

The future of mobile voice

By  Mark Schefermann

26 Jan 2013

What does it mean to live in a digital world? Well, I guess the reality is that our lives are becoming more and more connected. I often wonder how we ever survived without technology, the internet and social media. How did people organise things, how did they share memories and how did they remember people's birthdays and anniversaries?



The scariest part of all of this is that most of us come from that world and now technology is evolving at such a rapid rate that it is even a challenge for the technically savvy to keep up.

We are becoming completely integrated with the technology that we own. Most of our electronic devices are [converged](#) and in many cases our devices are all connected to the internet via Wi-Fi technology. Take a look at the [Google Glass](#) project for example, this shows how blurred the line between reality and digital might become in the near future.

Taking all of these facts into consideration, is it possible for this converged future to threaten the likes of the mobile operators in South Africa? What if technology could completely replace the need for a mobile operator? Can you imagine how much consumers would save? How much do you spend on your cell phone contract every month?

Converged solution

Let's use an example of a single company that could offer you an entire converged solution, you would imagine it to be a Telecoms company but on the contrary, we'll be looking at a bank, FNB. Consumers can now purchase their mobile [device](#) and [laptop](#) through FNB, and then when it comes to connectivity, they offer [FNB Connect](#).

FNB Connect offers consumer's [ADSL](#) (ISP) and [Connect Talk](#) and this is where the threat comes in for the Mobile operators (it is also possible to purchase 3G data and Wi-Fi vouchers). With this technology one is able to make calls and send texts to other Connect Talk consumers at no cost (besides the data costs incurred if there is no access to Wi-Fi). I will be the first to admit that this service isn't without its faults, however if you are connected to a strong Wi-Fi signal it works incredibly well. Now imagine a world where Wi-Fi is accessibly almost everywhere and everyone is using Connect Talk or a similar [VOIP](#) application, you will finally be able to say goodbye to those ridiculous monthly cell phone contract costs. It is also interesting to see how the mobile operators have adapted to this new era we are in. Years ago it was all about how much airtime you received in your contract, this has now completely shifted to how much data is included. I wonder if the mobile operators will ever get to a point where they bring out their own VOIP app to encourage data usage and to try and limit customer churn. [Telkom](#) has potential to become a threat to mobile operators if they chose to go this route. They would also have the upper hand as they have the 8ta offering to still support the traditional mobile needs.

Internationally there are similar VOIP applications, the most popular obviously being [Skype](#), then there is [Viber](#) and [Apple Facetime](#) as some other examples. Currently we are in an almost "hostage situation" with mobile operators as we have no alternatives and now that we live in an always on, always connected world we cannot do without our devices. At least the future looks brighter and more affordable from a mobile point of view.



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Samsung Galaxy S3 (16GB) + PC54500

BlackBerry Bold 9930 + PC5

Connect Talk Competitor Rate Comparison*

Connect Talk Relative Traditional Provider Rates per minute**

Rate Comparison	Toll Free Connect		Traditional Provider A		Traditional Provider B		Traditional Provider C		Traditional Provider D	
	Prepaid	Contract	Prepaid	Contract	Prepaid	Contract	Prepaid	Contract	Prepaid	Contract
Local - Peak	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢
Local - Off Peak	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢	25¢
Long-Distance - Peak	40¢	40¢	25¢	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10
Long-Distance - Off Peak	25¢	25¢	25¢	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10	25¢
Mobile - Peak	25¢	\$0.10	25¢	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10
Mobile - Off Peak	25¢	\$0.10	25¢	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10
Texting Peak	\$0.00	\$0.10	25¢	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10
Texting in Contract Off Peak	\$0.00	\$0.10	25¢	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.10	25¢	\$0.10	25¢

Connect Surf Competitor Rate Comparison*

Monthly Competitor Rate Comparison						
Service Provider	Connect Surf Rate		Provider A	Provider B	Provider C	Provider D
Service Description						
1-100	\$0.20	Connect Surf Rate	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.20
101-200			\$0.20	\$0.20		
201-300	\$0.25		\$0.25	\$0.25	\$0.25	
301-400	\$0.25		\$0.25	\$0.25		\$0.25
401-500		Connect Surf Rate				
501-600	\$0.25		\$0.25	\$0.25		
601-700	\$0.25		\$0.25	\$0.25		
701-800	\$0.25		\$0.25	\$0.25		

Make your internet connection to

Make Free Calls



Connect Surf users
No additional costs

Connect Surf users have no option
70 minutes

Call Connect Surf 1-800-456-7890

Connect Surf

Connect Surf is a service that allows you to make free calls to landline numbers. The service is available to all Connect Surf users who are using the service.

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ABOUT MARK SCHEFERMANN

My knowledge and enthusiasm for the digital world enables me to think creatively and challenge briefs. My passion is strategy and showing how digital can open new opportunities for clients. Well conceived digital strategies and campaigns will push brands ever forward in the consciousness of their audiences and lead to long lasting adoption, advocacy and allow them to forge individual relationships with their audiences.

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