

WhatsApp

WhatsApp (officially **WhatsApp Messenger**) is a [freeware](#), [cross-platform](#), [centralized instant messaging](#) (IM) and [voice-over-IP](#) (VoIP) service owned by United States tech conglomerate [Meta Platforms](#).^[14] It allows users to send [text](#), [voice messages](#) and video messages,^[15] make voice and video calls, and share images, documents, user locations, and other content.^{[16][17]} WhatsApp's [client](#) application runs on [mobile devices](#), and can be accessed from computers.^[18] The service requires a [cellular mobile telephone number](#) to sign up.^[19] In January 2018, WhatsApp released a standalone business app called WhatsApp Business which can communicate with the standard WhatsApp client.^{[20][21]}

The service was created by WhatsApp Inc. of [Mountain View, California](#), which was acquired by Facebook in February 2014 for approximately [US\\$19.3 billion](#).^{[22][23]} It became the world's most popular messaging application by 2015,^{[24][25]} and had more than 2 billion users worldwide by February 2020.^[26] By 2016, it had become the primary means of Internet communication in regions including Latin America, the Indian subcontinent, and large parts of Europe and Africa.

Skype

Skype ([/skaɪp/](#)) is a [proprietary](#) telecommunications application operated by [Skype Technologies](#), a division of [Microsoft](#), best known for [VoIP](#)-based [videotelephony](#), videoconferencing and voice calls. It also has [instant messaging](#), file transfer, [debit](#)-based calls to [landline](#) and mobile telephones (over [traditional telephone networks](#)), and other features. Skype is available on various desktop, mobile, and video game console platforms.

Skype was created by [Niklas Zennström](#), [Janus Friis](#), and four [Estonian](#) developers and first released in August 2003. In September 2005, [eBay](#) acquired Skype for \$2.6 billion.^[6] In September 2009,^[7] [Silver Lake](#), [Andreessen Horowitz](#), and the [Canada Pension Plan Investment Board](#) bought 65% of Skype for \$1.9 billion from eBay, valuing the business at \$2.92 billion. In May 2011, Microsoft bought Skype for \$8.5 billion and used it to replace their [Windows Live Messenger](#). As of 2011, most of the development team and 44% of all the division's employees were in [Tallinn](#) and [Tartu](#), [Estonia](#).^{[8][9][10]}

Skype originally featured a hybrid [peer-to-peer](#) and [client-server](#) system.^[11] It became entirely powered by Microsoft-operated [supernodes](#) in May 2012;^[12] in 2017, it changed from a peer-to-peer service to a centralized [Azure](#)-based service.

As of March 2020, Skype was used by 100 million people at least once a month and by 40 million people each day.^[13] During the [COVID-19 pandemic](#), Skype lost a large part of its [market share](#) to [Zoom](#).^[14]

As of February 2023, Skype was used by 36 million people each day.

Hangout

Hangouts was a [cross-platform instant messaging](#) service developed by [Google](#). It originally was a feature of [Google+](#), becoming a standalone product in 2013, when Google also began integrating features from Google+ Messenger and [Google Talk](#) into Hangouts. Google then began integrating features of [Google Voice](#), its [Internet telephony](#) product, into Hangouts, stating that Hangouts was designed to be "the future" of Voice.

In 2017, Google began developing two separate enterprise communication products: [Google Meet](#) and [Google Chat](#),^[8] as a part of its [Google Workspace](#) office suite. Google began transitioning Workspace users from Hangouts to Meet and Chat in June 2020.^{[9][10][11]} Subsequently, Gmail users transitioned from Hangouts to Meet and Chat during 2021^[12] and the Hangouts service discontinued on November 1, 2022.