

Sales and Marketing Code of Practice for Welcome Telecom Ltd.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide customers of Welcome Telecom with standards of protection over and above those provided by current UK law. (see schedule 1)

The aim is to ensure that all employees of Welcome Telecom use good practice and responsible selling in the marketing of fixed line telecommunication services.

The document will provide a clear framework within which responsible companies should be working, providing reassurance to customers and their representatives as to what constitutes good practice in the sales and marketing of fixed line telecommunication services.

The focus of good practice in the sales and marketing of fixed line telecommunications services will deal primarily with issues arising before, during and at the point of sale, with particular emphasis on the avoidance of mis-selling and misrepresentation, and ensuring customer understanding of the services offered.

All employees and agents of Welcome Telecom will be required to confirm that they have read this document and will comply with the code as set out.

The code will be available to customers on request and every effort will be made to ensure that customers are aware of it.

Status of Code

This code is entered into voluntarily by Welcome Telecom and its agents and does not guarantee compliance with any legal requirement.

Non compliance with this code does not affect the validity of any contract between the customer and the company, unless otherwise provided by law.

Sales, marketing and promotion

Regardless of the way in which customers are approached, be it by TV, radio or press advertising, promotions in shops or other retail locations, post, fax e-mail, telephone or in person Welcome Telecom, their agents and representatives will act responsibly.

Welcome Telecom will respect a customers' wishes where they have registered with any relevant preference service, including the Mailing Preference Service, the Telephone Preference Service, the Fax Preference Service and the E-mail Preference Service.

Advertising and promotional material will comply with the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion. Additionally all advertising and promotional literature will be clear, unambiguous accurate and fair and will contain no misleading information about price, value of service and in particular will not denigrate other companies.

Recruitment and Sales training

All staff, agents and their sub contractors or third party staff representing Welcome Telecom directly to customers or potential customers will operate within current employment legislation.

In addition they will have regard to their behaviour and appearance, recognising that the sales person may be seen as the public face of Welcome Telecom and the industry generally.

References and relevant criminal convictions will be checked and taken into account, as will any evidence of previous mis-selling or lack of integrity.

The following requirements related to sales staff will be observed.

Directly employed staff, whether by Welcome Telecom or their agents, must provide proof of NI number, proof of address and two references.

Referees cannot be related to the applicant

Business referees must not both be from the same company.

If a sales person transfers to another company a copy of his or her records will be retained for at least three years.

Welcome Telecom will take reasonable steps to ensure that all sales staff, agents and subcontractors are trained to a sufficient level so that any relevant advice they may give to a customer or potential customer is not misleading. The topics covered will include:

Arrangements for competition in the supply of telecommunications in the UK:

The different telephone options provided by Welcome Telecom and how these differ from other competitive telecoms products:

The process for ordering the telephone service:

The relevant principles of consumer protection law:

The prices charged by Welcome Telecom and its terms and conditions of service and, in particular, methods of payment, duration of contract and any termination fees:

The nature and cost of any additional services on offer:

The process for cancelling the contract during the cooling off period and at any time following the commencement of service:

The existence of the sales and marketing code of practice and the benefits provided.

Welcome Telecom are responsible for ensuring that sales staff, agents and subcontractors are aware of and comply with the sales and marketing code of practice. The Director of Sales and Marketing of Welcome Telecom will endeavour to ensure that the code is complied with and the Director of Operations will handle any complaints relevant to the code.

No remuneration systems will be used that may encourage misleading or exploitative sales practices. Agents and subcontractors will keep Welcome Telecom informed of any incentive schemes that may be in place from time to time to motivate their sales staff.

Customer Contact

All sales staff, agents and sub-contractors representing Welcome Telecom to potential or existing business customers will be courteous, use appropriate language and offer clear and straightforward explanations. All information presented will be factual and accurate and will not misrepresent the services being offered or those of other companies. Representatives will check that customers entering into contracts with Welcome Telecom understand them.

Representatives will immediately cease contact with any person who indicates that the contact is, inconvenient, unwelcome, inappropriate or too long.

Representatives will not abuse the trust of those who may be considered vulnerable, for example those whose first language is not English or who have special needs. Representatives will not pursue sales presentations to customers who they believe to be vulnerable.

Contracts.

It is essential that steps are taken to ensure that persons entering into contracts with Welcome Telecom is authorised to enter into the contract for fixed line telephone services at the premises.

Customer Service Agreements and contracts will be designed in such a way as to ensure that the contractual nature of the document is clear to the customer.

The contract will include:

- Essential information including contact address, phone, fax and e-mail for Welcome Telecom.
- The terms and conditions of the service provided.

Customers will be made aware of the existence of this code and how to obtain a copy. Customers will be provided, on request with a full tariff. Customers will be given a copy of the agreement together with the terms and conditions pertaining to it.

Orders obtained by distance selling will conform to Distance Selling Regulations as set out below.

Welcome Telecom will send a letter to customers, on receipt of contract, with the following details included.

- Date of notification
- CLI(s) affected
- Date of switchover
- Contact details for any queries

This letter will form the basis of the audit of contract to confirm that the customer understands that they have entered into an agreement, are happy to proceed with that agreement and are content with the way in which the sales and marketing activity was conducted.

Customer complaints

The procedure followed by Welcome Telecom in dealing with customer complaints includes those complaints relating to the sales and marketing activities of the company. Welcome Telecom will ensure that all sales staff, agents and sub contractors are aware of those procedures.

In the first instance customers should approach Welcome Telecom with any complaints. If the complaint is unable to be resolved to the customer's satisfaction then Welcome Telecom will advise the customer to contact the appropriate agency. Customers may also be able to obtain advice from Citizens Advice Bureau or local Trading Standards Department.

Awareness of the code.

Welcome Telecom will make available copies of this code, free of charge and in a reasonable range of formats, to customers on request.

Summary of relevant legislation to Sales and Marketing of telephony products

The Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1999 SI 1999No2083

Telecommunications (Open Network Provision) (Voice Telephony) Regulations 1998 SI 1998 No1580

Misleading Advertising Regulations

Consumer Protection Act 1987 (Part III)