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What You Need to Know About '224'

As the Chicagoland area continues to grow, demand for phone numbers also increases. Cell phones, of course, have created the largest percentage of new phone number requests during the decade. Inevitably, the number supply is reaching critical mass in a few areas. The 847 area code has experienced the greatest demand.

RAM first mentioned this issue in the fall of 2004. Now, we are witnessing cellular and landline companies assigning the new 224 area code within the 847 calling region. The 224 area code is being described as an "Overlay Code". An overlay code can be assigned in the same geographic area as existing 847 numbers. This has become necessary as the 847 numbers are running out. These numbers are supposed to work as local numbers and will carry the same local calling charges as the other Chicagoland area codes.

Of course, like anything new in the telecom industry, the new code has its share of problems. During one recent installation, one of RAM's clients was assigned the new 224 code by their new carrier. Unfortunately, phone companies such as SBC, did not recognize the new numbers. By FCC Regulation, all phone companies are responsible for updating their phone networks for new numbers. (Without this regulation, new phone numbers would never work.) On a daily basis, every carrier is required to download new numbers from the common, national database. In our first experience with the 224 Code, SBC failed to update their systems accordingly. As a result, SBC callers could not complete any calls to our newly assigned numbers.

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Paetec Rate Change

In case you missed this message, RAM wanted to bring to your attention the rate change announced by Paetec.

"Based on several factors facing our business today, we have agreed to rate adjustments for the following services: DTO has been raised from \$19.95 to \$29.95; in most cases there has been a .25 cent increase per EUCL, per market; Long Distance Directory Assistance has been increased to \$1.25 in each market; Local Directory Assistance has been increased across all markets (varies by state); and Blocks of DID 20/100 have been increased across all markets (rates vary by state). "

Who Said That?



Philip Bond
US Secretary of Commerce for Technology

"While convergence of information technology and telecom creates wonderful innovations & new services for consumers, it's hardly frictionless...or about privacy or about digital rights management or about spectrum."

From speech entitled: Technology Administration
Convergence: Digital, Global and Policy

I Didn't Know...

T1 Circuits were first used by the United States Military back in 1964.

The military needed a device that would handle more calls than traditional POTS lines.



Bell Labs developed the technology exclusively for government use. T1 would not be used in the Private Sector until the late 1980's.

Acronym Corner

ANI

Automatic Number Identification- A system, originally designed for use by the Bell carriers which transmits the "billed party number" along with a call.

CFV

Call Forward Variable- allows the user to manually forward inbound calls to another destination. 72# and 73# are universal codes for turning the call forward on and off.

RCF

Remote Call Forwarding- a permanent call forward from one number to another. This set up by the phone company and is billed to the customer as a monthly service fee.

It is our hope that carriers like SBC will cooperate and update their networks properly. There is no choice. The 224 area code is here to stay. For those Chicago area callers who do not reside in the 847 region, please be aware your calls to the 224 area code will be billed as local calls. If you experience any difficulty reaching a party in 224, you must call your carrier to report the problem. Your assigned carrier, whether they are a cellular or a landline phone company, is responsible for updating their number records.

As for customers who are assigned 224 numbers, RAM recommends 2 important items be addressed before using the new service.

1 Make sure the carrier assigning the new numbers has submitted a new number request to the national number database. This should be a matter of regular procedure. If your calls don't work, ensure this step has been completed first. If your clients still cannot reach your new 224 number, then your client's carrier must be pursued.

2 Be certain your clients and vendors know your new numbers as soon as possible. This sounds like an obvious point; however, it is always helpful to ask a few key clients to make test calls on your behalf. Use this process as a trial run. Vendors and customers usually don't mind making a test call. This process should demonstrate your business cares about them.

Of course, if you have an issue with a new service supplied by RAM, we will take up these procedures on your behalf. Please don't hesitate calling RAM if you or one of your associates is having issues with 224. In fact, we welcome the opportunity to earn their business.

Find Out More...

- I want to learn more about the 224 area code.
- I'm interested in RAM quoting my company a price for my telephone service.
- I'm interested in learning more about RAM's Professional Services.
Try a few of our most popular services:
 - Billing Audit
 - Audit of the Phone System and Equipment
 - Moving to a New Location