

1876 TO TODAY

# 150 Years of the Telephone

The man-machine interface that changed the world, and why AI is bringing voice back.



Leslie's Illustrated Weekly,  
March 22, 1919



**"It's little, it's lovely, it  
lights!"**

The Princess phone, 1959

1876

# Bell patented the first talking man-machine interface.

For the first time, a person could speak in real time, through a machine, to someone who wasn't in the room.



1876

Alexander Graham Bell  
placing a call, 1892

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# Then we traded voice for text.

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In the late 1980s and '90s, typing felt safer than talking. But writing was built for records, not live conversation.



Apple iPhone

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# My first test set.

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A rotary-dial lineman's test set like the one issued to me at Elmendorf Air Force Base in 1979. Mine finally crumbled from age two years ago.



Rotary-dial lineman's test set

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# Mitel Supersets.

The Superset 4 debuted in 1983. What made it unique: digital signaling, audio, power and features all carried over a single pair of wires. The 400 series followed in 1991.



Mitel Superset 4 (1983)



Mitel Superset 430

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# Then the phone got a screen.

Color-display IP phones. Mitel named the 6940 as the replacement for the 5360.



Mitel 5360



Mitel 6940

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THE PLATFORM

# Mitel WX and Mitel Edge.

Mitel's 2026 portfolio. WX connects the entire workforce. Edge brings AI-enabled innovation and resilient control to mission-critical environments.



Image courtesy of Mitel

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TODAY

# AI is bringing voice back.

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Luiz Domingos, Mitel's CTO, gave me one piece of advice: just learn how to talk to it. I have used it that way ever since.



## Luiz Domingos

CTO, Group VP Large Enterprise and Vertical Solutions R&D, Mitel

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THE CATCH

# Zero trust. Zero assumptions. Verify everything.™

AI sounds confident even when it's wrong. It takes someone who knows what right looks like to catch the mistake.

**At Kruiser Services, we take this statement seriously.**

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Background photo by Frank Lusko

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# What was the first phone you ever used?

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Voice and data applications engineer. 48 years, and still building.

**Zero trust.**

**Zero assumptions.**

**Verify everything.™**

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**“Just keep going.”**

Virginia Kelly, a veteran in the telephone industry