

Giving The Gift Of Staying Connected

(NAPSA)—Cell phones have become the simplest and most popular way to stay in touch, but while they are used for talk these days, they are used just as much for texting, chat, e-mails, sharing photos, Web surfing and social networking.

Mobile phones have become part of how we communicate, make plans, and find places to visit and things to buy. It's only natural that cell phones are a highly desirable gift every holiday season—because it's something that everyone needs. Yet cell phones have been difficult to give as gifts in the past because they generally come with a two-year contract, as well as the potential for unexpected overages or “bill shock.”

Now, that's no longer the case. Mobile phones are available without a contract with great value and quality handsets including smart phones. When choosing a phone to give as a holiday gift, there are three easy steps you should follow:

1. Choose a phone. Depending on the recipient, determine if you need a basic phone or one with bells and whistles like a smartphone. Check to see what the handset offers.

Does it have a music player, digital camera, Qwerty keyboard, stereo Bluetooth and mobile Web? Don't settle for less than you want—you don't have to—but also don't pay for more than the person needs. Prepaid no longer means shoddy cell phones. For example, you can get Androids and BlackBerries: On Boost, look for the Motorola i1, and Virgin Mobile recently launched the Samsung Intercept. Both brands carry the BlackBerry Curve 8530.

2. Choose a plan. There are several affordable monthly pre-



This holiday season there may be more cell phones given as gifts, with so many prepaid options now available that make gifting easy.

paid plans available on the Sprint Nationwide Network. Virgin Mobile offers \$25- or \$40-monthly Beyond Talk plans for those who message and surf more than they text, with unlimited messaging, e-mail, Web and data, plus hundreds of talk minutes.

Boost Mobile has the \$50 Monthly Unlimited plan with Shrinkage—for every six on-time payments, your cost is reduced by \$5 down to as low as \$35. It includes unlimited talk, text and Web.

3. Activate the phone. These phones are activated easily on the handset, online or automatically by phone. You can carry over an existing phone number or ask for a new one.

Once the phones are activated, you or the gift recipient can add money to the account to pay for the monthly charge.

For More Information

For more information, visit www.boostmobile.com and www.virginmobileusa.com.