

The company would work out an acceptable service plan with their carrier. They would need to have or acquire POTS-type telephones for each user. In the plan, the company should minimize what the per-minute usage rates are going to be for all regulated services categories. In addition, the company would establish what add-on charges are acceptable in the way of call features on one or more of the lines.

Because all employees will probably have voice mail, the company can cut some costs by getting voice mail for only a subset of the total number of lines to be leased. Voice mail usually comes with the ability to set up five or so mail boxes per line at no additional cost. If you get voice mail on the main number, you can set up a “hunt group” that rolls to the next line when the receptionist is unavailable, or you can have the caller leave a voice mail to any employee by leaving directions on the voice mail narrative (for example, “press 1 for Ms. Smith, press 2 for Mr. Williams”). Other call features can be added on the lines that need them.

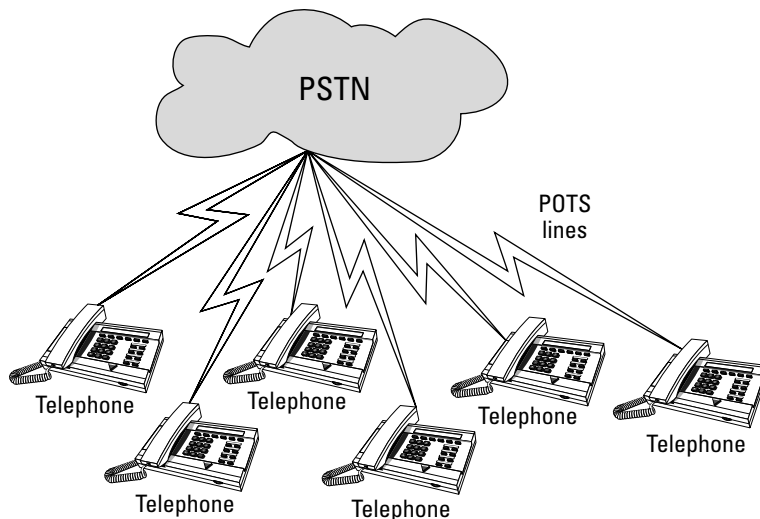


Figure 11-1:
The POTS
model of
telephony
service.

The bottom line with POTS is that each employee has a traditional phone. Some have more than one line to support a fax or dial-up modem services. The company gets the bill each month for all these lines, their respective service charges, and all add-on charges.

If your company has a computer network, you owe it to your financial health to at least take a look at VoIP. To get a total picture of what it is costing you or your company, divide your total monthly carrier services bill by the number of lines you are leasing for each employee. To isolate the total costs by line, usage, and cost per add-on item (taxes, add-on features, regulatory fees, and