Let's hold robo-dialers accountable.

Let me say this up front, I’m 100+% in favor of implementing Stir and Shaken and any other measures to curb the rash of caustic and irritating robo-dialer problems we now face. Thank you FCC, and other agencies for trying to force these companies to stop what they are doing. Will the efforts work? I hope so because I'm tired of getting calls from people and companies I don’t know or care about. Just like so many of you out there that get these calls at all hours of the day and night, I’m fed up with the nuisance calls.

But when I look at the dialer industry and the carrier industry, I see some gross evidence that the robo-dialers are not being held accountable for their acts. The carrier industry is not holding the robo-dialers accountable and in some way is actually **enabling** them to continue what they are doing. Let me explain my position.

As a Telecom Consultant, I can look at the call history of one of my carrier customers, and find that a particular dialer company sends 1 million call attempts per week. They maintain an ASR of about 25%. ASR is the Answer Seisure Ratio, basically it is the percent of calls answered as compared to the number of calls attempted. So what does that mean to a carrier that has to try to complete these calls?

Of the 1,000,000 calls sent out into the network, with a 25% ASR. (1 million is used to make the math easy).

1. 250,000 calls have some type of action that will cause the calls to be billed at least the minimum bill amount for that call. ( varies with each carrier, but let's say 5 seconds). Thus the robo-dialer will pay for these calls.
2. The real problem is that 750,000 call attempts (yes that is 75% of the calls) will be sent to a (LEC, ILEC, CLEC, Wireless) network and will:
   1. tie up carrier switch resources and trunks,
   2. use valuable SS7 resources to perform call set up,
   3. tie up valuable switch ports and eat up precious CPU cycles and memory
   4. quite possibly block other customer’s calls because all the resources for a given location are tied up
   5. And, not one of these ¾ of million calls will pay a red cent, nothing, nada, they are free calls.

Am I the only one that sees this as a problem?? Why do switch and capacity engineers and consultants like myself have to size and engineer a network to handle a huge “Busy Hour” of traffic when in some cases 75% of it is not bringing in any revenue?

If you want to talk about culpability and responsibility, here is the first thing that should be remedied to help fix some of the incessant robo-dialer problems we have today. This remedy in itself, will not entirely fix the robo-dialer problem, I know that. But it would eliminate some of the millions of calls that go *unanswered and unbilled*. I’m sorry, but the carrier business model is providing incentive to robo-dialers to dial as much as they want to, knowing full well that a large percentage of the calls will not be billed.

When people use resources, they should pay their fair share, I think we all agree that concept is fair. Then why do we not ask call-originators (robo-dialers) to pay their fair share? I firmly believe that one of the reasons robo-calling was invented is because there is no cost to send millions of calls out into the network because when no one answers the calls, it is ***“FREE”.*** Sure some percent of the calls will be answered by a human or voice mail or an IVR, that is what the robo-dialers are counting on. But they can send as many telephone calls out into the network with no culpability or more importantly no cost to them.

So, I'm not the first guy to notice this problem, it’s been a problem for years and has been sort of dealt with, for some time, in different ways. But if you ask any carrier why they don’t charge for every call attempt they will all tell you the same thing. “Well, we have always not charged for calls that are not answered. So we don’t want to change our billing system”.

If the FCC wants to do something about robo-dialers, then make every call attempt chargeable, as a rule, or law, or whatever you want to call it. First off, that would necessitate all carriers begin charging for every call attempt. Secondly, that would cut down on a large portion of the millions of call attempts and would bring in some revenue for the telecom carriers to help pay for their network costs.

While I realize this is not a cure for robo-dialing, it will certainly reduce it by some increment. And, any amount of reduced robo-calls is a good thing.

Thanks

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