

Three things they won't tell you when breaking up with your ISP

 By [Shan Raddiffe](#)

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In the almost six years that I've had my DSL and internet account with the country's major fixed-line operator (yes, you know who I'm talking about and I can hear you laughing in the back there), much has changed in the ISP sphere.



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Back then, there were only two real competitors in the arena and now, well, everyone I talk to will tell me about some other provider with some other deal. And so, a couple of weeks ago, I decided to take the plunge and make the big migration...to somewhere else.

So I hopped online, found my preferred provider and signed up. Voila! A new account in mere minutes - a piece of cake! Except that's where my great migration ground to a halt in a sludge of frosting... as it turns out, it was a seven-tiered wedding cake, each layer a different flavour, and I was going to need about a month to assemble it. Because as easy as they make it sound to "just switch", it's not.

Here are a few things the ISPs don't tell you (at least not at first) when you're looking to change service providers:

1. **They won't do it all.** The new account sign-up is simple and they tell you they'll do everything for you (or at least, that's the impression they give you). But they don't. In fact, legally, they can't. Unlike having your high school bestie do the dirty work and give that awkward break-up speech on your behalf, your current provider needs to hear it from you. So as much as you wish you didn't have to deal with them anymore, you're going to have to.

2. **You can't just do it over the phone.** My new ISP sent me several emails and texts telling me what I need to do next: get my current provider to migrate my line to the wholesale holding pool. They obviously love me and care for me because they contact me every day; the SMS I receive every morning even includes the number I need to call.

Alas, the cumulative two hours I spent on the phone over three days being passed around from department to department amounted to this: I need to fill in [these cancellation forms](#) in order to execute the order.

If someone tells you all you need to do is email ID verification to the cancellation department with a request to cancel the data portion of your line, they're lying. It's not going to be enough. In fact, I got a bounced message telling me their inbox was full. Cue another phone call. Spare yourself the runaround and just [fill in the forms](#) and email it to the department. Then phone if necessary.

If you're looking to move your business line, you need to fill in the forms *and* have the cancellation request issued on a company letterhead or a signed cancellation letter from the sole proprietor. Don't forget to include a copy of the authorised signatory's ID.

If you're with an ISP other than said major fixed-line supplier, you'll need to ask your service provider to move your DSL line to the OpenServe Holding Pool.

3. **It's not just a flick of a switch.** Service is not immediate. It's not. Billing is immediate though. I've already paid for my new contract. But because my current provider needs its forms and a *30-day* notice period, I'm stuck in limbo. Like two exes in a rented apartment waiting for their lease to expire.

Fortunately though, my new ISP has been very understanding and has given me the option to "pause" my account so I won't have to face being billed twice while I sit staring at the proverbial cake and not being able to eat it just yet.

ABOUT SHAN RADCLIFFE

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