



The Royal Academy
of Engineering



vodafone

Lecture series in Mobile Telecommunications and Networks

How mobile phones promote economic development

Tom Standage

Digital Editor, *The Economist*

Monday 27 February 2012

6.00pm for 6.30pm

Venue:

The Royal Society
6-9 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 5AG



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What was the most important technological shift of the past decade?

In the developed world most people would probably say the rise of the Internet. But the spread of mobile phones in the developing world has affected far more people and made a much greater difference to the prosperity of the human race. For the first time, billions of people have joined the global communications network, which brings huge benefits. Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University's Earth Institute calls mobile phones "the single most transformative tool for development".

Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus of Grameen Bank says, "When you get a mobile phone it is almost like having a card to get out of poverty in a couple of years." How did a yuppie plaything become a tool of economic development? How, exactly, do phones promote economic growth, and to what extent? In this talk Tom Standage will examine the evidence and consider the prospects for another big shift: mobile money.

Tom Standage

Tom Standage is digital editor at *The Economist*, overseeing the magazine's website, Economist.com, and its smartphone, tablet and e-reader editions. Before that he was business affairs editor, running the back half of the magazine (business, finance, economics, science and technology), and he previously served as business editor, technology editor and science correspondent. He has been the editor of the *Technology Quarterly* supplement, which have covered emerging technology, since 2003. Tom is also the author of five history books, including *An Edible History of Humanity* (2009), *A History of the World in Six Glasses* (2005), a *New York Times* bestseller, and *The Victorian Internet* (1998), described by *The Wall Street Journal* as a "dot-com cult classic". He writes the video-game column for *Intelligent Life*, The Economist's lifestyle magazine, is a regular commentator on BBC radio, and has written for other publications including the *Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The New York Times* and *Wired*. He holds a degree in engineering and computer science from Oxford University.

Chair: Professor Mike Walker OBE FREng, Vodafone Group and King's College London

Programme:

6.00pm Registration

8.00pm Drinks reception

6.30pm Lecture and Q&A session

9.00pm Close

Dress: Business attire

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Registration form

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