

Amazon buys video doorbell startup Ring

SAN FRANCISCO, US - Amazon confirmed on Tuesday that it bought video doorbell startup Ring, in a move that could help the internet giant's delivery arm reach into people's homes.



Financial terms of the acquisition were not disclosed, but online reports valued the deal at more than a billion dollars.

"We're excited to work with this talented team and help them in their mission to keep homes safe and secure," an Amazon spokesperson said.

California-based Ring first caught the spotlight with a failed quest for funding about five years ago on reality television show Shark Tank. Ring went on to win backing from the likes of billionaire Richard Branson and Amazon's Alexa Fund.

"Ring is committed to our mission to reduce crime in neighborhoods by providing effective yet affordable home security tools to our neighbours that make a positive impact on our homes, our communities and the world," Ring said in a statement. "We look forward to being a part of the Amazon team as we work toward our vision for safer neighborhoods."

Ring home security products include internet-linked video doorbells that can connect to smartphones to show people who is at their doors and allow them to chat. Amazon late last year unveiled a smart lock and camera combination in a move into home security.

"Amazon Key" is available exclusively to members of the internet giant's Prime subscription service in an array of US cities.

Key is designed to provide a secure and trackable way for packages to be delivered inside homes when people aren't there. Each Key kit includes an Amazon Cloud Cam synched to the internet and a smart door lock.

Prime members with the service can use a smartphone application to track packages and then watch deliveries happening or review video of in-home dropoffs.

Key allows someone making a delivery to request access to the recipient's home, with Amazon checking to make sure the proper driver is at the right location at the intended time before unlocking doors, according to a description of the service.

A Cloud Cam providing a view of the inside entryway spurs into action when doors are unlocked, recording a delivery. Delivery people are not given access codes, as unlocking doors is done online.

The move into home security opened a new competitive front with Google's parent company Alphabet, owner of Nest Labs, which recently expanded its line of products aimed at that market.

Source: AFP

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