



PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON INTRODUCTION OF NUMBER PORTABILITY IN KENYA

1. INTRODUCTION:

Number portability is a telecommunications network feature that enables end users to retain their telephone numbers when changing service providers, service types, and/or locations. It is a key factor in enhancing competition in a multi-operator environment.

It has been noted that customers become reluctant to consider changing their network operator if it means that they have to change their telephone number. Changing telephone numbers can be a major inconvenience for customers and a barrier that prevents them from exercising their right of choice and taking advantage of growing competition in telecommunications services.

In this regard, in its quest to ensure promotion of competition, protection of consumers, and fairness and efficiency in the telecommunications industry, the Communications Commission of Kenya intends to introduce Number Portability in Kenya .

The purpose of this consultative paper is to seek the views of operators, the general public, and other interested parties, regarding the planned introduction of Number Portability in Kenya , on issues pertaining to:

- Technical solutions ;
- Service provision procedures;
- Dispute resolution mechanism;
- Implementation time frame.

2. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

a) Donor network

Donor network is the network providing service to a subscriber number before porting.

b) Number Portability

Number portability is a telecommunications network feature that enables end users to retain their telephone numbers when changing service providers, service types, and/or locations.

c) Originating network

Originating network is the network providing service to a subscriber placing a call.

d) Recipient network

Recipient network is the network providing service to a subscriber number after porting.

e) Terminating network

Terminating network is the network providing service to a subscriber receiving a call.

3. TYPES OF NUMBER PORTABILITY SERVICES:

Three types of portability services can be identified:

- Operator portability: refers to the ability of a subscriber to retain the same telephone number when changing from one operator to another.
- Location portability: refers to the ability of a fixed telephony subscriber to retain the same telephone number when moving from one physical location to another.
- Service portability: refers to the ability of a subscriber to retain the same telephone number when changing from one type of service to another.

The Commission intends to introduce and enforce operator number portability, and as follows:
Fixed operator to another fixed operator number § portability, and in the same location,
Mobile operator to another mobile § operator number portability

4. TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS:

There are several possible technical considerations involved in implementing number portability.

The Commission wishes to remain technology neutral in this matter, however, the following technical solutions are hereby suggested for the consideration by the industry:

- All Call Query (ACQ) Centralized NPDB method
- Query On Release (QOR),
- Call Dropback (also referred to as Return To Pivot (RTP)), and
- Onward Routing (OR).
- All query internal number portability database method

a. All Call Query (ACQ) Centralized NPDB method

The call steps for the ACQ method:

The Originating Network receives a call from the caller and sends a query § to a centrally administered Number Portability Database (NPDB).

The NPDB returns the routing number associated with the dialed directory § number.

The Originating Network uses the routing number to route the call to the § new serving network.

b. Query on Release (QoR) method

The call steps for the Query on Release (QoR) method.

The Originating Network receives a call from the caller and routes the call § to the donor network.

The donor network releases the call and indicates that the dialed directory § number has been ported out of that switch.

The Originating Network sends a query to the centrally administered § NPDB.

The NPDB returns the routing number associated with the dialed directory § number.

The Originating Network uses the routing number to route the call to the § new serving network.