

**Remarks of  
Michael K. Powell  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission  
At the  
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The countdown begins. In seven days, consumers will be able to enjoy new freedom in their phone service.

- Freedom to choose among cellular providers and keep their phone number, and
- Freedom to choose whether to cut the cord entirely and move their wired phone number to their wireless phone.

The tie that once bound consumers to one particular service, or provider is about to be severed. Your phone number belongs to you, and you will finally be able to do what you choose with it.

This is a monumental improvement for consumers. It's about the convenience of keeping your phone number, but it is about much more.

Being free to move among carriers without the hassle of changing your number means providers will have to compete more aggressively to get your business and keep your business. Whoever provides the lowest price, best quality, and innovative features will win. This is the real competition that technology promises.

Companies will need to develop new ideas and innovative products to keep customers, or to entice them to make the switch. For example,

- Carriers are already working to integrate your wireless and wired world. For instance, there is a docking station that lets you use your existing home telephones with your cell phone.
- Carriers are also combining cellular phone, email and Internet in one personal untethered device.

As these new services come on line, we all will be the winners

Consumers who choose to take advantage of this new found freedom will need to take the following steps.

- **COMPARE:** First, consumers should **compare** the services offered by carriers in their area. Different landline and wireless carriers offer various calling packages. You should look for carriers that provide the value, services, and technology that fits you best.
- **CHECK:** Second, **check** your current contract. Your contract may contain early termination fees that you are obligated to pay. You will also be responsible for any outstanding balances. Make sure you know what fees apply.
- **CONTACT:** Finally, **contact** your new carrier of choice. Your preferred new carrier will handle all the details, and they have every incentive to make this process as easy as possible. Consumers should **not** call and terminate their current service—let the new carrier handle the transfer. Consumers should also bring a copy of a recent phone bill. This will have all the account information to make the process both accurate and painless.

I know a lot of consumers are enthusiastic about these new possibilities and freedoms. I too am energized by what's going to happen on November 24, and beyond, so let the countdown begin.

I'm glad to be with you here today to discuss this further. I'll be happy to take questions.