PERFORMANCETELECOM

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Number ranges...what's right for your organisation?

Before you secure a number or range of numbers to use in your business it's worth taking some time out to consider; the suitability for line of work that you are involved in, how the number range/s will be received by your audience, the suitability to the function within your organisation that you intend to use them for and any red tape that may come along with using certain ranges of numbers.

What ranges can I chose from?

As a quick guide, the following are ranges of non geographic numbers (this simply means phone numbers that are not representative of a geographic location such as 0207 for inner London for example) that can be promoted for telephone contact with your organisation.

Number range	Caller Pays?	Called party pays?	Will I receive revenue share?	Accessible outside UK?	Regulator controlled?	Included in free call bundles	Mobile Caller Surcharges?
0800 / 0808	No*	Yes	No	Mostly	No	Provider Variable	*Usually
0845	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Usually
0844	Yes	Rate Variable	In some cases	No	No	No	Usually
0871	Yes	No	Yes usually	No	Yes	No	Usually
03XX	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
01 & 02 Ghost	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Can I use more than one number range of for my business?

By all means yes, in fact we recommend choosing number ranges that are suitable for each specific function within your organisation. The drivers for each organisation will vary dependant on their goals, demand & level of competition for their service as well as the demographic of their audience. A common approach however would be to use 0800 or ranges which are low cost to the caller for areas that could lead to a sale...so that callers are not discouraged to from responding to your advert for example, versus a competitor who may be using an 0800 freephone number.

For customer services and support the cost burden of a freephone number can really mount up and may encourage callers who could have easily found the required information on your website or instruction manual for example. To discourage 'unnecessary' calls, many organisations opt for numbers that either don't cost them anything to receive calls, such as 0844 numbers, or go even further by introducing numbers which the caller pays a higher rate to place the call, such as 0871 numbers. 0871 numbers can have 2 key benefits in the areas of customer services and support, by acting as a disincentive to callers ringing in for information easily accessed elsewhere for free (user manual / website for example). In addition to this call revenue can be generated from each customer call to the 0871 number, which for businesses generating a high volume of customer service / support related telephone enquiries can result in a significant income stream. Before adopting 0844 numbers or 0871 numbers it's important to factor in the downsides, such as:

- 0844 and 0871 numbers cannot be dialled from outside the UK
- 0871 numbers are now regulated by PhonePayPlus so there are restrictions on their usage (such as limits on queue time for example)
- Some callers may refuse to call you if they think you are generating income from their call

Callers from Mobile phones

Many of the mobile operators charge considerably above the fixed line rates for dialling any number prefixed 08. If many of your callers use their mobiles to ring you, and it worries you that they could be charged a higher amount than you feel is acceptable then you can counter this by using the relatively new 03 number range. 0330 range provides all the flexibility advantages of non geographic numbering, yet networks may only charge calls at the same rate they would charge for calls to numbers starting 01 & 02, which in many cases are inclusive in callers bundled minute packages. The drawback to these ranges however is that you as the owner of the number will be have to pay for calls delivered to your site (around 3ppm) and also 03 prefix numbers cannot currently be accessed from outside the UK. It is also worth considering using 03 numbers in preference to 08 numbers if your work force call back to the office from their company mobiles as this could realise a considerable cost saving for your business.