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TRAVEL

TAKEOFFS & LANDINGS

by Mei Fong

Call Me ...

Anywhere

E.T. ISN'T THE ONLY one with phone problems.

Incompatible standards and pricey roaming charges often make it **complicated for Americans to stay in touch overseas**. But there's a better way to stay connected: Pair new Internet phone services with foreign prepaid phone services. For between \$2 and \$40 a month, services such as Kall8.com and Accessline let subscribers forward calls to almost anywhere in the world.

Here's how it works for Detroit lawyer Stuart Friedman: When in London, he uses a \$15 prepaid phone card that he plugs into his cell phone to get a U.K. number, which enables hi to make calls at local rates. Back home, friends call his U.S. number and reach him via his forwarding service, without



having to pay steep international charges. Mr. Friedman pays just 10 cents a minute to receive those calls, compared with \$1.39 per minute charged by his cellphone provider's roaming service.

It does simplify things for travelers: The combination gives just one phone number for clients and friends at home to remember. Plus, forwarding numbers can be changed instantly on the Internet.