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Doro PhoneEasy 345 and 410 Press Big Buttons

By: Geoff Duncan • November 30, 2009

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Smartphones might be all the rage, but sometimes you just need a basic phone with big buttons even grampa can use.

iPhones, BlackBerries, Droids, Pres, and even a few Windows Mobile devices might be the sorts of things mobile users are going for these days, but there's something to be said for a simple phone that places calls and doesn't have so many confusing bells and whistles that grandparents would refuse to touch it. Consumer Cellular has built a business catering to seniors and other folks who need simple, easy-to-use mobile phones, and today the company announced it has exclusively added the Doro PhoneEasy 345 and PhoneEasy 410 to its handset lineup.



"Our new PhoneEasy models are specifically designed for consumers who would like a simple, affordable way to stay in touch with friends and loved ones," said Consumer Cellular CEO John Marick, in a statement. "We know our customers will be spending wisely this holiday season, and these mobile devices are the perfect gift for fiscally-responsible shoppers searching for a thoughtful, convenient present for the older adult

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on their holiday list."

Sweden's Doro has more than three decades' experience designing user-friendly electronics devices. The PhoneEasy handsets feature big raised buttons, oversized displays, and soft-touch surfaces that are easy to hold and don't slide around on surfaces. Although the phones do offer convenience features like alarms, calculators, flashlights, and games, they can be hidden away for users who just want a phone they can pick up and dial.

The PhoneEasy 345 is a candybar-style phone with a built-in speakerphone, a one-touch emergency contact feature, FM radio, and text messaging capability; the Doro 410 is a flip-style phone that adds Bluetooth connectivity. Both phones are compatible with hearing aids: the 345 supports M3 and T3 hearing aids, while the 410 supports M4 and T4 hearing aids.

After rebates, the Doro 345 is available now for \$40; the 410 goes for \$50. Consumer cellular offers a variety of mobile plans, ranging from \$10 to \$60 per month.



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Renton, just outside of South Seattle has a Fry's. Best Buy stores are available in Seattle as well. Google Shopping is a good place to look for them as well since it can show local stores.

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You go to the clinic and they tell you that you have "typical" high frequency hearing loss, but you need "custom" \$3,000 hearing aids. This is an all too common scenario and one that doesn't have to be.

High frequency hearing loss is the most common form. This type of loss is also referred to as age related hearing loss. There is no particular cause for this. It mainly strikes with changes in the inner ear that occur as you grow older. Other factors include family history, exposure to loud noises, and smoking (smokers are more susceptible).

Symptoms of high frequency or age related hearing loss include:

- * not understanding speech in the presence of background noise
- * understanding men's voices more easily than women and children's voices
- * ringing in the ears

Hearing aids are the most common treatment for this type of hearing loss. In the last few years, the Open Fit Hearing Aid has become the hearing aid of choice to treat high frequency hearing loss. The downside has been that they can cost upwards of \$6,000 a pair, but this has recently changed.

Up until recently, misinterpretations of FDA rules have kept these instruments off of the shelves at retail stores. Thanks to clarifications from the US Court of Appeals, hearing aids are now widely available direct to consumers. That means that you no longer have to pay ridiculous marked up prices at a clinic for what you can purchase yourself.

One particular company that stands out is Rosebud Hearing LLC. Rosebud has created a line of ready to wear digital aids for those that suffer from typical hearing loss. The company offers open fit and in the canal aids direct to consumers at many major retail outlets.

There are other companies that have produced similar lines of instruments and that list is growing. The best part about buying direct is that these ready to wear hearing aids average just \$279. That's a huge difference from what the clinics want you to pay. Sites like <http://www.PerfectHearingAids.com> offer the Rosebud Hearing Aids and others with a 45 day in home trial period.

The hearing aid industry is reminiscent of what we saw with the reading glass industry about a decade ago. Prior to being able to purchase reading glasses at retail stores, you had to pay a fortune for them at the clinic.

Certainly, there are instances where programmable hearing aids from a clinic are the best choice, but for those that have "typical" hearing loss, you should seriously consider a ready to wear digital hearing aid available on the Internet.

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