

— INGENIOUS IDEAS —

— D E P A R T M E N T —

It's For You, Your Refrigerator Is Calling

(NAPSA)—In the not-too-distant future, if your refrigerator is in a squeeze for orange juice or has *not* got milk, it may give you a call. It will all be possible thanks to a technology that started with Alexander Graham Bell's first telephone call back in 1876.

Today, as the telephone celebrates its 125th birthday, every corner of the world is connected to a global network, enabling people to talk, fax, e-mail and e-chat. But according to experts, the network of the future will be even more powerful.

"The network will be the center for the most advanced communications and entertainment," says Dr. Larry Rabiner, vice president of AT&T Labs Research. "With the network's greater bandwidth and faster speeds, people will have extremely fast access to information, movies, music and books of their choice."

Light is the reason. Today's high-speed global network sends information as photons over optical fiber. AT&T estimates their network sends the equivalent of all the books in the Library of Congress every 45 minutes, every day.

Within ten years, American households will have network connections able to download a two hour movie in less than one minute.

But people won't be the only ones using all that bandwidth. Your "smart" refrigerator will be able to call you at

the office to remind you to pick up that gallon of milk on your way home.

"The next-generation network is on its way," Rabiner says. "And just as Bell did 125 years ago, we'll be able to communicate across distances. But now our appliances will do the talking, too."

More information is available at www.att.com/network.



Bell's first phone from 1876 led the way to today's AT&T network carrying trillions of bits of information.