other businesses and organizations, but they aren't providing details.

Facebook Inc. paid \$22 billion to buy the messaging service in 2014.

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