



IM Beyond

Instant Messaging

Unlike a dial-up system such as the telephone, instant messaging (IM) requires that both parties be logged onto their IM service at the same time. Also known as a "chatting," IM has become very popular for business.

IM Beyond provides a way to contact co-workers any time of the day, providing they are at their computers. Thus, IM is often used as a way to avoid telephone tag, whether the communication continues as text messages or winds up as a traditional phone call.

E-mail and instant messaging are often used in a similar manner, but e-mail is not real-time, and there can be delays of several minutes.



Overview

IM Beyond instant messaging is client program that hooks up to an instant messaging server. IM Beyond offers a presence information feature, indicating whether people on one's list of contacts are currently online and available to chat. This may be called a contact list.

Benefits

IM Beyond Instant messaging boosts communication and allows easy collaboration. In contrast to e-mails, the parties know whether the peer is available. IM Beyond allows the user to set an *online status* or *away message* so peers get notified whenever the user is available, busy, or away from the computer. On the other hand, people are not forced to reply immediately to incoming messages. This way, communication via instant messaging can be less intrusive than communication via phone, which is partly a reason why instant messaging is more and more important in corporate environments.

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