

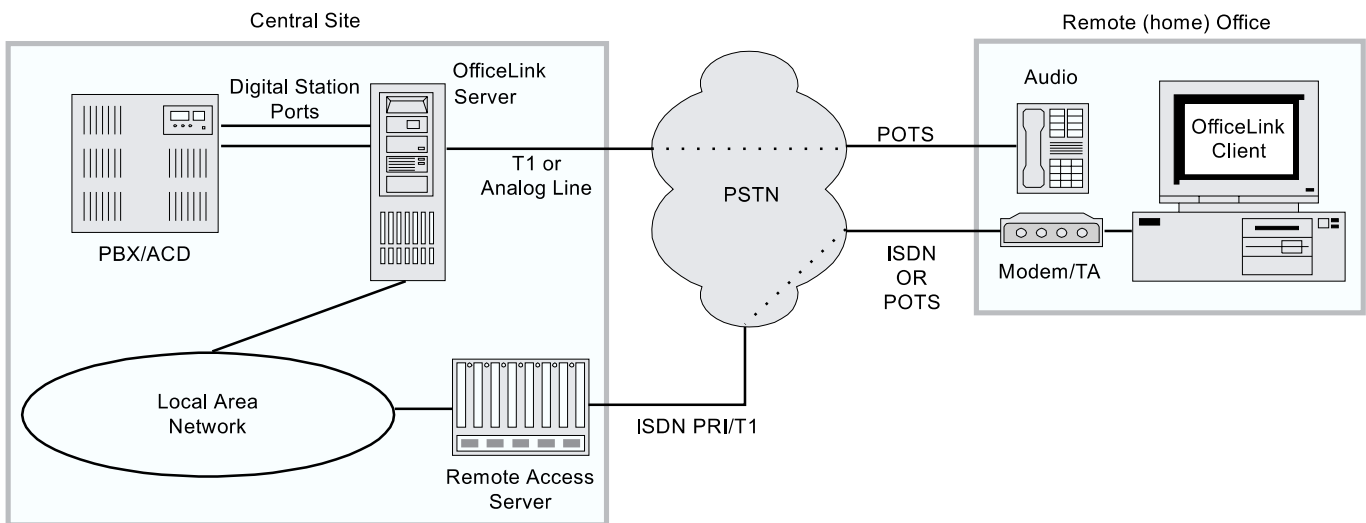
Application Note 82: Remote Data Access for OfficeLink

Teltone's OfficeLink system requires a TCP/IP session be established between the remote user's personal computer, running the OfficeLink client and the OfficeLink server that is connected to the corporate PBX/ACD. Providing this data connectivity for the OfficeLink user can be accomplished in various ways. This document discusses three possible methods for supplying this connectivity.

Dedicated Remote Access Servers

A common method for providing the OfficeLink user with a data connection to the OfficeLink server is to use a dedicated RAS (remote access server). These dedicated remote access servers provide a dial-up modem or ISDN interface for the remote user and a network interface for connecting to the corporate LAN. Once a remote user has established a RAS connection, their data flows through the remote access server and its network interface and onto the LAN where it is directed to, in this case, the OfficeLink server.

Larger corporations may have dedicated remote access servers already installed. These servers can normally be expanded to handle OfficeLink users. Expanding the number of available ports usually consists of plugging another card of the desired type (dial-up modem or ISDN) into the main chassis.



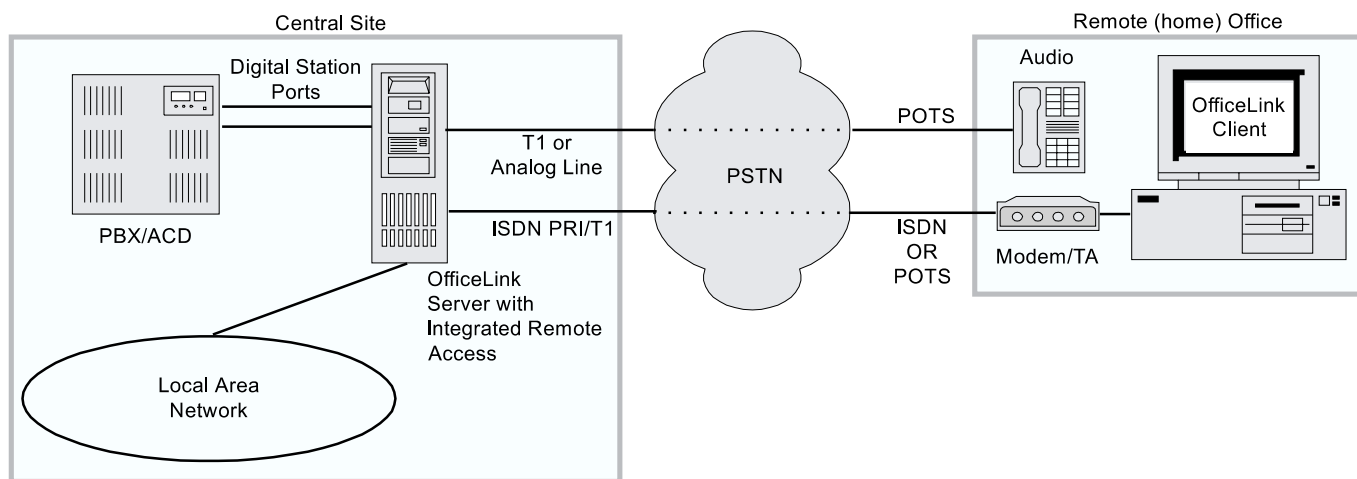
Remote Data Access for OfficeLink (Cont.)

Integrated Remote Access Servers

Another method for supplying the required data connection is to integrate the remote access server functionality into the OfficeLink server. Instead of having a dedicated remote access server, plug-in cards are installed into vacant ISA slots in the OfficeLink server to provide the remote access connection. These cards connect to the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) using one or two T1 or ISDN PRI circuits to provide up to forty-eight 56-kbps modem sessions or up to forty-six ISDN sessions. The remote access ports are administered using Windows NT/2000 Server built-in Routing and Remote Access services.

Data traffic intended for the OfficeLink server remains contained within the server, while data traffic intended for other hosts on the network is passed through a network interface card in the OfficeLink server and out onto the corporate LAN. If the OfficeLink users do not need to communicate with other hosts on the LAN, the network interface card can be eliminated to isolate the OfficeLink users from the rest of the network.

One benefit of adding integrated remote access capability to an OfficeLink server is that you maximize the utilization of the server's hardware. Spare ISA slots can be put to use without impacting the operation of the OfficeLink service. In addition, because most IS departments are already familiar with Windows NT/2000, additional training is not required when adding remote access functionality.



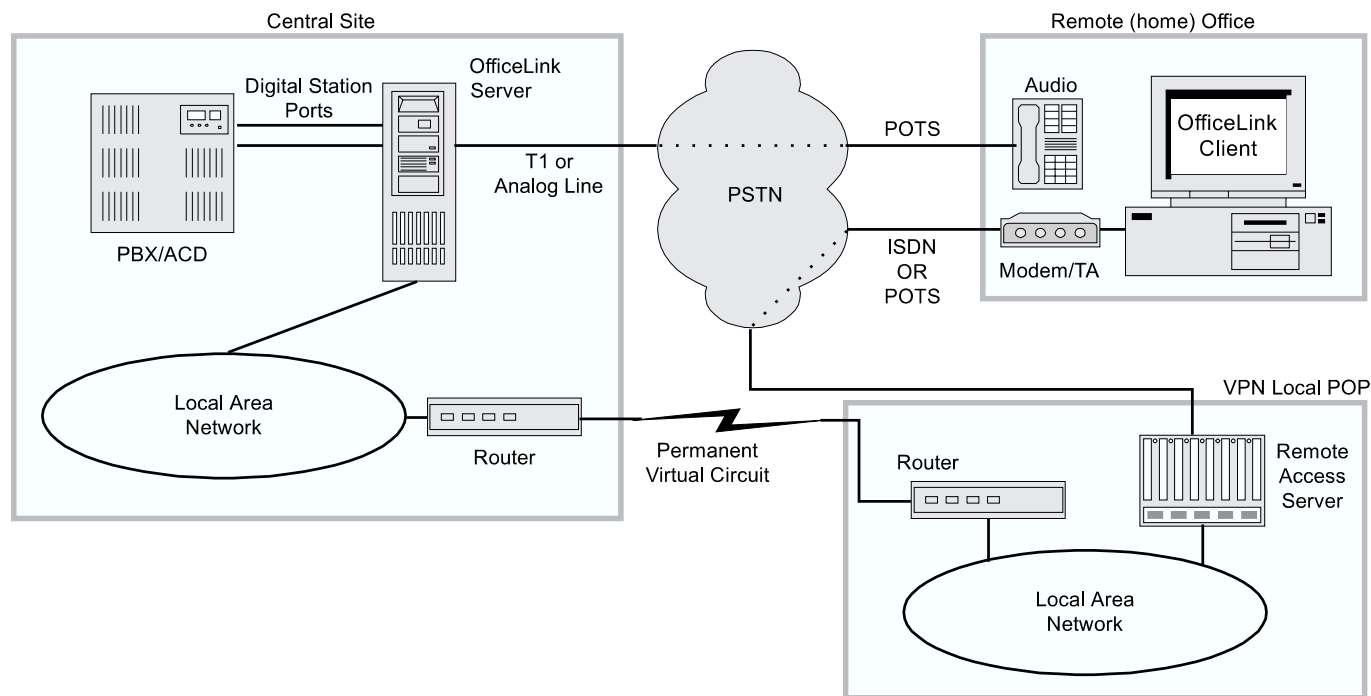
Remote Data Access for OfficeLink (Cont.)

Virtual Private Networks

A third method of providing the required data connection from the remote OfficeLink user to the OfficeLink server is to use a VPN (Virtual Private Network) service. This method does not require the installation of remote access servers for OfficeLink users. Instead, the OfficeLink clients dial into a public infrastructure to facilitate the connection, yet appear as if they are connected directly to their private network. Once the OfficeLink user connects to the VPN service provider, their data is sent through a permanent virtual circuit connecting the service provider with the corporate LAN. At this point OfficeLink data is directed to the OfficeLink server while data intended for other hosts is routed appropriately.

The advantage of VPNs is that the purchasing, maintenance, and upgrading of the remote access hardware, along with the telephone circuits and facilities, are handled by a third party, while your corporation can subscribe to the service that provides best cost/value.

If a majority of OfficeLink users would be required to dial long distance to connect to the OfficeLink server, it may be more cost effective to use a VPN service. The cost to provide the connection could be reduced to a local phone call and the monthly service charge.



Each of the three methods described for providing remote access for OfficeLink users is viable under varying circumstances. Factors such as equipment costs, number of users requiring remote access, telephone charges and urgency of service can affect which method you ultimately select.