



Telecommunications – Overview & Tips

Arrival Survival

August 29, 2011

What we will cover today

- Fixed & Mobile Services
- Internet & Internet Service Providers
- Long Distance /International Calling Options
- Resources & Information

To set context

- This presentation is a general overview of telecommunications within the context of the PRC, given the specific needs and challenges of expats
- We will not be covering technical specifics for each provider (e.g., GSM, CDMA, 3G, GPRS, WAP, etc.) or plans
- This presentation is a guideline and resource overview based on the experience of expats who have been living in Beijing. If you have any further tips and experiences to share, we would love to hear about them



Telecom Overview

Fixed Line and Mobile Operators



China Unicom (Zhong Guo Lian Tong)
Fixed & mobile services



China Telecom (Zhong Guo Dian Xin)
Fixed and mobile services



China Mobile (Zhong Guo Yi Dong)
Dominant mobile services provider in PRC

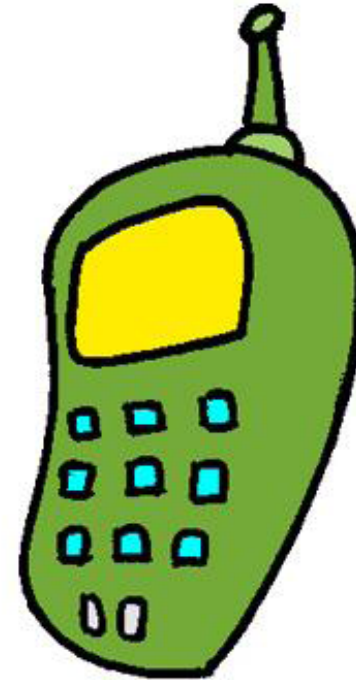


Fixed Line and Internet Services

Fixed Line and Internet Services

- Fixed and internet services usually available through same provider
- DSL or broadband internet is approx RMB 120-200 /per month for unlimited download 3 mbps pkg
- Various discount options are available if pre-pay internet 12-months in advance
- DDD and IDD discounts based on calling plans or dialing of discount pre-fixes (e.g., 17909 before the number)
- You can set-up direct payment of fixed line and internet bill through your RMB bank account

Mobile Phone Services



Mobile Communication

- Mobile (handset) and Mobile Service Providers (telecom company) are separate in China unlike places such as the US, Singapore, etc.
- All major telecom providers provide GSM, CDMA & 3G services, so you may choose the technology that best fits your needs
- To get the best value and deals it may be a good idea to surf the service providers' websites (especially the Chinese site - and either use Google translate or ask a friend to review it with you)

Mobile Handsets

- You can purchase a mobile handset from major outlets such as Zoomflight (Zhong Fu), Suning, Da Zhong, Carrefour, China Mobile retail outlets, Xidan mobile market, etc.
- Warranty and exchange available along with after-sales servicing
- If you wish to use your own phone from home, make sure to bring a compatible GSM/GPRS 900/1800 dual-frequency mobile phone. The phone must be an "unlocked" phone. You can find out if your phone is locked or not by calling your home service provider
- Some, but not all, locked phones can be “unlocked”

Mobile Services

Based on your needs, you can choose a post- or a pre-paid plan

Post-paid Plans

- Usually set-up through corporation for employees & billed at end of each month to corporation
- If individual post-paid plan, will need a Chinese sponsor (Shenfenzheng ID) & depending on services required (e.g., global roaming), an initial deposit of several thousand RMB
- Many calling plans available
- Can sign up for additional services (internet, voice messages, etc.)
- You can set-up direct payment of the bill through your RMB bank account

Pre-paid Mobile Services

- Pre-paid SIM cards can be purchased easily at local convenience stores and China Unicom/Telecom/Mobile retail stores
- Comes with local BJ number and some stored value
- Talk time/value can be topped up easily by purchasing refill cards at China Mobile/Unicom retailers, post-offices/newsstands / kiosks/ grocery/ convenience stores
- Several pre-paid plans from each provider:
 - China Mobile: Easyown; M-zone
 - China Unicom: Ruyitong; UP Xinshili

Pre-paid Mobile Services

- Usually charged for both incoming and outgoing calls
- Cost of incoming can be reduced by using plans which charge fixed amount (usually RMB 10/month) to make incoming calls free
- Rates vary depending on plan and service provider. Local BJ incoming calls: RMB 0.10 to 0.60; Outgoing calls RMB 0.25 to 0.60
- Can reduce costs by dialing 5-digit VOIP pre-fix number from provider
- SMS usually RMB 0.10 to 0.20 each. Many SMS packages available e.g., RMB 10 for 120 SMS, RMB 50 for 1000 SMS, etc.)



International Calling Options

Keeping in touch with friends & family

Opt 1 - Skype, Yahoo Voice, Google Voice

- Download free Skype/yahoo software at:
 - <http://skype.tom.com/products/en/>
 - <http://voice.yahoo.jajah.com/home/index.castle>
- For Google, sign into Google mail and manage the account from your 'chat' dialog box
- Calls are FREE computer-to-computer. Both users need Skype/Yahoo/Google Voice account
- SkypeOut/Yahoo /Google Voice—pre-paid value on the account allows you to call fixed/mobile numbers

Opt 1 - Skype, Yahoo Voice, Google Voice

- Current Indicative Costs
 - Skype Subscription “Unlimited World” allows unlimited calls to landline numbers in 41 countries for RMB 100.00 per month or RMB 1199.00 per year
 - Yahoo Phone Out allows calling at 0.018 USD/m to US/0.17 to UK
 - Google Voice – 0.01 USD/minute to the US, 0.02 to 0.24 USD /minute based on service provider

Opt 2 - Vonage

- Vonage equipment needed -can purchase overseas
- Can use it from anywhere but must have USA, UK or Canada billing and mailing address to sign up and to receive equipment
- Keep your current land line number and use a standard phone for calls
- High speed internet access required
- Vonage World Plan –US\$14.99 per month for unlimited calls to over 60 countries
- More information: www.vonage.com

Opt 3 : Rebtel

- Uses VOIP technology to send regular call thru the internet
- Call can be Mobile to mobile, mobile to landline, landline to mobile, landline to landline in multiple countries
- No additional equipment or internet access required
- Some of the calling costs from China
 - UK : 0.010 USD/minute to landlines and 0.015 USD to mobile
 - US : 0.015 USD /minute (e.g., 1.5 cents/minute)
 - Australia: 0.02 USD/minute (e.g., 2 cents) to Landlines and 0.16 USD (e.g., 16 cents) /minute to mobiles

Opt 3 : Rebtel

- Same account can be used for multiple numbers in multiple countries (e.g., you & your spouse here and your daughter in the US & parents in Hong Kong can all use the same account)
- Process
 - Visit rebtel.com & register your number(s)
 - For frequently called numbers, register to get a corresponding local BJ number
 - For infrequent numbers, use the automated rebtel system/operator to dial
- Visit www.rebtel.com for more info

The Internet

www

w



Wi-Fi and Internet Access

- Most establishments (restaurants, cafes, bars) provide FREE Wi-Fi which is fairly fast
- Internet access to certain sites blocked: Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, etc. but they can be accessed through a VPN (Virtual Private Network)
- Most laptops used for work have proprietary VPN
- For home computers/laptops VPNs can be downloaded for free or you can pay for a secure VPN service
- The online security bureau is always trolling the net for the free VPN providers so they can be blocked/shut down at anytime



To Find Out More . . .

Information and resources

For Additional Information

- China Mobile (Beijing) - <http://www.bj.chinamobile.com>
Dial 10086
- China Unicom (Beijing)- <http://www.bj.chinaunicom.com>
Dial 10010
- China Telecom (Beijing)- <http://www.bjtelecom.net>
Dial 10000
- Beijing Government Site : Info for Beijing Residents
http://www.ebeijing.gov.cn/feature_2/ebeijing_mobile/residents/default.htm

For Additional Information

Skype

<http://skype.tom.com/products/en/>

Yahoo Voice

<http://voice.yahoo.jajah.com/home/index.castle?>

Gmail Phone

<http://www.google.com/chat/voice/>

VONAGE

www.vonage.com

REBTEL

www.rebtel.com