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SKYPE

Niklas Zennström, CEO, Skype

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3 launches broadband & home media functionality on mobiles

The X-Series Partners – Skype

Q.

You're announcing your partnership with 3's X-Series today. What does this mean for consumers?

A.

I'm very proud to say today that for the very first time worldwide, Skype users can now use Skype on a mobile phone to make free phone calls around the world.

Q.

Mobile phone providers have traditionally made the bulk of their revenue by charging for voice calls. Are you confident that your very involvement in this initiative won't damage the very industry that you're joining?

A.

On the contrary. At Skype, we have for over three years now been changing the way people communicate all around the world. We have always delighted our users by innovating new ways of communicating. And actually we see a lot of opportunities for both handset providers and operators to work together with Skype - which is the most widely adopted communications service around the world - to develop new business opportunities.

Q.

But consumers will be charged a flat rate to use the X-Series. How does that square with Skype's philosophy of offering free calls over the internet?

A.

Skype calls have always been, and will always be, free to make calls between Skype users. So with 3 and X-Series, we're working together with them, providing an internet broadband service on mobile phones which is actually combining not only Skype, but a whole range of other really good internet services. So once you have that service, you can always make free, unlimited Skype communications.

Q.

So why have you chosen to partner with 3?

A.

3 is the first operator to offer this opportunity to consumers, and together with Skype, the changes in the way the mobile phone calls are happening and how people are working with mobile phones. So we're delighted to work with a company like 3, who is disrupting the market, and changing the way we communicate, and ultimately making a better offer to the consumers. That's why we're working with 3.

Q.

So what's in this for Skype?

A.

Over the last three years, we have changed the way people communicate with one another. We also want to continue to delight our users by innovating new ways to communicate, so this offering is the first major offering to bring Skype to a mobile phone, which makes it possible for the 136 million Skype users to use Skype when they're on the go, on their mobile phone, so they no longer have to sit in front of their PC. That's a major step for us. Over time, we also intend to improve this offer to include other Skype services. We start with the Skype calling between Skype users, online presence and the contact list. Over time, we hope to also offer Skype Out, Skype In, chat features, and other Skype services.

Q.

So what do you think this initiative will do for the way in which the ordinary person communicates?

A.

This makes it possible for a Skype user, or anyone else who becomes a Skype user, to communicate for free all around the world with their mobile phone. As an example, last week I was in San Francisco at a conference, and I was able to not only talk for free to my colleagues, I could see with the Skype presence if they were online or offline. So that enables me to bring Skype communications with me wherever I am around the world. If you have a friend in Estonia, another friend in Tokyo, you can now make calls, unlimited calls to them, from your mobile phone. You can also see when they're online, so it makes the world smaller, and makes it easier to communicate, unlimited, for free.

CLOSE