Skyping Awesomeness

Changing the way we communicate

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Foreword

This is a free application that allows you to text, voice and video friends and family anywhere around the world. With Skype you can speak, see and instant message other people who are also on Skype. In peak periods there are more than 30 million Skype users online. Even though it has several free features like online chatting and instant messaging, the one that stands out is the group video calling. Get all the info you need here.

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Chapter 1:

What is Skype?

This is a great application used by millions of families to stay in touch even when separated by thousands of miles. One of the great features of Skype is this group video conferencing. Many families with extended family members studying abroad use Skype for this purpose. They are able to see and hear each other. This gives them a sense of relief when they can see that the other party is in good health and are safe. They don't feel alone and sad. They get to talk to and see their loved ones on a regular basis. Sometimes even daily if time permits as it's free. This is even better than talking to friends and family on a phone as you get video confirmation of their safety and well-being.

Video conferencing is also used by many companies in their business meetings where presentations are made and decisions are finalized with both parties even though they are thousands of miles apart. They can see and hear what the other party is saying and can decide immediately if the proposal is good or bad.

Skype can be downloaded onto your mobile phone so that means that you can have online chatting and video calling while you are out and about. Instant communication with business associates, friends and family. And the best part of all this is that it is free for everyone..

Chapter 2:

How Skype works

Skype is a free voip application that allows you to text, voice and video friends and family anywhere around the world. Skype enables you to speak, see and instant message other people who are also on Skype.

Voip means voice over internet protocol. In layman terms it means using audio and video through the internet web interface on a computer or mobile smart phone. Voip does not work without the internet.

With voip technology, we can send and receive text, images, high quality stereo sound and live video through data packets.

Receivers such as specialized hardware appliances like smart phones to software applications installed on other mobile terminals and computers are an integral part of voip. All these devices must be able to send and receive data packets via an iPv4 network.

All transfers are captured and encoded from analog to digital then passed to a compressor before transfer of compressed data packets over a slow connection. These data packets are stamped with the destination address and sent through the network. Voip was never

engineered for live conversations and as such is prone to stutter and latency.

The receiver must reconstruct the data packets sequentially for ideal reproduction. Latency and data loss can cause the reconstruction to be incomplete due to congestion during peak hours. That is why there are sometimes blanks in audio streams and video stutters from frame to frame.

Eventhough voip is more versatile than traditional PSTN communications, it has been criticized as being unreliable, especially where power is unstable or intermittent. Most people still keep landlines for emergency situations where analog phones can operate without power.

Where broadband conection and power are available at all times, voip technology provides a cheap and comprehensive way to communicate. Many voip service providers offer free calls within their user base of internet clients.

Chapter 3:

Setting up Skype at your pc

Skype is a free voip application that can be downloaded onto computers, PCs, smartphones, android phones and any other computer terminal or hardware.

In order to setup Skype, you have to go to the website and download the application according to the type of computer or appliance you are using. For computers with Windows, there is a minimum hardware and software requirement for Skype to work well.

They are:

System requirements (for Windows users)

- PC running Windows® XP, Vista or 7, both 32- and 64-bit operating systems.

- Internet connection – broadband is best (GPRS is not supported for voice calls).

- Speakers and microphone – built-in or separate.

- For voice calls recommend broadband connection with 100 kbps down / 100 kbps up.

- For group video calling everyone on the call needs Skype 5.0 for Windows or Mac or higher plus webcams, and at least one person needs a group video calling subscription. For best quality we recommend you use a high-speed broadband

connection of 4Mbps down / 512kbps up and a computer with a Core 2 Duo 1.8 GHz processor. As a minimum you'll need a high-speed broad connection of 512kbps down / 128kbps up and a computer with a 1 GHz processor.

System requirements (for MAC users)

- 1GHz Intel processor

- Mac OS X v10.5.8 (Leopard) or newer.

- 100 MB free disk space.

- Either USB or regular headset if your Mac does not have a built-in microphone.

- [Download drivers](#) if you are using an external webcam.

- For voice calls recommend broadband connection with 100 kbps down / 100 kbps up.

- For group video calling everyone on the call needs Skype 5.0 for Windows or Mac or higher plus webcams, and at least one person needs a group video calling subscription. For best quality we recommend you use a high-speed broadband connection of 4Mbps down/512kbps up and a computer with a Core 2 Duo 1.8 GHz processor. As a minimum you'll need a high-speed broad connection of 512kbps down/128kbps up and a computer with a 1 GHz processor.

Chapter 4:

Skyping over your phone

In order to skype using your phone, you have to get the right Skype application downloaded onto your phone. There are many different types of Skype versions for different phones like windows phones, android phones, iphones and symbian phones.

Once you have downloaded Skype onto your phone, you will be able to do everything with Skype that you do using your computer. That means online chatting, free Skype to Skype calling, free group video calling, texting, messaging and more.

System requirements (for Windows phones)

- Skype for Windows Phone requires Windows Phone 7.5 and above. Internet connection – broadband is best (GPRS is not supported for voice calls).

System requirements (for iphones)

- Skype video calling requires iOS 4.3 or above.

- Skype requires iPhone 3GS or above.

- Send and receive video using front or rear camera on iPhone 4 and fourth-generation iPod touch.

- Send and receive video using rear camera on iPhone 3GS.

- Receive video only on third-generation iPod touch.

- Works with any H.264 compatible devices, including TVs and Android devices.

- iPod touch calling requires compatible headset and microphone.

- of 512kbps down/128kbps up and a computer with a 1 GHz processor.

System requirements (for android phones)

- Skype video calling requires android OS 2.1 or above.

- Skype requires t least 27MB of free memory on handset.

- Processing power of 600Mhz or more.

- Supported screen resolutions are 320X240, 240X400, 320X480, 800X480 and 850X480

System Requirements (for symbian phones)

- Compatible Symbian device.

- We recommend that you install Skype in device memory and you will need a minimum of 6MB free.

- Please note that data usage costs apply for the using Skype over 3G mobile networks (EDGE, EV-DO and UMTS), so we recommend an unlimited data plan or WiFi connection.

- WiFi connection or 3G/2G data connection (we cannot guarantee voice quality over 3G/2G. You may also be liable to additional data charges so please check with your operator before using).

Chapter 5:

Saving money with skype long distance call

Skype has one of the best offers for long distance calling. It ranges from under $4 to $18 per month. For this price, you get to talk to anyone, anytime, for as long as you like in 34 countries worldwide on their landline phones or mobile phones. That means you also get to call people who are not on Skype.

With Skype the subscriptions offers are:

For Europe -

Unlimited calls to landlines in a European country of your choice, €2.95 monthly

Unlimited calls to landlines in 20 European countries of your choice, €3.95 monthly

Unlimited calls to landlines in 34 countries worldwide, €8.95 monthly

For US and Canada -

Unlimited calls to US and Canada landlines and cell phones, €1.95 monthly

Unlimited calls to landlines in 34 countries worldwide, €6.95 monthly

For Asia -

Unlimited calls to landlines in one of 34 countries, €3.95 monthly

200 mintes of calls to landlines and mobile in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, China per month, €5.95 monthly

Unlimited calls to landlines in 34 countries worldwide, €8.95 monthly

For Rest of the World -

Unlimited calls to landlines in one of 34 countries, €3.95 monthly

Unlimited calls to landlines in 34 countries worldwide, €8.95 monthly

The current Skype offers shown above are very attractive and affordable to most people. Not so long ago, people used to spend hundreds per month calling and talking to their loved ones. And that is also probably on a weekly basis with limited talk time. With these offers from Skype, people will now be able to talk to each other daily and for longer periods.

This offer is great not only for individuals but also for businesses. Business calls are usually quite long and requires patience when dealing with prospective clients and business partners. So huge savings can be made with these Skype offers.

Chapter 6:

Record Skype conversation & videos

Skype does not have a built-in feature to save or record calls or video calls. The use of third party software, add-on or plugin is required if recording is needed.

There are many in the market. The popular ones are:

Vodburner – this software has a trial offer. So you can download it and try it out during the trial period. If it is good then go ahead and buy it. If not then try other software. This software has a 3 of 5 star rating.

Supertintin Recorder – this software has a trial offer. This software is recommended for Windows users. It is rated as the best for Skype in the Windows category with a 4 of 5 star rating. The software is lightweight, reliable and produces good consistent recording quality. eCamm – this software is recommended for Mac users. The feedback from users of this software is good and is highly recommended. Easy to use and not complicated.

Evaer video recorder – this software has a trial offer. This high quality, easy to use software has excellent Skype video and audio features and is very affordable compared to others.

Pamela – this is a freeware with options to upgrade. The freeware has limitations like 15 minutes recording only.

IMCapture - this software has a trial offer. This software is recommended for businesses also as the recorded file can be converted to most of the popular file formats for audio and video.

It is best to experiment with some of the software applications for Skype. You can do this during the trial periods and see which one suits you best. Some of them may lack the features you require. Some may be very complicated to use. Some may have extra features not found in others. Once you are satisfied which one is best for you, then make the purchase.

Chapter 7:

Skype for business

With features like online chatting, monthly low rates for long distance calls and group video calling, it is no surprise that Skype has more than 500 million registered users. Eventhough individuals make up more than 95% of Skype users, there is a huge user base on Skype that is made up of businesses.

Many businesses have found it extremely beneficial to have Skype as part of their communication highway between themselves and customers. Some businesses have reported communication savings up to 80% which can mean savings between $100 to $10,000 depending on monthly communication expenses.

Online chatting has replaced the old way of calling up a customer to give status on production, delivery or payments. Many companies have stand alone servers with Skype as the default application and this is used to communicate with all their suppliers and customers.

That means no additional expenses for faxes, landline calls, long distance calls etc. Close communication with customers and suppliers ensures good and lasting business relationships. And with the use of group video calling, the savings could be even more substantial.

The expenses incurred by a project team of 3 to 4 persons can cost a company $5,000 to $20,000 depending on the destination. This cost

will include accommodation, flight and daily allowances. If the project team makes 6 trips a year, that could amount to $120,000. This amount is huge and much of it can be saved by using group video calling. By using group video calling, 80% of the project work can be done through Skype.

Savings on long distance calls can also be a substantial amount. Some companies with many international clients have monthly landline bills running into the thousands. With Skype, this expense can be lowered by 70% to 80% which is a lot if based on thousands.

Chapter 8:

Your virtual office with Skype

Having Skype on your computer and mobile phone will create a virtual office for you and that means not having to be stuck in the office waiting for emails and SMSs. But you must remember to have WiFi connectivity to log onto your Skype account. You must get a basic plan that will allow you unlimited access and downloads from the internet.

When you are not bogged down, you will find that you can do a lot more on a daily basis. With the introduction of Voip as well as the emergence of social networks like facebook and twitter, many individuals have found a new way of life that is more social and mobile.

Many freelance professionals have virtual offices and do not have a permanent office base. Many actually work fom home and prefer this way of life. They say that they have no overheads and are more flexible with time as they are always in touch with associates, friends and family.

Travelling is also easier as they can plan their routines when they are at home and while they are out and not have to worry about returning to an office.

With Skype you can do all your professional work from where you are. You can even have a conference call right in the middle of town while you are on a lunch break or tea break. It also gives your customers confidence that they are able to contact you anytime. Many business relationships are built on trust, confidence and reliability. When your customers know that they can rely on you to deliver as promised, they will remain loyal customers.

And with Skype special low rate offers for long distance calls, expanding your business boundaries becomes a reality. Small price to pay for huge potential rewards.

Chapter 9:

Marketing with Skype

Whenever communication is thrown into the mix that helps generate interest, then this communication is part of the marketing strategy of a business plan. The real benefit of Skype as a marketing tool is it's immense database of users, more than 500 million to date.

Imagine reaching out to just 1%. That is 5 million users. And if you go by the 80/20 rule in business, meaning if you pitched to 100 customers, 80% will turn you down and 20% will show an interest.

If 10% of the 20% that showed interest actually bought your product, that means you are now a success.

Imagine the following calculations.

1% of 500 million is 5 million
20% of 5 million is 1 million
10% of 1 million is 100,000
If your product cost $10 each, total sales is $1,000,000
If your GP% is 20%, that means you just made $200,000

The cost in reaching your target audience is the time spent sending your marketing pitch to be advertised on Skype and the cost for placing this advertisement which is far cheaper than conventional billboards or TV advertisements.

The cost of TV advertising is huge as there is the air-time cost as well as the advertising production cost which might go into millions. Even with billboard advertising there is a production cost. But this cost is much lower than the production cost for TV.

The target audience for Skype is also much bigger than conventional billboards or TV. That means the true put for advertising on Skype has greater value coverage than conventional billboards and TV.

 That is why social networks with huge mega databases like Facebook, Twitter and Skype are being targetted by many corporations to try and win more market share at lower advertising cost. They now know that this type of marketing is more effective.

Wrapping Up

When selecting a phone, make sure that it is Skype compliant. Most android phones and smart phones should be Skype compliant. But it is best to double check with the seller before committing on the purchase. You can also check on the Skype website for hardware and software requirements for the different type of android and smart phones.

Also make sure that the phone has a good camera with high pixel quality and also with macro features to enable close up photos to be taken. This will enable high quality close-up shots of documents or products which you can send to prospective clients. The phone should also have video capability for group video calling on Skype.

When you have purchased your phone, you also need to get a basic WiFi package that allows you internet access wherever you go. This will enable you to have a virtual office which is important from a business point of view. You will want to be able to get calls anytime, anywhere. You also want to be notified immediately via emails when they come in.

Once you have both the phone and the internet access, you also need to have accessories to go with your virtual office. These accessories will help you with your privacy. A good headphone is important as the clarity and sound quality is important when discussing business

especially when it is with international clients. The headphone will also give you privacy from public ears nearby as you might be having a business discussion in a public area like a café or diner. That means that people cannot hear what is being said from the phone and the headphone also helps drown out public noises. Hearing becomes clear and audible and good communication is established.