



## **SKYPE 4.0 beta – a blogger based product launch**

### **Initial situation**

Since it was launched in 2003, Skype has evolved into a popular solution for internet communication, with over 370 million users around the world. In this time period, the software has changed from a simple program for conversations and short messages over the internet, to a diverse tool with countless additional functions and features. The immense popularity among users is largely due to its intuitive design and ease of operation.

### **Objective**

Although within the last five years the Skype software's user interface had been continually enhanced with additional functions and features, the user interface always remained the same and thereby offered high recognition value. It was now only necessary to present and explain the new Skype 4.0 beta user interface, to allay user concerns about having to use an unfamiliar interface and to positively influence their opinions. Obviously, it wasn't possible to do this by communicating directly with the millions of Skype users in Germany, so Schwartz Public

Relations and Skype developed a viral communication strategy, believing it to be the most effective means of credibly communicating the information and messages. Another objective was to generate understanding and acceptance in the media and among users, and to dissipate potential reservations about the new Skype user interface.

### **Description**

Skype communicates with users via diverse channels such as E-mail newsletters, entries in the official company blog and via contacts to relevant media. All three channels are handled by Schwartz PR in Germany. The agency developed a communication concept to present the new Skype 4.0 beta which exclusively addressed bloggers, since they would communicate it by way of viral dissemination in all media channels.

### **Results**

The Skype 4.0 Beta launch, which was only communicated via the bloggers, led to over 950,000 downloads during the first three days, according to the company, which makes it the most successful Skype software version release ever. Schwartz Public Relations set the wheels of media coverage in

motion with minimum communication dilution and without any additional budget requirements. The product, Skype 4.0, was the only topic communicated, yet it prompted the media to discuss basic IP communication standards.

Based on the blogger's messages, the subject of Skype 4.0 was soon receiving comprehensive coverage in all media channels. On Dailymotion, the Skype 4.0 videos have now chalked up over 40,000 hits and are among the top three videos with the keyword Skype in the relevance ranking. Only one day after the official announcement, almost all German language online media included reports about the new Skype version.