

Title:

Cell Phone Rebates Are Often An Illusion

Word Count:

547

Summary:

So you are looking for a new cell phone. Everywhere you look you see advertisements for free cell phones. You have physical stores that have the free cell phones available for you to inspect and you also have the online stores that usually have a larger selection of free cell phones from which to choose. The catch is that the cell phones are really not free since you have to sign a two-year service contract but that is a different story. You usually have to actually pay f...

Keywords:

cell phone accessories, cell phone accessory

Article Body:

So you are looking for a new cell phone. Everywhere you look you see advertisements for free cell phones. You have physical stores that have the free cell phones available for you to inspect and you also have the online stores that usually have a larger selection of free cell phones from which to choose. The catch is that the cell phones are really not free since you have to sign a two-year service contract but that is a different story. You usually have to actually pay for the phone up front and then mail-in a rebate form. So it really is the price of the phone that you pay up front - mail-in rebate = the free phone. But the rebate is not guaranteed. Once you mail in the rebate form you must hope that you are one of the lucky ones that actually receive the rebate check in the mail.

I know you are probably asking: "What do you mean be saying one of the lucky ones?" Well the rebates are basically the enticement that creates the illusion that the cell phone is free. It is the rebates that influence the decision to buy many of the free cell phones. But there is usually a catch to the rebates. You will see that the rebates have their own set of fine print that you need to navigate through. As you read through that fine print, you will notice that you usually have to wait a specified period before you are eligible for the rebate. Once the waiting period is over you usually have a limited time in which to mail in the rebate form and the supporting documentation. This waiting period is a trick in which the companies hope you forget about mailing in the rebate and if

you do remember the limited window is set in hopes that the window will have passed by time you remember the rebate.

Let us say that you are one of the people that remember to mail in the rebate on time. Now you will find that there are often long delays in the processing of your rebate. This again is a trick that tries to help you forget about the rebate over time. If you do remember and try to check the status of your rebate, more time is usually required before you are given an answer. Once again they are trying to help you forget. But you still remember and check on the rebate status again only to receive an answer that you forgot to include some of many items of information and documentation required by the rebate company. Your answer may be that the information was given when you purchased the phone. However, that does not matter since the rebate company is often a different company from the one in which you actually bought the phone. So you may receive the line that you are no longer eligible for the rebate.

This rebate fiasco got so bad with one online cell phone provider that the Federal Trade Commission had to actually step in and require that the company pay rebates to the many of customers that it had defrauded. So remember that cell phones are not really free regardless for what the promised rebates happen to offer.