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Cell Phone Plans - Choices Abound!

By Lillian Fuller

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The Future Is Flexible

Gone are the days when the only way you could afford a cell phone was to buy into a lengthy cell phone plan. In those early days, a cell phone plan included a seemingly ironclad contract that lasted a minimum of three years. There simply were no choices. If you wanted a cell phone you had to buy the phone and commit to being tied to a contract; like it or lump it.

Thankfully those days are over and today because of the number of service providers, choices abound! Today's cell phone plans are designed with the consumer and their multitude of choices in mind. The wireless customer can choose an affordable cell phone with many choices and combinations of cell phone plans. That's the good news! There is bad news though, with the large volume of information available today, where does a person start to look and how do they decide what to choose?

Choices, Choices, Choices

That's the reason for this article. My goal is to help guide you through the myriad of choices that are available and to introduce you to the world of prepaid cell phones, family plans and shared plans for multiple cell phones. I'll be giving you some suggestions on how to match the best cell phone plan for you and your lifestyle. I'll also be giving you an idea where to find some ratings and reviews.

There are a few things to consider when making a decision. Once that's done you can look into the various reviews on what's currently available. Some internet sites provide ratings for the cell phone plans they advertise and are always striving to inform the customer about their newest offerings and hottest deals.

Decision Helpers

Hardware & Software.

What's Available?

The prepaid cell phone - Diamonds & Dust.

Contracts - Bundles of Bargains.

Companies you can count on.

What's your style?

Hardware And Software

The Hardware

When it all comes down to it, isn't it all about the phone? This is primarily one of the first of the decision making factors because it determines what kind of phone you'll get. This is especially true when you are looking at what can be a very expensive purchase.

Almost every cell phone company provides the most simple or the most complex cell phones with their prepaid cell phone packages. Companies such as Verizon, Cricket, and Nextel all offer easy consumer

friendly "pay as you go" options.

If you chose a contract, there seems to be a formula but some companies have very enticing offers especially if you are changing service providers. The basic rule of thumb seems to be:

\$50.00 price reduction for a one year contract.

\$100.00 price reduction for a two year contract.

\$150.00 price reduction for a three year contract.

As mentioned above some service providers offer up to a 75% discounted price for a top of the line cell phone in exchange for a three year contract. As a particularly good salesman told me "you can always get out of a contract these days, you just have to pay it out". Because the cell phones offered by most service providers are top of the line items from Motorola and Nokia and the contract is so consumer friendly it will be easy for you to stick with a contract for three years.

The Software

The service provider is the most important software factor when choosing between a prepaid cell phone and cell phone plan contract. This is an important issue because even the best phone is only as good as its signal.

Buyers beware however; some service providers' piggyback on top of more established lines. If it's a case of first come; first serve and your service provider piggybacks, you could be the first one off. This results in dropped calls and unreliable air space. Not a good outcome to your purchase. So do your research diligently.

What's Available?

Because it's all about the phone, ask yourself the following questions. What kind of phone do you want? Do you want one that is bare bones or one that has it all? Does the cell phone company or service provider offer a phone that comes with family or shared plans? If you chose a family plan, are both phones equally efficient? Do you want a cell phone that doubles as a palm pilot or perhaps you want a

?

Cell Phone Plans – Choices Abound!

All these questions will determine where you want to look when making your choice between a contract and a prepaid cell phone plan. There may be some features that you can live without. Knowing this upfront will help you determine what is best for you. There are numerous websites that provide ratings and reviews of what is currently available. Surf the web and research Verizon, T-Mobile, AT&T, Nextel, Cricket and Cingular.

The most popular plans these days are shared plans or family plans. Family plans are useful to the small business because each employee can have a cell phone and the company receives just one invoice. This is a good way of keeping track of communication expenses. This applies to a small business but one invoice is a good way to monitor family budgets as well.

Prepaid Cell Phones...Diamonds & Dust

Diamonds

Prepaid minutes can be less expensive than contract minutes.

No Credit checks, no hassles!

No monthly bill, you've paid upfront.

No service fees.

Dust

Extras costs more, long distance and roaming fees can be very expensive.

Not all services are included, you may not be able to surf the web.

Your phone only works in analog areas (quite common in more remote areas).

Prepaid minutes can be more expensive on a minute by minute basis. Read the fine print.

Contracts - Bundles Of Bargains

The most attractive feature about cell phone contracts is the bundle concept. There are numerous cell phone plans to make it easy for you to adhere to a contract and get a bundle of great deals. You can get special "add ons" like three way calling and call display. You can purchase a relatively nice cell phone at a reasonable price. As mentioned above contracts are not the iron clad document they used to be. If need be you can get released from them and you do get nicer phones!

Companies You Can Count On

Tried & True

There are so many cell phone companies and service providers these days, who can you, count on?

For the best hardware (the phone) and the best software (airtime and air quality), you could choose cell phone companies that have been in the communication business for a long time. Verizon is one of these companies. They have a long standing tradition of superior customer service and product dependability. AT&T is also a long established communications company with impeccable standards.

Up & Coming

There are also some new cell phone companies and service providers who are making a good name for themselves because of the attention to quality as well. Check out new companies such as Nextel (a proud sponsor of NASCAR), T-Mobile, Cingular and Cricket.

Cell Phone Plans – Choices Abound!

There are reviews you can read about the latest and newest technology about all of the above companies so go to each company's websites and check out how their phones rate against each other.

What's Your Style?

Truly today, it is all about you and your unique lifestyle. This is the most important decision making factor of all. You know what you need in a cell phone plan. The key is finding the best one that will serve your needs best. Don't be intimidated or overwhelmed by the number of choices out there. Just keep in mind; it's all about your unique communication needs. Read these two short scenarios. They will help to show you what could be right for you.

OR

The first scenario indicates that a prepaid cell phone would suit your lifestyle well. Make sure you prepay your minutes and avoid those pricey extra airtime costs. Use an international company such as

AT&T so that you receive global coverage.

The second scenario indicates that your family needs a shared plan like the family plans currently available. Surf the web and research companies like Verizon and AT&T.

The Bottom Line - Choices Do Abound!

So there you have it, the future is flexible and choices do abound. I hope you have found this article helpful as you make that choice between a prepaid cell phone and a cell phone contract. Keep in touch!

Lillian Fuller is a talented freelance writer providing tips for consumers about

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and

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Cellular Phone Buyers Information

By vince ohare

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The Hottest thing with cell phones is the ability to take pictures with your cell phone. You can take pictures with your cell phone and e-mail them to family and friends with the touch of a few buttons.

Cell Phone Plans – Choices Abound!

There are no tricks involved and it is a fairly simple process. Just aim and shoot to capture all the fun right on your cell phone. Press a few buttons and bam it's right on your freinds phone or sent to their email.

Factory-to-dealer sales of camera phones grew from 1.2 million in 2001 to 6.3 million last year with estimates that last year's sales will double this year and triple in 2005. Some say that this is going be the next standard on cell phones to come but video cell phones are being marketed to Japan as we speak.

If you are in the market for a new cell phone check out camera phones at <http://www.cell-phone-buyersguide.com>

I hope I have helped you In choosing the right Cell phone

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Cellular Phone Buyers Information

Are Cellular Phones Just a Fashion Accessory?

Prepaid cell phone plans: Great option or Last Resort?

Stop Paying Two Phone Bills: Make Your Cell Phone Your Primary Line

Cell Phone Abuse. Are You A Victim?

Rolodex Pro Contact Manager Software

Money Saving ideas

Scams Exposed

Understanding Incontinence

Brian Garvin's MLM Secrets

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