

Microsoft's Skype launches video messaging app

NEW YORK - Microsoft-owned Skype on Tuesday unveiled a new app enabling users to send short video messages to stay "connected between calls."



The smartphone app called Skype Qik allows users to create and send videos up to 42 seconds long.

The new service seeks to help Microsoft catch up to rivals in the fast-growing mobile messaging space.

It takes some features from Twitter's Vine - which allows six-second videos - and the ephemeral messaging service Snapchat. With Qik, the messages disappear in two weeks, while Snapchats are gone after being viewed.

"Skype Qik makes video conversations more spontaneous and fun so you don't have to wait until your next call to connect with your favorite people," said a blog post from Microsoft's Dan Chastney and Piero Sierra.

The Qik app is available for phones using Apple's iOS, the Google Android platform and Microsoft's own Windows Phone.

Qik brings Microsoft into the red-hot segment of mobile messaging, following Facebook's multibillion-dollar acquisition of WhatsApp.

Other popular messaging services include Asia-based Line and Viber - which was bought this year by Japan's Rakuten for \$900 million.

Source: AFP via I-NET Bridge