



USITA

Commercial Committee Bulletin

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
BLUE PAGES AND HUMAN SERVICE GUIDES

February 1981
81-1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this bulletin is to offer some information from the Bell System and Independent consultants on certain changes occurring in directories with emphasis on those listings concerned with community services. . . particularly in the human services and health fields.

BACKGROUND

Of continuing interest to USITA member telephone companies are the more recent changes in directory formats within the Independent telephone industry and those the AT&T Company has recommended to their operating telephone companies. One significant change by the Bell System was the recommendation that Bell companies include in their plans implementation of residence/business split white pages with residence listings in surname hi-lite format and consolidation of all government listings in a blue pages section. A twelve page description of this recommended change is available from Pam Gray at USITA.

The Bell System also has recommended that a separate section be established which represents a consolidation of the alphabetical listings in the white pages for United States Government and various local, county and state governments and yellow pages listings. These listings are printed on blue paper and include an Easy Reference List. Generally this blue pages section is positioned between the residence and business section in res/bus split directories.

Another new format being recommended by the Bell system concerns the customer Guide formerly titled "Call Guide". This suggested guide consists of eight sections. One section is a new addition "Guide to Human Services", "Community Services Numbers", or "Helpful Numbers". It is a reference guide for finding telephone numbers of basic community services.

Directories of the Independent telephone companies are also reflecting changes designed to increase the customers acceptance of the telephone directory as a very valuable reference book. Two topics which have been of increasing interest are the use of a blue pages section and the development and publication of a "Human Service Guide"--both are described below.

BLUE PAGES

There is an on-going effort among Independent telephones and Bell System companies to establish a separate blue pages section within the directory to

provide a means of bringing together listings of Community and Government information. This section is printed on blue colored stock to create attention and generally consists of these separate parts: Human Service Guide, Easy Reference List for selected government offices, complete alpha listing of government offices and public schools, zip codes, map and a final part providing other information useful to the subscriber. A recommended example of these listings titled "The Blue Pages" is enclosed and on the reverse side is the cover from a blue pages section of a Bell Company Directory. The companies that distribute the small directories may not need a separate blue pages section, but could accomplish essentially the same effect by placing this information separately in the front of the book in larger and bolder print. Some companies prefer green colored stock for community information section.

Jim Long, an Independent Oregon consultant, initially suggested and advocated such a separate listing, as reported in the enclosed April 1977 article and summarized his concept and study findings in a 64 page report prepared for the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). He has done additional research and development on this concept for the United States Government's Community Services Administration and other private sources. He recently published a "How to" booklet for telephone companies interested in establishing a separate section for human services and community information. The HEW study report and the booklet "How to Implement Blue-Green Community Pages in Telephone Directories: A Guide for Telephone Companies" are both available from Pam Gray at USITA.

HUMAN SERVICE GUIDES

For the purpose of this bulletin the term "Human Service Guide" is defined as single grouping of telephone directory listings which identifies organizations that provide help for personal and family problems and also information and referrals to other organizations.

These listings are now being provided in many directories as a public service. They are usually arranged under problem/service headings, with single line description of service (whenever appropriate). Adequate cross references for those listings are also considered to be helpful. TEL-MED type listings, similar to the enclosed example, are also appearing in more and more directories immediately following the Guide to Human Services.

The final enclosure is a good prototype for a Human Service Guide with some information on the back cover about the development of this guide. Mrs. Hawthorn, consumer consultant has prepared this and related material with the support of the Pennsylvania Departments of Health Education and Aging, the United Way of America, Bell of Pennsylvania and certain Independent telephone companies.

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATION

Telephone company officials considering the changes in directories described above may be concerned with the additional expenses that would be incurred in implementing these changes. There appears to be no easy answer to this question, which requires judging the increase in usefulness of these changes to the customer and as a community service when compared to the added costs.

RECOMMENDATION

Your Commercial Committee recommends that each company carefully consider the suggested changes and make its own judgment on the merits of these changes and costs involved.

Executive Summary of Oregon Telephone Directory Analysis 12/3/4 – 2/7/5

If a person in need doesn't know the name of a community services agency, it's tough for him or her to find it alphabetically in the telephone directory.

In 1976, during the USA Bicentennial, there were only white and yellow pages in Oregon telephone directories. State needs assessments showed a majority of Oregonians is "at-risk" within the broad scope of individual, family, and consumer problems that government and human services address.

75 telephone books serving Oregon communities were evaluated for implementation of "Community Blue Pages" sections. Oregon directories range in size from the one-sheet for Meacham and another single sheet for Helix, to the urban Portland Yellow Pages total of 1,464 pages. A dozen current editions of Oregon directories do not contain a "blue-pages" section, and many do not consolidate government offices and schools listings.

Names of telephone directories in Oregon range from: "Opportunity Pages" to "Everything Pages." Ten names of sections for specialized human services sections vary from "Hard To Find Numbers" to the vague "Resident Resources"

Some changes in directory content and format have occurred in implementation of portions of the "blue pages" concept since the latest complaint and petition was originally filed (8/20/2003). However, not all changes are improvements. After decades of including them, for the past three years, Qwest Dex Media has omitted thousands of listings for government offices and schools on thirty Blue Pages from its Portland Yellow Pages Directory.

There are numerous inconsistencies within directories published between and amongst publishers. For example, seven (7) different colors are used as highlights or borders for pages with Government Offices and Schools listings (blue, pink, gray, yellow, red, purple, black, and white).

Existing "blue pages" are less blue, some with significantly smaller borders. Some blue bordered-pages are now used for the telephone company Customer Guides, and the blue-bordered pages also appear in the yellow pages classifications for "Attorneys."

Eighteen directories appear to be in violation of a 1991 Oregon statute for Emergency Telephone services at on the inside front cover or page one of telephone directories. Some companies use toll-free numbers to comply for mental health and suicide prevention

Placement of human services, government offices, and schools sections of telephone directories in Oregon varies from 1) before, 2) within and 3) after the Customer Guide; 4) in the middle of the "community information pages"; 5) in the middle of the directory; to 6) near the end. Some government and/or human service sections are part of Customer Guides, whereas most aren't.

There is a range of print sizes with Verizon leading the way with large print for Human Services Guides to Qwest Dex Media's use of small print in its Community Services Numbers on pages 27 + 28, wasting one-third of page.

It appears only 2 of the 75 editions utilize an Emergency Services Box for 24-hour, 7-day listings in their Guide To Human Services (see Verizon's Southern Oregon Coast and Gresham telephone directories). The emergency services box was in the model Guide To Human Services recommended by US Telephone Association in February, 1981. USTA recommendations are represented in Pennsylvania and Delaware directories by Verizon.

Standardized Yellow Pages classifications have been used *or* unused for many decades. Thousands of human services listing omissions appear to be violations of both state tariffs and federal charter statutes. There are many underutilized 'self-promotional filler pages' (up to 18% of the Tillamook directory and 62 pages of column inches in the Portland Yellow Pages). There are inconsistencies amongst and within publishers in the classified listing treatment of non-profit business telephone customers.

Scattered Community Information Pages sections (e.g. maps, street guides, Zip Codes, transit routes, etc.) vary by geographic areas, naturally. The new Homeland Security information is not found in the Community Information Pages where Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response information have been for decades.

The Astoria telephone directory includes 57 State of Oregon toll-free numbers. Why don't that and other publishers print those toll-free telephone numbers in other books?

There are inaccurate and non-existent cross-references to both existent government offices and schools listings and non-existing government and public school listings.

Some directory publishers are still not using any of the headings requested by the Oregon Department of Human Services in the interim summer of 2001.

With all the existing inconsistencies, a rule is necessary to standardize "Community Blue Pages" formats in Oregon telephone directories. It will inform and benefit consumers by providing them at least a minimum standard of easy-to-find readable telephone listings of government offices, public schools, and emergency services that will be maintained at least annually and accessible 24-hours a day in Oregon communities.

Resolution unanimously passed by Portland City Council

Clock: 37:37 of am council session February 2, 2005

Regular Agenda, first item

Mayor Tom Potter: We're going to move onto the regular agenda.

Would you please read item number 73?

City Clerk

Authorizes the Office of Cable Communications and Franchise Management to participate in the blue pages proposed rulemaking action of the Oregon Public Utility Commission (AR 464) in coordination with the City Attorney's office, ONI Information and Referral, and other interested city bureaus.

Mayor Tom Potter: Thank you. The staff is here.

Please state your name and go ahead and proceed.

David Olson: Thank you Mayor and Commissioners, I'm David Olson from the Office of Cable Communications and Franchise Management, director of that office.

And very briefly, we have, I've been participating informally in the process, in the informal process of the Oregon Public Utility Commission that looked at the blue pages listings in the phone directories.

That informal process became formal in December when they opened a rulemaking. And that formality necessitates coming before the council and making sure that we are authorized to file formal comments on the city's behalf in that proceeding in the importance of retaining the Blue Pages directory listings.

The hearing before the Administrative Law Judge is next week in Salem and we want to make sure we are representing city interests in that proceeding.

By way of background, there is no current rule requiring blue pages listings and government directories in Oregon. And this proceeding will hopefully result in that rule so that those listings can be there.

These blue pages listings were never automatic. They came about, starting in the late 1970s and early 1980s, primarily due to the influence of the gentleman sitting on my left, a mild mannered citizen from Oregon, who in fact, Jim Long is the essentially the godfather of the Blue pages not just in Oregon but nationally. It was through his efforts as a citizen activist that blue pages listings became included in telephone directories not just in Oregon but elsewhere.

He started the movement here he went to the FCC in Washington, he talked with to U S Telephone Association--- and the RBOCs and it happened because of his efforts in the '70s. Jim is back, because the Blue Pages are at risk in this environment.

And in fact, even in Portland they are not all they should to be.

I don't know if you noticed, but when Portland went to split directories several years ago, the Blue Pages did not follow. They remain in the White P ages, but they are no longer in the Yellow Page edition.

Some people in phone booths and otherwise, only have access to this. And that's the only thing they can find. The government listings are gone. Of course business listings are in both. Government listings did not travel here.

In fact, if you look at blue pages in the current Yellow Pages, you'll find the blue is allocated to attorneys, and there's some green for dentists, and some more blue for doctors, but the blue did not travel.

And there's an additional question that Portland like many governments may be paying business rates that means you're supposed to be in both directories. But we're only in one. That's a separate issue.

In any event, Blue Pages now in terms of community access to not only the government but also to services have never been more important. For some people it's the first place people look.

They could be more so much more than they are.

They could have Internet addresses for example.

And so many services and community are done by non-profits nowadays.

The community services listings are not all they should be.

So there is a need to bring the blue pages concept into this century.

Make sure they are adequate and make sure people have access to government services and to community services that they can't otherwise find.

It's a very simple concept. It just needs to be updated to this century.

Portland because we're the only city in the state with a split directory has particular issues with regard to this.

On your behalf, I want to represent those issues before the Administrative Law Judge in Salem to make sure a good rule is written and adopted by the PUC that picks up these community concerns.

I thank you very much. Be happy to answer any questions

And I would invite you to hear from the blue pages godfather, Mr. Jim Long.

Mayor Tom Potter: Mr. Long

Jim Long: It's a good resolution. It's essential that the city participate in the rulemaking procedure. We're looking at establishing the Blue Pages, improving them, and updating them.

There are a lot of variations in phone books around the state's 75 phone books.

There's eight colors that government offices and schools are on.

There's variety in format that they are using.

One of the formats that I'm proposing would start with a 24hour/7 box at the top of the page, which would list the 24hour/7 services.

Here's a page from Coos Bay with a box up top with all the 24hour/7 for child abuse, elder abuse, poison control, rape crisis resources, things like that.

And we're trying to make it as responsive as possible because a lot of people when they are in need, they don't know where to look and they need help to get there.

And I think it would be helpful to putting in something like a home page URL to improve and establish the concept of the 24-hour city hall, 24-hour courthouse, 24-hour statehouse. So more people can go in their leisure time or at night and find the information they want. So as I say, it would be very helpful if the City of Portland participates in this procedure.

Mayor Tom Potter: Does Council have any questions?

Commissioner Randy Leonard: I'm curious, what is the basis for the opposition, is it from Qwest or who is it that's opposing them?

Jim Long: Yes, yes Qwest and Qwest Dex as you know the Yellow Pages is now published not by Qwest, but by an affiliate, Qwest Dex. And they are raising issues, none of which in my estimation hold much water. They don't want to be told what to do. People typically don't. But it's a quality of service issue and adequate service as far as the PUC is concerned. The phone book is essential to find numbers, to be able to use the system and

David Olson

Commissioner, David Olson: Every page in the directory is a commodity that can be sold, {holding up yellow pages book} you have certain printing costs, even the side is available for sale.

So every page they have to print without being compensated for to them it is a lost business opportunity. It's simply business. One can understand that. But because they remain the last, the telephone provider, mandated telephone provider of choice that they have to serve everyone.

This is part of what is considered universal service you have to, in exchange for running your business for profit in this way you must include listings so people can get in touch with services.

So I would say the opposition is founded simply on business and commercial reasons.

Commissioner Sam Adams: So is the regulatory purview only over Qwest or the other phone books that are printed?

David Olson: Commissioner, the PUC only regulates the traditional dial tone, home dial tone companies, the incumbent companies which are Qwest, Verizon, and the phone companies of last resort in the state. So this does not apply to independent or competitive directories, of which there are many around.

But one works with what one has. And so though there is not any realistic chance that this can be mandated in and among all the competing directories that are out there, nevertheless this directory and wherever you are you have the basic phone company directory that comes as part of your service. Everyone gets it. It's sort of the universal database.

Commissioner Sam Adams:

Right. I don't use those things. I use the web pages. What about the web pages?

Jim Long: Jim Long again. The directory, same print directory, the errors, omissions, inconsistencies in the print are also moved over to the CD ROM and online services. What we are trying to do is get everything in better shape. And if you can on your computer go to an electronic button that says Electronic Yellow Pages, maybe there should be one that says electronic Blue Pages too so that people can access those services, be they life and death services, or whatever, easily.

Commissioner Sam Adams: I can't recall that there are Blue Pages online, are there?

David Olson: Not to my knowledge. No.

Commissioner Sam Adams: So you're seeking, Mr. Long, you're seeking to get that on the web page directory version as well?

Jim Long: That's not actually part of what was in the petition that I submitted originally, but it is something that may come out in the rulemaking proceeding. That's just an example to bring across the fact that the print and electronic, there's a connection between them; it's the same database.

Commissioner Sam Adams: Right.

Jim Long: It's just there and we want to make it easier to find. You know that Google is a search engine. The blue pages are a search engine. A print search engine that everybody has and people have gotten used to it over the years. So we're just trying to improve the search capability, the usability of it. But the real issue here, as David had mentioned, there's residential rates you have at home and business rates, and businesses are supposed to get two listings. And government just has not been getting them recently, to a great degree.

David Olson: Commissioner, also hopefully the rule will also address updating these things, keeping them update and accurate in a way there's thing in a way that's real sporadic real volunteer and sort of the last thing the phone company thinks of now, getting these up-to-date.. I believe Commissioner Leonard had to wait a couple of years before he even got in the Blue Pages.

Commissioner Randy Leonard: That was not an accident, by the way.

David Olson: And currently, if you look for information on Voting in Multnomah County in the current Community Services Numbers of the Qwest Directory, you're given a phone number with a 248- prefix that the county has not used for six years. This is an example of simply the inattention and a rule would help keep up-to-date and accurate, it would help people find services. Particularly because Portland has issues with a split directory, we think it's worthwhile putting this information forward in Salem so a good rule is written.

Mayor Tom Potter: Any other questions? Thank you.

David Olson: Thank you.

Jim Long: Thank you..

Mayor Tom Potter: Sue has anyone signed up to testify?

Clerk Sue: No

David Olson: And thank you Commissioner Leonard for letting us borrow directories from your office.

Commissioner Randy Leonard: You're welcome.

Mayor Tom Potter: Is council ready to take a vote?

Sue, please read.

Clerk: Adams

Commissioner Sam Adams: I would like to laud a hero that I did not even know existed. Mr. Long I did not know of your previous efforts. Thank you. I appreciate them. And I vote AYE

Clerk:: Leonard

Commissioner Randy Leonard:

Well this is another example of the great work of the Office of Cable Communications I've really enjoyed, I'm going to give a plug, having the Office of Cable Communications in my portfolio.

Because they do this stuff all the time. On the cutting edge of what citizens expect in Portland and so I appreciate David you taking this up.

It's a great public service that you're providing by doing that. AYE.

Clerk: Saltzman

Commissioner Dan Saltzman: AYE

Clerk: Sten

Commissioner Eric Sten: AYE

Clerk: Potter

Mayor Tom Potter:

I too would like to thank Mr Long and David too. I think that's a valuable service. And having worked for an organization, that used to be in the blue pages or still is in the blue pages, I know that a lot of citizens use the Blue Pages.

Thank you very much. And AYE.

Sue please read the next item #74.

The above transcription from audio-video file of the February 2nd, 2005 morning city council session located at

<http://www.portlandonline.com/index.cfm?c=28259>

The Blue Pages rulemaking agenda item begins at the 38th minute of that meeting.

Quotes from 55 letters in 1988 supporting telephone directory improvements include:

"In absence of regulation regarding the placement of community services and government listings in telephone directories, these listings are absent in some directories, on blue pages in others, and on page 21 in the current directory of U S West Direct for Roseburg."

G. John DeGroot, Director, Senior Services Division, Roseburg.

"Regarding our Blue Pages, No - It does not contain an easy-to-find, complete, community Human Service Guide. No - It does not list any agencies specific or not. No - toll-free numbers are listed and our agency does in fact have a toll-free number. No - The print-size is not large enough to be read by visually-impaired persons. Multi-service agencies do not get listed under more one classification. In fact, I do not find them anywhere. Many of our seniors have reported confusion in trying to locate our office as well as any Senior Services in the telephone book."

Judy Cairns, Area Agency on Aging, East Central Oregon Assoc. of Counties, Pendleton.

"I would suggest the blue pages appear in both the white page and yellow directories, since often only one is available in phone booths."

Barbara J. Winans, FISH Emergency Service, Portland.

"We urge you to consider the (Blue Pages) concept and, as appropriate, rulemaking so that Oregon will have a statewide system"

John Mullin, Community Action Directors of Oregon

"It would benefit everyone in this state"

Ed Sage, Oregon Area Agencies on Aging.

"This (compilation) process for U S West Communications has become increasingly difficult in the past few years"

Ruth Harshfield, Northwest Information and Referral Association

"We support the Blue Pages rulemaking petition."

Eula Lockett, Community Action Team, Tillamook

"Since libraries are one of the most widely used human service agencies, we feel that libraries deserve a separate classified listing state-wide."

Sarah Ann Long, Director, Multnomah County Library.

"Adopt a rule to establish a uniform format for Health & Human Services listings and that they be included in all telephone directories used in the state of Oregon."

Bonnie Hays, Chairman, Washington County Board of Commissioners.

"Woe to the poor newcomer, or slightly upset, elderly or infirm person trying to find some agency." Leeanne G. MacColl, Portland

Human Services Coalition of Oregon

4/4/1989

Human Services Coalition of Oregon letter to
the Oregon Public Utility Commission
(Ron Eachus, Myron Katz, and Nancy Ryles)

The Human Services Coalition of Oregon, comprised of 113 human service organizations, associations and agencies and 125 individual members, strongly endorses the making of a P.U.C. Rule which would establish minimum standards for a "Community Blue Pages" section for all telephone directories in all Oregon cities served by regulated telephone companies. We also urge that local telephone companies be required to work with local advisory committees to identify the agencies which should be in the blue pages together with addresses and phone numbers.

The agencies should be listed under problem oriented classifications as worked out with the advisory committees within general statewide guidelines established by P.U.C.

HSCO member agencies indicate that many clients have difficulty gaining access to both public and private human services because the current listings are incomplete and hard to use.

We wish to thank the PUC for holding hearings on this important matter. Please be advised that many of our members would be pleased to work with you on this issue.

Sincerely,
Diane Luther,
Legislative Committee Chair