

# Telecom & Networking Glossary

Understanding Communications Technology



A Plain English Guide to Cutting-Edge Telecommunications  
Technology, Terms and Acronyms

Aegis Publishing Group

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purchased that recognize the different ring patterns and route the call to the appropriate device. This service goes by many names throughout the country including *RingMate*, *Identa Ring*, *Ring Master*, *Personalized Ring*, *Custom Ringing*, *Route-a-Call*, *Teen Service*, *Multi-Line* and *Smart Ring*. You pay a monthly fee per number, usually from \$4 to \$7, a lot less than a separate line.

**distribution frame** A piece of equipment that interconnects wires between two sources, located in central offices, PBXs, or other switching facilities. In a central office, for example, all the subscriber's wires come into the building and first connect to one side of the distribution frame. The internal C.O. wiring connects to the other side of the distribution frame. Jumper wires running in between connect the two sides, allowing for changes to be made when telephone numbers are changed, added, or dropped.

**divestiture** The court-ordered separation of the Bell Operating Telephone Companies from AT&T in 1983, when AT&T ceased to be the monopoly telephone company in the United States. The seven Regional Bell Operating Companies (RBOCs) were given control of local phone services while AT&T kept the long-distance market.

**domain name server** A server that retains the addresses and routing information for TCP/IP LAN users.

**Domain Name System (DNS)** The online distributed database system that (a) is used to map human-readable addresses into Internet Protocol (IP) addresses, (b) has servers throughout the Internet to implement hierarchical addressing that allows a site administrator to assign machine names and addresses, (c) supports separate mappings between mail destinations and IP addresses, and (d) uses domain names that (i) consist of a sequence of names, *i.e.*, labels, separated by periods, *i.e.*, dots, (ii) usually are used to name Internet host computers uniquely, (iii) are hierarchical, and (iv) are processed from right to left, such as the host *nic.ddn.mil* has a name (*nic* — the Network Information Center), a subdomain (*ddn* — the Defense Data Network), and a primary domain (*mil* — the MILNET).

**do not disturb** A service feature that lets you get work done without being constantly interrupted by a ringing phone. You can either turn this on and off at will (by pressing \*78) or set up a regular schedule in advance. You can give family members or preferred clients a privileged "caller code" that lets their calls ring through anyway.

**downlink** A data link from a satellite or other spacecraft to a terrestrial terminal.

**downstream** In communications, the direction of transmission flow from the source toward the sink (destination/user).

**DSL** See **digital subscriber line**.