



Helping Customers Find You

Courtesy of Main Resource, Inc. Visit us at www.MainResource.com or call 800 362-6740 for all your telecom needs.

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Who is trying to reach you using one of the many Directory Assistance numbers available? Those who use 411 or area code +555-1212 include travelers, customers who have lost your business card and many more. For that reason, it is vital that companies keep their Directory Assistance Listings up to date.

Every time a potential customer calls Directory Assistance to find your number, they may be reaching a different company with a different database. Are your customers able to reach you regardless of which service they use? If not, you may be giving an unprofessional impression and will certainly cause potential customers frustration that may result in lost business opportunities.

Listing Your Company

When you sign up for new business telephone service with your local telephone company, you will be able to view your business listing as it will appear in the printed telephone directory as well as in the Directory Assistance database.



Generally, your telephone service will allow you one listing in the Business White Pages, where your business will be listed alphabetically; as well as one listing in the Yellow Pages where your business will be under a heading that groups similar types of businesses.

Confirm this listing in writing and send it to the associate at the telephone company who took your order for service. Keep a copy of this confirmation. Remember that your billing name may be different from your listing, especially if you are running a corporation with several smaller entities.

Importance of “Multiple Names”

For a small fee of about \$2 a month, you may be able to add another listing for the same telephone number. This may be advantageous because the caller may not know the complete name of your company, the correct spelling, or may know it by a different name. For instance, if your corporation is Smith Industries, Inc. and the individual business is called Northern Artist & Craftsman Supply and is located on Free Street; you may want to have a listing under “N” for the business name, “S” for Smith Industries and “F” for Free Street Artist Supply (another name that people may associate with your business).

Some businesses are better known by the name of an individual working there. Larger organizations such as Health Centers and Lawyer’s Offices may wish to provide a listing for each partner with a direct line rather than simply listing the main number for the entire organization. Another option for listing individual numbers by name or department is to request that these be displayed under your main listing. In that way, the Directory Assistance Operator can ask the caller if

they know the name of the person or department they would like to reach. Check with your local telephone company for regulations.

Make it Easier for Customers to Find You

If you would like an advertisement in the Yellow Pages that is beyond a simple listing, the options are nearly endless. You may choose to make your listing in bold font, or opt for a full-page ad. There are many competitors to your local telephone company's yellow pages including a national directory for toll-free numbers and business-to-business directories. You may also consider placing a listing in a neighboring city's directory for maximum coverage. Remember that the monthly charge for these listings can be quite expensive and cannot be canceled for an entire year. Some companies may be willing to include in your agreement a provision that if you do not get any calls from a listed number, you do not have to pay for that listing. To check the effectiveness of your listings, publish another phone number and track the volume of incoming calls to that line. Be certain that your listing information is accurate before it ends up in print!

Main Resource was able to get a deal in the Business to Business directory which allowed us to evaluate the results from the first six months of that listing before determining whether to continue paying for the service.

Why Some Numbers Should Be Unlisted

Residential customers have the option of requesting that their number not be published. Every business customer, however, is required to list at least one telephone number. If you do not want your callers to realize that your business is not based in their community use a toll-free number and don't publish your address. You can make sure that inappropriate telephone numbers, such as fax lines or rollover numbers, are not listed by requesting to the telephone company that certain numbers be "non-listed".



Preventing Mix-ups

To avoid confusion Main Resource has established a company policy that allows only one individual the authority to place orders for telephone service and listings. Send the policy in writing to the telephone company. Request a copy of all listings from your telephone company at least once a year. Contact the representative in your telephone company's business office and ask how they provide those listings to other companies and other databases.

Accuracy Verification

Test you listing's accuracy by dialing 411 or the area code +555-1212 to ask for your company's telephone number. Call from a variety of locations, including cell

phones with several different service providers (AT&T, Sprint, Nextel, etc.) Check your listing in some of the major online databases often used by the various Directory Assistance services such as www.acxiom.com, www.switchboard.com, and www.infospace.com. If you have a toll free number you can dial 800 555-1212 to be sure it is listed correctly.

If your company is relocating, consider whether a new phone book will come out in the interim. The deadline for listings is usually 2 months in advance of publication. If you will be in the new office before publication date, talk to the phone company about listing your new address and phone number.

When we built our new office our local phone company would not publish the new address until it was "active". We thought we had a great work around. A line would be brought into the new MRI office and all calls would be forwarded to the old office until we moved. But the local phone company dropped the ball. They were unable to install the new line for an "unknown" reason. But they still initiated the forward and cut of the old path. Main Resource was without service for nearly the whole day. To protect yourself, we recommend confirming all changes to service the day before they are to take place.



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