

Google's Plan to Keep You Online All the Time



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Google's business only works when people are online. It doesn't care how you get there. But Google has every incentive to make connecting to the internet as easy as possible. And now it's looking at a few new ways to make access easier than ever.

Last month, the company revealed that it will soon offer its own wireless service. But Google doesn't seem to be interested in providing standard-issue voice and data services designed to keep you locked into its network. Instead, it wants to move you automatically from its network to whatever offers the best internet on-ramp wherever you happen to be.

To pull off its plan for seamless switching, Google said at the time that it will experiment with technology that would allow phones to more easily move between its networks and available Wi-Fi—perhaps even juggling in-progress calls between the two. Now The Telegraph reports that the company is negotiating deals that would let phones move between its service and various international cellular networks at no extra cost to users.

In other words, you'd be able to travel across the US, the UK, Italy, Hong Hong, and Sri Lanka while paying the same fees for calls, text, and data—an attractive option for anyone who's ever carried a phone overseas. Carriers tend to charge inflated rates for this kind of "roaming," forcing you to think twice about using your phone at all while traveling. "Roaming fees in Europe and Asia can kill you," says Richard Doherty, an analyst with New York-based research firm Envisioneering .

In response to the Telegraph story, Google said it doesn't comment on "rumor or speculation." But the report fits nicely with what we already know about Google's plans for its unconventional wireless service. Google appears to be envisioning a wireless world where we can move effortlessly from one wireless network to another, making it easier for us to stay online.

