

What is Enum?

ENUM was developed as a solution to the question of how network elements can find services on the Internet using only a telephone number, and how telephones, which have an input mechanism limited to twelve keys on a keypad, can be used to access Internet services. ENUM at its most basic is the convergence of PSTN and IP networks; it is the mapping of a telephone number from the public switched telephone network to Internet functionalities.

"ENUM" has a number of meanings. It is the name of a protocol that resolves fully qualified telephone numbers to fully qualified domain name addresses using a DNS-based architecture. It is the name of a chartered working group of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) chartered to develop protocols that map telephone numbers to resources found on the Internet using the Domain Name System. It is also the title of RFC 2916, the approved protocol document that discusses the use of DNS for the storage of E.164 numbers and the available services connected to an E.164 number.

ENUM does not change the Numbering Plan and does not change telephony numbering or its administration in any way. ENUM will not drain already scarce numbering resources because it uses existing numbers.