

Title:

Dial Around Long Distance Plans Compared To Phone Cards

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Summary:

If you have done any research into the confusing world of long distance telephone rates, you have discovered that conventional long distance is expensive compared to almost any of the alternatives. This is especially true when you factor in, the extra fees and taxes added on by governments.

Conventional phone companies rely on people being either uninformed or unmotivated to check out the alternatives. Usually they bundle long distance with local services so you are never ...

Keywords:

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Article Body:

If you have done any research into the confusing world of long distance telephone rates, you have discovered that conventional long distance is expensive compared to almost any of the alternatives. This is especially true when you factor in, the extra fees and taxes added on by governments.

Conventional phone companies rely on people being either uninformed or unmotivated to check out the alternatives. Usually they bundle long distance with local services so you are never quite sure how much your long distance service is costing.

For instance, many consumers sign up for a local plan that includes unlimited long distance calling. They usually pay between \$50 and \$70 for this package. But they could get the same level of service for much less money by staying with a \$20-\$30/month local package and using a dial around plan that charges only 1.9 cents/minute for calls to the USA and Canada.

****Phone Cards - a solution with serious limitations****

One alternative to conventional long distance service is to purchase a prepaid phone card. These cards are often purchased online. After signing up you are sent an account number and PIN which allow you to access the long distance

system.

Having a phone card lets you place long distance calls by calling a toll free access number, entering your account information, and then dialing the number you want to call.

Some of the features and shortcomings of phone cards are as follows:

-- Phone cards are often country or region specific. It is difficult to find one card that gives you good rates to multiple countries or regions.

-- They are good for short term situations like traveling, or for occasional use.

-- Calling can be cumbersome unless you can find a "PIN-less" phone card.

-- Charges can be higher than expected because of hidden fees and taxes.

-- Calls can be more expensive because of longer call duration rounding intervals. A 6.5 minute call will be billed as 7 minutes if a 1-minute rounding interval is used. But it will be billed as 9 minutes if they use a 3-minute interval.

-- Phone cards often have a higher minimum call duration. Some cards charge a minimum of one rounding interval for every call, even if it is not completed.

****Dial Around Plans - a much better alternative****

A much better alternative is what is called a dial around plan. They are called "dial around plans" because you use a local number or toll free number to bypass or "dial around" the conventional phone company. You call the special access number, and once you get a dial tone you dial the area code and number of the party you are calling.

Here are some of the features you can get with a quality dial around plan:

-- With good plans you only pay for minutes used. There are no fees, taxes, or hidden charges.

-- No monthly minimum charge or account fee.

-- Very low long distance rates, including low domestic rates to the USA and Canada.

-- Savings are substantial - from 50% to 90% less than conventional long distance.

-- Quality plans do not require a caller to enter an account number or PIN when calling from registered numbers. You can register as many as 10 phone numbers with your account.

-- Connection quality is comparable to conventional long distance.

-- Some plans (higher quality ones) give you free online account management including real time call history. This lets you see the details of every call -- the number called, time and date of the call, duration, and cost.

-- Dial around plans can be used at home, with a cell phone, or while traveling in the USA.

****Summary - Dial Around Plans are much more versatile****

While it is true that phone cards provide convenience when traveling, dial around plans offer a better and cheaper long distance alternative for anyone who uses long distance service on a regular basis.