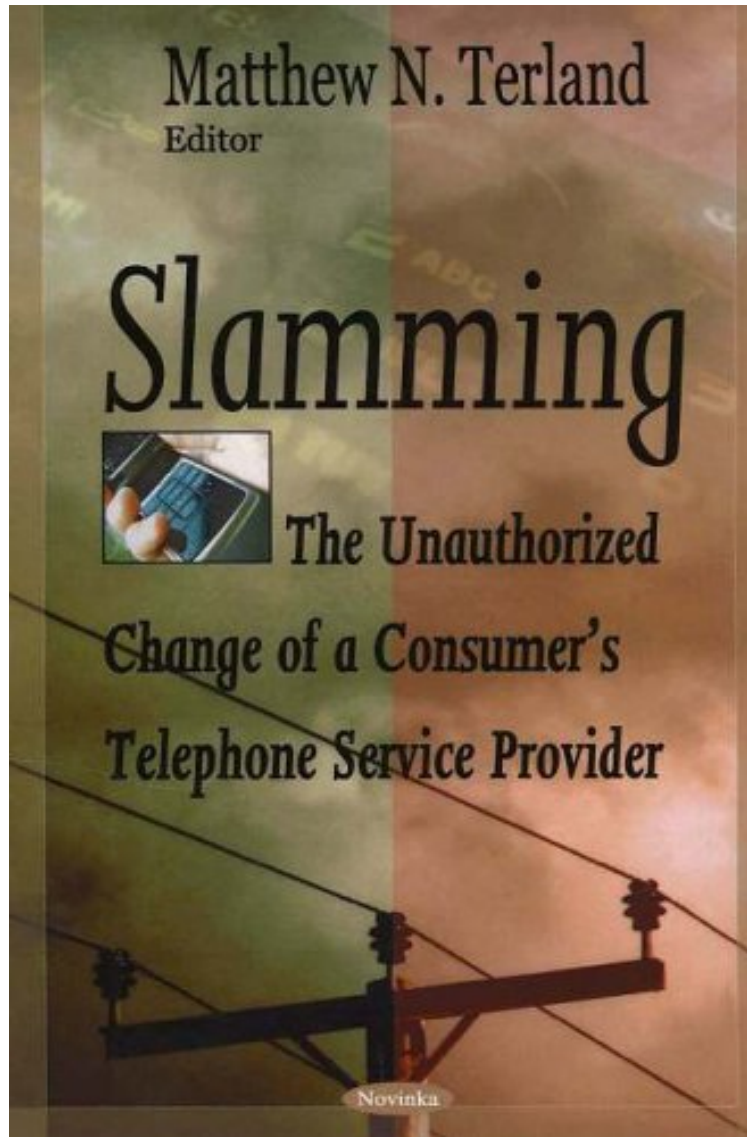


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# Slamming: The Unauthorized Change of a Consumer's Telephone Service Provider

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Changing a consumer's telephone service provider without his/her knowledge or consent is known as 'slamming'. This unauthorised change can occur for several reasons ranging from computer or human error to unscrupulous or illegal marketing practices. Regardless of the reason, slamming has a negative impact on both consumers and suppliers of telecommunications services. Despite existing regulations to prevent such practices and the overall condemnation of such activities, slamming is occurring with increasing frequency. According to data released by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) 3,216 slamming complaints were filed in the first half of 2003. The issue of slamming is expected to continue as competition in the provision of intrastate long distance and local telecommunications services becomes more widespread. A significant level of consumer complaints, coupled with the potential for further abuses in an increasingly competitive market place, have prompted action to examine and strengthen deterrents to this practice. The FCC has been actively enforcing existing rules and continues to address outstanding slamming issues. to slamming in compliance with provisions contained in the 1996 Telecommunications Act (P.L.104-104). All of these rules are now in effect. Under these revised rules, states are given the option of processing slamming complaints, and numerous states have chosen to do so. The telecommunications industry has condemned intentional slamming and is also taking steps to eliminate the practice. This new book examines this new rip-off practice.