

Hidden costs: Fastweb responds to the complaint submitted by the Consumer's Union on the transparency of offers

Fastweb asserts its role as leader in the transparency of offers and proposes a public debate with the UNC and other consumers' associations on the subject of hidden costs.

Milan, 16 May 2018 - With reference to the claim submitted by the Italian National Union of Consumers (*Unione Nazionale Consumatori*) to the AGCM on "hidden costs" applied by landline and mobile telephony operators, communicated by means of a press release entitled "*UNC reports to Antitrust the companies Tim, Vodafone, Wind Tre and Fastweb for lack of transparency in the charging of various telephone services*", Fastweb firmly rejects the accusations of the consumers' association and asserts that it embarked, more than a year ago, on a strategy and specific action plan designed for total transparency in dealings with its customers and the market. Specifically, since some time ago, Fastweb has eliminated, on both landlines and mobiles, all kinds of "hidden cost" cited in the inquest conducted by the UNC: including voice mail costs, costs for "call back" service and the costs of the basic pricing scheme or to find out your remaining credit or those for the activation of the mobile service. In relation to the other hidden costs identified by the UNC inquest (such as antivirus or tethering costs), Fastweb reiterates that it does not charge any amounts to its customers for those services.

"It is so true and clear that Fastweb does not adopt hidden cost policies", explained Roberto Chieppa, Marketing Officer at Fastweb "that the inquiry of the National Union of Consumers could not refer any of the costs identified for the other operators to our company. At the same time, ambiguous analysis and titles - which do not distinguish in any way between the business practices implemented by the individual operators - do not only damage Fastweb, which has been investing resources and energy since May 2017 in the transparency and clarity of its relationship with its customers but does not serve the consumers well either, by making mistaken generalisations. Therefore, we deem it important that various positions be clarified and we propose to the National Union of Consumers a public debate on the issue".

Lastly, the company clarifies that the only additional cost, which however, is declared and transparent, attributable to Fastweb - among those cited in the UNC inquest - relates to the annual cost of EUR 1.81, which relates (for landline subscriptions only) to the optional service of having home delivery of telephone directories. By contrast to that which was revealed in the UNC inquest, which accuses Fastweb of failing to clarify the nature of the aforementioned cost, that item is perfectly clear and therefore identifiable on the invoice. Furthermore, that service will be provided only to those who expressly request it as of June 2018.

Over recent weeks, Fastweb has presented to AGCOM a report on the issue of “hidden costs” applied on the market, deeming the intervention of the regulatory authority necessary to impose a clearer and more transparent representation of the prices, to protect users and market competition dynamics.

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