

# AOL Instant Messenger to sign off

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In this Jan. 12, 2010, file photo, an AOL logo is seen in the company's office in Hamburg, Germany. AOL announced on Oct. 6, 2017, that it will discontinue its once-popular Instant Messenger platform on Dec. 15 (AP Photo/Axel Heimken, File)

AOL Instant Messenger, one of the pioneering chat applications of the internet's early days, will be shut down December 15, the company said

Friday.

The shutdown comes 20 years after the launch of AIM, which became a wildly popular feature of AOL, the largest internet provider at the time.

Verizon, which acquired AOL in 2015 and merged it into a unit called Oath this year, said it is looking at new services to replace the instant [messenger](#).

"AIM tapped into new digital technologies and ignited a cultural shift, but the way in which we communicate with each other has profoundly changed," said Michael Albers, [vice president](#) at Oath.

"As a result we've made the decision that we will be discontinuing AIM effective December 15, 2017. We are more excited than ever to continue building the next generation of iconic brands and life-changing products for users around the world."

AIM has been overtaken by other messaging applications and [social media](#) amid a growing move to smartphones.

Facebook-owned WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger each have more than one billion users.

AOL has provided no specific user numbers but one report said fewer than 10 million people were regular AIM users.

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