

The future of mobile voice

By [Mark Schefermann](#)

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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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Connect Talk Competitor Rate Comparison*

Standard Rate Relative Traditional Programs Rates per Minute**

Rate Comparison	Rate Connect	Traditional Program 1		Traditional Program 2		Traditional Program 3		Traditional Program 4	
		Prepaid	Contract	Prepaid	Contract	Prepaid	Contract	Prepaid	Contract
1000 - Peak	250	250	500	250	750	250	250	250	250
1000 - Off Peak	250	250	500	250	750	250	250	250	250
15000 - Peak	400	250	500	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.25
15000 - Off Peak	400	250	500	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	500
20000 - Peak	550	\$1.00	500	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.25
20000 - Off Peak	750	\$1.00	500	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
30000 - Peak	1000	\$1.00	500	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
30000 - Off Peak	1000	\$1.00	500	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.00	500	\$1.00	500

Connect Surf Competitor Rate Comparison*

Standard Rate Relative Traditional Programs Rates per Minute**						
Rate Comparison	Rate Connect		Program 1	Program 2	Program 3	Program 4
	Prepaid	Contract				
1000	\$1.25		\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25
1500			\$1.25	\$1.25		
2000	\$1.75		\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	
2500	\$1.75		\$1.25	\$1.25		\$1.25
3000		See note on page 10				
4000	\$1.25		\$1.25	\$1.25		
5000	\$1.75		\$1.25	\$1.25		
6000	\$1.25		\$1.25	\$1.25		

Make your internet connection **100% Free** with **Make Free Calls**!

For the Connect user, 100% free calls are available **24/7**.

Prepaid services have a 15-minute **70-minute** limit.

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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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