

Dear Sir/Madam,

I had my fair share of spam on the mobile. It is particularly unfair when I travel and the charges end up in my bill. Whether it is telemarketers or SPAM.

One of the key issue is : Telco providers are unable or reluctant to reveal for example who is the StarChat operator. Or the Idlechat operator. As a result, it is difficult for the aggrieved party to contact the person to ask them to release them off the Spam. It is important therefore, that the SPAMMER be registered in an official body like the IDA. With all the details and an e-mail address to allow us to be taken off the list. Where the IDA can monitor and close down operations that has gone over the line.

One of the worst culprits is FunMobile. A telco number is given for aggrieved caller to dial and cancel. But the number is left ringing all the time. on top of that, when you try to reply to a Cancel code, the message automatically bounces back for you to call. It is a catch 22 situation that is difficult to rescind. I had to call Singtel to act basically because I had threatened to cancel my Singtel mobile number if it happens again. That drastic method seems to be the only one that works.

The other issue I have is the sexual implication of the messages sent by companies like Idle Chat or StarChat. Anyone who had received any of those will find the sexual tones very insulting. I've called up M1, Singtel and Starhub - nobody can tell me who these companies are or how I can contact them. So, should I pay for a 1-900 call and scream at them? With e-mails at least one don't have to pay.

I'm all for a tougher legislation against MMS and SMS and now with 3G phones - we have to watch out for porn being sent over as graphics too! I think we can anticipate a bunch of viagra ads and such. Our legislation has to include that particular possibility.

From a business perspective there is no way I can use a 'block sender' equivalent on a mobile. I've written to CASE to no avail. I don't even know who to file the charges against! The point is: there must be a proper listing of the companies and their 'product name' for charges to be filed and avenues where opt out works properly.

Next - data mining houses. There must be a legislation that governs the usage of phone details. Restaurants and loyalty card holders often end up with those phone/e-mail details being sold to the data mining houses. That should not be allowed. Banks are no better. In fact our phone details are given to outsourced telemarketing houses. It took me 2 harsh e-mails, 2 irate phone calls to take me off the list. Why? Results only happen when I threaten to cancel my card once again. It's annoying to have to behave like such a bitch before any corporation takes matters seriously.

Irene Zeiler
Editor-Asia
for Print Pack Publish Asia, NewsCom & Asian Flexo Magazines
Callahan Publishing Pte Ltd