

Amazon launches videoconferencing for cloud customers

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US online giant Amazon on Tuesday announced the launch of a "unified communications service" which offers video and audio conferencing through its cloud computing service.

The new service called Amazon Chime from Amazon Web

Services—which provides the online computing power for thousands of businesses—enables customers to have conversations and videoconferences whether they are using desktop computers, Apple iPhones or Android devices.

"Most meeting applications or services are hard to use, deliver bad audio and video, require constant switching between multiple tools to do everything they want, and are way too expensive," said Amazon vice president Gene Farrell.

"Amazon Chime delivers frustration-free meetings, allowing users to be productive from anywhere. And with no ongoing maintenance or management fees, Amazon Chime is a great choice for companies that are looking for a solution to meetings that their employees will love to use."

The cloud computing unit of Amazon is among the fastest growing segments for the US tech giant, which has expanded from its roots as an online retailer into fields such as streaming video, music and artificial intelligence.

Chime was developed with telecom partners Level 3 and Vonage and is expected to be available in the second quarter of this year.

Amazon said its first customers for the new platform would include US apparel retailer Brooks Brothers, ecommerce group Connexity and the LED lighting maker Soraa.

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