
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau

2008 Annual Report

January 15, 2009

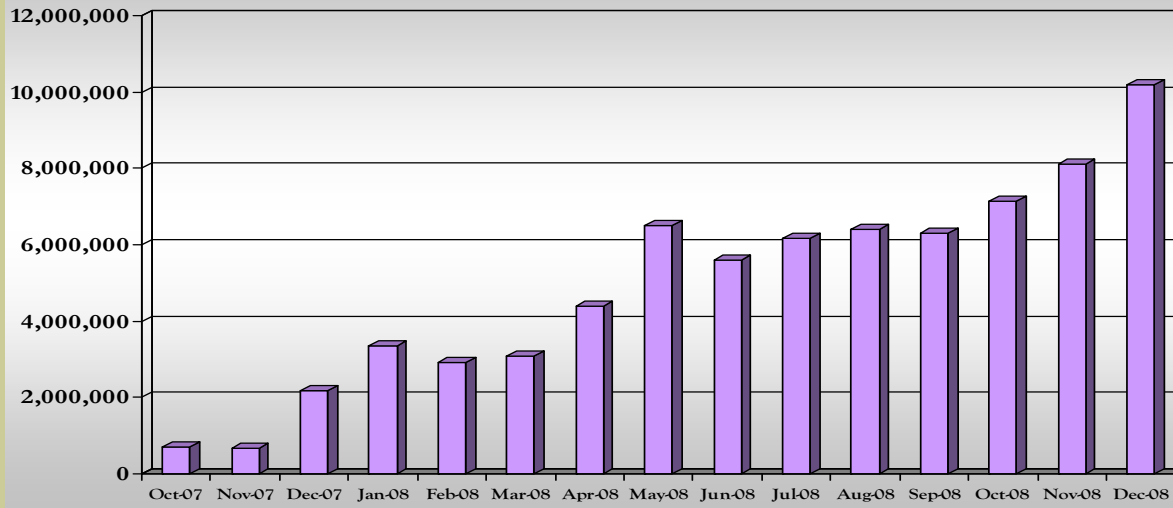


Overseeing the DTV Transition

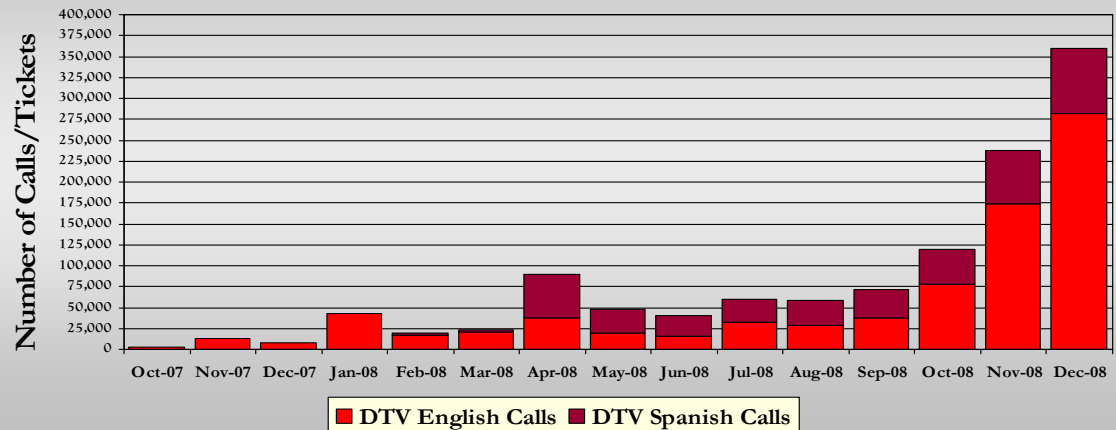
- Awareness has grown: CEA found that only 41% of consumers were aware of the DTV transition in August 2006, but that number had grown to 79% by January 2008. In October 2008, NAB reported that awareness is up to 92%.
- According to Nielsen, between November 2008 and December 2008, the penetration of Completely Unready households in the U.S. declined by six-tenths of a percentage point – one of the largest drops since readiness status reporting began in May 2008.
- CGB, with the help of staff from every FCC Bureau and Office, promoted consumer awareness of the DTV transition through:
 - 82 market outreach tour; held more than 50 town hall outreach events in markets with a high percentage of over-the-air households.
 - Distribution of 14 million DTV publication pages to the public directly or to our partners to distribute.
 - Over 67 million hits at www.dtv.gov.
 - Over 2.2 million calls at the FCC Call Center. Increased Call Center staffing by 102 (over half bilingual), and expanded call center hours until midnight weekdays.

Overseeing DTV Transition (cont.)

Hits to www.dtv.gov



Total DTV Call Center Calls



Protecting Consumers From Harm

➤ **Do-Not-Call Registry**

- Extended the effectiveness of Do-Not-Call registrations indefinitely. Over 172 million telephone numbers are now included on the Do-Not-Call Registry.

- During the period from 2005-2008, processed over 309,000 TCPA complaints.

➤ **CAN-SPAM**

- Administered the Wireless Domain Registry to protect consumers from unwanted commercial electronic mail messages.

➤ **Slamming (Unauthorized Switching of Consumer's Carrier)**

- Addressed over 7,300 slamming complaints.

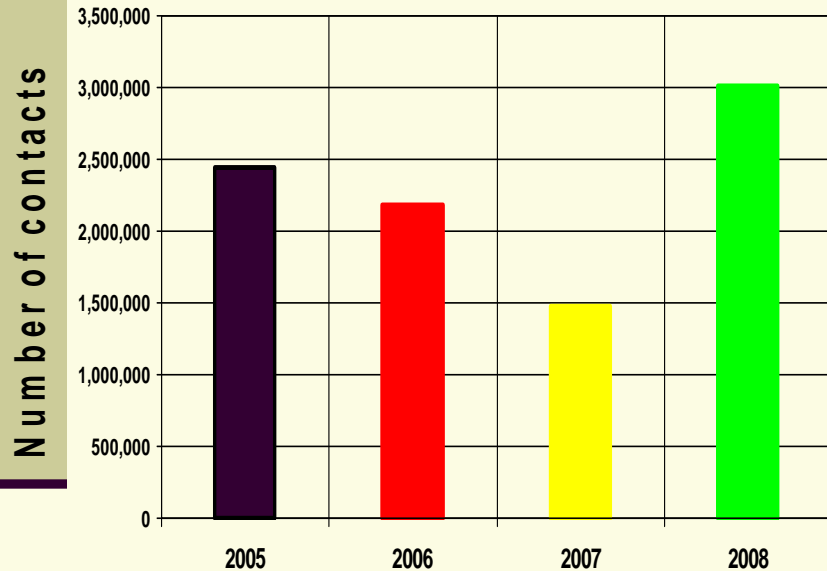
➤ **Early Termination Fees (ETFs)**

- The Commission has examined ways to protect consumers.

- AT&T, Sprint Nextel, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless all have announced that they were voluntarily adopting an ETF that diminishes over the term of the contract.⁴

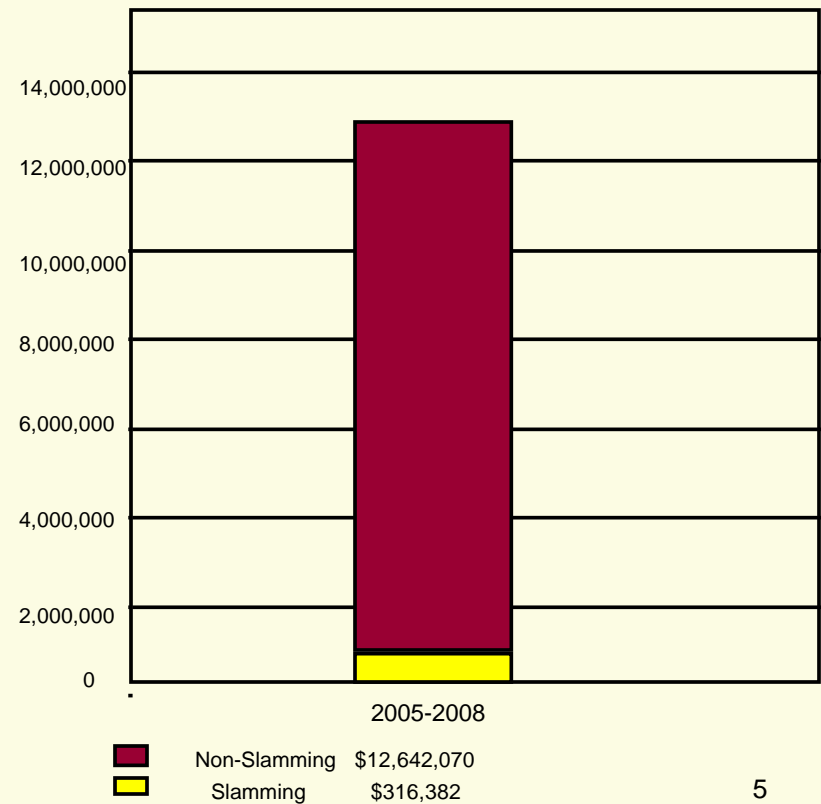
Protecting Consumers from Harm (cont.)

Total CGB Consumer Contacts 2005-2008



Consumer Contacts represent any inquiry or informal complaint received by any submission method (mail, fax, Web, telephone)

Total Amount Returned to Consumers in 2005-2008 Through the Informal Complaint Process (Slamming & Non-Slamming)



Ensuring Access to Communications by All Citizens

- **Expanded Access to, and Enhanced Functional Equivalency of, Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS)**
 - Adopted a ten-digit numbering plan for Internet-based TRS, which allows such users to be reached by voice telephone users the same way that voice telephone users are called, and adopted rules to ensure that Internet-based TRS users receive 911 service that is comparable to 911 service provided to telephone users.
 - Extended the disability access requirements of Sections 225 and 255 of the Communications Act to providers of interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services and to manufacturers of specially designed equipment used to provide those services.
- **Strengthened the TRS Program**
 - Adopted new cost reimbursement methodologies.
 - Took steps to guard against the misuse of TRS by prohibiting incentive and marketing programs that result in the illegitimate billing of minutes to the Interstate TRS Fund.
- **Ensured Effective Closed Captioning of Television Programming**
 - Revised the closed captioning complaint process to make it more user-friendly to consumers, by allowing consumers to complain directly to the FCC and requiring distributors to provide contact information for the addressing of immediate problems and filing of complaints.
 - Initiated a rulemaking proceeding to examine the need for new closed captioning rules, including quality standards for closed captioning.

Ensuring Access to Communications by All Citizens (cont.)

➤ **Disability Access Services**

- Converted over 57,000 pages of print documents into accessible formats.
- Provided approximately 2,200 hours of sign language interpreting, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), and revoicing services.

➤ **Implemented the Commission's Indian Telecommunications Initiative (ITI) to promote access by Indian tribes to broadband and other communications services**

- Partnered with tribes and tribal organizations to co-sponsor 5 ITI Workshops on or near tribal lands; cumulatively, over 200 tribes throughout the U.S. were represented at the workshops, which addressed various communications topics such as broadband deployment, universal service policies and programs, media ownership, public safety communications and, most recently, the DTV transition.

➤ **Consumer Publications and Consumer Information**

- Created or updated over 100 fact sheets, consumer advisories, and other publications.