



For immediate release: Tuesday 28th June, 2011

9 MILLION MOBILE CUSTOMERS COULD BE HIT BY PAY AS YOU GO PRICE INCREASES

Independent price comparison and switching service, uSwitch.com, estimates that at least nine million Orange and Vodafone customers could be hit by higher charges from July as changes are announced to Pay As You Go prices for both calls and texts^[1].

From this Friday, Orange customers will be charged an extra 25% on calls to mobiles, landlines and voicemail, while the cost of texting will rise 20%. From 14th July, Vodafone customers on the Simply tariff will see the cost of calls to mobiles, landlines and voicemail rise 19% and the cost of texting rise 20%. Pay As You Go customers not on the Simply tariff will see the minimum call charge go up a staggering 66%^[2].

Ernest Doku, technology expert at uSwitch.com, comments: "This is a real kick in the teeth for cash-strapped consumers that are already struggling to make ends meet. Pay As You Go customers are being hit with a double whammy of price increases – with both calls and texts going up, they will be counting the cost whenever they pick up their mobile phone. Orange and Vodafone are two of the biggest networks and it's our only hope that the others don't follow suit. As it stands we expect around nine million prepay customers to be affected by these hikes.

"The best advice for Pay As You Go users worried about spiralling bills is to take a look at your phone usage and see if you are better off moving onto a low value contract. A good solution for anyone nervous about getting tied in could be to keep your existing handset and take a 30-day SIM-only deal, which currently start from just £10 a month for 100 minutes and 500 texts. If you're happy to sign up for longer, there are some great pay monthly options out there and you could even land yourself with a free smartphone."

For more information on SIM-only deals visit <http://www.uswitch.com/mobiles/sim-only/> or call

0800 093 0607

-Ends-

Table 1: Key Orange and Vodafone PAYG price rise hikes^[2]

Company	Effective from	Key changes
Orange	1 st July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum call charges for PAYG customers to rise by 25% from 20p to 25p - Text messages to rise from 10p to 12p
Vodafone	14 th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum call charges on all PAYG price plans except Simply to rise by 66% from 15p to 25p - On the Simply price plan, calls to mobiles, landlines, and voicemail to rise from 21p to 25p, and standard UK texts to rise from 10p to 12p

Table 2: Key PAYG charges from July 2011

	Call (per minute)	Text	MMS	Voicemail (per minute)
O2 (Simplicity)	35p	12p	25p	15p
O2 (Non Simplicity tariffs)	25p for first 3 mins*			
T-Mobile (Text)	25p	10p	30p	20p
T-Mobile (Talk)	20p	12p	30p	20p
Vodafone Simply (from 14/7/11)	25p	12p	36p	25p
Orange (from 1/7/11)	25p	12p	40p	25p
3	26p	11p	36p	26p
Virgin (Addict)	26p	10p	30p	26p
Data supplied by www.uswitch.com, correct as of 28/6/11				
*then 5p for rest of day				

Calculations based on the fact that 91% of adults surveyed have a mobile phone for personal use. Assuming 48.3m adults (ONS) uSwitch.com calculates that there are 44 million mobile phone users in the UK.

1. According to Ofcom there are 22 million PAYG customers: <http://media.ofcom.org.uk/facts/>. A uSwitch.com survey of 3,000 PAYG customers in August 2010 revealed that 23% were with Orange and 17% were with Vodafone. Assuming the total of 40% can be applied to the PAYG base of 22 million, the price rises could affect 8.8 million consumers.
2. See Table 1 in press release:
 - a. Price rise information taken from company websites - <http://www.vodafone.co.uk/personal/price-plans/pay-as-you-go/price-changes/?cid=rdr-2788-01> and <http://www1.orange.co.uk/paygchanges/>

For further information please contact:

Katherine Cooper, uSwitch.com on 020 7802 2961 or katherinecooper@uswitch.com

Anna Schirmer, Lansons Communications on 0207 294 3605 or annas@lansons.com
John Diviney, Lansons Communications on 0207 294 3696 or johnd@lansons.com

About Us:

uSwitch.com is a free, impartial, online and telephone-based comparison and switching service, helping consumers compare prices on gas, electricity, water, heating cover, home telephone, broadband, digital television, mobile phones and personal finance products including mortgages, credit cards, current accounts and insurance. In 2010 uSwitch.com celebrated ten years of saving customers money.

uSwitch.com is the first comparison website to achieve the Plain English Campaign's Internet Crystal Mark, which is recognised as a standard that a website has clear language, is accessible and easy to use, and has been tested on a sample of its users.

uSwitch.com is dedicated to helping consumers save money whether they have internet access or not. It offers a dedicated call centre, manned by uSwitch customer service representatives, as well as a freepost 'Send us your bill' service, whereby customers can post their latest energy bills with their telephone number to FREEPOST USWITCH, to get a free call back from a dedicated customer services representative. The service is also available via fax, email and post. Consumers should fax 0203 214 8417, email CustomerServices@uswitch.com or write to Customer Services, uSwitch.com, Centro 3, 19 Mandela Street, London, NW1 0DU with their postcode and usage details.

uSwitch.com is owned by Forward Internet Group Limited, a privately funded collection of internet-based businesses focused on consumer engagement and innovation.