

of the market. In addition to the reductions in basic long-distance rates, AT&T proposed cutting prices by 5% and 5.7% for its Pro-America calling plans. The company also proposed to reduce prices by 2.9 percent for its 800 Service customers and 4.4 percent for WATS customers, although it would increase the monthly access line charges for those plans by \$3.20 to reflect higher special access charges filed by the local phone companies.

US Sprint Operator Service Traffic Increases 40%

ORLANDO, Fla. -- US Sprint Wednesday announced its long distance operators who began saying, "May I help you?" just five months ago, are now handling 3« million calls a month.

The fiber-optic long-distance carrier, offering the only operator service alternative to AT&T has experienced a 40 percent growth in operator service calls since it announced its service July 1. Amanda Weathersby, US Sprint vice president of product marketing, said Tuesday, "More and more people are taking advantage of our call completion assistance and alternative billing arrangements. "Customer surcharges are the same as AT&T with the added benefit of US Sprint's fiber-optic quality and lower long-distance rates." US Sprint currently offers person-to-person, station-to-station, call completion and collect calling. US Sprint has announced an agreement with US WEST Service Link that will allow anyone to call on US Sprint and charge their calls to a Regional Bell Operating Co. calling card beginning in first quarter 1988.

"Previously, our operator service was available only on pre-subscribed US Sprint phones and recently we added operator assistance for US Sprint FON CARD customers," Weathersby said. "With this new agreement, we'll be able to expand our operator service to markets such as pay phones, hospitals, and hotels/motels." The newest 24-hour operator service center in Dallas began operations on Oct. 5. US Sprint's other operator service centers are in: Cherry Hill, NJ; Atlanta; Lombard, IL and Reno, NV. US Sprint is a joint venture of United Telecommunications Inc. of Kansas City, MO and GTE Corp. of Stamford, Conn.

Pacific Bell Pursuing Calling Card Thief

SAN FRANCISCO--(BW)--Pacific Bell is warning consumers to protect their telephone calling cards like any other credit card in the wake of a series of frauds by people posing as phone company employees. A Pacific Bell spokesman says customers in the 213, 805 and 916 area codes are being victimized by someone who says he is a telephone company employee investigating calling card fraud. The individual calls people at home at odd hours, asking for their calling card numbers. He then sells the numbers to people who use the numbers to make long distance phone calls.

As recently as Monday of this week, 180 long distance calls were billed to a Sacramento area resident who had given his number to the thief just three hours earlier. According to Pacific Bell, this kind of scheme and other forms of calling card fraud cost telephone customers nationwide half a billion dollars a year. The company offered these tips to consumers to avoid becoming a victim of calling card fraud:

Never give your calling card number or personal identification number to anyone. Any telephone company employee with a legitimate need to know the number has access to it. Treat your calling card like any other credit card. Report its loss immediately by calling the 800 number on the back of the card 800-621-0430. If you receive a suspicious call regarding your telephone calling card, report it by calling the 800 number on the back of the card. If you receive a call from someone claiming to be a telephone company employee and asking for your calling card number, ask for a name and number to call back. Then call the local Pacific Bell business office to report the incident.

One suspect was arrested in Southern California last week by a quick thinking customer who did just that. Pacific Bell immediately contacted the local police department. A suspect holding seven stolen calling card numbers was arrested minutes later. Pacific Bell and long-distance telephone companies will credit customers for calling card charges determined to be fraudulent. Pacific Bell is a subsidiary of Pacific Telesis Group, a diversified telecommunications corporation based in San Francisco.

93. The Phreaker's Guide to Loop Lines by The Jolly Roger

A loop is a wondrous device which the telephone company created as test numbers for telephone repairmen when testing equipment. By matching the tone of the equipment with the tone of the loop, repairmen can adjust and test the settings of their telephone equipment. A loop, basically, consists of two different telephone numbers. Let's use A and B as an example. Normally if you call A, you will hear a loud tone (this is a 1004 hz tone), and if you call B, the line will connect, and will be followed by silence.

This is the format of a loop line. Now, if somebody calls A and someone else calls B--Viola!--A and B loop together, and one connection is made. Ma Bell did this so repairmen can communicate with each other without having to call their own repair office. They can also use them to exchange programs, like for ANA or Ringback. Also, many CO's have a "Loop Assignment Center". If anyone has any information on these centers please tell me. Anyway, that is how a loop is constructed. From this information, anyone can find an actual loop line. Going back to the A and B example, Note: the tone side and the silent side can be either A or B. Don't be fooled if the phone company decides to scramble them around to be cute. As you now know, loops come in pairs of numbers. Usually, right after each other.

For example: 817-972-1890
and
817-972-1891

Or, to save space, one loop line can be written as 817-972-1890/1. This is not always true. Sometimes, the pattern is in the tens or hundreds, and, occasionally, the numbers are random. In cities, usually the phone company has set aside a phone number suffix that loops will be used