

Title:

The Calling Card Alternative

Word Count:

503

Summary:

How many times have you complained about high long distance costs and phone companies overcharging you? Did you try to do anything about it? Did you search for alternate solutions? Calling cards might be the answer. Their low rates to any destination make them the perfect buy for domestic and international calls.

Keywords:

calling cards, phone cards, international calls, low rates, long distance

Article Body:

For a few years now, the calling cards business is booming. Everywhere you go, everywhere you search you might find one: in WallMarts, grocery stores, newspaper stands, vending machines in coffee shops. But the place you can find the most of these long distance alternatives is the internet. A quick search on Google, Yahoo or other search engines will reveal thousands of websites that sell calling cards. So, it's an easy pick, one might say.

Well... not quite. According to the FCC, almost 70% of the calling card businesses are fraudulent. Meaning mostly that they get your money but you don't get the calling card. That means that you have to be very careful when choosing a website to buy from. On top of that, calling cards vary in number and features, so you have to choose the one appropriate to your needs. Their low rates however, come with a price at times.

Companies selling calling cards use VoIP technology and other third party carriers to complete their calls. While not as expensive as a satellite connection (hence the low rates), this technology is at the beginning, so problems may occur from time to time.

This is why calling cards are not usually recommended for emergency calls. For calls within the United States however, calls made with calling cards (also known as phone cards) have a good quality and connection rate, given that you have found a good supplier.

So here are the steps you need to take to get the best out of your

calling card purchase:

- Find a reliable website (this means no weird pop-ups, no advertisement of Viagra on the website - you get my point).
- Take a look at the available calling cards and rates.
- Check out any details of calling cards: usually, next to or underneath the picture of the calling card there is a link that will take you to a "Details" page. Look for maintenance fees, rounding, any other surcharges, expiration dates.
- If you intend to make a lot of long calls over a short period of time, choose a card with a maintenance fee. This means that a certain amount will be deducted from your balance each week/month until you use up the card. But if you plan to make so many calls, you'll probably use the card up by the time the maintenance fee is deducted. Calling cards with maintenance fees also tend to have lower rates.
- If you use the card just once in a while, choose a card with no maintenance fee. These cards usually have higher rates, but you don't have to worry about your balance going down if you do not use the card.
- Look for a Customer Service number. Reliable companies have Customer Service, in case their customers have questions or problems.

After this, get the card you think is best for your needs and wait for it to arrive in the email. Unless otherwise specified, you should be able to use it immediately. Good luck!