Microsoft has officially announced the final agreement on Skype acquisition: this Skype call has quite a huge bill, $8.5 billion.

Microsoft has released few details, regarding future integration with XBox gaming platform (and its recent Kinect motion-sensing device) and will continue to support 'non-Microsoft' software platform – Apple anyone?

Skype history is quite made of similar announcement (and acquisition-bound high-end evaluations): founded in 2003, was later acquired by eBay in 2005 for $2.6 billion and spun off (for some $2 bn) in 2009 after some disappointment from the online auction giant.
A group of investors, led by Silver Lake, run the company with some nice performance: in the last 18 months, Skype claimed it increased by 150% montly calling minutes and a profit turning $13.2 million through first half of 2010.

The closing of this IPO will certainly ensure Microsoft position in VoIP market, after some previous business-oriented attempts, while facing growing competition on both the Apple side (Facetime becoming standard among Mac users) and mobile devices, iPad 2 namely – which may prove the best bet.

[Via Skype]