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Windows Live
Messenger
Microsoft

Microsoft: Yes, the Windows Live Messenger Free Ride Is Over

But only on mobile phones

Yes, the [Windows Live Messenger](#) free ride is over. Microsoft is no longer offering its instant messaging client as a free service, and will start charging end-users. However, this affects only users of Windows Live Mobile Messenger, and not of the Windows Live Messenger. According to [MoDaCo](#), users of mobile phones with the Windows Mobile and Symbian operating systems started receiving 30-day trial period notifications for Windows Live Mobile Messenger, explaining that, at the end of that time, they would have to purchase an additional 30-day pass. The news has generated strong reverberations in the Windows Live Mobile Messenger community, as until now the instant messaging client and associated service has been offered for free to users of Windows Mobile. Microsoft offered official confirmation of a shift in its strategy regarding Windows Live Mobile Messenger, designed to permit the company to monetize the service. "This week we rolled out a direct-to-consumer billing service for the Windows Live client on Nokia S60 in the UK and Sweden. Although we are considering doing the same at a future time for Windows Mobile, this has not been implemented - however, something happened and many of you saw a trial message on Windows Mobile devices. Windows Mobile customers shouldn't have received any notifications of a 30-day trial and we are working as quickly as possible to correct this", revealed Matt Champagne, Director of Windows Live Mobile Services, as cited by [LiveSide](#). The fact of the matter is that although Windows Mobile users can now breathe a sigh of relief, as the Direct Consumer billing impacts consumers that run Symbian-Nokia, this is just a temporary situation. In the end, Microsoft might just as well decide to charge Windows Live Mobile [Messenger](#) users, even if they run Windows Mobile and have purchased the operating system. As for now, the Direct Consumer billing is scheduled to debut in Sweden, UK, Spain, France, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway and Australia, between January and March of this year, and in Belgium, Ireland, Portugal, Austria and Switzerland, in the second phase - April-June 2008. Continuing to use Windows Live Mobile Messenger will cost somewhere between \$2 and €2. Champagne went on to say that billing over the Windows Live Mobile Messenger service is nothing new and that it has been in fact a standard practice. "As you may know, we offer Messenger services through mobile operators on lots of handsets, not just Windows Mobile. Traditionally, customers have been billed by their mobile operators for many of these services, either directly or through their data package", he added.