

# SCHEDDELEAKS

Tutto ciò che avreste voluto sapere sulle schede telefoniche

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Everything you ever wanted to know about calling cards

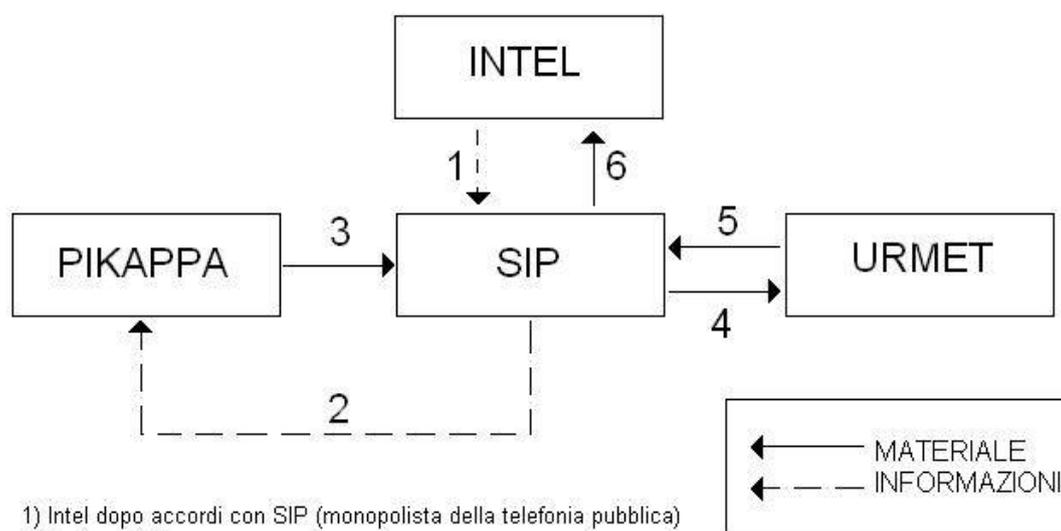
## The world of Codes

### 1-Use of codes in SIP

The only guarantee of originality of the magnetism of a telephone card is, as previously mentioned, the electronic control. Of course, the SIP-Urmet technology does not arise from a collecting need, but from some needs, one related to the production and use of the telephone card at public telephones and the other related to its traceability.

The internal code of the cards issued within a two-year period allows the card to be uniquely identified.

Here we do not want to give great importance to the description of the production process of a telephone card, but we will briefly outline it in order to make the following explanation simpler.



- 1) Intel dopo accordi con SIP (monopolista della telefonia pubblica) richiede un lotto.
- 2) SIP richiede il miglior preventivo alle ditte di stampa.
- 3) La ditta di stampa, lavora a plastica e manda il materiale a SIP.
- 4) SIP può inviare (su richiesta di Intel) tutto il materiale a URMET, oppure solo una parte e lasciarne in parte in deposito.
- 5) URMET rimanda indietro le schede magnetizzate a SIP.
- 6) SIP invia le schede magnetizzate a INTEL. E' possibile che una parte delle schede stampate sia ancora in magazzino SIP, smagnetizzata. Su richiesta di INTEL, dopo N mesi, SIP esegue i punti 4, 5, 6.

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The printed cards coming from the printing companies (Pikappa, Mantegazza, Technicard, etc.), which have already given the OCR, arrive at SIP / Telecom, which then delivers them to Urmet to perform the last physical process: magnetization. In this phase Urmet proceeds with the magnetization of the printed and numbered supports and groups the cards in sealed boxes of 100 pieces with consecutive internal code, ready for widespread distribution throughout Italy. From the analysis of boxes of 100-piece cards that are still sealed, it has been seen that inside there are not necessarily 100 cards with perfectly consecutive OCR, but on the contrary, there may be jumps and missing of one or more cards.

The sequence of internal codes contained within the single box does not, however, contain any numbering jumps even in the presence of OCR jumps.

Once the box is sealed, the cards contained in it, which until then were simple plastic supports, take on a substantial economic value. Think for example of a box containing 100 equal pieces of 10,000 Lire: the telephone value is huge, equal to 1 million Lire! It is therefore essential for SIP to be able to uniquely identify each card produced and magnetized and to be able to know its movements from time to time, up to first reaching the distributors and then the end user.

In order to reduce the theft in the factory, it is assumed that the cards were activated only once sold / invoiced, in order to make any loss of cards "painless" during the production / distribution phases.

Until about 1993, SIP did not perform any computerized checks on the goodness of the card. The only checks were performed directly from the telephone terminal, which checked the remaining credit. In these years "scotch scams" were widespread: it was, in fact, sufficient to place a piece of adhesive tape on the magnetic strip, at the height of the credit area to prevent the magnetic head of the terminal from canceling the residual credit.

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In order to thwart user scams, starting is introduced since 1993 a further control, carried out by a central system. Once the card has been inserted into the slot on the terminal, the system performs two different checks:

1. First check if the card is exhausted or if there are still telephone clicks;
2. Subsequently, if the card is not exhausted, the system communicates the data to the telephone exchange which checks the validity of the card and the correctness of the internal codes and, if so, gives the green light to the call.

As you can easily guess, the purposes of SIP were very different from those of us collectors!

If the cabin does not have a connection to the central computer, the residual credit stamped on the telephone card was valid. There are reports of booths that until recently allowed the use of expired telephone cards: possibly these booths did not have a connection to the central computer and could therefore not verify the expiration of the cards by checking the codes.

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