

MetroPCS mimics landline with family 'groupline'

April 7 2009, By PETER SVENSSON , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- Regional wireless carrier MetroPCS Communications Inc. has a new feature designed to lure families getting rid of their landlines. The new service gives families one number that rings all their cell phones at once.

Family members that pick up a call to this "GroupLINE" number are all placed into conference, much like the way people can pick up landline phones all over a house to participate in a call. When one family member picks up the call, the phones of the others will keep ringing a few times to give them the chance to join, said Roger Linquist, MetroPCS's chief executive.

Users will also be able to call the number for quick conferencing with the rest of the family.

"The notion is to try to remove the customer objections to going wireless," Linquist said.

Customers who plan to cancel landline service can in most cases take that number and have it assigned as their GroupLINE number, Linquist said.

The feature comes as most wireless carriers are experimenting with different ways of replacing [landlines](#). [Sprint Nextel](#) Corp., AT&T Inc. and Verizon Wireless have or will have "femtocells," small devices that improve cellular coverage within a home. Verizon Wireless is selling a

Hub, a touch screen home phone that works over broadband lines. T-Mobile USA sells an Internet router to which a home phone can be connected.

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Citation: MetroPCS mimics landline with family 'groupline' (2009, April 7) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-04-metropcs-mimics-landline-family-groupline.html>

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