



The Communicator

vol. 1
no. 5

A Monthly Telecommunications Update from RAM Communications

MORE CHARGES and CHANGES IN CELLULAR ARE COMING

According to New York telecom regulators, starting in November Verizon will charge its customers an additional surcharge for every landline call to cellular phones. In other regions of the country local phone companies will take up the same practice over the next few months. At this time it's too early to tell what sort of increase consumers can expect on their bills. Given the number of cell phone users, the increase could be substantial, especially for businesses who tend to make more calls.

In an unrelated story, it appears cell phone users will be able to transfer their cell phone numbers to other carriers. Up to now cellular companies have owned their numbers. The FCC is finally putting number portability in the consumers' hands. A formal announcement should be made by January 1, 2003.

RAM TIP: DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE IS NOT FASHIONABLE

If you have been driving around the Chicagoland Area lately, you may have noticed Ameritech's latest billboard campaign promoting '411 information' calling. Personally, I'm amazed by Ameritech's marketing department. They are certainly a creative group of people. The campaign uses billboards depicting 'hip' guys and gals from the 1970's in an attempt to show how unfashionable it is to dial 555-1212 for information. The ads insist that consumers should dial 411 instead because it is faster, smarter and perhaps, 'hipper' than dialing the old number.

We're not debating the merits of dialing 411 over 555-1212. What is debatable is the necessity of dialing your phone company for phone and address information at all! Why? There is a better, cheaper tool at your disposal -the internet! If your business is really concerned about keeping costs down and productivity up then use an internet browser. Whether you have a T1-based connection from RAM or another provider, your employees can get the information they need quickly and more economically than dialing 411. Consider this: we typically come across Ameritech bills with \$50 to \$110.00/month in directory assistance calling. Depending upon your local carrier, these calls cost anywhere from 45 to 95 cents per call. Using Google or Yahoo yellow pages is fast and easy. Have your employees bookmark one of these sites and avoid these charges permanently. Wasting money on 411 is not fashionable.



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FEATURED PARTNER CORNER: Network System Technologies

Who: Devin Nowakowski
Company: Network System Technologies
Position: Account Manager for Systems Integration
Co. History: NST opened in 1996 as a network integrator for small businesses. The company started as a two man operation and has grown to 30. NST is expanding once again and currently has annual sales of \$30 million.
Services: Devin and his support team specialize in electronic data management and disaster recovery.

I think it's beneficial for RAM to share its top business partners with our clients and associates. So starting with this issue, we will focus on a key partner RAM utilizes to help solve client needs. I've known Devin Nowakowski since 1998, and we've always enjoyed an outstanding business relationship. I am certain Devin and his firm can help your business's networking needs.

Recently, NST brought in RAM to provide Kipling Homes a complete internet solution. RAM brought in Internap to provide the internet service. NST provided the router and remote monitoring service. For clients who demand mission critical performance, NST is a one-stop shop for service monitoring and disaster recovery. NST's monitoring is much more thorough and accurate than that provided by any telco or ISP. In most cases, NST can diagnose a network or internet issue within minutes without depending upon customer intervention. In Kipling's case, Devin's team provides remote internet monitoring, automatic data backup and security monitoring for their network. This level of service will enable Kipling's employees freedom to complete their core tasks and work with complete computer and internet network security.

Devin and NST enjoy strong relationships with many business clients. Their attention to detail and reliability provide businesses peace of mind for information technology. For more details call Devin at 630-904-9600, extension 17, or visit www.nst-inc.com today.

ACRONYM CORNER

What do all those words and terms mean? The telecom world has more than its fill of acronyms. Customers certainly don't need to know all of them, but knowing a few will help you communicate better with your phone company. Here are a few:

POTS	Plain Old Telephone Service	PRI	Primary Rate Interface (Voice T1 Service)
CO	Central Office (Local Phone Office)	CLEC	Competitive Local Exchange Carrier