



## Preparing LOAs

*moving phone numbers more efficiently*

Over the years RAM has helped clients move thousands of phone numbers to new phone systems and various service providers. Phone number transitions are equal parts project management and art. In this article we touch on both approaches so you can follow our best practices to your full advantage. With these tips you can save a lot of time and aggravation when and if you need to move or acquire phone numbers for your business.

First, let's decipher the acronym. LOA stands for Letter Of Authorization. The LOA is a universal document used by phone companies for decades. The LOA is your permission slip that enables you to move or acquire phone numbers from one phone company to your provider. This is a legal document and with it there are specific rules and rights you have as the business consumer.

Here's three general RAM rules on LOAs . . .

### **Rule 1 Ownership**

*Which organization is paying the bill for the numbers in question?*

Every part of the transfer process starts with this question. If you are acquiring a business and its phone numbers then follow Rule 3 on 'acquisitions'. You have extra work to do. If your organization is the named customer on the phone bill then the process is much simpler. Your designated phone company must provide you with their LOA form. Every carrier (ie. phone company) will have an LOA form with their corresponding logo and contact information. The LOA serves as a notice that numbers are to be transferred to the authorized carrier. Your role in this is to make certain you provide proper documentation.

## ALTERNATIVES

### Rule 2 Accurate Documentation

Every porting process requires the same documents. Your company will need to provide a recent phone bill (not more than 60 days old). This serves two purposes. First, the invoice confirms ownership and it also establishes credit - especially if your business is moving its services to a new provider. So, make sure your account is paid in full. Otherwise, it's likely your transfer process (also known as 'porting') will be delayed. The second important document is the LOA itself. Accuracy is everything! The company name on the LOA must match the name on the phone bill *to the letter*. Even if there's a misspelling on the phone bill match it. Otherwise, you risk a rejected order request from the losing carrier. This may seem petty but it's critical to follow this guideline.

### Rule 3 Acquisitions & New Ownership

If your company is acquiring another business and you wish to take over its phone numbers then be prepared for an extra complication. For security reasons, the losing carrier cannot release phone numbers unless the old business provides written authorization. In our experience there are two choices: transfer under the old business name or submit a 'change-of-ownership' form. If the responsible party of the acquired company is working in your organization then take advantage and ask that person to sign off on the LOA. this allows you to transfer the numbers under the former company's account. This is your best bet and will save time in the transfer process. Otherwise, the change-of-ownership form requires a two-step process. It can take several weeks (or more) for the old carrier to process and recognize your business as the new, rightful owner. Additionally, this process still requires a written acknowledgment from the old business. Your best bet is always to transfer the old account 'as-is' to your carrier. Once the numbers are moved then you can always request a name change and align the new services under your existing account.

Follow these suggestions and you will be assured of a much smoother porting process. To be sure there are exceptions and curve balls that can occur in every porting process. So, if you have questions contact RAM today. We'll be happy to help!



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