



## Greetings to U!

# YAHOO!

I hope you all enjoyed your first semester and are all ready to reconnect with friends and family for the Holidays. In this edition of U Asks Yahoo!, I will introduce you to a great new way to make **free** calls to your family and friends around the world through your PC. Many of you have expressed interest in creating your own blogs and even taking that a step further with podcasting, so I'll explain how you can get up and running in no time. Lastly, I'll introduce you to new versions of Web-based e-mail that will change how you think about Web applications.

Thanks for your helpful feedback and interesting questions. We look forward to hearing from more of you. Please e-mail me any Internet-related questions at [uaskyahoo@colleges.com](mailto:uaskyahoo@colleges.com) and I'll do my best to answer them in upcoming columns.

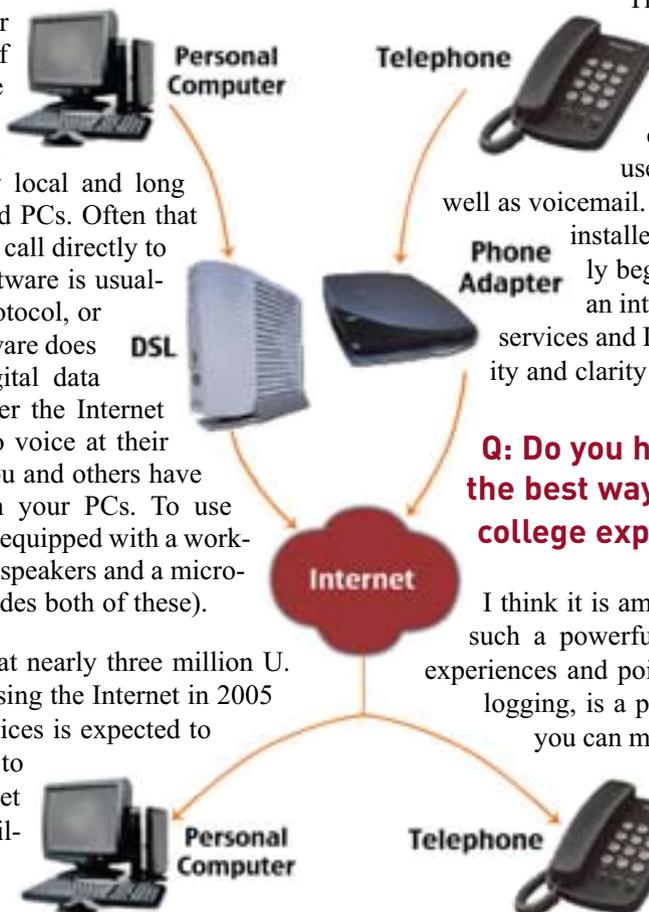
— **GEOFF RALSTON, CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER, YAHOO!**

### Q: I've heard I can make free worldwide calls on my PC, but am not really clear on how this works. Can you explain?

You sure can make calls via your PC, and let me tell you how. If your PC is connected to the Internet there is now software readily available which allows you to make free, high-quality local and long distance calls to other connected PCs. Often that same software will allow you to call directly to regular phones as well. The software is usually called Voice over Internet Protocol, or VoIP, software. What VoIP software does is convert your voice into digital data packets that are transmitted over the Internet and then converts them back to voice at their destination. This process lets you and others have a regular conversation through your PCs. To use VoIP software, your PC must be equipped with a working sound card and it must have speakers and a microphone (or a headset which includes both of these).

Forrester Research estimates that nearly three million U. S. households will make calls using the Internet in 2005 and the popularity of these services is expected to grow dramatically. According to IDC, by 2009, the VoIP market will explode to more than 27 million U. S. users.

Both Yahoo! and MSN have a



VoIP feature built into their Instant Messaging (IM) programs and they cost nothing to use. This Spring, users of Yahoo! Messenger with Voice and MSN Messenger will be able to talk to each other when the two services become interoperable.

These IM products and others like them, such as Skype, allow users to place calls to one another. Yahoo! Messenger with Voice also includes a call log and voicemail feature where users can check missed and placed calls as well as voicemail. These programs can be downloaded and installed within minutes, so you can immediately begin calling anyone who uses the same or an interoperable IM program. Try one of these services and I think you'll be impressed with the quality and clarity of the voice calls you make.

### Q: Do you have any suggestions for the best way to create a blog about my college experience?

I think it is amazing that today's college students have such a powerful new way to capture and share their experiences and points of view. "Blogging," short for Web logging, is a perfect tool for college students, because you can make it as private or as public as you want to, and use it to keep in touch with friends and family from back home or even get to know new friends.

There are all kinds of free blogging services out there, including simple