

1 November 2007

By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor

Windows Live
Messenger
Microsoft

[Windows Live Messenger 9.0](#)

Drops in late 2008, early 2009

Forget about [Windows Live Messenger 8.1 and 8.5](#), Microsoft is cooking Windows Live Messenger 9.0. Currently, Windows Live Messenger 9.0 is in the very early stages of baking, but this does not mean that the Redmond company is not perfecting the receipt of its instant messaging client. Andrew Jenks, a Microsoft employee speaking at the Georgia Institute of Technology revealed that Windows Live Messenger 9.0 is planned for availability towards the end of 2008, but it could slip into 2009. [LiveSide](#), quoting [Ampcoder](#), focused on Jenks' announcement of a new Microsoft application programming interface designed to be joined at the hip with the 9.0 version of Windows Live Messenger. The API will permit third-party developers to build upon Windows Live Messenger 9.0, creating customized versions of the instant messaging client or even programs that take advantage of the features available. The details are scarce, but developers apparently will be able to access a technical preview of the API concomitantly with the MIX08 conference next year. In addition, Microsoft is also looking to include the first beta of the application programming interface with the finalized version of Windows Live Messenger 9.0. Over at Redmond, very early, internal builds of Windows Live Messenger 9.0 already include some of the components that will make up the final API. Still, Microsoft plans a consistent evolution with Windows Live Messenger 9.0. If the currently available versions of the IM client, [builds 8.1.0178 and 8.5.1288.816 Beta 2](#) are targeting integration and support for Windows Vista as a primary focus, Windows Live Messenger 9.0 will potentially bring to the table multi-person audio/video chat capabilities, although there is even a chance that the feature will be pushed back as far as v10. However, one aspect that Microsoft is hard at work on is the interoperability of Windows Live Messenger 9.0 with alternative instant messaging clients such as AIM, Gtalk and ICQ, in a similar manner to the integration with Yahoo Messenger. And last, but not least, while Apple users will not be getting an upgrade to the MSN Messenger for Mac, they will be able to access a new client designed with Mac OS X in mind.