

Telecoms Jargon Buster

ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Link) - A broadband service used mainly for accessing the Internet.

Analogue lines - A conventional telephone line delivered on copper wiring such as you would have at home. Analogue lines are different from ISDN lines.

Auto attendant - Automated call technology that answers external calls and provides the caller with options for choosing the department they wish to speak to.

Autodialer - A device that can be programmed to dial calls automatically.

Cards - These fit into the slots that are found inside the phone system cabinet and determine the size and configuration of the system. Once all the slots have been used the system is full unless it is possible to expand it further by buying another phone system cabinet.

CLI (Caller Line Identification) - The number of a specific telephone line.

CPS (Carrier Pre-Select) - A system allowing clients to select their chosen 'indirect' carrier without the need of 'smart boxes' or least cost routing software.

CRM - Customer Relationship Management

CTI (Computer Telephony integration) - The linking of computers and telephone systems. The term covers a broad spectrum of applications, an example of which includes 'Screen popping' (see below) where the information relating to the caller appears on the PC screen before or at the same time as the call is answered.

DDI (Direct Dial Inwards) - A feature available on ISDN (see below) switchboards enabling callers to call people directly at their desks.

Digital card - A card in the phone system required for connecting digital (system) phones to the system.

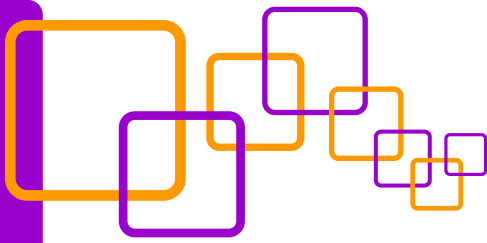
DTMF (Digital Tones Multi Frequency) - The musical notes generated by a phone keypad that are used by voice processors as a method of command and signaling. Also known as 'Touch Tones', a registered trademark of British Telecom. It is these tones that are used to select the options on the much hated auto attendants mentioned above.

E-mail integration - The incorporation of e-mail delivery into unified messaging, so that only one screen or viewer is necessary to list all voice, fax and e-mail messages to another. For example, e-mail to speech (text-to-speech) so the system can read in an automated voice the e-mail over the phone!

Fax broadcast - The mass send out of prepared faxes. To benefit from off peak telephone charges, this may be programmed for evenings and weekends.

Fax mail - A variation of voice mail whereby faxes are received into mailboxes allocated to individuals or departments. Message notification is as for voice mail, this is often used in conjunction with unified messaging, which provides for convenient viewing of faxes on a PC. See also E-mail integration.

Feature phone - Also known as a system phone. A phone with additional features for that particular phone system. Typically you are not able to swap these between different phone systems.



Frame relay - An interface designed to provide high speed packet transmission with minimum delay and efficient use of bandwidths.

In band (DTMF) signaling - The DTMF tones that are sent by the telephone system to voice processor to identify from where the call has been sent. For example, from which extension it has been diverted on busy or ring no answer.

IDA (In-Direct Access) - A coding used by carriers to facilitate calls via their networks.

ISDN - This stands for Integrated Services Digital Network.

ISDN30 - A fully digital public network service providing up to 30 separate channels which can be used for voice, data, fax, video conferencing etc. Delivered by BT and cable companies on fibre optic cable.

ISDN2 - As above but offering only two channels. It is mainly delivered by BT and is on copper wire.

IVR (Interactive Voice Response) - The ability of a voice processor to answer calls and provide access to a database for making a data enquiry, an input or manipulating information. The database may be internal to the voice system or within a third party system. A typical application is telephone banking, which provides these three functions in the form of balance enquiries, order input for cheque books and manipulation of data in transferring funds between accounts.

Kilostream - A BT term for a digital leased line running at over 1000 bits per second between two premises.

LAN (Local Area Network) - A data communications network linking PCs together, typically through a central file server, to provide a multi-node centrally controlled computer system. LANs are usually privately owned and found in one building or in a group of buildings in close proximity.

LCR (Least Cost Routing) - A means of routing calls to a specific carrier by programming a phone system.

MAN (Metropolitan Area Network) - A network spanning an area which is greater than a LAN but smaller than a WAN (see below). MANs are usually privately owned and found in one city linking buildings within the city perimeter.

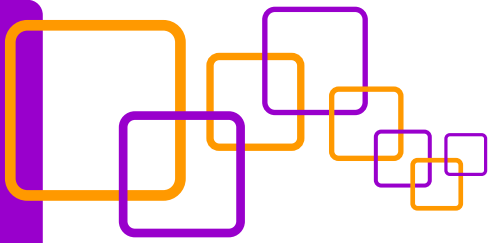
Megastream - A BT term for a digital leased line running at over 1,000,000 bits per second between two premises. Also known as a 1 meg link.

MLD (Multi-Line Dialer) - A device that automatically enters an LCR code to re-route outgoing calls via a specified carrier, for several lines on a PBX.

Novation - A dictionary definition of this is the substitution of a new agreement for an old one by mutual agreement between the two parties. In telephony terms it is the taking over of an existing contract with time to run and is used extensively in moving Kilostream and Megastream lines.

NGN - Non Geographic Number (See NTS) or Next Generation Network: A network that converges voice and data transmission.

NTS - Number Translation Service: A number that is not geographically based, traditionally beginning with any other digit sequence except 01x and 02x.



Number portability - An agreement which allows for telephone numbers to be moved between telecoms companies.

OLO (Other Local Operator) - A network provider that can offer direct connection.

PBX/PABX Private (Automatic) Branch Exchange - Also known as a telephone system or switch.

Ports - The access points and means of connection of a voice processor. A port is typically an extension socket supporting one caller at any one time.

POT (Plain Ordinary Phone!) - Also known as a SLT (see below). Not a system, digital or feature phone. These are analogue phones and work off analogue cards (sometimes known as two wire cards) in the phone system.

Predictive dialer - A system that dials numbers on a pre-planned basis for an outbound telesales or marketing agent.

PSTN - Public Service Telephone Network. The general telephone network available to all residential and business customers. Also sometimes used as a substitute for "analogue".

P.T.O. (Public Telephone Operator) - This is a company supplying telephone lines in off the street.

Ring groups - The programming of a selection of phones to ring as a result of a particular incoming number or ODI. There are four types:

- All phones - all phones in the group ring together;
- Longest waiting - a group where the phone system rings the free group members in order of how long they have been free. Useful where you want to share the workload fairly between staff;
- Rotary - a group where the system starts with the first available phone then rings each in turn;
- Sequential - a group where the system always rings the first free group member starting from the front of the group. Useful where you want the most senior members of the team to take the phone calls where possible.

Screen popping - The ability for your computer to pick up the incoming telephone call and relay the caller's information to your screen before you answer the call.

SDSL - Symmetric Digital Subscriber Line. A similar service to ADSL with faster upload speeds. Available at selected exchanges in speeds of up to 2Mb.

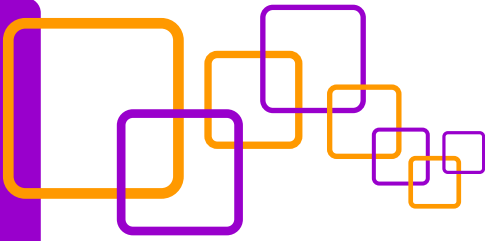
SLD (Single Line Dialer) - A device that automatically enters an LCR code to re-route outgoing calls via a specified carrier.

SLT phone (Single Line Phone) - Also known as POT phone (see above). Not a system, digital or feature phone. These are analogue phones and work all analogue cards (sometimes known as two wire cards) in the phone system.

Speed dials - This is the storing of regularly dialed numbers under short codes.

Switch - Engineers often refer to phone systems as switches.

Terminal - Telephone handsets are often referred to by engineers as terminals.



TPS (Telephone Preference Service) - A service that bars calls to residential numbers that have been registered as "do not disturb". Used mostly to prevent unwanted sales or marketing calls.

Trunks - Incoming lines from a public telephone operator (PTO).

Unified messaging - The control of multiple messaging mediums through one master control screen. Typically a Microsoft Windows based panel on a PC running off a LAN. The unified messaging may provide visual control of voice and fax messages which are delivered to the PC node through a connection of the voice processor to the LAN's file server.

Voice mail - The ability to receive information direct from a caller when you are unable to answer the telephone. Extremely versatile it allows you, as a basic feature, to provide callers with a personalised greeting and to give them the option of leaving a message. It is also possible to offer callers the opportunity to speak to an operator or a colleague.

Voice processor - A computer system to answer and handle telephone calls. Voice processing encompasses auto attendant, voice mail, bulletin boards, voice forms and IVR, being part of the wider scope of CTI.

WAN (Wide Area Network) - A network spanning an area which is greater than a LAN and MAN. WANs are NOT usually privately owned and can be used to link buildings within the perimeter of a country and buildings globally for large corporations.