

Solution1.

0870 Numbers

Proposed Changes to Service Charging

A white paper from Solution1 Limited.

Overview

During 2005 and 2006, Ofcom, the UK telecommunications regulator, conducted a review of 0870 services following consumer concern about the charges being levied for these services. On April 19th 2006, Ofcom published the results of this survey, as follows:

From spring 2008 (exact date to be confirmed by Ofcom) the cost of dialing an 0870 number must be no more than that of an equivalent national call to a number beginning 01 or 02. If providers wish to charge more for 0870 calls they will have to make a free-to-caller price pre-announcement at the start of the call. Additionally the current revenue share proposition will end, in fact organisations may well be charged for the call, as they are with 0800 services.

Ofcom published FAQ's on 0870 numbers can be found here:

<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/mofaq/telecoms/nts/>

Impact

The impact of these changes to companies that use 0870 numbers as a marketing device or to give customers access to Help or Service desks is that costs will increase.

Apart from the likelihood of each call being charged on a per minute basis to the owner/user of the number there will also be the loss of any revenue share that may have been negotiated.

To retain an 0870 number may also incur a charge for any free-to-caller pre-announcement that is played to callers.

Customer Options

In the face of the above ruling, our customers have two choices

- Retain the existing 0870 number and increase costs
- Change to another service, such as 0844 or 0871

The option to change to a 0845 service is also available, however it should be noted that Ofcom have advised that they will be carrying out a similar review for these services shortly.

The likely outcome is that 0845 number usage will also be subject to the same restrictions.

Timescales

The timeframe for the change has been set as spring 2008 although the exact date has yet to be published.

To allow plenty of time to make any changes that are necessary to stationery, vehicle livery, marketing material etc. it is important to start planning your alternative arrangements as soon as possible.

Alternative Service Options

0844 Numbers

There are a number of 0844 services with charges to the caller ranging between 1 pence per minute and 4 pence per minute. With these services, there is the possibility of a revenue share element payable to the number holder. This payment would be dependent upon the number used and the volume of traffic carried.

0871 Numbers

There are a number of 0871 services with charges to the caller ranging between 5 pence per minute and 10 pence per minute. As with 0844, there is the possibility of a revenue share element payable to the number holder. This payment is dependent upon the number used and the volume of traffic carried, but is generally higher than the payment for 0844 numbers.

Number Registration

It is proposed that any customer choosing to use 0871 numbers will need to register with Phonepayplus, www.phonepayplus.org.uk.

Phonepayplus has replaced ICSTIS, which was the organisation set up to monitor premium rate services in the UK.

How Solution1 Can Help You

Solution1 can help our customers in the following ways:

- Provide consultancy to identify the most suitable option for you to move forward.

(Where appropriate Solution1 will be able to provide the call record detail that you need to make an educated decision.)

- Provide revenue share projections for the service required.
- Assist with any registration for Phonepayplus.
- Install the service, including any routing plans required.
- Provide ongoing maintenance services, including routing plan changes.

About Solution1

Solution1 was formed in March of 2007 following the acquisition of two companies from Siemens Enterprise Communications Ltd (SECL) with the main aim of becoming a leading B2B provider of converged IP services' in the UK.

The Solution1 portfolio offers a range of products and services that enables us to offer a true One Stop Shop covering all communication services. The services range from a single exchange line, through IP enabled voice switches to managed multi-site MPLS networks built for today's converging applications.

You can contact Solution1 in the following ways:

Via your Solution1 Account Manager

Via our Customer Support Centre on 0870 906 1111

Via email, operations@solution1.co.uk