

Title:

Cellular Phones vs. PCs Phones

Word Count:

937

Summary:

Most people are unaware of any discrepancy between the terms cellular and PCS. PCS services have cropped up however, in order to offer a viable alternative to cellular phone plans. While both are providers of mobile communication, there are some slight differences between the two. PCS stands for Personal Communications Services, which is essentially the trademark for the difference between the two. PCS boasts its ability to cater its services to meet the needs of the client. ...

Keywords:

cell, cellular, phone, pcs, phones, plans, wireless

Article Body:

Most people are unaware of any discrepancy between the terms cellular and PCS. PCS services have cropped up however, in order to offer a viable alternative to cellular phone plans. While both are providers of mobile communication, there are some slight differences between the two. PCS stands for Personal Communications Services, which is essentially the trademark for the difference between the two. PCS boasts its ability to cater its services to meet the needs of the client. PCS is defined as "...a combination of services like paging, caller ID and e-mail. PCS has an emphasis on personal service and extended mobility, often used in place of "digital cellular".""

A cell, used for communication between such named cell phones, is described as such: "Cell: The basic geographic unit of a cellular system and the basis for the generic industry term "cellular". A city or county is divided into small "cells", each of which is equipped with a low-powered radio transmitter/receiver. The cells can vary in size depending on terrain and capacity demands. By controlling the transmission power and the radio frequencies assigned from one cell to another, a computer at the Mobile Telephone Switching Office (MTSO) monitors the movement and transfers (or hands off) the phone call to another cell and another radio frequency as needed."

While PCS boasts a more extended mobility than that of cell phones, it essentially is a phone service with additional features such as caller id and

paging, with more comprehensive customer care. Another central difference between the two is the wavelengths on which they operate. Cellular wavelengths operate in the 824 MHz (megahertz) to the 894 MHz ranges, while PCS runs on the 1850 MHz to 1990 MHz ranges. In addition, because of the wavelengths on which PCS travels it doesn't cover a network as extensive as those covered by cell phones. PCS phones also work under digital technology, whereas cellular phones employ both digital and analog. Initially PCS phones were typically more expensive to purchase, but offered lower rates than competing cell phone plans. Currently, PCS phone plans are competitive in price with standard cell phone plans. A typical PCS cell phone plan starts at about \$29.99/per month for 300 minutes ranging to upwards of \$109.99 for a family plan with 2100 minutes.

As with any mobile calling plan, cellular or PCS, it is critical to determine your individual needs prior to deciding on a plan and purchasing a phone. Mobile phone plans are varied whether they are cellular or PCS, and one may suit your needs better than the other.

Everything evolves, becomes more complex and better quality (we hope). Look at the TV for example, first there were radios (sound only), then black and white, then color, then remote controls, then cable, then digital, and now High Definition TV's. The same principal is true with wireless, portable, phone service. We started with Cellular, which was originally geared at being available for people on the go, in their cars, away from their homes and offices. Then slowly, as the coverage areas grew, cellular coverage became almost absolute. Cell phones have now replaced the landline phone in many households. However, cell phones, on a cellular network, have just about hit a brick wall... so in walks the PCS! PCS, Personal Communications Services, is the new wave, the upgrade, of Cellular phone service.

PCS is a complex mixture of digital, wireless technology linked with messaging and internet at its base, not as additions to the service like Cellular. The whole process that PCS utilizes is shown, at its best and simplest, basically, in the children's movie "Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" when he is explaining "Wonka-vision" to Mike Teavee. Now, with that assisting in the explanation, PCS utilizes digital technology, not cellular. It takes small pieces of the conversation or message and then breaks them into smaller pieces and sends those pieces out in random spurts of information that is collected by the PCS and put back together. This process makes the data more secure and harder to intercept than the continuous flows of information sent as in Cellular service. Another plus to PCS service is the speed. It is over twice as fast as basic analog Cellular service, this increased speed means that data such as text messages, emails, downloads, caller ID, and even voice calls will be faster.

All of this sounds great when comparing Cellular and PCS services; However, one

of the drawbacks is that there are three different types of PCS services competing with one another. Unlike Cellular service where you can link up to any tower that is near you and have the airtime sent back to your carrier, if you are registered with one service, and you travel into another service area, you will not have service. There may be partnerships and mergers of technologies and creating compatible systems in the future, but as of now, this is a large concern when thinking about PCS service. The three major competing services now are Global System for Mobile Communication, Time Division Multiple Access, and Code Division Multiple Access. Another problem with PCS versus Cellular service is that the technology is still fairly new, making it not as widespread, and thus, reliable as traditional cell phones.

Every new technology has some hitches and bumps in the beginning, but slowly they get ironed out and the product with the best coverage, quality, and durability will surely win out. Some are placing bets on traditional Cellular service, others on PCS. But either way, the improvements to both will benefit us all.

* Not responsible for price quotes, as they may change over time.