

Skype eyes US business customers, Facebook

30 September 2010



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A technology blog, the Dow Jones-owned AllThingsDigital, reported meanwhile that Luxembourg-based [Skype](#) was also set to announce a partnership with [Facebook](#) that would integrate Skype services into the social network.

Skype and Avaya, a provider of enterprise communications systems, software and services based in Basking Ridge, New Jersey said their agreement calls for the delivery of low-cost communications to business clients.

Avaya customers in the United States will have access to Skype Connect, allowing them to save on international calls.

Skype, which was founded in 2003, bypasses the standard telephone network by channeling voice, video and text conversations over the Internet.

Avaya and Skype said that in the second half of 2011, they will deliver integrated solutions that will allow instant messaging, voice and video communications between their respective users.

"Our relationship with Avaya is expected to expand the footprint for Skype Connect into more enterprises in the US market, while allowing us to help Avaya's customers benefit from Skype's cost savings and access to Skype's global user base," Skype vice president David Gurle said in a statement.

"We believe our integrated solution in the second half of 2011 is expected to offer the benefits of Skype to a growing number of businesses and open up new ways for people to communicate and collaborate."

AllThingsDigital said the Facebook and Skype partnership would see the integration of Skype SMS messaging and voice chat into the social network, which has more than 500 million members worldwide.

Contacted by AFP, a Facebook spokesman said: "We work with a lot of companies on Facebook integrations, but have nothing to announce with regards to Skype at this time."

Skype also declined to comment on any potential agreement with Facebook.

Last month, the communications firm announced plans to raise up to 100 million dollars in shares by listing on the NASDAQ stock exchange.

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APA citation: Skype eyes US business customers, Facebook (2010, September 30) retrieved 17 October 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-09-skype-eyes-business-customers-facebook.html>

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