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## **Protecting the Privacy of Your Telephone Calling Records**

### **What is CPNI, and what does it have to do with me?**

Effective December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the FCC imposed new regulations regarding Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI). These regulations affect the way we are allowed to talk to customers about their Digital Phone service and share information regarding their Digital Phone packages and Call Detail Records (CDR's).

CPNI regulations place restrictions on how we can provide information to our subscribers that regards the customer's CDR's (time, date, duration, destination number), type of network they subscribe to, and the customer's phone packages or phone features. We are NOT allowed to discuss any of this information with you until we have verified that we are speaking with the customer of record or a person who is on the customer's authorized access list.

US Cable and our switch partners' are your telephone provider. Telephone providers collect information such as the numbers you call and when you call them, as well as the particular services you use, such as call forwarding or voice mail. Telephone companies collect this customer information, sometimes called Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI), so they can provide the services you have requested and send you bills for them.

Both Congress and the FCC impose requirements on telephone companies about how they can use this information and what they must do to protect it from disclosure. Despite these rules, using a practice known as "pretexting," or posing as someone such as the actual customer or a law enforcement official, unscrupulous individuals have been able to obtain telephone calling records, and, in some cases, offer them for sale on the Internet. To help control this practice, Congress recently passed a law making it a crime punishable by fine or imprisonment of up to 10 years to obtain calling records from a telephone company, including Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service providers, by: making false or fraudulent statements; providing fraudulent documents; or accessing customer records without prior authorization through the Internet or fraudulent computer-related activities. The law also prohibits the unauthorized sale or transfer of confidential phone records or the purchase or receipt of such information with knowledge that it was obtained fraudulently or without authorization.

### **What Can Your Telephone Company Do With This Information?**



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Both a law passed by Congress and Federal Communications Commission rules impose a general duty on telephone companies to protect the confidentiality of your customer information. Telephone companies may use, disclose, or permit access to your customer information in these circumstances: (1) as required by law; (2) with your approval; and (3) in providing the service from which the customer information is derived.

Your telephone company must disclose your customer information to any person you designate if you make a request in writing. Your telephone company may use your customer information, without your approval, to market enhancements to services you already use. For example, if you purchase basic local telephone service from a telephone company, it does not need your approval to use your customer information to try to sell you voice mail or caller ID services. However, if you ask your telephone company to put your residential telephone number on its company-specific do-not-call list, it cannot legally make these calls.

US Cable does not use your information for any marketing purposes and will not sell or provide CPNI information to a third party other than as noted in the foregoing.

### **What Must Your Telephone Company Do To Keep Your Information Confidential?**

The FCC requires your telephone company to keep accurate records of all instances where your customer information was disclosed or provided to third parties, and whether or not you have provided approval to use your customer information for marketing. Telephone companies must train their employees in the appropriate use of customer information. Marketing campaigns using customer information must be carefully reviewed. The FCC requires telephone companies to prepare annual compliance certificates signed by an officer of the company certifying that the company has established operating procedures that are adequate to ensure compliance with these rules. The compliance certificates must be made publicly available.

### **What Is The FCC Doing To Keep Your Telephone Company From Disclosing Your Information?**

In addition to these rules, the FCC is exploring whether new or stronger rules may be necessary to protect your customer information. The FCC investigates consumer complaints about unauthorized or unlawful disclosure of customer information, and, if it finds a violation, can issue citations and propose fines. The FCC recently proposed \$100,000 fines on telephone companies with inadequate certifications regarding compliance with FCC rules protecting customer information from disclosure.

The FCC also works closely with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to prevent the unlawful sale or distribution of customer information by data brokers or Web sites. Telephone companies also have sued data brokers to prevent the unlawful sale or distribution of customer information.



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You are an important part of the FCC's efforts to keep telephone companies from unlawfully disclosing your customer information. If you suspect that your customer information may have been disclosed without your permission, first contact your telephone company to inform it of your concern. If you don't think your customer information is being protected adequately, file an informal complaint to help the FCC determine if there is a problem. You can file a complaint with the FCC by e-mail ([fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov)), the Internet (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/complaints.html>), telephone 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY, fax (1-866-418-0232), or mail.

If mailing a complaint, send it to:

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554.

### **How Can I Help Prevent Unauthorized Disclosure of My Information?**

If you think your customer information has been disclosed without your permission, contact your telephone company right away. Also, file a complaint with the FCC.

Remember: Customer information rules apply to all telephone companies: local, long distance, and wireless. Make your customer information choices known to each company.

For more information on telephone company issues, visit [www.fcc.gov/cgb](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb); send an e-mail to [fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov); or call us at 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) (voice) and 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) (TTY).

For this or any other consumer publication in an accessible format (electronic ASCII text, Braille, large print, or audio) please write or call us at the address or phone number below, or send an e-mail to [FCC504@fcc.gov](mailto:FCC504@fcc.gov).

To receive information on this and other FCC consumer topics through the Commission's electronic subscriber service, click on <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/contacts/>.

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