Orange Belgium Launches Chat Messages, The New Generation Of SMS For Android Devices

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With Chat Messages, Orange Belgium is the first operator to bring RCS (Rich Communication Services), the new standard for short messages, to the Belgian market. Pictures, videos, localization, …: thanks to this new service, eligible Android users now have access to a much richer messaging experience.

The future of the SMS has landed in Belgium: from now on, the owners of eligible Android smartphones will be able to use Chat Messages, a new messaging service based on RCS, the new telco standard for messaging services.

The RCS - for Rich Communication Services - allows the users to share much more than a traditional SMS: pictures, videos, documents, localization data, ... The users can also create dedicated groups to share content with specific lists of contacts and see whether they received the messages or are busy writing an answer.

The messages then transit on the IP network via Wi-Fi or a mobile data connection and will be charged as such.

All those functionalities are already available within some popular messaging apps, but will be natively available for Android smartphones users (from Android 8.1 onwards), with some of the advantages of classic texting. For instance, if a Chat Message is sent to a non-eligible user, it will be automatically be converted into a traditional SMS or MMS to ensure the transmission of most of its content. Also, at Orange Belgium, SMS and MMS are free of charge for all postpaid clients. The messages will also only transit on Orange Belgium's network and servers, not on those of a third party.

Orange Belgium will deploy Chat Messages in the coming months, with full coverage of eligible users by the summer of 2020.

Developed jointly by the GSM Association and Google, the RCS standard is to become the new global standard for telco providers' messaging services.

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