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MARCH

The majority of our new customers were referred to us by customers like you. We appreciate your thoughtfulness.

The 411 on directory assistance. *Credit: By Fred A. Bernstein*

Calling 411 for directory assistance can be maddeningly expensive. Carriers like Sprint and Verizon charge more than \$1 and sometimes as much as \$2 a call from a cellphone. And much of that is profit. Directory assistance "truly is a cash cow," said Saroja Girishankar, a vice president at the Pelorus Group, a telecommunications market research firm based in Raritan, N.J. She and other industry analysts said that the carriers paid wholesalers — who actually provide the 411 service — from 25 to 50 cents a call.

[Click here for the complete story.](#)

What's a Cell Phone for Anyway? *Credit: By www.businessweek.com*

For most older Americans, a cellular phone is just a phone. But for the younger generation, well, a cell phone is so much more than just for making voice calls. In a survey of 2,365 adults, only 19% of the people 55 and over say they use the calendar and address book features on their phones. And 15% say they download ring tones. That compares to 56% of people between the ages of 18 and 34 who rely on the calendar and address functions. And 47% of people in that age bracket download ring tones.

[Click here for the complete story.](#)

Microsoft: Searching Your Favorite Sites *Credit: By Dr. A. Michael Noll*

When Neil Holloway, the president of Microsoft's (MSFT) Europe, Middle East and Africa operations, blurted out March 1 that his company's search technology would be more relevant in the U.S. than Google's (GOOG) within six months, executives in the company's MSN unit cringed. For years, Microsoft has added features and improved technology in its Web search engine, only to see Google's lead expand.

[Click here for the complete story.](#)

What does AT&T/BellSouth mean for consumers? *Credit: By Marguerite Reardon*

Only three months after it closed the merger of AT&T and SBC Communications, the new AT&T is opening its checkbook again to buy BellSouth for a whopping \$67 billion. So what's this megamerger mean for consumers? Initially, consumers are not likely to even notice the merger, which is expected to close within the next year. For one, AT&T, which is still busy integrating business units and networks from its last merger, will also take time to make all the logistical changes associated with a merger of this size.

[Click here for the complete story.](#)

"...change in our industry is inevitable." *Credit: By Brian Twomey*

"Again, as I stated in December, change in our industry is inevitable. This week we have seen further evidence of carrier consolidation with news of the proposed acquisition of Bell South by AT&T. While there are substantial regulatory issues that certainly need be considered prior to any approval that would severely impact competition, even if approved, it will take considerable time before any real integration of ATT/SBC/BS networks and systems are likely. Even a transaction of this type will still create opportunity in our Channel. As mega carriers become even larger, they will continue to become more challenged as it relates to direct communications and sales. They will face more challenges with regard to flexibility, be less customer-focused, and become increasingly unable to work their way down to the mid-market business customers. Their size and inability to move quickly with their direct programs creates our opportunity to beat them on a daily basis. I look forward to working with you and further enhancing our programs to ensure that together we are able to continue to provide our customers with the best competitive solution. A solution that meets the increasing needs of customers while at the same time providing you with strong compensation, and the comfort of TNCI's financial stability."

Brian Twomey
President - TNCI

Razr Phone Glitch Puts Sales Temporarily on Hold. *Credit: By Marguerite Reardon*

Cingular Wireless and T-Mobile suspended Razr sales over the previous two days as a precaution so its customers didn't get stuck with defective phones. "It's virtually impossible to identify at retail which units have the defective component," said Peter Dobrow, a T-Mobile spokesman.

[Click here for the complete story.](#)



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