

## ICQ replaced by MSN

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ICQ used to be very popular among Singaporeans, but was gradually replaced by MSN.

In an interview with Gregory Birge, managing director of F5 Digital Consulting, he stated that ICQ was excellent software. But it was overloaded with unnecessary features, a burden for users and computers.

This was the period where broadband has yet to be widespread. Modem was the norm and the slow speed of the Internet affected the smooth operation of software. In addition, the 'heavy' software weighed down the entire computer system

Besides, ICQ has a serious issue on spam and copyrights. ICQ is often used for distribution and unwanted advertisement. The terms of services implies that ICQ may publish, distribute etc. any messages sent through the system that could be meant to be private. All these factors weaken its competitive advantage, leading consumers to switch to MSN.

The most distinct advantage of MSN lies in the integration between operating system (OS), Internet Explorer (browser) and other related Microsoft products. When Windows XP was launched in 2001, Windows Messenger, a simplified version of MSN, was incorporated. This inevitably contributed to the high usage rate MSN.

There was only 2.5million users during the first two months of MSN launch. Today, 10 years later, users have increased to 330million and with almost 10 billion of instant message (IM) are being sent daily.