

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission and Consumer Outreach

The U.S Experience



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Global Forum, November 7, 2003

Consumer Information: The Regulator's Role

- Competition brings multiple options for consumers – new applications and services, new providers, and increasingly aggressive marketing
- As a regulator, the FCC:
 - Arms consumers with knowledge and tools to make essential decisions
 - Protects consumers from anti-competitive behavior

FCC Consumer Information Services

Information outreach and consumer protection for services regulated by the FCC, including:

- **Wireline and Wireless Telecom Services**
 - Bills and charges, Toll-free and Pay-per-Call services, Emergency Services, International Dialing, Scams
- **TV & Radio Broadcasting**
 - Digital TV, Digital Radio, HDTV, Obscenity and Violence
- **Accessibility**
 - Universal Service, Access for those with Disabilities

Consumer Information: Unregulated Services

- Growing number of applications, services that the FCC does not regulate, whether because of highly competitive markets or absence of legal authority to do so:
 - Includes Internet, Internet Service Providers
- Alternate Consumer Information and Protection for these services and for fraud and business scams from:
 - State consumer protection agencies
 - U.S. Federal Trade Commission
 - U.S. Justice Department

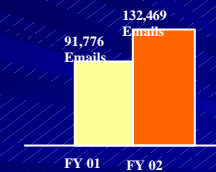
FCC Resources: Consumer Information and Complaints

- Consumer Call Centers
 - Washington, DC and Gettysburg, Maryland "Call Centers" have about 75 consumer advocacy and media specialists to answer consumer questions and resolve complaints
- FCC Headquarters
 - Direct inquiries, complaints or comments addressed to the FCC Chairman or Commissioners
- Consumer Advisory Committee
 - 35 Consumer Groups Represented

www.fcc.gov

Broadband

Consumer Center Inquiries & Complaints via the Web



GCT

FCC Resources: Consumer Information and Complaints

- A typical week includes:
 - Almost 6,000 inquiries and nearly 2,000 complaints to Call Centers, plus 5 inquiries from our Congress
 - Nearly 12,000 telephone and/or email inquiries to the FCC Chairman or Commissioners

– (From week of October 13-17, 2003)

Consumer Inquiries and Complaints (FY 2002 Consumer Statistics Snapshot)

Competition

Telephone Inquiries and Complaints*	313,665
E-mail Inquiries and Complaints	132,469
Written Inquiries and Complaints	79,295
Calls to the Automated Response System	387,410


In addition, 11,837 visits to the Reference Information Center

*Includes calls placed directly to CARS (313,665) and those received after hours and answered the next business day (13,734)

Recent Examples: FCC Information Outreach

Broadband

- Digital TV Transition
- Wireless Number Portability
- National “Do Not Call” registry
- International Charges for Fixed-to-Mobile Calls
- Emergency “911” dialing services from wireless phone networks




Emergency Communications Services

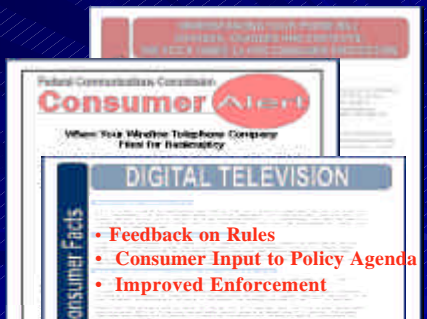
Homeland Security

Ensure that all U.S. Consumers:

- Know what the industry and FCC are doing to ensure the safety of the nation’s networks
- Know how best to use the communications network during emergencies



Benefits of FCC Consumer Outreach



- Feedback on Rules
- Consumer Input to Policy Agenda
- Improved Enforcement



Thank you!

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