

Dear Sirs,

The cellular phone network and handset industry are far too tightly coupled in this country because the networks prefer to increase the cost of switching providers and decrease the number of handsets they support. With this arrangement, it is much like AT&T prior to Carterphone - we have a few handsets which provide some functionality, but there is an additional charge for every additional feature, whether it involves the network or not. Camera phones and MP3 player phones are interesting ideas, but until the networks permit utilization of the devices in ways that do not incur extra charges, I am not interested. What business is it of theirs if I transfer a picture to my home computer through a Bluetooth connection?

Applying Carterphone regulations to the cellular network would open a new market for cellular phone purveyors. It would allow them to compete based on the features of the phone of interest to the individual customer, not just a handful of phones selected to give the network a certain array of devices and then crippled before being sold to the end user.

Decoupling the network from the telephone would make for more efficient spectrum utilization. Telephones with local networking capabilities would be able to connect to nearby devices and perhaps even make calls without having to use the cellular network at all. Telephones could transfer data over nearby Wi-Fi and Bluetooth networks, for example. The actual user of the device would be able to select a device appropriate to that user's requirements and use the spectrum appropriately.

The course of action is clear. The FCC should apply Carterphone regulations to the cellular networks to broaden choices for the consumer and allow more efficient spectrum utilization.

Sincerely,

James E. Scarborough