

## **FCC Expands Porting to VOIP, Streamlines Porting Process**

### *Seeks Comment on Porting Interval, Other Issues*

The Federal Communications Commission on Wednesday adopted measures that would allow voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) customers to retain their numbers when switching service providers and that would speed the overall number porting process, thereby easing customer delays.

In its monthly meeting, the FCC adopted the Order to clarify that the obligation to provide local number portability extends to interconnected VoIP providers and the telecommunications carriers that obtain numbers for them.

The Order, which has yet to be released, is expected to streamline a porting request by limiting the information that carriers may use for simple local number portability (LNP) validation to four fields: (1) a 10-digit telephone number; (2) a customer account number; (3) a five-digit zip code; and (4) a pass code, if applicable.

The Commission also agreed to seek further comment on the appropriate time to complete simple ports, abbreviated dialing codes, and other issues affecting the extent of obligations and elements of the porting process. In a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking accompanying its Order, the FCC tentatively concludes that it should require the industry to complete simple ports within 48 hours. Simple ports typically involve one to five single

lines and exclude complex ports involving bundled or business services.

Although details of the Order will not be forthcoming until the FCC releases the Order's actual text, Commissioner Deborah Tate stated that the FCC's Order also extends "to interconnected VoIP providers the obligation to contribute to shared numbering administration costs."

Commissioner Robert McDowell echoed Martin's call for regulatory parity between carriers and VoIP providers so that "our regulations do not favor one type of service provider over another." McDowell distinguished VoIP as an "information service" saying, "The steps we are taking today promote consumer freedom in the voice and information service markets by allowing customers to port their telephone number to and from Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services across all platforms."

Meanwhile, Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein noted that "many interconnected VoIP providers have acknowledged the need to offer number portability to their customers."

Given the Commission's pace for releasing Orders, the actual text of the Order may not be available for some weeks. The Order will establish the comment and reply comment deadlines.

**If you would like to participate in this rulemaking proceeding, or if you have any questions about these issues, please contact :**

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