

visitors writes

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✉ Nickname: chaffinchtweter
Subject: Illegal deliveries?

I've got a problem with an online supplier. This is the first time I've ordered from this supplier and it is refusing to deliver to my work address as this is not the billing address for my credit card. The company will only deliver to my home address, which will mean me having to take a day off work.

The company says on its website that it is in fact against the law to deliver to an address other than the billing address of the credit card holder. Can this really be the case? And why won't it at least give me a morning or afternoon delivery time.

🗉 PCAdvisor.co.uk replies:

No it's not against the law. It's down to the agreement the vendor has with the credit card company – some are stricter than others.

The refusal to give a delivery time such as morning or afternoon is also a common complaint. To save money, a number of online vendors go for bottom-of-the-range 'next-day delivery' through their couriers, which means it's often the delivery company that gets it in the neck. It's worth checking with the vendor to see what agreement it has with the courier company before ordering your goods.

✉ Nickname: Lilweed
Subject: Technical support line costs

Could someone tell me why, when you pay for 'onsite warranty' with a new machine, you still have to pay 60p per minute for technical advice when you need it? I'm fed up paying for something twice.

🗉 PCAdvisor.co.uk replies:

If your (purchase) contract included telephone/onsite support, you shouldn't be paying again for help. But suppliers sometimes transfer you to a peak-charge line if, after the initial call, it decides the problem is caused by software that you have loaded yourself and was not part of the initial setup.

We're not defending the practice, but its attitude is that if you modify the product it sold you in any way (and loading any piece of software is a modification) then it's not obliged to support that modification, only the initial configuration. From what we've seen, it's the biggest cause of conflict between supplier and customer.

✉ Nickname: Silverfoxy
Subject: Small claims court

I've absolutely had it with my PC manufacturer. How do I take the company to the small claims court?

🗉 PCAdvisor.co.uk replies:

Well Silverfoxy – it's quite straightforward. First you get a set of small claims forms from your local County Court office. Outline why you are claiming and explain what you have done to try to resolve the matter, along with any responses you have had from the company. It's important you list all documents that you intend to use to support your claim.

Send back the forms and documents with the requisite fee. The company will then get a County Court summons, requiring them to reply within the statutory 28-day period. You will then be given a date for the hearing.

✉ Nickname: Colneyhatch
Subject: Third-party inkjets

I keep seeing third-party inkjet cartridges advertised at a fraction of the price of 'official' cartridges from the inkjet manufacturers. What's the catch?

🗉 PCAdvisor.co.uk replies:

Third-party inks are rarely up to the same standard as the manufacturers' products. You may well get away with basic text printing, but for high-quality images or artwork we recommend you stick to the 'official' cartridges.

✉ Nickname: Sailorx
Subject: Installing a hard drive

A couple of days ago I sold an MP3 player through a classified ad. I received a call from the buyer today complaining that he can't get it to work, and he is now demanding a refund.

Do I have a legal obligation to refund him for a secondhand sale, for a device that worked fine before I sold it to him, and that he inspected beforehand?

🗉 PCAdvisor.co.uk replies:

A private sale is based on the principle of *caveat emptor* – that is buyers beware. In other words there is no legal requirement for secondhand goods sold to be of satisfactory quality or fit for their purpose. As long as you didn't provide a warranty you're in the clear. ■