

VoIP goes mobile

Cape Town-based telecommunications company, Yeigo, is one of the first companies worldwide to have developed mobile Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), enabling it to offer cheaper and even free mobile calls.



Ivan Ferrer, non-executive chairman of Yeigo and the original founder of Pastel Software, sees mobile VoIP as a natural and more flexible extension of the fixed-line VoIP already implemented by many businesses. "There is no doubt it will be widely embraced by the business community which is why we have developed a specific mobile VoIP offering for businesses," says Ferrer.

Yeigo aims to save users money by directing their voice calls via the operators' data networks or direct through the internet, rather than over the voice network. The only cost incurred by a Yeigo user, when calling another Yeigo user, anywhere in the world, is their data cost of connecting to the Internet. If the user connects via the 3G data network, the cost will depend on the user's data plan. If you have a data plan of say **R1/MB, the data cost will be only 8c per minute. Calls made through a WiFi connection could be totally free to the user in a freely available hotspot.

In addition, a Yeigo user who calls a non-Yeigo user is expected to save as much as 80% on calls to international destinations. Sending an SMS through Yeigo costs only 35c to most destinations around the world.

An example of the savings that can be achieved by Yeigo is the following:

A 5 minute call from a Yeigo-enabled mobile to a Yeigo user in the UK would cost about 40c if connected through 3G (assuming a data cost of R1/MB), whereas a similar call between non-Yeigo enabled phones would cost approximately R20.00 (depending on package and service provider).

A 5 minute call from a Yeigo-enabled mobile to a landline in the UK would cost R2.10, whilst the same call from a non-Yeigo enabled phone would cost about R17.00 (depending on package and service provider).

It is even cheaper calling a landline in the UK from a Yeigo enabled mobile than it is calling from a local landline. As

mentioned, the cost of calling a landline in the UK from Yeigo is R2.10 for 5 minutes, whereas it would cost R7.00 from a standard landline.

“The inspiration behind Yeigo is to empower the ordinary person to make cheaper calls anywhere in the world, giving them control over how often they communicate and how much it costs them. By bringing friends on to Yeigo, they can cut down their communication costs tremendously, as too can businesses, which we see will ultimately have a positive impact on the economy as a whole,” says one of Yeigo's founders, Managing Director Rapelang Rabana.

The service is currently compatible with high-end or smart phones that use the Windows Mobile or Symbian Operating Systems and have either Wi-Fi, EDGE, 3G or HSDPA connectivity. Examples of such phones are a select number of Nokia, Qtek, I-mate, HP and HTC handsets, among others.

All subscribers have to do to Yeigo-enable their phones is to download free software from the website. The software integrates with the phone's contact and call registers. For more information or applications, visit www.yeigo.com.

***All prices are quoted in South African Rands and approximated using South African mobile and landline subscriber rates.*

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