

#thebrief

Internet Messaging

After two decades in which texting transformed modern-day communication, the number of messages sent in Britain fell for the first time last year. This is partly due to younger users turning away from relatively clunky text messaging services in favour of internet messaging apps. Internet messaging (IM) is a type of online chat which offers real-time text transmission over the Internet. These apps provide users with the ability to communicate with several people simultaneously and send photos and videos at a fraction of the price of text messaging. Some IM applications can even use push technology to provide real-time text, which transmits messages character by character, as they are composed.

This issue of #thebrief will detail the most popular internet based messaging applications.

Talk this way

Version 14.04

WhatsApp Messenger is an instant messaging subscription service for smartphones, available for almost all types of phones.



In addition to text messaging, users can send each other images, video, and audio media messages as well as their location using integrated mapping features. On February 19th 2014 Facebook announced its purchase of WhatsApp for US\$19 billion. The effect this takeover will have on the future of the app is uncertain.

Did you know? As of November 10th 2013 WhatsApp had over 190 million monthly active users. More than 10 billion messages and 400 million photos are sent each day.

iMessage is an instant messenger service developed by Apple Inc.



iMessage allows users to send texts, documents, photos, videos, contact information, and group messages over the internet to other iOS or OS X users, thus providing an alternative to standard SMS/MMS messaging. iMessage is accessible through the Messages app on an iPhone, iPad or iPod touch.

Did you know? All iMessages are encrypted and can be tracked using delivery receipts. If the recipient enables the 'Read Receipts' function, the sender will be able to see that the recipient has read the message.

BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) is a similar service to iMessage, where it was originally used to send messages to other BBM users using an individual's BBM Pin.

BBM has recently expanded to run on iOS and Android phones.

Did you know? A BBM Train is a group of BBM users who collect and share BBM pins with each other in order to gain followers. People join BBM Trains with the intent of expanding their network and the distribution of their messages (similar to twitter followers).



Kik Messenger is an instant messaging application for mobile devices.



The app is available on most iOS, Android, Windows Phone, BlackBerry and Symbian operating systems free of charge. Kik offers swift text messaging services and also allows users to share photos, sketches, voice messages, and other content. Kik Messenger requires users to register a username as form of identification. Kik has been gaining popularity of late as it offers anonymous chatting with users across the world.

Did you know? Kik gained notoriety in recent months after being linked to a 'spam bot' (an automated computer program designed to assist in the sending of spam) which randomly sent explicit images to users. Other applications such as Snapchat have also suffered from such exploits.

Other Similar Apps:



Tango



Viber



Yahoo! Messenger



HeyTell



LINE

Up and Coming

Firechat is a recently launched app available on iPhone which uses Multipeer Connectivity Framework to connect from one phone to another – without an internet connection.

Instead of sending messages using a mobile or data signal, the app uses a Wi-Fi signal nearby or the phone's Bluetooth to send messages. Messages can be sent to those within Bluetooth or Wi-Fi Direct range - up to around 30 feet (9 metres). This makes the app very useful when on a plane or using the underground network. As users are accessed through a Wi-fi or Bluetooth network, it is not necessary to know other user's phone numbers to contact them. Users can therefore talk to any other user in the vicinity, regardless of whether they know them or not.

