Caller ID and 800 Number ANI - Differences

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RCSC Personnel
SNC Personnel
Division Support Personnel

From time to time, I receive the following question from Service Reps and Managers,

> "I have this customer who claims he (or she) dialed an 800 number and
> the called party was able to identify the customer's telephone number.
> This can't be true; since we don't have approval for Caller ID yet - Right?"

This question seems to be asked more often lately, so I thought I would share the answer with the masses. The short and sweet answer is: Yes, it can be true but it wasn't because of Caller ID. However, short and sweet doesn't cut it, so the following is the unabridged version:

First, let's discuss Caller ID. When a call is placed, the caller's telephone number is passed throughout the telephone network via SS7 (Signal System 7). It is the SS7 technology that enables the Caller ID subscriber to "capture" and display the caller's telephone number on the Caller ID display device.

When a call is placed to an 800 number, Ameritech (and all Local Exchange Companies) is <u>required</u> to pass the caller's telephone number to the Interexchange Carrier for billing purposes. This is referred to as passing ANI (Automatic Number Identification) information. It is then the IC's decision as to what to do with ANI, i.e., the caller's telephone number. Some ICs provide ANI as a service to their End User (the customer who has the 800 number)

The point to remember is that calls to 800 numbers do <u>not</u> use the SS7 technology. Instead, ANI is what is being utilized to identify the caller's number. And because of that, dialing *67 prior to dialing an 800 number will <u>not</u> block the transmission of the caller's telephone number.

Customers who call to complain about their calls to 800 numbers being identified should be told to voice their complaint against the End User of the 800 number. Also, as an FYI, there is currently some discussion at a National level to have Interexchange Carriers honor per call blocked calls (*67) when calling an 800 number.

Please call me at (414) 678-4390 if you have any questions.

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