



STRICTLY EMBARGOED TO 00.01 HRS ON WEDNESDAY 1ST APRIL 2009

HomePhoneChoices.co.uk comments on BT's and TalkTalk's increases in monthly line rental charges

- BT and TalkTalk increase the cost of line rental to £11.25 per month^[1] from 1 April 2009
- Paperless billing and direct debit payment mechanics more important than ever before
- Customers should consider their switching options
- HomePhoneChoices.co.uk gives its line rental top tips and recommended best buys

Despite their customers being harder up than ever, BT has increased its monthly line rental charge by almost £1 from £10.27 to £11.25 and TalkTalk has added 75p per month to bring its charge from £10.50 to £11.25.

Michael Phillips, product director, HomePhoneChoices.co.uk said:

“This price increase is very disappointing; bills should be getting cheaper given the current state of their customers’ finances in the midst of the credit crunch.”

“BT sets the agenda in the home phone market, so I won’t be surprised if we see smaller providers follow suit and hike up their own line rental charges.”

BT charges an additional £1.50 per month for customers that don’t pay by direct debit which TalkTalk doesn’t offer as an option. In addition, both providers charge an extra £1.25 per month if customers don’t take their paperless billing option.

Phillips continued: “We would definitely recommend that customers pay by direct debit and opt for paperless billing”. If you can’t pay by direct debit then the Post Office accepts payment by cheque, cash or over the phone with no additional charge and no minimum contract period.”

“BT still has the lion’s share of the line rental market but there are alternatives that offer valuable savings. Customers need to compare call plans and home phone options through a reputable comparison site like HomePhoneChoices.co.uk.”

Three top tips to get the best phone deal:

1. **Pay by direct debit** – Nearly all providers discourage payment by any means other than direct debit and impose punitive charges of anything up to £5 per month for dealing with cheques. The Post Office accepts payment by various means with no additional charges
2. **Go for paperless billing** – Some providers offer useful savings if you receive your statements online, not by post. You'll also do your bit for the environment
3. **Consider bundling** – If you have broadband and/or you subscribe to a digital TV service then you could make considerable savings through bundling these with your home phone.

Best buys

Evening and Weekend Call Plans

Supplier	Package	Monthly line rental	Monthly package cost	Notes
Primus	Primus Home Phone Saver	£9.99	Free	1
Sky	Sky TV with Talk Freetime	£10.00	£16.50	2
Post Office	Home Phone + Line Rental	£10.72	Free	3

Notes:

1. Exclusive offer to HomePhoneChoices.co.uk
2. Includes 1 x Sky TV Entertainment Pack
£15 one-off set up cost (normally £60; offer ends 25 June)
£25 Tesco gift card offer if you sign up online; Ts & Cs apply (offer ends 31 May)
3. No minimum contract length
Payment by direct debit, over the phone or at local Post Office branch with no additional charges

Anytime Call Plans

Supplier	Package	Monthly line rental	Monthly package cost	Notes
Primus	Primus Home Phone Max	£9.99	£5.99	1
Sky	Sky TV with Talk Unlimited	£10.00	£21.50	2

Notes:

1. Exclusive offer to HomePhoneChoices.co.uk
2. Includes 1 x Sky TV Entertainment Pack
£15 one-off set up cost (normally £60; offer ends 25 June)
£25 Tesco gift card offer if you sign up online; Ts & Cs apply (offer ends 31 May)

-ends-



Notes to editors

1. Prices effective from 1 April 2009.

BT – line rental £11.25 per month includes £1.50 direct debit discount and £1.25 paperless billing discount. Further details at

http://www.productsandservices.bt.com/consumerProducts/dynamicmodules/pagecontentfooter/pageContentFooterPopup.jsp?pagecontentfooter_popupid=24641

TalkTalk – line rental £11.25 per month includes £1.25 paperless billing discount; payment by direct debit only. Further details at

<http://www.talktalk.co.uk/products/landline>

For further information please contact:

Michael Phillips	HomePhoneChoices.co.uk	020 7700 3245
Karen Wagg/Emily Church	Polhill Communications	020 7655 0540

About HomePhoneChoices.co.uk

HomePhoneChoices.co.uk was launched in 2005 and is the UK's leading home phone comparison service.

We offer comprehensive and impartial advice on home phone and bundled packages (home phone with broadband and digital TV).

The HomePhoneChoices.co.uk calculator compares thousands of different combinations of packages and provides results in a clear, intuitive table where users can rank and compare services according to their individual needs.

At HomePhoneChoices.co.uk we help our users make the right choice of provider and get the most from their home phone service.

HomePhoneChoices.co.uk – *working hard to save you money*