



Guide for businesses: Mobile Phone Terminology

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MOBILE PHONE TERMINOLOGY EXPLAINED...

3G

The next generation mobile network, launched in the UK in March 2003, pushed heavily by the company, Hutchison 3. The other major networks however are also now utilising this advanced technology network. 3G represents the third generation of mobile phone handsets that make use of greater bandwidth, hence faster connectivity. Video calling and video messaging are two of the main features that are possible with this larger bandwidth.

(1G was the old analogue system, 2G was the digital handsets that we're used to today, with 2.5G representing handsets with data capabilities over GPRS).

Airtime Provider

Also known as Service Provider. This is the company who you take out your airtime contract with, such as Vodafone and O2 (ex BT Cellnet), Orange, Virgin or T-Mobile (One2One) all of whom sell direct.

Bluetooth

Bluetooth is a short-range wireless technology that provides links between mobile computers, mobile phones, other [portable handheld devices](#), and connectivity to the Internet. When two Bluetooth equipped devices come within 10 meters range of each other, they can establish a connection together. See also [Wi-Fi](#)

bps

Bits per second: a way of quantifying data transmission throughput. It is the number of pieces of information (bits) transmitted or received per second.

Call Line Identity (CLI)

Digital phones will display the number of the person phoning you, unless it has been withheld on their phone in their preferences or by them dialling 141 before your number.

Carphone / Car Kit

Carphones are mobile phones that are permanently installed in a vehicle and are more powerful than most ordinary mobile phones, although they are fairly rare today. A car kit allows an ordinary mobile phone to be used 'hands free' in your vehicle and then removed for use elsewhere.

Connection Fee

Airtime/Service providers often charge a one-off connection fee when you first join their network, some offer free connection as an incentive to use them.

Data Card

Some digital phones can be connected via a data card to a computer to allow the sending and receiving of data, faxes e-mails etc. A few phones have the necessary electronics built in and only require a cheap connecting cable between phone and computer.

Digital

The technology used by all new phones whereby sound is converted into computer data prior to sending and vice-versa for receiving. Different providers may use the terms GSM, PCN or GSM1800 to distinguish their service, they are all virtually identical and give users a greater range of services and facilities.

Dual Band

This enables one phone to use two different bands, ie PCN and GSM and gives greater worldwide coverage. Some networks operate on two bands, for instance GSM-1800 in town centres and GSM-900 in the rest of the country.

EFR (Enhanced Full Rate)

This is a type of coding, when sound is turned into data, and gives greater sound clarity but is only advantageous if the network you subscribe to also uses EFR.

FCT (Fixed Cellular Terminal)

A device that allows fixed telephony devices (e.g. your PBX) to connect directly to the GSM Network. This allows you to pay for calls at mobile-to-mobile rates rather than the more expensive landline-to-mobile rates. However, there is usually a capital outlay for the hardware, or the line rental (sharetime bundle) may be high. Therefore, this is usually only a viable option for customers who spend a significant amount on their calls to mobiles.

GSM

Global System for Mobile Communications - used by Vodafone and O2 (ex BT Cellnet) to describe their digital service (GSM 900). Virgin and Orange refer to theirs as GSM1800.

GPS

GPS is the main system in use today to pinpoint your location anywhere on the globe. This is done by acquiring a signal from 27 orbiting satellites.

GPRS

The General Packet Radio Service, is the "new, improved" way of passing data over a mobile phone network. Until GPRS, the standard method of surfing the net, getting emails or, most commonly, using [WAP](#) on a mobile phone was done using the circuit-switched method - dialling up, staying online, then logging off.

Infrared (IrDA)

Some phones have infrared ports built in to allow cable less linking between phone and PC. This is also the acronym for the Infrared Data Association - the industry body that specifies IrDA protocols, originally founded by Hewlett-Packard and others.

Lithium-ion (Li-ion)

The latest battery technology providing more power for the same weight as conventional NiCad or metal-hydride batteries, also longer service life and don't suffer from memory effect.

Memory Effect

Incorrect charging of NiCad or metal-hydride batteries can suffer from the memory effect resulting in reduced capacity.

MMS

Multimedia Messaging Service. An improvement on text messaging, adding animation, images, sound and video. MMS is also frequently referred to as Picture Messaging or Media Messaging. See also [SMS](#)

Networks

The companies that provide the mobile phone service, 02 (ex BT Cellnet), T-Mobile, Orange and Vodafone.

NiCad

Nickel Cadmium battery technology is cheap but does not hold as much power as nickel-hydride or lithium-ion. Nickel-hydride the most common form of battery technology used in phones, better than NiCad not as good as lithium-ion.

Packet-switching

Technique whereby the information (voice or data) to be sent is broken up into packets, of at most a few KB each. These packets are routed by the network between different destinations based on addressing data within each packet. Use of network resources is optimized, as the resources are needed only during the handling of each packet. Use of packet-switched network can be charged according to the volume of data transferred.

PCN

Also known as GSM1800 the digital technology used by T-Mobile and Orange.

PDA

Personal Digital Assistant - A portable computing device for organizing personal data such as telephone numbers, appointments, and notes. A PDA can be capable of transmitting and receiving data when equipped with a wireless or Bluetooth module.

PIN

A Personal Identity Number, used for security on some phones to stop unauthorised use.

Roaming

The use of the phone abroad on a different network, call charges are higher and incoming calls are also paid for.

Service Provider

See airtime provider.

SIM Card

Subscriber Identity Module. The electronic chipped card is inserted inside all GSM phones. It identifies the user account to the network, handles authentication and provides data storage for basic user data and network information. It may also contain some applications that run on a compatible phone (SIM Application Toolkit).

SMS

Short Messaging Service - allows the sending and receiving of short text messages, like a pager, only available on digital. See also [MMS](#)

Smartphone

A combined mobile phone and pocket computer.

Standby Time

This is the maximum amount of time a phone can be left on, without you using it before the battery runs out.

Talktime

This is the maximum amount of time you can be talking on your phone before the battery runs out.

Tariff

Different providers offer many different tariffs depending on your expected usage of the phone, you choose one which will form part of your contract.

Text Messaging

See [SMS](#).

Tri-Band

Tri-Band is a term applied to wireless telephone handsets that are capable of operating on any of the three internationally designated GSM frequency bands. A phone incorporating the Tri-Band facility allows it to be used for global roaming, depending on the available networks and the type of service agreement that the subscriber has.

UMTS

A third generation network standard that will enable phones to receive higher internet data rates and even video. This standard is currently on trial in the Isle of Man, and should start to become available here in the next 12-18 months or even sooner.

Voicemail

This is equivalent to a tape answer phone that you would have on a home phone but uses the network to store and retrieve messages.

WAP

Wireless Application Protocol Designed to bring a modified form of the internet to your mobile phone, includes news, weather, sport etc.

Wi-fi

Wireless Fidelity - Wi-fi enables two compatible units to connect using radio signals (as opposed to network cabling). It is a faster method of networking and has a greater range than Bluetooth, making it ideal for home or office connectivity for your Laptop or PC. Using a Wi-fi setup with your PDA or laptop means that you can share a broadband or dialup Internet connection, swap files, or share a printer or CD ROM between computer users.

Wi-Max

Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access. A more powerful version of Wi-Fi that can provide wireless Internet access over wider geographic location such as a city.

Please contact us if we can be of any further assistance to you at www.businesscostconsultants.co.uk or info@businesscostconsultants.co.uk



Business Cost Consultants
Hope House
125 Milngavie Road
Bearsden
Glasgow
G61 2QJ
Tel: 0141 943 3344
Fax: 0141 943 3345