



## Keeping in touch over the internet

**With the holiday season fast approaching, many of us will take the time to get in contact with friends and family. We've put together a brief overview of different technologies to help make getting in contact using some of the convenient and affordable internet technologies available. Give it a go...in most cases you probably already have everything you need.**

### Instant Messaging

Instant Messaging (IM) programs such as Windows Messenger, Yahoo Messenger and ICQ (pronounced, "I Seek You") allow you to quickly 'chat' online. All you need to do to get started is download your program of choice, "add" your friends and away you go. If your friends use the same program as you, notifications will pop up when they come online letting you know they are available for chat. Lots of fun and simple to use.

Some popular Instant Messaging Programs are:

- **MSN / Windows Live Messenger** - <http://messenger.live.com/>
- **Yahoo Messenger** - <http://messenger.yahoo.com/>
- **ICQ** - <http://www.icq.com>
- **Google Talk** - <http://talk.google.com>

### Internet Phone Calls (VOIP)

Now that high-speed broadband is becoming more commonplace, many Internet Service Providers and online companies are offering the ability to make phone calls using your internet connection instead of your phone line. The advantage of this is that your call does not use the standard telephone network and can pop-out of the internet anywhere in the world. This means that in most cases you only pay for the cost of a local call and avoid STD and international calling rates.

When you sign up for VOIP (which stands for Voice Over Internet Protocol) with your I.S.P., they sell you a special device called an analogue telephone adapter (or ATA). This device lets you use a normal telephone handset to make calls so that there is no

mucking around with your computer. In most cases there is only a tiny (and barely noticeable) difference in the quality of your phone call, however, the cost of your call is significantly lower (around 10 cents for an un-timed conversation anywhere in Australia at any time of day).

Online providers such as Skype are similar to your ISP in that they allow you to make phone calls through the internet. The advantage of online providers is that you don't need an ATA and the software is usually simple to download and install.

More information about the services offered by internet telephony service providers can be found here:

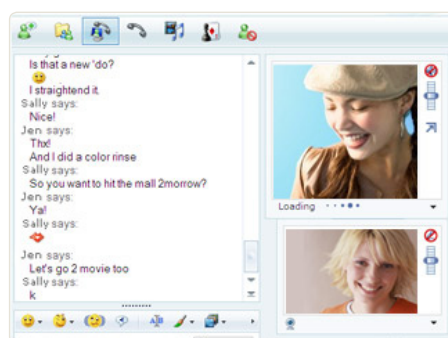
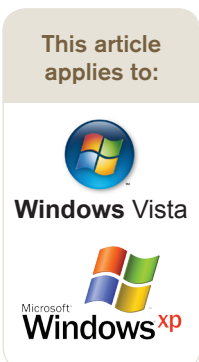
- **Primus** – <http://www.iprimus.com.au/PrimusWeb/HomeSolutions/TalkBroadband>
- **TPG** - <http://www.tpg.com.au/voip/>
- **Skype** – <http://www.skype.com>
- **Engin** – <http://www.engin.com.au>

Getting set up to make phone calls over the net can be a bit tricky sometimes, so if you're stuck let us know – 1300 275 449 – a Gizmotech is only a phone call away.

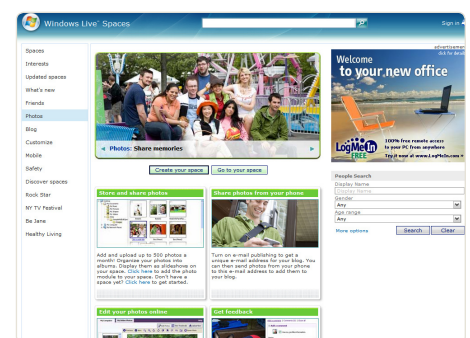
### Sharing Memories

One of latest crazes to hit the net are photo sharing sites such as **Windows Live Spaces** and **MySpace**. These sites allow you to create an online photo album where you can upload photos and share them with family and friends.

These sites aim to remove the need to print and mail photos out to friends and family. Instead you can upload them and email your friends the website address. When coupled with the popularity of digital cameras, it really makes sense to give these sites a try.



**Above:** Instant Messaging allows you to chat using your keyboard or video.



**Above:** Spaces.Live.Com is similar to an online photo album you can share with your friends.



## Keeping in touch over the internet cont...

To get started with your very own **Windows Live Spaces** page, simply visit <http://spaces.live.com/> and sign up using your email address. Once you've signed up, it's simple to upload your photos and get an online album started. Give it a try and if you need any help give Gizmo a call.

### Blogging

A blog is essentially an online diary which lets you make entries using text and pictures. These entries are then available for everyone to read, comment on and share. Although blogs are not for everyone, blogging is an immensely popular activity with up to 100 million blogs tipped to be in existence sometime in the first half of 2007 (Source: [http://english.people.com.cn/200612/15/eng20061215\\_332679.html](http://english.people.com.cn/200612/15/eng20061215_332679.html))

Some popular blogging sites are:

- <http://www.blogger.com/>
- <http://www.blog.com/>

To get started, visit the site, login and start writing your blog today.

As with anything tech related, if you have issues or get stuck, give us a call and we can help you out.

