WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for providing a manual ring-down communication line using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP), comprising the steps of:

transmitting, by a first SIP user agent to a second SIP user agent over an Internet Protocol (IP) network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session;

determining, by the first SIP user agent, that a signal key associated with a first communication device has been selected;

transmitting, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a start event message to cause a second communication device to activate an alert;

determining, by the first SIP user agent, that the signal key associated with the first communication device has been released; and

transmitting, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the alert.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the alert is at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising transmitting, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a session establisher message to dynamically negotiate a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the session establisher message is an OPTIONS message.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising forwarding, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the IP network.

6. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions including instructions, which, when executed by a computer system, cause the computer system to:

transmit, by a first SIP user agent to a second SIP user agent over an Internet Protocol (IP) network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session;

determine, by the first SIP user agent, that a signal key associated with a first communication device has been selected;

transmit, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a start event message to cause a second communication device to activate an alert;

determine, by the first SIP user agent, that the signal key associated with the first communication device has been released; and

transmit, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the alert.

7. The computer-readable medium of claim 6, wherein the alert is at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

8. The computer-readable medium of claim 6, wherein the instructions, when executed by the computer system, further cause the computer system to transmit, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, an OPTIONS message to dynamically negotiate a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

9. The computer-readable medium of claim 8, wherein the session establisher message is an OPTIONS message.

10. The computer-readable medium of claim 6, wherein the instructions, when executed by the computer system, further cause the computer system to forward, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the IP network.

11. A manual ring-down private line communication system, the system comprising:

a first SIP user agent communicatively coupled to an IP network, wherein the first SIP user agent is configured to:

transmit, over the IP network, an INVITE message to establish a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) session;

determine that a signal key associated with a first communication device has been selected;

transmit, over the IP network, a start event message to cause a second communication device to activate an alert;

determine that the signal key associated with the first communication device has been released; and

transmit, over the IP network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the alert; and

a second SIP user agent communicatively coupled to the IP network, wherein the second SIP user agent is configured to receive, over the IP network, the INVITE message, the start event message, and the end event message.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the alert is at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein the first SIP user agent is further configured to transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a session establisher message to dynamically negotiate a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the session establisher message is an OPTIONS message.

15. The system of claim 11, further comprising at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA) configured to forward a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the IP network.

16. A method of negotiating a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) session establisher, comprising:

transmitting, by a first SIP user agent to a second SIP user agent over an Internet Protocol (IP) network, an OPTIONS message to request designation of a session establisher, wherein the OPTIONS message includes an identifier of the first SIP user agent; and

receiving, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a 200 OK message accepting designation of the first SIP user agent as the session establisher.

17. A method for providing a private line communication channel using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP), comprising the steps of:

transmitting, by a first SIP user agent to a second SIP user agent over a communication network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session, wherein at least one of a first communication device associated with the first SIP user agent and a second communication device associated with the second SIP user agent is in either an on-hook state or an off-hook state;

receiving, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a 200 OK message confirming receipt of the INVITE message;

transmitting, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an ACK message to acknowledge receipt of the 200 OK message; and

transmitting, by either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an event message, to cause the second communication device or the first communication device, respectively, to activate a manual ring-down alert.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the manual ring-down alert includes at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the event message relates to an event and includes at least one of a Real-Time Protocol (RTP) message and an INFO message.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the event includes at least one of a change in a hook state and a change in an alert state of at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device includes a hard turret or a soft turret.

22. The method of claim 17, further comprising transmitting, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a message negotiating a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

23. The method of claim 17, further comprising transmitting, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an end event

message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the manual ring-down alert.

24. The method of claim 17, further comprising forwarding, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the communication network.

25. The method of claim 17, wherein either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent controls the first communication device or the second communication device, respectively, to activate the manual ring-down alert.

26. A non-transitory computer-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions including instructions, which, when executed by a computer system, cause the computer system to:

transmit, by a first Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) user agent to a second SIP user agent over a communication network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session, wherein at least one of a first communication device associated with the first SIP user agent and a second communication device associated with the second SIP user agent is in either an on-hook state or an off-hook state;

receive, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a 200 OK message confirming receipt of the INVITE message;

transmit, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an ACK message to acknowledge receipt of the 200 OK message; and

transmit, by either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an event message, to cause the second communication device or the first communication device, respectively, to activate a manual ring-down alert.

27. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein the manual ring-down alert includes at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

28. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein the event message relates to an event and includes at least one of a Real-Time Protocol (RTP) message and an INFO message.

29. The computer-readable medium of claim 28, wherein the event includes at least one of a change in a hook state and a change in an alert state of at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device.

30. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein at least one of the first communication device and second communication device includes a hard turret or a soft turret.

31. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause the computer system to:

transmit, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a message negotiating a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

32. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause the computer system to:

transmit, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the manual ring-down alert.

33. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause the computer system to:

forward, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the communication network.

34. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent to control the first communication device or the second communication device, respectively, to activate the manual ring-down alert.

35. A system for providing a private line communication channel using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP), the system comprising:

a first SIP user agent communicatively coupled to a communication network; and

a second SIP user agent communicatively coupled to the communication network,

wherein the first SIP user agent is configured to:

transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session, wherein at least one of a first communication device associated with the first SIP user agent and a second communication device associated with the second SIP user agent is in either an on-hook state or an off-hook state,

receive, from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a 200 OK message confirming receipt of the INVITE message, and

transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an ACK message to acknowledge receipt of the 200 OK message, and

wherein the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent are respectively configured to:

transmit, over the communication network, an event message, to cause the second communication device or the first communication device, respectively, to activate a manual ring-down alert.

36. The system of claim 35, wherein the manual ring-down alert includes at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

37. The system of claim 35, wherein the event message relates to an event and includes at least one of a Real-Time Protocol (RTP) message and an INFO message.

38. The system of claim 37, wherein the event includes at least one of a change in a hook state and a change in an alert state of at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device.

39. The system of claim 35, wherein at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device includes a hard turret or a soft turret.

40. The system of claim 35, wherein the first SIP user agent is further configured to:

transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a message negotiating a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

41. The system of claim 35, wherein the first SIP user agent is further configured to:

transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the manual ring-down alert.

42. The system of claim 35, further comprising at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA) configured to forward a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the communication network.

43. The system of claim 35, wherein the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent are further configured to control the first communication device and the second communication device, respectively, to activate the manual ring-down alert.

44. A method for providing a private line communication channel using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP), comprising the steps of:

receiving, by a first SIP user agent from a second SIP user agent over a communication network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session, wherein at least one of a first communication device associated with the first SIP user agent and a second communication device associated with the second SIP user agent is in either an on-hook state or an off-hook state;

transmitting, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a 200 OK message confirming receipt of the INVITE message;

receiving, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an ACK message to acknowledge receipt of the 200 OK message; and

receiving, by either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an event message, wherein the receiving of the event message causes the first communication device or the second communication device, respectively, to automatically activate a manual ring-down alert.

45. The method of claim 44, wherein the manual ring-down alert includes at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

46. The method of claim 44, wherein the event message relates to an event and includes at least one of a Real-Time Protocol (RTP) message and an INFO message.

47. The method of claim 46, wherein the event includes at least one of a change in a hook state and a change in an alert state of at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device.

48. The method of claim 44, wherein at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device includes a hard turret or a soft turret.

49. The method of claim 44, further comprising receiving, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a message negotiating a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

50. The method of claim 44, further comprising receiving, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an end event message to cause the first communication device to deactivate the manual ring-down alert.

51. The method of claim 44, further comprising forwarding, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the communication network.

52. The method of claim 44, wherein either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent controls the first communication device or the second communication device, respectively, to activate the manual ring-down alert.

53. A non-transitory computer-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions including instructions, which, when executed by a computer system, cause the computer system to:

receive, by a first Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) user agent from a second SIP user agent over a communication network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session, wherein at least one of a first communication device associated with the first SIP user agent and a second communication device associated with the second SIP user agent is in either an on-hook state or an off-hook state;

transmit, by the first SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a 200 OK message confirming receipt of the INVITE message;

receive, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an ACK message to acknowledge receipt of the 200 OK message; and

receive, by either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an event message, wherein the receiving of the event message causes the first communication device or the second communication device, respectively, to automatically activate a manual ring-down alert.

54. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein the manual ring-down alert includes at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

55. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein the event message relates to an event and includes at least one of a Real-Time Protocol (RTP) message and an INFO message.

56. The computer-readable medium of claim 55, wherein the event includes at least one of a change in a hook state and a change in an alert state of at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device.

57. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device includes a hard turret or a soft turret.

58. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause the computer system to:

receive, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a message negotiating a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

59. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause the computer system to:

receive, by the first SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an end event message to cause the first communication device to deactivate the manual ring-down alert.

60. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause the computer system to:

forward, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the communication network.

61. The computer-readable medium of claim 53, wherein the sequence of instructions further includes instructions which, when executed by the computer system, cause either one of the first SIP user agent or the second SIP user agent to control the first communication device or the second communication device, respectively, to activate the manual ring-down alert.

62. A system for providing a private line communication channel using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP), the system comprising:

a first SIP user agent communicatively coupled to a communication network; and

a second SIP user agent communicatively coupled to the communication network,

wherein the first SIP user agent is configured to:

receive, from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an INVITE message to establish a SIP session, wherein at least one of a first communication device associated with the first SIP user agent and a second communication device associated with the second SIP user agent is in either an on-hook state or an off-hook state,

transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a 200 OK message confirming receipt of the INVITE message, and

receive, from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an ACK message to acknowledge receipt of the 200 OK message, and

wherein the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent are respectively configured to:

receive, over the communication network, an event message, wherein the receiving of the event message causes the first communication device or the second communication device, respectively, to automatically activate a manual ring-down alert.

63. The system of claim 62, wherein the manual ring-down alert includes at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert.

64. The system of claim 62, wherein the event message relates to an event and includes at least one of a Real-Time Protocol (RTP) message and an INFO message.

65. The system of claim 64, wherein the event includes at least one of a change in a hook state and a change in an alert state of at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device.

66. The system of claim 62, wherein at least one of the first communication device and the second communication device includes a hard turret or a soft turret.

67. The system of claim 62, wherein the first SIP user agent is further configured to:

receive, from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, a message negotiating a role of session establisher between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent.

68. The system of claim 62, wherein the first SIP user agent is further configured to:

receive, from the second SIP user agent over the communication network, an end event message to cause the first communication device to deactivate the manual ring-down alert.

69. The system of claim 62, further comprising at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA) configured to forward a message between the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the communication network.

70. The system of claim 62, wherein the first SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent are further configured to control the first communication device and the second communication device, respectively, to activate the manual ring-down alert.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for providing a manual ring-down communication line using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP), comprising the steps of:

transmitting, by a session establisher SIP user agent to a second SIP user agent over an Internet Protocol (IP) network, an INVITE message;

receiving, by the session establisher SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent, an acknowledgment message transmitted in response to the INVITE message, thereby establishing a private line SIP session, wherein the private line SIP session provides a manual ring-down communication line;

re-establishing, by the session establisher SIP user agent, the private line SIP session after a session failure;

determining, by the session establisher SIP user agent, that a signal key associated with a first communication device has been selected;

transmitting, by the session establisher SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a start event message to cause a second communication device to activate an alert;

determining, by the session establisher SIP user agent, that the signal key associated with the first communication device has been released; and

transmitting, by the session establisher SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the alert.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of transmitting, by the session establisher SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a session establisher message requesting to be designated as the session establisher.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising forwarding, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the session establisher SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the IP network.

4. A non-transitory computer-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions including instructions, which, when executed by a computer system, cause the computer system to:

transmit, by a session establisher Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) user agent to a second SIP user agent over an Internet Protocol (IP) network, an INVITE message;

receive, by the session establisher SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent, an acknowledgment message transmitted in response to the INVITE message, thereby establishing a private line SIP session, wherein the private line SIP session provides a manual ring-down communication line;

re-establish, by the session establisher SIP user agent, the private line SIP session after a session failure;

determine, by the session establisher SIP user agent, that a signal key associated with a first communication device has been selected;

transmit, by the session establisher SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a start event message to cause a second communication device to activate an alert;

determine, by the session establisher SIP user agent, that the signal key associated with the first communication device has been released; and

transmit, by the session establisher SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the alert.

5. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 4, wherein the instructions, when executed by the computer system, further cause the computer system to transmit, by the session establisher SIP user agent to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a session establisher message requesting to be designated as the session establisher.

6. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 4, wherein the instructions, when executed by the computer system, further cause the computer system to forward, by at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA), a message between the session establisher SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the IP network.

7. A manual ring-down private line communication system, the system comprising:

a first communication device communicatively coupled to an IP network by way of a session establisher Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) user agent, wherein the session establisher SIP user agent is configured to:

transmit, to a second SIP user agent over the IP network, an INVITE message,

receive, from the second SIP user agent, an acknowledgment message transmitted in response to the INVITE message, thereby establishing a private line SIP session, wherein the private line SIP session provides a manual ring-down communication line,

re-establish the private line SIP session after a session failure,

determine that a signal key associated with a first communication device has been selected,

transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a start event message to cause a second communication device to activate an alert,

determine that the signal key associated with the first communication device has been released, and

transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, an end event message to cause the second communication device to deactivate the alert; and

the second communication device communicatively coupled to the IP network by way of the second SIP user agent, wherein the second SIP user agent is configured to:

receive, over the IP network, the INVITE message and

transmit an acknowledgment message in response to the INVITE message.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the session establisher SIP user agent is further configure to transmit, to the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a session establisher message requesting to be designated as the session establisher.

9. The system of claim 7, further comprising at least one of a SIP proxy and a back-to-back user agent (B2BUA) configured to forward a message between the session establisher SIP user agent and the second SIP user agent over the IP network.

10. The method of claim 2, wherein the session establisher message is an OPTIONS message including an identifier of the session establisher SIP user agent, and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

receiving, by the session establisher SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a 200 OK message accepting designation of the session establisher SIP user agent as the session establisher.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the alert is at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert, and wherein the at least one of the audible alert and the visual alert are initiated by at least one of (i) the INVITE message and (ii) the signal key being selected by a user during the established SIP session.

12. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 4, wherein the alert is at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert, and wherein the at least one of the audible alert

and the visual alert are initiated by at least one of (i) the INVITE message and (ii) the signal key being selected by a user during the established SIP session.

13. The system of claim 7, wherein the alert is at least one of an audible alert and a visual alert, and wherein the at least one of the audible alert and the visual alert are initiated by at least one of (i) the INVITE message and (ii) the signal key being selected by a user during the established SIP session.

14. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 5, wherein the session establisher message is an OPTIONS message including an identifier of the session establisher SIP user agent, and wherein the instructions, when executed by the computer system, further cause the computer system to:

receive, by the session establisher SIP user agent from the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a 200 OK message accepting designation of the session establisher SIP user agent as the session establisher.

15. The system of claim 8, wherein the session establisher message is an OPTIONS message including an identifier of the session establisher SIP user agent, and wherein the session establisher SIP user agent is further configured to receive, from the second SIP user agent over the IP network, a 200 OK message accepting designation of the session establisher SIP user agent as the session establisher.