

**The BBC (in part) demonstrates the need to change from 084 to 03 numbers**

In the wake of recent bad telephone number stories for disabled sports fans and for the BBC, we are delighted to announce that a **fair telecoms campaign** supporter has achieved a success.

(see next page for screen dumps and links to all relevant and related material)

The problem

On 29 October the **BBC** announced that only wheelchair users were still able to buy tickets for its **Sports Personality of the Year** show on 16 December, by calling **0844 995 9672**.

All 084 numbers attract a subsidy for the person called and consequently cost more to call, up to 41p per minute, than numbers which do not (i.e. 01/02 and 03 numbers) ¹.

The remedy

In response to a complaint, the **BBC** graciously acknowledged that it had not fully understood the situation with 084 numbers and confirmed **an immediate switch to use of a 03 number**.

Calls to the replacement number **0333 567 0153** (indeed all 03 numbers) are charged at no more than the cost of a call to a geographic (01/02) number.

For very many callers this means that they incur no direct cost for the call, as most calls to these numbers are made within the terms of inclusive packages or bundles. Because of the cost of paying on the subsidy, 084 numbers are generally excluded from inclusive packages, although BT does collect it (only for 0845 numbers) from all subscribers to its Call Plans.

The lesson being learned

The equity offered by 03 numbers, which provide all of the same call handling benefits as other non-geographic numbers, is now starting to be recognised. This will be hastened by forthcoming **Ofcom** measures to force the "Service Charge" (subsidy benefit) to be declared, separately from the "Access Charge" added by the telephone company ². The forthcoming introduction of Consumer Rights measures by **BIS** will prohibit business from using 084 numbers for customer enquiries ³.

We are delighted to see that some parts of the BBC are happy to lead this move from 084 to 03.

It is however regrettable that **BBC Countryfile** continues to use a 0844 number for its "**Children in Need**" calendar ⁴, despite representations from **fair telecoms campaigners** similar to those which promoted the change in respect of the **Sports Personality of the Year** ticket line.

If the BBC has learned from its own coverage of the **Paralympic Games** disabled fans ticket rip-off fiasco ⁵, then that is to be welcomed.

We are also delighted to report **Gloucestershire NHS** making the 084 to 03 move ⁶, if belatedly.

The slow learners



We wait for **DWP**^z, **HMRC** and other **NHS providers** to wake up to what needs to be happening. Many businesses, including banks, but across all sectors, also need to learn.

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The following links and screenshots demonstrate how the BBC has indeed changed its approach on SPOTY.

The Google cache of www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/sports-personality/20104604 "as it appeared on 15 Nov 2012 23:00:17 GMT" - showing the 0844 number	The current version of www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/sports-personality/20104604 edited to remove the offending number	The new page at www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/sports-personality/20427959 showing the new 0333 number
<p>BBC Sports Personality of the Year ticket details</p> <p><small>BBC SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR 2012 Venue: ExCel London Date: Sunday 16 December Time: 19:30 GMT Coverage: Live on BBC One, BBC Radio 5 Live and the BBC Sport website</small></p> <p>The first wave of tickets for the BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2012 show have sold out in 30 minutes.</p> <p>Fans will have another chance to buy tickets in late November.</p> <p>Wheelchair spaces are still available and can be bought by calling 0844 995 9672. Full information and terms and conditions are available.</p> <p>Staged at London's 15,000 capacity ExCeL, the event on Sunday, 16 December will be the biggest in the programme's 59-year history.</p> <p>Sue Barker, Gary Lineker and Clare Balding will host the 2012 review.</p>	<p>BBC Sports Personality of the Year ticket details</p> <p><small>BBC SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR 2012 Venue: ExCel London Date: Sunday 16 December Time: 19:30 GMT Coverage: Live on BBC One, BBC Radio 5 live and the BBC Sport website</small></p> <p>The first wave of tickets for the BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2012 show have sold out in 30 minutes.</p> <p>Fans will have another chance to buy tickets in late November.</p> <p>Staged at London's 15,000 capacity ExCeL, the event on Sunday, 16 December will be the biggest in the programme's 59-year history.</p> <p>Sue Barker, Gary Lineker and Clare Balding will host the 2012 review.</p>	<p>BBC Sports Personality of the Year tickets sold out</p> <p><small>BBC SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR 2012 Venue: ExCel London Date: Sunday, 16 December Time: 19:30 GMT Coverage: Live on BBC One, BBC Radio 5 live and the BBC Sport website</small></p> <p>The remaining tickets for BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2012 have sold out in 40 minutes.</p> <p> The event, at London's 15,000-capacity ExCeL on Sunday, 16 December, promises to be the biggest in the programme's 59-year history after a golden summer.</p> <p>There are still a limited number of disabled places available, to book these please call 0333 567 0153.</p> <p>Sue Barker, Gary Lineker and Clare Balding will host the 2012 review.</p>

Links to related material

1. Our explanation of 084 calls costs is found at: [When are 084 calls more expensive than geographic rate?](#)
2. Details of the forthcoming **Ofcom** measures are found at: [Simplifying Non-geographic Numbers - Detailed proposals on the unbundled tariff](#)
3. Our comments on the forthcoming **BIS** Consumer Rights measures are found at: [Proposal to ban use of ripoff telephone numbers](#)
4. The failure of **BBC Countryfile** (and Pudsey) to remove use of a 084 number is covered at: [Pudsey gets it wrong](#)
5. **BBC** coverage of the scandal of disabled paralympic spectators having to use a 084 number is at: [Paralympics wheelchair bookings 'discriminate'](#)
6. Our welcome for the move to 03 by **Gloucestershire NHS** is found at: [Gloucestershire NHS finally gives up its 084 numbers](#)
7. Our commentary on the debate showing **DWP** being ready, but unwilling to move from 084 to 03 is found at: [... debate opens the door ...](#)

