

# Nearly half of UK broadband complaints left hanging

Submitted by: BroadbandChoices.co.uk

Thursday, 22 July 2010

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\* Survey reveals 46% of UK broadband complaints are left unresolved

\* Many customers disillusioned with complaints process and failing to complain at all

\* Survey by Broadbandchoices.co.uk coincides with Ofcom ruling that customers should be getting better broadband support

A survey of over 2,500 UK broadband (<http://www.broadbandchoices.co.uk>) customers\* by Broadbandchoices.co.uk has revealed that consumers continue to face major difficulties in having their complaints resolved. Almost half of respondents (46%) who made a complaint said they did not feel they reached a successful resolution.

Of the respondents who had not complained, nearly a quarter (24%) simply hadn't bothered despite experiencing problems with their broadband service.

The findings are revealed as industry regulator, Ofcom announced today that it will make it easier for customers to get help with their complaints. From January next year, communications providers will have to include information of the relevant dispute resolution service on all paper bills. They will also have to write to consumers whose complaints have not been resolved within eight weeks to inform them of their right to take their complaint to a dispute resolution service.

Michael Phillips, product director, Broadbandchoices.co.uk commented:

"We welcome the new rules on complaint handling from Ofcom – more needs to be done to empower consumers and ensure they have the confidence and know-how to get their complaint resolved. In fact, in our survey last year we found that almost 80 per cent of people who complained to their broadband provider (<http://www.broadbandchoices.co.uk/broadband-providers-directory.html>) weren't even aware of the existence of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process which acts as an independent middleman between provider and customer in the case of disputes.

"What is also striking from our most recent survey is the proportion of unhappy customers who simply weren't bothering to complain. Over a third said that they thought it would be too much hassle (39%) and another third (34%) simply didn't have faith that their broadband provider could resolve their complaint.

"Their concerns may not be entirely unfounded either, as a high number of respondents (46%) told us that their complaint was not resolved successfully. This has improved since our survey last year when over half (54%) of complaints were going unresolved, but broadband providers still have work to do if they are to win back customer confidence.

"Broadband customers are clearly disillusioned with their provider's ability to improve their service if they make a complaint. Raising a complaint is never easy, but the stress and hassle will be significantly reduced thanks to the new Ofcom rules and also by following our 10 practical tips to a successful complaints resolution below."

Broadbandchoices.co.uk's top tips for making a complaint:

1. Be wise before the event. Even if your relationship with your broadband provider is running smoothly, make sure that your paperwork is in order. Keep your bills filed in chronological order and keep all correspondence between yourself and the company.
2. Always approach your broadband provider first with any complaints or grievances and insist that they explain their official complaints procedure to you before you enter into a dispute.
3. Tell your provider, in writing, of your grievance and that you wish to enter into an official complaints procedure.
4. Maintain a call log detailing each call that you made to your provider. Include such details as the time and date of the call, and the name of the person that you spoke with.
5. Remember any passwords or keywords that you might need; your claim will lack credibility if you forget.
6. Use bank statements to add credibility to your claims, particularly those concerned with billing errors.
7. When communicating with your broadband provider, be both patient and personable. Don't raise your voice or get irritable. Make sure that you are targeting the correct department and the right people with your complaints.
8. Insist on written confirmation of any changes to your contract, or any verbal agreements that are made over the phone.
9. If you have exhausted your broadband provider's complaints procedure with no resolution after 8 weeks, contact Cisas or Otelo, and ask them to advise you on the next step you should take.
10. If all else fails, get legal help - Which? Legal Services provides low cost, consumer legal advice.

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Notes:

\* Broadbandchoices.co.uk Broadband Complaints Survey 2010; online survey conducted April 2010; 2,641 respondents with home fixed line broadband

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About Broadbandchoices.co.uk

Broadbandchoices.co.uk was launched in 2005 and is the UK's leading Ofcom accredited broadband comparison calculator.

We offer comprehensive and impartial advice on broadband, mobile broadband and bundled packages (broadband with home phone and digital TV).

The Broadbandchoices.co.uk calculator compares thousands of different combinations of packages and provides results in a clear table. This can be further customized according to individual requirements, for example showing connection costs, or broadband speed.

Users can switch online or by calling our sales team on 0800 232 1279.

Broadbandchoices.co.uk powers the broadband services of over 20 leading comparison services including Confused.com, Comparethemarket.com and GoCompare.com.

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