

Embarq DR-2

Has Comcast ever investigated the possibility of, or actually engaged in, providing its subscriber list information directly to a DL/DA provider rather than use an ILEC, such as Embarq, as an intermediary? If the answer is "yes," please: (1) state the names and provide titles of who undertook the investigation; (2) identify each and every directory publisher and identify by name and title of the person(s) contacted by Comcast; and (3) explain specifically when the investigation was undertaken.

Response

In response to Embarq's position in this proceeding, Comcast investigated the possibility of providing its subscriber list information directly to DL/DA providers rather than using an ILEC as an intermediary. Comcast contacted Embarq's main directory publisher, RH Donnelley (a/k/a Dex), and was informed that over the years a few CLECs have approached Donnelley to inquire about establishing a direct relationship, but that none was ever established due to reasons of economics and complexity. For example, RH Donnelley explained that it requires daily automated updates of business records, and that a system to set up the necessary extracts from multiple data sources (the ILEC and CLECs) would be expensive and time-consuming. Donnelley is also concerned that if it had to work with multiple providers in a given service territory, some listings could be duplicated and there might be confusion as to which listing should be published. Also, eliminating the duplicate listing entries would be time-consuming and expensive. CLECs that by-passed the ILEC would be required to remove all of their directory listings from the ILEC's database before they were provided to the DP/DA providers. And then on a going-forward basis, CLECs would have to remove listings from all those providers' databases every time a customer selected a new service provider (who would then be responsible for the customer's listing). Obviously, the more entities that are involved in this process of adding and deleting listings the greater chance there is for errors and inaccuracy in the directories.

With ILECs maintaining the one, complete DL database for each service territory, DL/DA providers know that they only have to contract with the ILEC in each service territory to obtain all the information they need to assemble complete, accurate and up-to-date directories. In addition, Donnelley could not verify that it would be able to offer Comcast the same "deal" as ILECs like Embarq currently enjoy, and Comcast would have no way to verify because the deal between Donnelley and Embarq is not a public document. So even if Comcast could bypass Embarq's DL clearinghouse service, there is no evidence that it could obtain the same terms as Embarq.

Responsible Comcast Official:

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