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Heat is on in telecoms sector

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Johannesburg - Draft regulations on "carrier pre-select" - a system that allows users to choose telecommunications providers per call - is an important step towards facilitating competition, a telecommunications management company said on Thursday.

Huge Telecoms executive chairperson Anton Potgieter said the ability to choose a telecommunications carrier call-for-call allows individuals or companies to use their existing telecoms infrastructure, but to have calls carried by another company which may offer a cheaper service for that particular routing.

It works by dialling a code before dialling the destination number.

"Internationally, we've seen this type of ruling significantly stimulate competition, with the larger players in the market competing vigorously for voice traffic by using creative pricing structures to attract customers," said a statement from Potgieter.

However, customers could become confused by the number of carriers and pricing options available and settle for their regular provider.

Companies can save money by evaluating routing options and ensuring each call they make is placed on the most cost-effective route.

"Where it is cheaper to route via another network, this should be taken advantage of," he says.

Potgieter recommends outsourcing the evaluation of the options to a telecoms management specialist.

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa has issued draft regulations on the matter for comment. January 9 is the deadline for submissions and oral hearings will be heard on January 21 and 22.

- Sapa