



BUSINESS



New era

New York Stock Exchange faces challenges under new leadership.

Please go to E-3

NYSE chief executive John Thain

Tone tunes



KELLY KERR / Tulsa World

University of Tulsa students Daniel Jeffries and Meaghan Reaves show off their musical cell phones. Jeffries' cell phone is stocked with a variety of pop songs and seasonal tunes. Reaves knows who's calling her just by listening to the ringtones her phone plays.

Ringtones multibillion-dollar segment of wireless industry

COUNT YOUR ringy dingy now.

Soon the sound made famous in the 1970s by Lily Tomlin's operator character, Ernestine, will get a modern makeover.

Instead of drumming their fingers and counting rings, callers will tap their feet to a song that plays until someone answers the phone.

It's called a ring-back tone, and some cellular companies plan to offer it later this year, said Jimmy Duvall of New York-based Verizon Wireless, a cell phone company that will offer the service.

"That's going to be the next thing people can do," he said. "It's just another way to personalize your phone."

It's all part of a booming business that has turned riffs from popular songs into a multibillion-dollar branch of the wireless industry.

While cell phone users wait for

the ring-back tone to be introduced, many have filled their phones with a jukebox of ringtones — the song snippet played when someone calls.

However, tone tunes don't stop with a cheery song played each time the phone rings. Talkers today have their ringtones assigned to different callers, so they know who's calling just by listening to the melody. Others have substituted a recording of their voice for a ringtone song.

It all depends on which type of phone you buy, and how many favorite songs you have.

Phone rings have become a megabusiness. Having a few seconds of music played in a ringtone has become so popular that record labels and cellular phone companies have teamed up to turn the latest hit songs into rings.

And the tones even have a Billboard music chart to rank the most popular rings. Hip-hop songs

usually take the top spots, industry experts say.

"I think today the main culture is so generalized, and people want their own ways of being unique," said Daniel Jeffries, an international business freshman at the University of Tulsa.

His cell phone is stocked with "Hey Ya!", the hit song of funk artists OutKast, plus an assortment of pop songs and a seasonal tune for the holidays.

"It lets others know what type of music I like," Jeffries said.

But, he added, ringtones are just for fun and aren't a necessity.

"I think the companies have found another way they can make money."

Ringtones are purchased per song, with an average one-time price of \$1.50 each for unlimited use, according to U.S. Cellular.

Fellow student Meaghan Reaves,

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Tune tips

U.S. Cellular offers this advice on shopping for ringtones.

► Make sure your phone is equipped to play the ringtones you want. Not all cell phones can download hit songs. The phone must support advanced wireless data or text messaging. Check with your service provider's Web site, or the manual if you're unsure.

► Listen first. Most ringtone providers will let you hear the tone before paying for it.

► Know which type of ringtone you're shopping for. Monophonic is the most basic. Polyphonic is a step up, but not high-fi. The best tones have different names, but are usually called "true tones" or "master tones" and are real audio clips from songs.

WORKPLACE PRIVACY

Employee rights few, even for top execs

By DAN RICHMAN
Seattle Post-Intelligencer

SEATTLE — Two rules emerge from last week's firing of Boeing chief executive Harry Stonecipher, an ouster that occurred after a tipster told company officials the CEO was having an extramarital affair with a co-worker.

Rule No. 1: If you're a high-ranking officer who has made a point of creating and enforcing a strict code of ethics, as Stonecipher did, don't have an affair at work.

Rule No. 2: If you must violate Rule No. 1, for heaven's sake don't send sexy messages to your lover over the company's e-mail system.

According to published reports, Stonecipher's affair was brought to the company's attention in a letter, attached to which was an excerpt of a sexually graphic e-mail by Stonecipher.

Do employees have a right to be outraged over such an interception of their e-mails? Or voicemails? Or keystrokes? After all, communications from one's office or cubicle feel so private and safe from prying eyes.

E-mails marked 'Private' can be read by the company just as easily as any others.

Well, they're not.

Experts say corporate employees' rights to privacy in communications made on company equipment can be described in one word: None.

"If an employer has done its job right, employees shouldn't have any illusions about having privacy," said Evan Spelfogel, a New York attorney specializing in labor issues.

The law firm urges corporate employers to periodically remind employees that all telephones, computers and fax machines belong to the company, and that the company has the right to monitor and inspect any of those machines, or any communications generated by them, at any time, for any reason.

The U.S. Constitution, and some state constitutions too, protect the privacy rights of employees from government entities. So employees of school districts and governments have more rights than those of private companies, Spelfogel said.

Private employers have broad rights.

They can listen in on phone calls made to or from work, though in some states, including Washington, the parties on the call must be told such monitoring is going on, says the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, a not-for-profit consumer information and advocacy organization in San Diego.

SEE E-MAIL E-8

Wind power: hot air or valid energy source?



DAVID CRENSHAW / Tulsa World

By RUSSELL RAY
World Staff Writer

WIND POWER IS the newest member of Oklahoma's energy family.

All of Oklahoma's major electric utilities have entered agreements to build and supply wind-generated power, a form of energy beloved for its nominal effect on the environment.

But Dobie Langenkamp, a critic of renewable energy, says wind power is costly and inefficient and that Oklahoma should think again before more wind farms are built in the Sooner State.

"Before we impose a green-power mandate and force people to take wind power, we ought to have a discussion on the impacts of wind," said Langenkamp, director of the National Energy-Environment Law & Policy Institute at the University of Tulsa.

During an interview, Langenkamp, who served as deputy assistant secretary of energy under President Carter and President Clinton, said wind power

"If wind power is cheaper, why do we have to subsidize it?"

DOBIE LANGENKAMP

FORMER U.S. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY

is unreliable and provides no solution to the nation's surging demand for electricity.

"The United States is producing less than 1 percent of its electric power from wind," Langenkamp said.

In addition, wind farms operate about 30 percent below their reported capacities, he said.

"You just don't get as much power as you think you're getting, because the wind doesn't blow all the time," he said. "The turbine doesn't start spinning until it's 14 miles an hour. It stops spinning when it gets to 40 or 50 miles an hour. You have to cut them off because they can't handle

it."

He dismisses claims that wind power is cheaper than coal- or gas-fired power.

"If wind power is cheaper, why do we have to subsidize it?" he said.

Wind farms receive a federal tax credit for wind power production — 1.8 cents per kilowatt hour.

Others disagree with Langenkamp.

The construction of wind power must continue because it is important to the preservation of valuable energy supplies in the United States, said Greg Adams, president of the Oklahoma Renewable Energy Council.

"If we continue burning fuel at this rate, we have approximately 200 years of fossil fuels left," Adams said. "We either make a gradual turn to renewables or we run headlong into complete depletion of fossil fuels."

Coal accounts for 53 percent of U.S. electric generation while natural gas represents 15 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

"Those are very precious chemical

SEE WIND E-7