

NYTELOAC.TXT

From: Colin Plumb <ccplumb@rose.waterloo.edu>
Subject: Re: NY Tel New Service For Handling Operator Assisted Calls
Reply-To: Colin Plumb <ccplumb@rose.waterloo.edu>
Organization: U. of Waterloo, Ontario

>[Moderator's Note: Can't you *just imagine* the fraud with this new toy?
>On being asked to record their name, caller responds:
>'Meet me at the airport at seven'; 'Call me back at acc-xxx-yyyy'; 'I do
>not have change, but I'll be home soon.'; or a whole variety of messages
>to which the callee can refuse to accept charges. Is telco going to
>keep track of all the 'names' (heh-heh!) that callers use when placing
>collect calls?

>If telco thinks they have a hard time now keeping people from talking
>around the operator to deliver quickie messages think how much harder
>it will be now. If telco thinks they have a problem now with people
>using coded names to deliver unpaid messages under the pretense of a
>collect call, wait until complete automation! People won't even have
>to make pretenses; they can just say something to the tape, let the
>other person hear it and decline to 'accept the charges'. How many
>school kids in NYC will bother to pay for local calls to tell their
>parents they will be home late once they figure this one out? PT]

Just one suggestion: if you're going to bother using coded names,
don't use collect calls, call person-to-person. You usually expect a
collect call to succeed, and the telco may notice a lot of refused
calls to a certain place. But you bother calling person-to-person
when you expect difficulty getting through (it's a *great* way to
bypass n layers of secretaries!), so the usage patterns aren't as
suspicious.

It's quite possible the telco will listen in and keep track of numbers
with lots of refused collect calls, although I don't know what they
can do about it after the fact. Theoretically, they could intercept
those lines to human operators, but it's an awful lot of work, and
won't help if the problem becomes sufficiently widespread.

At least around here, "operator-assisted" is a flat fee, so if I'm
making a collect long-distance call, I often ask for a specific
person.

-Colin

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