

## Glossary

This Glossary includes terms used in Schedules to this document

**Analogue:** A way of transmitting speech in the form of a continually varying electrical audio signal.

**Automatic Call Distribution (ACD):** A system mostly used in call centres whereby incoming calls are distributed in sequence to the first available answering point. It is used to reduce call waiting time for callers and to help route the call to the right person.

**B channel:** An ISDN channel (bearer channel) which each carry 64kbit/s of data. ISDN 2 and ISDN 30 comprises 2 and 30 of these channels respectively.

**Bandwidth:** Defines the range of frequencies which can be conveyed in the channel without distortion, loss of quality or speed. It is a measure of the capacity of any given communication channel whether it be for voice, data or video.

**Baud Rate:** The speed of operation of a device or communication channel measured in pulses per second (bit/s).

**Bit:** A 'Bit' is a shorthand version of 'binary digit', a computer's way of expressing information in simple 'on' or 'off' instructions. Bits are the basic unit of storage in a computer's memory and on computer discs. On a personal computer it is normal for memory capacity to be expressed in 'bytes', each of which are made up of eight bits.

**Bit/s:** The term for bits per second, the speed at which digital information is transmitted.

**Byte:** A byte usually represents eight 'bits'. Because huge amounts of bytes are needed to convey even simple messages, larger units were devised.

**Call Centre:** A telephone based service operation being used for direct banking and insurance, ticket sales and customer service operations.

**D channel:** An ISDN signalling channel used to carry control signals and low speed data.

**Data compression:** Improves the efficiency of communication transmission by reducing or compressing the number of information 'bit/s' which need to be transmitted. Useful for transmitting data, graphics and voice signals.

**DASS Channels:** Digital Access Signalling System (DASS) is a common channel signalling system between a Private Branch Exchange (PBX) and a local telephone network, providing digital access channels for a wide range of voice, image, text and data transmission.

**Decibels:** A measure of the noise level on the line. A low loss exchange line increases the signal power to overcome losses due to noise.

**Digital:** A method of transmitting data, text, voice or graphics in pulse form at great speeds and low error rates, using binary codes.

**DDI:** Direct Dialling In - a way of dialling directly to the person you require, even though they may work in a large organisation served by a switchboard.

**Ex-directory:** A service offered for ordinary lines where a supplementary rental is charged to exclude telephone numbers from the telephone directory.

**Fibre Optic Cable:** Cabling structure carrying light pulses which is used in the trunk telephone network for high capacity transmission of voice, data or video images. It is a flexible and secure method used for high speed Private Circuits.

**Gateway:** The interface between two incompatible networks. By means of software and hardware a gateway allows connection between them.

**ISDN:** Integrated Services Digital Networks are digital public service telephone networks which enable voice, data, graphics and facsimile calls to be made over a single connection. Digital quality enables applications like video and desktop conferencing, and fast Internet access.

**Kilobytes, Megabytes, Gigabytes:** A Kilobyte (called a 'K') is 1,000 bytes, a Megabyte is 1,000 K and a Gigabyte is 1,000 Megabytes - a billion bytes! Gigabytes are the domain of high capacity networks but the demand for more and more memory is growing.

**LAN:** Local Area Networks (LANs) are used to link computers within a building or across a site to carry non-voice communications such as data and text and sometimes images and video.

**Leased lines:** See Private Circuits.

**Measured Service:** An annual rental on ordinary lines where local calls within the KCOM Network Area are charged for. (See Unlimited Service)

**Meter Pulsing:** A method used for payphones, which generates a pulse at specific time periods to charge the user for the call.

**Modem:** A modulator-demodulator - a piece of equipment needed to connect a computer to an ordinary telephone line. The modem converts computer language, which is digital, into an analogue waveform to be carried by public or private telephone networks.

**Multi-Frequency (MF) Telephone:** A modern signalling method is used where a tone or 'beep' is generated on dialling a number. These telephones enable commands to be transmitted and therefore enable the use of KC Choice Services.

**Multiple Subscriber Numbering (MSN):** Allows multiple numbers to be assigned to a line so that different terminals can be selected to answer the call, like a fax machine, database server or telephone. (See Sub-addressing)

**Multiplexer:** A device that enables the sharing of transmission channels so that a number of data terminals can use them at the same time.

**OFTEL:** Office of Telecommunications, OFTEL - the Government's 'watchdog' for the telecommunications industry who oversee fair competition and pricing structures between the UK's telecommunications suppliers.

**PABX/PBX:** Private Automatic Branch Exchange - describes a telephone exchange installed on private premises such as a hotel or a business office to act as an interface between the public network and the various extensions on its own network.

**Packet Switching:** A method of breaking up digital data into 'packets', enabling many devices to share paths and transmit over the network at the same time.

**Premium Rate Services:** pre-recorded 'programmes' or live interactive services which can be accessed over normal telephone lines on payment of a higher or premium charge over and above normal telephone costs. Premium Rate Services, which can range from sports and weather information to 'adult' services, are controlled by ICSTIS, the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services.

**Private Circuits:** Lines that are leased from KCOM for private use that incur no call charges between sites. Typically they start and finish on private premises and cannot be accessed from the public telephone network.

**PSTN:** Public Switched Telephone Network - the basic public telephone network which connects every telephone in the UK but which is increasingly being used to carry more sophisticated services for customers, like KC Choice Services.

**Sub-addressing:** A more flexible alternative to MSN, where a sequence of additional numbers is added to the dialled subscriber number and passed through the public network unmodified for use in identifying or selecting a specific terminal on the users private network.

**SDH:** Synchronous Digital Hierarchy - ensures compatibility between high speed digital telephony systems based on optical fibre rather than copper cabling. SDH standards are known as SONET (Synchronous Optical Networks) in the United States but are compatible with those used everywhere else.

**Unlimited Service:** An annual rental on ordinary lines where local calls within the KCOM Network Area are not charged for. (See Measured Service)

**VPN:** Virtual Private Network - a telecommunications network dedicated to specific businesses rather than the general public but which uses elements of the public network for strategic or cost-saving reasons.

WAN: Wide Area Network - a telecommunications network for business and organisations which want to span large distances between their own sites, buildings or networks.

X.25: An international standard for public packet-switched networks.