



Common Telecommunications Terms

ACCESS CHARGE

A fee charged to subscribers or other telephone companies by a local exchange carrier (phone company) for the use of its local exchange networks.

ACCESS LINE

The portion of a telephone line between the end user's location and the telephone service provider's central office. Also called local loop, subscriber loop or local phone line.

BANDWIDTH

The capacity of a line to carry signals. The necessary bandwidth is the amount of spectrum required to transmit a signal without distortion or loss of information.

BUNDLE

The practice of joining related products together for the purpose of selling them as a single unit at a package price. For example, combining voice and Internet services so that they can be billed together as one service.

BROADBAND

Broadband is a descriptive term for evolving digital technologies that provide integrated access to voice, high-speed data service, video-on-demand services, and interactive delivery services.

CENTRAL OFFICE (CO)

A building where an end users' lines are joined to switching equipment that connects other end users to each other, both locally and via long distance carriers. The central office contains the equipment required to perform this function, such as distribution frames, interoffice facility termination points, and so on. Also known as End Office and Entity.

CLOUD SERVICES

Cloud computing is a model for enabling convenient, on-demand network access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources (e.g., networks, servers, storage, applications, and services) that can be rapidly provisioned and released with minimal management effort or service provider interaction.

COLOCATION

When a company locates its switching and/or other equipment in another company's central office.

COMMON CARRIER

In telecommunications, the term used to describe a telephone company.



COMPETITIVE LOCAL EXCHANGE CARRIER (CLEC)

Any company or person authorized to provide local exchange services in competition with an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC). A CLEC provides similar or identical telecommunications services to the ILEC.

CRAMMING

A practice in which customers are billed for enhanced features that they have not ordered such as voice mail, caller-ID or call-waiting.

DEDICATED HOSTING

A service that provides clients with managed hosting services on hardware and software that is isolated to a single client.

DIAL AROUND

Long distance services that require consumers to dial a long-distance provider's access code (or "10-10" number) before dialing a long-distance number to bypass or "dial around" the consumer's chosen long-distance carrier in order to get a better rate.

DIGITAL SUBSCRIBER LINE (DSL)

A generic name for a group of enhanced-speed, digital services provided by telephone service providers.

EMAIL

Also called electronic mail, refers to messages sent over the Internet. Email can be sent and received via wireless phones or "smart phones," but users generally need to have a specific email account.

ETHERNET

A 100-Mbps technology based on the 10BASE-T Ethernet CSMA/CD network access method to accommodate the operation of local area networks (LANs).

INCUMBENT LOCAL EXCHANGE CARRIER (ILEC)

In the Telecommunications Act of 1996 with respect to an area, the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier is defined as the Local Exchange Carrier that, on the date of enactment of the Act, provided telephone service in that area.

INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE COMPANY

A Local Exchange Carrier other than a Regional Bell Operating Company.

INFRASTRUCTURE AS A SERVICE (IaaS)

IaaS is basically outsourcing IT. It lets IT managers choose which aspects of their infrastructure they want to outsource and places them in a dynamic infrastructure environment that can flex and scale to meet their unique business needs.

**LANDLINE**

Traditional wired phone service.

LOCAL EXCHANGE CARRIER (LEC)

As defined in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, a company certified by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to provide local exchange telecommunications service. A LEC can be either a Bell Operating Company or an independent company.

MANAGED SECURITY SERVICES

Services that provide global around-the-clock monitoring and management of security appliances, software and network-based controls, and incident response, for managed hosting and network services clients. Advanced network tools are utilized to detect and filter malicious traffic before it reaches clients' infrastructures, in addition to providing virtualized security services to reduce the need for clients to pay for dedicated security equipment.

NETWORK

Any connection of two or more computers that enables them to communicate. Networks may include transmission devices, servers, cables, routers and satellites.

PRESCRIBED INTEREXCHANGE CARRIER CHARGE (PICC)

The charge the local exchange company assesses the long distance company when a consumer picks it as his or her long distance carrier.

REGIONAL BELL OPERATING COMPANY (RBOC)

The acronym for the local telephone companies created by the Modified Final Judgment in 1984 as part of the break-up of AT&T. The original seven RBOCs were Ameritech, Bell Atlantic, Bell South, Nynex, Pacific Telesis Group, Southwestern Bell, and US West.

SERVICE PROVIDER

A telecommunications provider that owns circuit switching equipment.

SLAMMING

The term used to describe what occurs when a customer's long distance service is switched from one long distance company to another without the customer's permission. Such unauthorized switching violates FCC rules.

SPECTRUM

The range of electromagnetic radio frequencies used in the transmission of sound, data and television.

SUBSCRIBER LINE CHARGE (SLC)

A monthly fee paid by telephone subscribers that is used to compensate the local telephone company for part of the cost of installation and maintenance of the telephone wire, poles and



other facilities that link homes and businesses to the telephone network. These wires, poles and other facilities are referred to as the "local loop." The SLC is one component of access charges.

TARIFF

The documents filed by a carrier describing their services and the payments to be charged for such services.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE (TRS)

A free service that enables persons with TTYs, individuals who use sign language and people who have speech disabilities to use telephone services by having a third party transmit and translate the call.

TELEPHONY

The word used to describe the science of transmitting voice over a telecommunications network.

TTY

A type of machine that allows people with hearing or speech disabilities to communicate over the phone using a keyboard and a viewing screen. It is sometimes called a TDD.

UNBUNDLING

The term used to describe the access provided by local exchange carriers so that other service providers can buy or lease portions of its network elements, such as interconnection loops, to serve subscribers.

UNIVERSAL SERVICE

The financial mechanism which helps compensate telephone companies or other communications entities for providing access to telecommunications services at reasonable and affordable rates throughout the country, including rural, insular and high costs areas, and to public institutions. Companies, not consumers, are required by law to contribute to this fund. The law does not prohibit companies from passing this charge on to customers.