

What is VoIP? Fact vs. Fiction

Twenty years ago, a telecom technology was introduced that is changing the way businesses communicate. It's Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), also referred to as IP Telephony or Internet Telephony. VoIP routes voice communication over the Internet or through an Internet Protocol-based data network instead of the traditional telephone copper wire cabling.

By 2010 VoIP had become a well-established alternative to traditional business PBX telephone systems and, unlike those systems, allows voice and data to work together — making all communications more flexible and efficient.

If your business is not already using VoIP, you may be hesitant to make the switch because of comments you've heard or read, such as the following:

- Sound quality is poor or unreliable.
- Only large companies have the network infrastructure and the money to use VoIP.
- Installing and setting up VoIP is complicated.
- Using mobile phones is a smarter business option.
- It's not cost effective to convert to VoIP when a current PBX system is still working.

If these comments were true, then why is VoIP being adopted so rapidly by businesses of all sizes? Here are the facts:

1. Experience excellent and reliable sound quality.

VoIP traffic runs over the Internet, so — before broadband Internet was common — VoIP traffic would sometimes run into congestion problems during transmission. This led to poor call quality.

Today, with a quality provider and a high-speed Internet connection, VoIP sound quality is actually better than traditional phones. Businesses using VoIP report no more dropped calls or service gaps than those using traditional landline services. Some VoIP systems even use voice activity detection to suppress background noise and other distracting sounds while a person is talking — improving call quality even more. Power outages are the only real concern, and these are easily addressed with either a battery backup for internal IP PBX solutions or automatic fail-over to cell phones or landlines for cloud based Hosted PBX services.

2. Look like a big business at a very low cost.

The dollar amounts vary, but VoIP can often cut your monthly phone bill in half while bringing your business sophisticated services. Depending on your provider, your VoIP system can include the following features and many others:

- Answer calls when the recipient is on another call.
- Automatically open a customer record in Salesforce when that customer calls.
- Let users call from any phone to quickly access voice mail messages.
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- Display voice mail messages in email.
- Forward calls to ring at another extension or outside phone number.
- Give full control over how and where to receive calls and information to administrators and users.
- Give each phone its own phone number and extension.
- Let each employee log into their personal Web portal to listen to and manage their voice mail messages and control their forwarding.
- Let each extension program hundreds of individual speed-dial numbers.
- Let each extension record a customized greeting for their voice mail box.
- Manage all aspects of your phone system from a single convenient dashboard.
- Monitor who is on the phone at any time.
- Play music or special messages when callers are on hold.
- Press a single a key to instantly call the person back — right from your voicemail.
- Prevent unauthorized users from making external calls.
- Record calls for training and record-keeping.
- Save time with last-number redial.
- See a blinking LED indicator when a voice mail is waiting.
- Send callers directly to your voicemail box when you don't want to be disturbed. Set up an Auto Attendant to greet callers and route callers to the right extension.
- Set up and conduct conference calls.
- Transfer a call from one extension to another when an extension is busy.
- Transfer calls to an external number.
- Use a headset with any phone on the system.

3. Install and set up your system quickly and easily.

There's nothing complex or difficult about installing a VoIP system. The system you choose

can be installed on premise or a cloud based hosted service accessed online. VoIP systems provide a single dashboard from which you manage all aspects of your telecom system, such as setting up extensions, permissions, and much more.

4. Gain full mobile integration and more.

Mobile phones are invaluable as part of an integrated communications system, but they don't do everything. A VoIP system includes your office phones, mobile phones, desktop computers, laptops, tablets, and other devices in your business communications. VoIP puts it all together — something mobile phones alone cannot do.

With VoIP, you and your employees can quickly access voice mails and answer a customer's inquiry from multiple devices, including your mobile phones. VoIP also works whether your employees are on site, on the road, or are working from home or any other location.

5. Deploy now, cost effectively.

Your current PBX system may still be working, but it may also be holding your business back and making a negative impact on your bottom line. Here's why:

- Costly maintenance, repairs, and carrier fees
- Lost time making system changes as your business grows or reduces staff
- Loss of access to advanced features that can significantly boost productivity
- Falling behind your competition because your business appears dated to customers and prospective customers

Moving to VoIP can cut costs and increase productivity so dramatically that the system quickly pays for itself over the cost of a traditional PBX system. Those are the facts.



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