



How to avoid 'bill shocks' when travelling

When travelling abroad, whether it's for leisure or business, most people will go to great lengths to find the best deal for villas, hotels, flights, train journeys, transfers, car parking and car hire.

But how many have thought to check out the benefits of using an alternative mobile/cell network when they travel abroad?

This article has been provided to help you to understand what charges you would expect to pay using your regular mobile/cell SIM Card, and how much you could save by using an Aether Mobile global roaming SIM card.

What is mobile/cell roaming?

When you travel abroad i.e. travel outside your home country, and use your regular mobile/cell phone, this is classed as mobile roaming, cell roaming, global roaming or GSM roaming as you would be roaming on local networks to make and receive calls and SMS. Generally your existing network will charge high rates to use their network when travelling outside your home country. For the privilege of this service, you are generally charged pretty high rates from your existing provider.

How can I avoid a 'Bill Shock'?

European travellers have seen their rates for making and receiving calls and SMS/text messages reduced for roaming abroad since the EU commission capped the mobile roaming charges applied by the major mobile networks in European Union member states. However that doesn't affect non EU destinations – you'll still expect to pay extortionate roaming bills when visiting anywhere within the EU (and further afield).

The EU Commission have enabled people travelling within Europe to make calls and send SMS messages at lower rates now, but you are still charged a rate per minute to receive a call, which is around 19p per minute. The rate to make a call, although lower than previously charged, is still high at around 38p per minute.

To ensure you don't have to pay these rates, it would be more cost effective to use the Aether Mobile global roaming card. As long as you have an unlocked handset, you can insert the SIM card into your current phone and when travelling in Europe you will expect to pay around 25p per minute to make a call, and receive all your incoming calls for free, also known as free roaming.

Outside of the EU though, there have been very limited control over the rates networks charge, and this is taken full advantage of by the network operators. Below we look at a few comparisons to see how much you'd expect to pay for making and receiving calls with the major networks, compared to the Aether Mobile service.



UK travellers heading out the USA would be charged astronomical rates for the privilege of calling back home. For example, you would expect to be charged from between £1.25p - £1.49 per minute to make a call and between 70p – 99p to receive a call with any of the major network operators in the UK. Aether mobile has recently reduced its rates to give even further savings to its customers. Customers of Aether Mobile pay just 65p per minute and to receive a call its 50p.

US customers travelling to Europe can call their loved ones at home for \$1.04 per minute, that's up to 75% cheaper than some USA major networks, who would charge around \$1.39 to receive a call, whereas with Aether Mobile it's free in Europe to receive incoming calls (free roaming).

Our Australian customers can also benefit from the low global roaming rates offered compared to networks in Australia for roaming. For example, calling Australia from France is just \$0.54AUD compared to \$2.20 from one of the main network operators in Australia, that's a staggering 75% saving on making the calls. When you then start looking at the cost of receiving calls, the global roaming service from Aether Mobile offers a 100% saving in Europe as there are no charges to receive calls.

Other options include local SIMs but these are generally only practical if you plan to stay in one country, and will mean that local calls would be very cost effective, but calling internationally using the local service could prove to be expensive.

So it's true to say that it certainly does make sense to research your options before jetting off on your leisure or business trip for a more cost effective option.

Before you travel, go online and research the different services available to see what solution is best for you. Check out each services rates for incoming calls, making calls and sending SMS. Also check out the coverage maps to see where each service is available, and see what free roaming countries are offered with each service. Also check out the terms and conditions of sale to ensure that you don't have to pay service charges, connection charges, daily service fees and if you might be subject to penalties charges for non use of the service.

Aether Mobile, in partnership with the Know Before You Go Campaign.

