(Approx. 547 words)

Those Pesky Car Warranty Calls

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Nearly every other day, I receive an obnoxious voice mail: Your car warranty has expired. This is the final call. If you don't respond now, you will get no extended

warranty coverage.

Those calls go to my iPhone's voice mail without bothering me because the robocall slayer software known as Nomorobo recognizes this is snake oil and keeps my phone from ringing.

Now, NPR has dissected the calls and given us an inside look at what's really going on.

It turns out if you pay for this service, it covers very little, according to NPR's Planet Money. If you paid a monthly fee, the company claimed to cover your car bumper to bumper. But it turns out the warranty was worth about as much as the paper it was written on. Furthermore, this was all promoted in a very deceptive way, says the NPR article.

The piece notes the contracts sold were legal. But if you tried to cancel the service, your patience was taxed to the max.

NPR says the standard operating procedure was to force customers to talk to six or seven people to cancel. Then, while speaking to that individual, the company would purposely terminate the phone call. Then the customer had to go back through the process all over again to try and cancel their service.

It turns out despite all this, the company called U.S. Fidelis was doing very well. According to NPR, "One of the owners spent $26 million building a mansion with a bowling alley and all these secret rooms and this weird walkthrough shower that was kind of like a car wash for your body."

By 2007 or 2008, the complaints began piling up. Since word was getting around that U.S. Fidelis customers were quite unhappy, the company turned to a new way to promote itself: robocalls.

By one estimate, U.S. Fidelis sent out one billion robocalls pitching its product – in just ten months.

As tempers flared and unlucky recipients of these phone calls fumed, more than 40 states began going after U.S. Fidelis and its robocalls. NPR reports U.S. Fidelis was banned from robocalling. In addition, dozens of news articles, TV and radio news reports, and Internet news stories blasted the company. Finally, U.S. Fidelis customers vented during news interviews. They were red hot angry.

Tales of families sitting down for a nice evening supper interrupted by these robocalls surfaced.

Folks who could hardly afford to buy these so-called "extended car warranties" were spending hard-earned dollars.

Eventually, the company went bankrupt.

So that's the end of the extended car warranty robocalls, right? Not. Exactly.

NPR reports, "It's been ten years since US Fidelis went bankrupt, and now these auto warranty calls are back with a vengeance. But unlike with US Fidelis, many of these calls do not name the company calling you. So, while the federal government tries to figure out who exactly is calling, you will continue to be robocalled and asked about your car's extended warranty."

Read and hear the NPR story [here](https://www.npr.org/2021/04/16/988200844/behind-those-extended-auto-warranties-robocalls).

More stories:

FCC - [Combating Spoofed Robocalls](https://www.fcc.gov/call-authentication) with Caller ID Authentication

FTC says [hang up](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2021/05/hang-auto-warranty-robocalls?utm_source=govdelivery) on car warranty robocalls

[Car Warranty Scam Robocalls: Here's Why You Get So Many (And How to Stop Them)](https://www.komando.com/kims-column/stop-car-warranty-robocalls/784700/)