



Guide for businesses: Telecoms Terminology

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TELECOMS TERMINOLOGY EXPLAINED...

ACD - Automatic Call Distribution

An automated system for answering, queuing and distributing incoming calls to a number of agents

ASDL - Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Line

A broadband technology that delivers very high data transfer speeds (potentially over 10 times faster than ISDN) over existing phone lines.

Auto Attendant

An automated answering system that uses prompts to direct callers to the right department or extension

BRI

Basic Rate ISDN2 provides one 'D' channel and 2 'B' channels, each of which is equivalent to one telephone line. These can be used for two voice calls, two data calls, one voice call and one data call; or one data call using 2 channels (e.g. a video conference).

Call Forwarding

A feature of ISDN channels (as opposed to analogue lines). Call forwarding enables incoming calls to be diverted automatically to a different number e.g. home phone, or mobile.

CLI - Calling Line Identity

One of the key ISDN features, CLI displays the phone number of the caller on the answering phone's display.

CTI - Computer Telephony Integration

The term used to describe the linking of the telephone system with a computer network. The classic CTI application is 'screen popping', which uses CLI to identify the caller and displays his/her database records on-screen before the call is answered.

DDI - Direct Dial Inwards

A key ISDN feature is the ability to assign individual phone numbers (DDI numbers) to extensions, faxes, computers and departments, enabling callers to dial them directly and automatically through the switch (switchboard) without going through a receptionist.

DECT - Digital Enhanced Cordless Telephony

DECT cordless handsets provide wireless communications within an office, a building or a site. It can be fully integrated into the company telephone system.

IP – Internet Protocol

The signalling standard used to transmit data across the internet and local area networks.

IP Telephony

The use of IP signalling methods to send voice traffic across a data network. It eliminates the need for separate voice and data networks by converging all traffic on one network.

IP Gateway / VOIP Gateway

A gateway for an existing telephone system, which converts normal circuit-switched telephony traffic into IP for transmission over a data network.

ISDN – Integrated Services Digital Network

ISDN is a ‘dial up’ digital public network for voice and data communications with charges based on line rental and usage.

IVR – Interactive Voice Response

IVR Systems automate routine transactions, such as literature requests or information lines, using voice recognition or phone keypad operations.

LAN Interconnection

Using ISDN an organisation can connect local area networks at different locations in a WAN (wide area network) on a dial up basis, without the need for a permanent, expensive leased data link.

LAN Telephony

The convergence of voice and data on a LAN (local area network) eliminating the need for separate voice and data networks within an organisation. Normally people use structured cabling (e.g. Category 5 cabling) to transmit data and voice traffic over a LAN.

PBX – Private Branch exchange

A private business telephone system

PSTN

A public switched telephone network. Traditionally that was analogue, then it was digital (ISDN). In future it will be based on a WAN.

Predictive Dialling

A third party CTI application, predictive dialling removes all ‘dialling’ responsibilities from an agent. Once a call has been completed the software automatically dials the next number on the agent’s list. It is used by telesales organisations.



PRI

Primary Rate ISDN provides up to 30 'B' channels, giving users 30 lines that can be used for any combination of voice, data and video. ISDN30e is the European standard and is more flexible than ISDN2.

QSIG

A protocol for networking telecoms systems from different manufacturers.

S0-BUS

A device within a switch used to connect data terminals. E.g. it is used to bond two or more ISDN channels for videoconferencing. The more channels used, the greater the bandwidth and hence the better the picture quality.

Soft PBX

The term used to describe a software application that provides server-based telephony. It offers a range of PBX functions, voice mail and integration with other server-based applications such as unified messaging and contact management information. E.g. a homemaker might use a softphone on his PC or laptop computer.

TAPI – Telephone Application Programme Interface

Developed by Microsoft, 1st and 3rd party TAPI are the standard interfaces for computer telephony integration applications.

Unified Messaging

Unified Messaging systems provide one centralised mailbox for all e-mail, voice and fax messages. All message types can be viewed, replied to, saved or deleted in the same inbox

Voicemail

Voicemail systems allow callers to leave voice messages in individual mailboxes. Messages can be retrieved remotely

VOIP – Voice over IP

The transmission of voice traffic over a wide area network or the internet using the IP signalling standard.

VPN – Virtual Private Network

Organisations with offices in more than one location can link phone systems and data networks (LANs) together using the internet to form a Virtual Private Network.

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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