

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Shaun

Surname:

Wells

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep nothing confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:

You may publish my response on receipt

Question 1.1: What are the implications of market change for mobile and wireless services?:

It seems that consumers are having to take out, ever increasing lengths of contracts, to own the latest mobile phones (18 + 24 mnths contracts). This can mean, that over the length of a contract you're paying a significant fee. I've recently purchased an iPhone 3g - its likely to cost me somewhere near £1,000 by the conclusion of the 18 mnth contract. Its also likely that the phones battery life will be quite poor by the end of my phones contract.

Question 1.2: How are citizens and consumers affected by developments in the mobile sector?:

Developments are generally good for consumers - allowing more services. The consumer needs to be very wary of hidden charges. Internet roaming can be so expensive. I also had issues with a contract I signed with Carphone Warehouse - and have had a incredible nightmare experience, trying to come to a amicable solution. The inclusion of GPS on phones, is great - but a slight worry. Again, this may need internet access, and on certain packages this could prove very dear. I currently own a iPhone (which uses Google Maps). This is much better then the Nokia N95, i owned previously owned.

The reason is that the maps needed to be downloaded and unless you read all the print, it would have been very easy to spend a small fortune downloading maps. You could download them from a software package - but this should have been more easier to see, as it was the cheapest option.

Buying ringtones/songs are also much dearer then other mp3 only stores.

Question 1.3: What are the purposes of mobile regulation, and where should its focus lie?:

I'm pleased by the EU encouraging companies to clearly explain international roaming charges.

I also am pleased, to see an increasing number of providers, offer inclusive internet roaming charges. The pay per MB deals from the past are too expensive.

With an increase in mobiles that can stream video (either from YouTube or BBC iPlayer), its essential that mobile contract are including some sort of deal on this front. I would like to see regulation in software related to purchasing anew mobile. For example, Apple are trying to flog the Mobile Me software with a new iPhone (and its not cheap, £59 a year). Without its hard to sync some software (calendars).

I would also like to see greater regulation, with regards to complaining to service providers. Whenever I contacted the Carphone Warehouse - its was hell. Not replying to calls/letters. Never doing what they said they would. There is little a customer can do, as they are tied into lengthy contracts.

Phone insurance is also becoming really costly.

Also don't like offering pay-as-you-go customers the latest handsets.

Question 1.4: What is the scope for deregulation, competition and innovation in the mobile sector?:

Not sure about deregulation.

Question 3.1: What do you think are the features of a well-functioning mobile market? What evidence do you see that those features are present in the UK market?:

Competition on the price of mobiles/calls/services.

Varying contracts offered. It seems that the companies are all going towards offering 18 (and now 24mth) contracts, if you want the latest phone.

Evidence that the market is heading towards good - the clear identification of international roaming charges/and there reduction in price.

Question 3.2: What measures are most appropriate to assess whether the mobile sector is performing well for citizens and consumers?:

Average cost of bills (I suspect that they are going up). Perhaps comparing this to the number/duration of calls made.

I guess that the average price of a call per min has gone up, from say 10 yrs ago, when you include the total cost of monthly bill. I find that my £35 a month contract is very rarely just £35 - despite using my phone very rarely - always staying way within my free minutes package.

Also reviewing the cost of insurance (again I would say this has gone up). Another problem with insurance is that its usually on a seperate bill/Direct Debit. So when you change your phone, you could also still be paying for insurance, on a phone you don't still own.

Question 3.3: How will market dynamics change as a result of trends such as availability of new spectrum, mobile broadband and new ways of delivering voice services?:

It will become more expensive.

At present, the more desirable a new phone is - the more it will cost (over the duration of a contract) - compared to the previous generation of handset.

New services will be good - touch screen/better cameras/quicker internet. But will newer initiatives - it seems that sometimes they can be with hidden extra charges. For example - you get GPS, but have to pay to access maps; get a iPhone, but pay to sync all areas.

Question 4.1: What is your experience, as an individual consumer or an organisation that uses mobile services?:

Phones are generally great. But service providers are terrible (or at least the carphone warehouse was). Never been treated so bad by one company.

Question 4.2: How should regulators and policy-makers respond to signs of rising consumer concern? :

Advertise a regulator better. Is there an OFCOM for the mobile industry - in regards to complaining about a retailer?

Question 4.3: What are the important factors to consider in striking a balance between protecting mobile consumers and enabling markets to work flexibly? Have we got this balance right in today's mobile market?:

Just - the market is obviously looking to make a profit, and I think the core of the business do that very well. But the big companies have external links that can drain

the wallet. E.g. mobile insurance. I think most of the big providers have external insurance arms? (Carphone Warehouse / Life Line)

Question 5.1: How does the use of mobile services affect our participation as citizens in society?:

It makes me happy. Able to use GPS to get home, or find local services. Wi-fi iTunes store to buy songs. Internet on the move. All good.
Great cameras mean no more digi camera and it looks like soon no more need for a camcorder, either.

Question 5.2: What factors should we take into account in thinking about access and inclusion issues in mobile markets?:

Don't think it a real concern, but there is some beta software that lets you identify the location of your friends, via GPS. I think you all need to opt into the service at presnet - wouldn't like this to be something that you don't need to agree to.

Question 5.3: What factors should we take into account in thinking about new services, and how those services may affect issues like protection of children, privacy and security?:

See above

Question 5.4: Have you been affected by issues about coverage or 'not spots'? How has it affected you?:

The iPhone 3g has trouble finding some 3g - but think that only affects this handset make. Used to have some trouble accessing some free wi-fi, on my old Nokia n95.

Question 7.1: What do you see as the most influential trends and features of mobile and wireless markets in future?:

Touchscreen, internet access and the quality of camera/video recording.

Question 7.2: What new policy and regulatory challenges could the trends identified in this section bring? Which policy and regulatory challenges could they address?:

GOS - roaming charges.
Software updates (Apple are making you pay for software updates-although not i iPhone, but ther iPd Touch-but they may do so soon????)
Extra service costs.
Cost of internet roaming.
Price of music/ringtones.
Length of contracts.
Rubbish service from providers/retailers.

Question 8.1: Should Ofcom do more to promote competition in mobile and wireless markets?:

Yes. Most people charge the same. pick an ew new phone. Say the new Nokia N96. It will be freely avialable on all networks. But at the end of the day, they will all be pretty similar when comparing the price of packages.

Question 8.2: Ofcom's strategy in telecommunications is to promote competition at the deepest level of infrastructure that is effective and sustainable. How might this strategy be applied, given future developments in the mobile sector? Under what circumstances, if ever, would it make sense to consider access regulation for mobile platforms?:

Nott sure

Question 8.3: What role can competition play in ensuring that future development of the mobile internet provides an open and flexible environment for a wide range of services? Should Ofcom explore open access requirements to ensure opportunities for innovation? What role might 'net neutrality' play in the mobile sector?:

Perhaps try to allow the consumers to choose between 3rd party/independant version of services/software. Would i be tied to using my dear Nokia maps or could i use a free GPS service, provided by someone else. The iTunes Application store is a good example. I can choose between paying for Sudoku game or getting one for free (not that I play Sudoku)

Question 8.4: What role might competition play in addressing questions about transparency of prices, services and contractual conditions offered to consumers of mobile and wireless services? What role should regulation play in addressing these questions?:

Ensure all the providers use the same terminology. Testing new phones, when they are realeased, to ensure that they are being correctly advertised, Think I heard about someone upholding a complaint about the iPhone, as the adverts about "all parts of the internet are accessiable" was incorrcet.

Question 8.5: What is the best way to promote content standards and ensure privacy protection for increasingly complex content and transaction services? How will privacy issues fare in a world where services are more personal and more complex?:

Renew the laws, to incomporate these new challenges?

Question 8.6: Will the mobile termination rate regime need to evolve or change more fundamentally? What is the best approach to adopt?:

Its hard, because consumers have little movement within their contracts. Ideally, I would set a limit on how long a contract should be.

Question 8.7: If competition does not reduce international roaming charges sufficiently, how should regulators respond, if at all?:

Enforce it via the UK courts?

Question 8.8: How might universal service and universal access need to adapt in a world where we increasingly rely on mobile services? What role might mobile play in universal access delivery in future?:

Not sure

Question 8.9: Can markets and commercial agreements address issues such as 'not spots' and emergency access? If not, what role might be played by a regulator to address these issues?:

Don't think emergency access is a problem is it. Even if you've run out of credit, you can still call 999

Question 8.10: How might access for particular groups (such as the elderly and disabled users) need to evolve in future? What role can competition play in addressing these questions?:

Make phones with big buttons. Bigger screens with a big font and very, very easy to use.

Question 8.11: Do you have any comments regarding our proposed way forward and the objectives of the next phase of this Assessment?:

Reduce contract lengths. If there is a regulator that you can contact, to complain about the CarPhone Warehouse, then let me know and check hidden charges.

Additional comments:

Thanks