

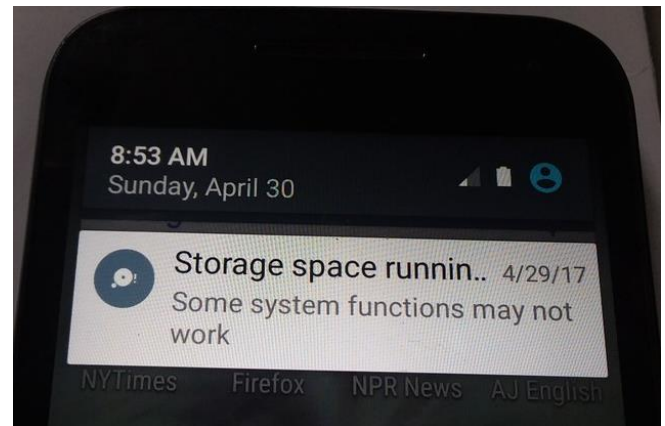
One really good phone store is in the Columbia area.

The recent closing of Radio Shack's store in the Shops at Prospect and the sudden closing of the Verizon store next to Rite-Aid in the Weis shopping center might seem like bad news for mobile phone Customers. When our phone "died" recently, we tried to call our carrier to find out about how to replace the phone.

As a mostly-satisfied Virgin Mobile Customer for over a dozen years, it was dissatisfying to experience Virgin Mobile's service erode over the years.

Virgin Mobile's coverage was worsening so much that, as some of you will know, we had dropped phone calls from our own house depending in which room we were. Tower reception had gotten increasingly spottier. And we can never talk with anyone when a question or problem develops.

We've been a long-time user of pre-paid non-contract phone plans. It's what had been happening around the globe since at least 2001. Only in this nation, the giant telephone carriers viciously tried to hold onto their one-sided contracts. Just recently they've acquiesced and introduced pay-as-you-go plans.



But a frustration has been that "pay-as-you-go plans" carriers load up the phones with applications that are non-removable. One consequence is that phone memory quickly gets gobbled up and that "storage space running out" message appears.

Admittedly, we are not mobile phone expert; that's what we think device sellers should be. Rather than sell the device that yields a bigger commission, we think professionals ought to find out what the Customer wants and needs and recommend from there. And that includes loading the device with ample memory, making sure the plan is the best suited one for the Customer's needs.

Another phone, one used for business only, purchased just a several months ago was "running out memory" - even though we delete files regularly and always transfer photo files to a separate SD card.

Too many times, though, the representative's objectives and the Customer's are not the same.

Having no success contacting someone live to talk with at Virgin Mobile we went in search for a new phone and or new service.

A new phone

A few weeks ago, we bought a new phone at a Best Buy store. The fast-talking, slick-willy type person who attended to our questions seemed to be in a hurry or didn't want to deal with the questions we

posed. But we bought a phone and a Best Buy person "transferred" the contacts and files. We thought.



Anthony Stevens, Metro PCS, Columbia

- Sales professional, Customer advocate and Dad

As it was, the transfer was not done correctly and hundreds of contacts were not transferred.

Yesterday we walked into [MetroPCS](#), the phone store in Columbia at 846 Lancaster Avenue. We were welcomed by an ebullient, smiling and gregarious person.

Anthony Stevens welcomed us and listened intently to the situation we described.

He then asked about use patterns, history and what we wanted in a mobile device. He satisfied our concerns about service areas and he showed us a couple phones and told us about the "pro's and con's" of each. He took time to show us the phones and respond to our "device memory" concerns.

We asked him about high-end i-phones and Android models; phones like the new [Samsung Galaxy S8](#) – a truly stunning and high memory device. Frankly, while we loved that phone, we thought it was way

more than we needed now.

We agree with the raves it gets: "The Samsung Galaxy S8 is without a doubt the most beautiful, polished phone I've ever held." Maybe, some day!!!?

Bottom line, yesterday we switched carriers – despite a 10 plus year history – and yesterday, we came away with a new phone, an [LGK20 Plus](#) with:

- A lot more memory (and the phone cost less, too!)
- A phone with completely restored files and contacts list
- A much better understanding of phones and their capabilities
- Someone we can talk to in a local store if there are issues or questions.

Bottom line, if you're looking to do business:

- With someone who will listen to your mobile device and carrier needs and wants;
- With a business located in Columbia;
- With a business with competitive prices, coverage and "local, in-person" advisors; and

- A friendly, helpful, knowledgeable and concerned guy who will respond to your questions with a completely open mind,

Anthony Stevens, at MetroPCS in Columbia, is someone you ought to meet.