



## Telecommunications

**Vonage Makes Video Calling Plans**

Arik Hesseldahl, 12.09.04, 9:50 AM ET

**Vonage**, one of the many companies behind the ever-more popular voice-over-Internet Protocol technology for making phone calls over the Web, disclosed today a partnership with a maker of video phones.

Under the deal with Viseon (otc: VSNI - news - people ), an Irving, Tex.-based manufacturer of video phones for VoIP, the two are developing a device that will be central to a new Vonage video calling service aimed at consumers and small businesses. The device will be unique, says Viseon Chief Executive **John Harris**, in that it won't require customers to use a personal computer to configure the calling preferences of their Vonage account.

Harris says he expects next year to mark the opening salvo in a brutal marketing battle to attract new customers to VoIP services. "So far it's been marketed as an all-you-can-eat unlimited service. Now you'll see companies start marketing based on actual features," he says. Other companies in the VoIP business are **AT&T**, (nyse: T - news - people ), **Time Warner** (nyse: TWX - news - people ) and **8x8** (nasdaq: EGHT - news - people ).

The deal comes only weeks after Vonage scored an important victory before the Federal Communications Commission concerning the regulation of VoIP calling. The commission last month voted 5 to 0 in favor of a Vonage-sponsored petition to declare the company's service an interstate product and therefore under federal regulatory control. The move shoved aside state regulatory intentions.

Privately held Vonage offers unlimited calling for \$25 to its 300,000 subscribers in the U.S. and Canada, which amounts to about half of all VoIP customers in the U.S. It says it is adding some 30,000 customers per month.