New Straits Times : 27 November 2006 <br />PETALING JAYA: When Law Gwo Yunn received a message on her mobile phone in August last year with the words "download successful, RM3 monthly", she was surprised.<br /><br />Especially since she had never downloaded any ringtones and RM6 had already been deducted from the credit on her mobile phone &#65533; RM3 for registration and RM3 as monthly fee. <table border="0" width="1" height="59" align="center"><tr><td>&#65533;</td></tr><tr><td>&#65533;</td></tr></table>She immediately cancelled the download using the number provided. Surprise turned to shock. She was charged a further 30 sen.<br /> <br />&#65533;"It was horrible music, something I would never order. But I did not complain to the telco," said the 28-year-old production manager.<br /><br />A few months later, on Oct 12, she received a similar message, but from a different company.<br /><br />"This time I did not want to leave it alone. I was also angry as the moment the message is opened, the music goes straight into the phone and you pay for it." <br /><br />Law cancelled the download and called her handphone service provider. <br /><br />She was told that content providing companies were independent and the service providers did not liaise with them.<br /><br />"I asked if they were selling our numbers to these companies as I wondered how they got my number. They denied doing so."<br /><br />She asked for the names and contact numbers of the two companies which had sent the downloads<br /><br />When she called the first company and demanded a refund, Law was told the company&#65533;s records showed she had ordered the music.<br /><br />"I told them I could not have ordered it as I had never even heard of them before. They then told me a refund was not possible as the transaction had already gone through but they promised never to send me stuff again." <br /><br />Law then called the second company and demanded to speak to the manager but ended up just being passed around.<br /><br />Her request for a refund was denied but when she demanded the company&#65533;s address to write an official complaint, she was told they would de-register her and never send her stuff again.<br /><br />"I ended up losing more than RM9 for something I never ordered. I think the service providers are selling our numbers. They must have known I had credit in my phone to be able to deduct RM6 immediately.<br /><br />"Some of my friends too have received similar messages and when they receive it too often they just change their numbers.<br /><br />"I think these content providers must be raking in millions by sending such stuff to people who don&#65533;t request them.<br /><br />"If a complaint is made against these companies, the authorities should investigate immediately," said Law.<br /><br />Chan Kah Chi&#65533;s experience, however, was slightly different. The short messaging service (SMS) she received on Sept 18 said she had won third prize in a lucky draw called "Lucky 88".<br /><br />The message in Mandarin said her winnings amounted to RM60,000 and provided a five-digit reference number and a phone number to call.<br /><br />Upon calling the number, she was asked to give her personal particulars and bank account number and when she provided them the information, she was told to purchase insurance for the money.<br /><br />"I was told the insurance was to avoid technical problems. The person spoke to me in Mandarin and the sounds in the background were more like a telemarketing company.<br /><br />"They even told me the results of the draw were announced in a Chinese television channel and that the draw was in conjunction with the company&#65533;s 10th anniversary," said the 30-year-old financial executive.<br /><br />Chan was told there were two insurance options &#65533; a non-refundable RM1,800 or RM4,800 which was refundable.<br /><br />"The deadline for insurance payment was Sept 18 but I told them I did not have the money. <br /><br />"They extended the deadline by a day and told me I could not get the money if I did not purchase the insurance."<br /><br />She said: "I knew it was a hoax from the beginning. I wanted to learn

more about it, that&#65533;s why I called." </p>