

## Vodafone bridges gap between landline and mobile

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By [John Drinnan](#)

Vodafone has rung up another new phone offer with a phone that is halfway between a mobile and a landline service.

The phone giant will be marketing the service to target niches such as tradesmen and people who work at home, as it pushes ahead with its own fixed line services – like the new Red Network – and prepares for more competition in the mobile market.

The new service, called Local Zone, works both as a fixed line phone and mobile with numbers allocated to both, and while aimed at drawing Telecom customers with second fixed line Local Zone aims to maintain Vodafone's advantage in the mobile market.



Vodafone's latest plan means one handset, two numbers.

Local Zone is based around a You Choose mobile phone plan, allowing phones to act as fixed line services in homes or designated zones, enabling users to enjoying the call costs.

Alternatively it can be used outside the designated areas as a mobile phone.

Local Zone includes the ability to divert calls or use fixed line voice mail which notifies the mobile number with a text message.

Phones will have two numbers, and users will be able to take all their calls from the mobiles whether they are made to it or to a fixed line number.

Vodafone general manager of products and services Kursten Shalfoon said that Local Zone will become a key part of Vodafone's fixed line offering, at \$20 per month (a 52 per cent discount on a \$44.20 second fixed phone line).

Shalfoon said Vodafone had marketed the service in Germany with some success.

He declined to estimate earnings or even the size of the potential New Zealand market, but said the new product would be a significant part of the Vodafone line-up, and that it was being released with a view to the changes in the market this year.

The fixed line business is heavily dominated by Telecom so Local Zone provides Vodafone another option to secure customers.

Meanwhile Telecom is preparing for the long-delayed launch of its new 3G mobile phone service, replacing its 027 network in November.

New Zealand Communications also planning a new mobile network to start around November.

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