

## Fun With Qw...Uh...Acme Communications

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Muse readers and friends who know me well understand that I'd rather have my nether regions bitten by a Laplander than deal with sales people over the phone. However, as a (usually) caring person, I try not to let my personal ire show too forcefully when one of these hard working sales folks call. I know they are just doing their job. Recently however, one phone company has caused me to rethink my "no throttling the sales person" position. I won't say their name but it begins with a Q and ends with est - and in a twist it does not have a U in it. I guess these folks don't know how to spell NO either because they keep calling.

Usually it is pretty typical stuff like "are you happy with your phone service". I'm actually *not* happy with my phone service but I prefer not to discuss it with strangers over the phone. Still I'm usually pretty nice and say something like "we are not ready to make a change right now." The last 2 times however, the salesman has chosen a new tack. They are now trying to wheedle additional proprietary information out of me. Today things did not go so well....

**Muse:** This is Mark...

**Steve:** Hey this is Steve from Qw... uh... from Acme Communications. How are you today.

**Muse:** [keeping it short] Fine thanks.

**Steve:** Mark, we are just calling you to ask when your current contract for phone service expires.

**Muse:** Uh... look, you guys have called like 3 times this month.

**Steve:** Are you a current Q... uh.. Acme customer?

**Muse:** No we are not, but we know who you are and if we are ever *looking* for a new phone company we might consider calling you. Although it would probably take several annoying phone calls over the course of a month.

**Steve:** [Irony is lost on most sales people] We just need to know when your current contract expires.

**Muse:** Really? Who's my current contract with?

**Steve:** I don't know that.

**Muse:** You don't know who it's with? How about the terms? Do you know the terms?

**Steve:** No we would have no way of knowing the terms.

**Muse:** Hmmm... ok, tell me something, when does Q.. uh... Acme's contract with ATT & T expire?

**Steve:** I'm not sure we have a contract with AT&T.

**Muse:** Sure you do, all these big tier one providers have to work together just to keep data and voice traffic flowing. All I want to know is, when does the contract expire?

**Steve:** I don't know that.

**Muse:** Are you sure you don't know, 'cause I might like a piece of that action. I have 20 megs of fiber here and I'm not afraid to use it.

**Steve:** I uh... well...

**Muse:** Steve [I called him Steve] you seem undecided. Tell you want, I'm going to mark you down as a probable. Give me your cell phone number and I'll call you tomorrow.

[click]

Now hopefully Steve put a big red X or something on my account so no one calls again - but that's probably about as likely as Dick Chaney winning Miss Congeniality (sigh).