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36 MONTH MOBILE CONTRACTS FINALLY CULLED

Ofcom has today outlined new regulations, in line with EU telecoms law, that will benefit consumers in the UK when they take out contracts. Providers are now required by law to offer contracts of a maximum 24 months and the option of a 12 month contract.

Ernest Doku, technology expert at uSwitch.com, comments: "These longer 36 month mobile phone contracts were effectively handcuffing consumers, preventing them from getting the latest phone and saving money for three years. In such a rapidly evolving market nobody can afford to be tied down like this.

"Three year contracts came as a result of the sharp increase in smartphone take-up, which in some cases are worth up to £600. Now providers are required to offer 12 month contracts by law, we are likely to see providers claw back handset costs through higher contract charges.

"But in reducing the length of time that consumers can be locked into phone or broadband deals, as well as enabling easier mobile number porting, Ofcom has put the power back into the hands of the people.

"For Ofcom to require providers to port mobile numbers for both consumers and businesses in a single day is a real step in the right direction. It brings providers to task and allows people to vote with their feet and enable them to switch to a better deal with minimum downtime. The threat of compensation will doubtlessly ensure that the process is as painless as possible for consumers."

For more information visit www.uswitch.com or call 0800 093 0607

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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.

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