

From: Ray Stoddard <RayS@FlashCreative.com>
To: A4.A4 (FCCINFO)
Date: 5/22/98 11:38am
Subject: Pay Phone Charges for 800 # Access

96-128

Dear People,

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I completely disapprove of allowing phone companies to charge for 800 number access from payphones. It is much like what the banks have done with ATM's. You do not have to allow this practice. You can reconsider it.

Banks provided ATM access and promoted it as an "easier" way for people to bank. They did so in large measure so that they wouldn't have to pay tellers. They even charged customers an extra fee to talk to a live teller. Now, however, they are charging us to ATM's! Why, because they want to make more money and they've been allowed to.

Here's a case in which the phone companies touted 800 numbers as a great service, for which they're charging the company with the 800 number. Now that the public is using the service, the phone companies aren't making any money on their pay phones. They created their own problem! Why should consumers have to pay for the phone company's problem? It doesn't make sense.

My pager provider would have to charge me every time I get paged! They already pay the phone company for their 800 number. Let the phone company dip into its own pocket to recoup its pay phone costs. Privately owned pay phones could invoice their local phone companies! It's absurd to bill the person at the phone! The whole point of an 800 number is that you DON'T need cash at a phone to access it! It's more absurd and unequal considering the telephone companies are not charging to use an 800 number from a private phone. Why not? Because 800 numbers are supposed to be FREE! That was the deal!

What next? Some pay phones in "good neighborhoods" cost more than phones in "bad neighborhoods?" It will end up like the airline industry in which the cost of a seat varies wildly! No thank you.

Please reconsider this regulation.

Ray Stoddard
Business Technology Consultant
Flash Creative Management
(201) 489-2500 X262
rays@flashcreative.com

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From: Diane Gordon <dgordon@TheRamp.net>
To: A4.A4 (FCCINFO)
Date: 5/21/98 7:49pm
Subject: pay phone charge

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I don't know if this is the right place to write my extreme displeasure at the recent implementation of the 30 cent pay phone charge. As a solo practitioner (a VERY small business), this extra fee is a real deterrent to business. I have cancelled those toll free numbers I have given to people because I cannot afford to have expenses that I cannot control. I cannot control someone else's choice to call me from a pay phone. I used to check my service from a pay phone using my toll free number. I have stopped. I try to find a non pay phone to make such a call. Those 30 cent fees are inflationary as they raise the cost of doing business, and if I cannot contain them, they will get passed on to consumers. 30 cents is an extremely high fee (I wouldn't mind 5 cents) - so it makes it more expensive than using coins for a pay phone. This fee interferes with communication rather than enhance it. Also to have 30 cents added to a prepaid calling card or a regular calling card means alot of us think twice before making that one minute call. I think you made a big mistake in approving that fee. I am so glad that I hadn't yet published my toll free numbers. They'd be cancelled in a heartbeat. Unfortunately I can't control wrong numbers!!!!

I hope that you reconsider your decision. I would imagin that big business must be REALLY angry about this charge!!!

Yours truly
Diane Gordon

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