



THE BUSINESS CASE FOR MOVING VOICE TO THE CLOUD

Many businesses are becoming aware that they have outgrown their on-premise telephone systems but hesitate to take advice on upgrading due to cost concerns and lack of knowledge of modern solutions.

As a result, businesses still running an on-premise PBX system are missing out on telephony features that could help to improve productivity and customer satisfaction encouraging business growth.

Do you recognise any of the following telephony issues?

- Maintenance problems due to an old legacy telephone system with costly repairs and downtime.
- Difficulty finding the skills and expertise necessary to maintain your old system.
- Problems with locating replacement parts when required.
- Complexities associated with adding new extensions to the system and new configuration of hunt groups etc.
- Fear of system failure caused by an out-dated on-premise telephone system.
- Communications problems that result from multiple on-premise phone systems across several office locations.
- Rising costs of maintaining on premise telephony systems.
- High monthly call and line rental bills.

If any of these sound familiar, our white paper will help you to learn more about the features and benefits of switching to cloud-based telephony.

We will also discuss the ways that cloud telephony can help you improve communications across your business that will also result in real cost savings.

No matter if you are a small single site business or an organisation with several offices, a cloud based telephony solution will benefit your business in many ways.

Why you should switch to switch to cloud-based communications.

Voice over IP telephony has transformed the way businesses communicate and the telephony environment has changed significantly since the age of on premise PBX telephony system.

Businesses are looking to reduce costs whilst improving productivity and customer service, workers are bringing their own devices (BYOD) to the workplace, the need for remote and home working has increased dramatically and many organisations are turning to cloud based telephony in order to fulfil these ambitions.

This market is also being driven by the fact that BT ISDN will be ceased as a service during 2025.

A quote from Gartner:

“Cloud telephony spending is expected to surpass on premise telephony during 2017 where cloud telephony and messaging sales surpass premise based revenue for the first time. Cloud-based telephony and messaging represent the most significant opportunity, with end-user investments projected to rise to £18 billion worldwide in 2019.”

These predictions are based on real trends that include modern capabilities such as mobile productivity, business application integration, video conferencing, the need for 24/7 support, unified communications, advanced productivity features, and more.

These are now established and proven technologies and services that an on-premise legacy PBX system is not designed to handle.

There are many benefits of switching to a hosted cloud-based solution.

High Availability: on premises PBX system are becoming more difficult to maintain and manage, they are prone to failing, a situation that can be catastrophic for a business. With a hosted cloud-based telephony system, service continuity is the supplier’s responsibility. Typically, you will gain from upwards of 99.9% uptime with your cloud hosted telephony solution.

Reduces costs: maintaining and managing an on-premise PBX system can be costly and inefficient not only on a single site but even more so across multiple locations. When you deploy cloud-based telephony, the entire solution can be managed from any location with an Internet connection. You will have the ability to easily scale up or down as required by adding or removing extensions or changing ring groups for example. There are minimum setup costs and the ongoing service is delivered and maintained on a subscription basis which means you only pay for what you use.

Our telephony infrastructure is housed in a secure and compliant data centre where the staff are available if required 24/7 for support. The telephony platform provides carrier-grade communications and enterprise functionality that are future proofed. Upgrades and version releases are rolled out automatically.



Flexibility and Scalability:

Cloud based telephony systems grow with your business as opposed to on site PBX systems that can be difficult or even impossible to upgrade.

When you use a hosted cloud-based solution, you can add or remove extensions, features such as auto-attendants and ring groups as your business grows and needs change. You can easily facilitate home and remote working for your staff and accommodate mobility and BYOD. Changes are instantaneous allowing your business communications needs to be proactive and efficient.

Inherent Disaster Recovery:

If you have an on-premise legacy PBX system spread across one or several locations, then this can be a worry when it comes to disaster recovery and business continuity provision. Your business can suffer badly if the outage lasts for several days.

When you use cloud-based telephony, you are buying in to a system that has disaster recovery and business continuity as standard!

Clients incoming calls can quickly be diverted to previously configured 'disaster ready' ring groups or even to mobile phones. Staff can be deployed to any location with an internet connection to make and receive calls either via their mobile phone app or desktop app taking their Direct Dial and Extension numbers with them wherever they are.

Even if your office building is inaccessible your telephone system will still be receiving calls in the cloud and dealing with these as per your earlier devised Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity plan.


Standard Features

Call reporting and recording:

Cloud-based telephony systems will provide call reporting and recording. This ensures you never miss a call and provides you with opportunity to listen to previous messages.

Call reporting enables you to easily generate reports using templates, add custom information to data elements, drill down for additional report specifics, and more. Useful data such as received but unreturned calls can be captured so you never miss an important call.

Call recording allows selected or all incoming and outgoing calls to be recorded. This allows you to search for recorded calls that you have to rely on for any purpose. Call recording can be enabled across the whole telephone system estate or on a per extension basis and can be automatic or on demand.





Voicemail:

Hosted cloud-based telephony provides you with features such as shared voicemail. This feature allows you to easily share voicemail messages with other team members simply by configuring the service online. Voicemail will be delivered to any device you choose or to your email system. This ensures that your clients can always at least have the opportunity to leave a message if you do not answer the call.

Integration with Software Applications Systems:

Hosted cloud-based telephony solutions can be integrated with your main business application and off the shelf products such as Microsoft Outlook, Salesforce, Housing Management Systems and much more.

This speeds up call handling time and helps to improve customer satisfaction. Application integration is achieved by designing an integrated solution between the cloud-based telephony platform and your chosen Application.


For example, a tenant calling in to a Housing Association will cause the Housing Management Application to pop up a pre-designed form on the receiver's screen enabling them to greet the caller by name and have instant access to their records.

Call queuing:

Cloud-based telephony systems provide call queuing which allows you to receive multiple calls and answer them in the order they are received or in order of importance. The calls are distributed to the next available representative after they complete a current call. Call queuing also makes it easier for your callers to access the telephone services they need before being automatically forwarded to an available representative.

Hunt and reporting groups:

Cloud-based telephony services offer a hunt and reporting group feature that allows for the distribution of phone calls from one destination number to multiple groups of call agents or phone lines. This feature automatically routes incoming calls as soon as they are answered by an IP telephony system. When an incoming phone call is received on the extension number for the hunt group, the cloud-telephony platform automatically rings all extension numbers included in the group.





Mobile working:

Staff members that use mobile devices for daily productivity can take their office extension with them wherever they go. This improves mobility and ensures workers never miss an important call. The calls are automatically transferred to the designated device without requiring the caller to dial another number. This feature can provide substantial savings on mobile phone contracts and increase productivity substantially.

High definition web conferencing:

With cloud-based telephony you have access to HD web conferencing which offers a rich selection of features. This feature can be used to host online meetings that were once reliant on staff travelling to a central location. Training can be delivered across multiple locations by inviting staff on to the online conference.

Cloud-based instant messaging and presence:


You can enable private instant messaging across all of your users. This enables them to send messages between their softphone apps and even attach documents, a method of communications that ensures they arrive instantly. You can also set your status for example, not available, do not disturb, back in 10 mins etc and see the status of everyone using the cloud hosted system.

Cloud-based call analytics:

Cloud-based telephony services provide you with a centralised dashboard that allows you to easily view data and analytics in real-time. The data can include employee performance and response, call activity, phone call statistics for specific times of the day or year, and more. The dashboard can be used on both a desktop and a mobile device.

Cloud-based telephony WEB administration:

Although cloud telephony is hosted on the provider's platform in a data centre, you still have better control over the system than you would with an on-premise PBX solution. With a cloud telephony system you can easily make changes using the central web interface and you no longer must be on the premises to manage the system. It is a simple operation to add new extensions, ring groups etc to match the needs at that moment in time or to make changes required during a disaster situation.





Conclusion:

Legacy on premise PBX systems are becoming obsolete, costly and difficult to maintain and are not compatible with new and emerging technologies and the ever-growing mobile workforce.

This is the main driving force behind more businesses making the switch to hosted cloud-based telephony solutions. Cloud telephony provides a cost-effective way to bring a communication system into your business.

Start-up costs are minimal and you can budget your communications spend accurately by paying a monthly subscription per extension that will cover all of your telephony calls, maintenance and support.

Productivity is increased and your clients will get a better experience when contacting you.

Cloud telephony services enhance collaboration, support a mobile workforce, reduce on premise ICT infrastructure, and improve profits with easy integration of CRM solutions designed to increase efficiency.

With ISDN and analogue lines being phased out your business needs to start planning now for the transition to Voice over IP telephony.



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