



MEDIA RELEASE
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Aussies in the dark about voicemail fees

Sydney, 1 July 2009 – Most Aussie mobile users are in the dark when it comes to the cost of voicemail. In fact, three out of four Australians with voicemail don't know how much they are charged to retrieve messages, according to researchⁱ released today by Virgin Mobile.

The study shows that, on average, Australians with voicemail use 14% of their cap plans on voicemail charges. This equates to an average of \$71 in hard cash that most Aussies are unwittingly spending each year.

In the midst of a recession, Virgin Mobile CEO, Peter Bithos said, "Virgin Mobile believes that current voicemail charges are excessive and have become the equivalent of ATM fees in the Telco industry."

The research revealed that four in five (79%) mobile phone users would use voicemail more often if it were free, however Virgin Mobile is currently the only major provider that does not charge for voicemail, regardless of what plan the customer is on.

"We provide all of our customers with free voicemail and always have. Virgin Mobile customers can check their voicemails anywhere, anytime without worrying about the cost. We at Virgin Mobile are focussed on making it easy, simple and transparent for the customer. We can't help but wonder why Telcos like 3 and Vodafone charge you to call yourself."

According to mobile phone users, only one out of every three messages is considered worth paying for. This means Australians with voicemail spend \$46 a year on voicemail they don't even want to listen to.

The types of voicemail that annoy Australians most are blank messages (66%) and long and boring messages (37%). In addition, one in five people are frustrated by messages which simply say "I called" or "don't worry about calling back".



Bithos says there is a need for other mobile operators, such as Vodafone and 3 Mobile, to clearly communicate and simplify all voicemail charges for consumers or get rid of them altogether.

“We have worked very hard to streamline our mobile caps and plans to ensure that along with receiving maximum value, our customers know what they are paying for – and what they really get for free. This allows each customer to spend their mobile budget on more of what they want from their mobile phone, and less on unwanted or unneeded fees.” continued Bithos.

Virgin Mobile strongly recommends that when looking for value, customers go to <http://www.yourcap.com.au/> to compare mobile plans and charges, including voicemail fees, from all the major Australian operators.

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For further information, state specific results or to arrange an interview with Peter Bithos, please contact:

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ⁱ The research was conducted online by Galaxy Research in May 2009 with 1,025 Australians aged 18 and over who own or are the primary user of a mobile phone.