21 VoIP Frequently Asked Questions

Everything you need to know to boost your business with VoIP

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Getting started with VoIP

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) lets you make phone calls using an internet connection instead of a telephone line. Users can make calls from a single number using a desktop computer, smartphone, or softphone (more on that later). Even when dialing a traditional, non-VoIP number, users can take advantage of high-tech features while keeping the total cost of ownership lower than with outdated phone systems.

VoIP is a relatively new technology. You may think that adopting it means having to deal with hardware issues you've never handled before, making additional investments you simply cannot afford, or changing time-tested aspects of your operations to accommodate the needs of this technology.

These reservations are a normal reaction to unfamiliar technology. To help you understand VoIP, its features, and how you can incorporate it into your business and take advantage of its features and benefits, we have answered some of the most frequently asked questions about this powerful innovation.

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VoIP Basics:
5 Questions

1

How fast does my internet need to be for great call quality?

We recommend around 200 kbps for high-definition (HD) calls. Business internet packages — as well as cellular data connections — require orders of magnitude faster than that. A better question would be: How many simultaneous calls can my office network handle? Even in areas with substandard internet, you should be able to manage at least 70 or 80 HD calls at one time.

2

Will I be charged per minute or per call?

VoIP services are usually charged per user, per month. You may be charged per minute for international calls or those that use special features, but in general, the monthly bill is more consistent than with landlines.

3

Are there limits to how many phone lines I can have?

No. If you can afford the commensurate monthly fees, then you can have as many numbers as you want. It takes a matter of hours to set up or cancel a number so you'll never be stuck with too much or too little calling capacity.

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VoIP Basics: 5 Questions

4 **Can I transfer an old phone number to my VoIP service?**

Yes. Your current provider may charge extra to keep your existing number, but we should be able to transfer it to your new system without any technical difficulties. It's important to know, however, that porting a number may also impose certain restrictions. For example, you might be barred from benefiting from certain features offered with a new service, especially if the feature is linked to a VoIP provider's numbers. One way to avoid this restriction is to pay for a second line that carries the ported number. This way, users can take advantage of all the features included in a certain service.

5 **What should I be looking for in a provider?**

Since pricing plans and scalability options are fairly uniform across providers, technical support and service features are usually the deciding factors. For instance, some VoIP providers offer 24/7 phone and live chat support for customers with plans for two or more users. Providers typically guarantee their availability and response times through service level agreements (SLAs), so you'll know exactly what kind of support you'll receive each time you make a request.

When it comes to service features, advanced call features are the leading advantage of VoIP over traditional phones. Most providers offer similar packages, but there may be small differences in aspects such as call recording, voicemail transcription, text messaging, and video conferences. Compare the offerings per provider and see which one fits your business best.

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Features:
6 Questions

6 **What are the most useful VoIP features for small businesses?**

Providers are constantly adding new features so we recommend reaching out to us about which are best for your organization. However, automatic call recording, voicemail-to-email, and virtual receptionists are some of the most popular.

7 **Can I analyze call data?**

Yes. Paying attention to average call durations, calls per conversion, and geographical trends are just a few ways to boost your sales efforts. Through metadata on call detail records (CDRs), you can have an idea how a specific phone number or user is utilizing the phone system. For instance, you can monitor call date, time, and duration, who called whom, what kind of call was made, and the total call cost.

8 **Can I connect my VoIP service to a customer relationship management (CRM) platform?**

Since the technology is based on software instead of public switching systems, VoIP is easy to integrate with other apps and platforms. That being said, if you're using a CRM that your telecommunications provider has never heard of, you could be out of luck. But if you're using Salesforce, Hubspot, or another well-known solution, call data can be easily synced between the two platforms.

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Features:
6 Questions

9 Can I use my number on more than one device?

Absolutely! The number one benefit of a VoIP solution is the ability to maintain the same outgoing number when making and receiving calls from your smartphone, laptop, desktop, or softphone.

10 Can hackers listen to my calls?

As long as your employees don't give away their login details to strangers or lose a device that has their password saved, VoIP calls are impossible to eavesdrop on. We ensure all your live audio and call records are encrypted so you don't have to give a second thought to security.

11 Can my employees work from home or on the road?

If your staff members have internet access and a mobile device, they can make calls. Simple as that. Even office-based employees that use VoIP phones in the office can log in remotely and dial out, check their voicemail inboxes, or record an out-of-office message.

Hardware:
7 Questions

12 **Do I have to buy new handsets? Can employees switch between a mobile app and hardware phones?**

Desk phones are totally optional. We can even configure incoming calls to ring on all of a user's registered devices so they have the option to pick up at their desk or on the go. This means that even if a user is working from home or frequently traveling, they will be able to take their business phone with them. This not only promotes better productivity and efficiency, but also better cost savings.

13 **Can't I just buy a VoIP desk phone and plug it into the network?**

No, the phone won't work without an associated number. You could connect a desk phone to a low-cost or free VoIP platform (e.g., Google Voice) but you'll quickly hit a wall of limitations. The most painful issues would be fewer enterprise features, slower support response times, and less reliable audio quality.

14 **Can I use my old VoIP desk phone with a new platform?**

All a handset needs to be compatible with a VoIP solution is a microphone and a connection to your desktop computer. It may be difficult to get things working if you're going the DIY route but a hands-on provider will have no problem extending the life of your hardware.

15 **What is "hosted VoIP"?**

This option, sometimes referred to as "hosted PBX," eliminates most of the on-site technical requirements. For example, every VoIP solution needs a computer server to keep things running smoothly. Providers that offer hosting set up and manage that hardware in their office so your team can access everything remotely.

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Hardware:
7 Questions

16 What happens if I move offices?

If an IT provider is hosting your VoIP platform, relocating your business shouldn't interrupt your service in any way. Employees can still make and receive calls using their laptops or smartphones, and desk phones will be ready to use as soon as they're plugged in at the new location.

17 Does my office need to be rewired?

This depends on your current cabling and growth forecasts. We could connect your VoIP phones to your existing cabling infrastructure, but it might cause issues when adding lines in the future. Although we're happy to keep the project budget low, upgrading your office wiring is cheap and we usually recommend taking care of it early.

18 What happens if the office power or internet goes out?

You can avoid any interruption of service by setting up call forwarding to cell phone lines. Assuming you have a hosted VoIP solution, the calls would be received by your off-site provider and routed to a phone number that doesn't rely on an internet connection. From the caller's point of view, nothing would be out of the norm.

Deployment:
3 Questions

19 What do I need to prepare before contacting a provider?

We're happy to hold consultations with business owners and decision makers who are unsure about their telecommunications needs. However, deciding whether or not a provider is a good fit will go much faster if you already know the following:

a. How many lines you'll need
b. How important desk phones are
c. Which VoIP features are most important to you
d. What apps the service should integrate with
e. What your growth forecast looks like

20 How long will it take to install my VoIP solution?

Every deployment is different but core call capacity shouldn't be interrupted for more than one day. You probably won't have all your phone lines up and running in that time frame, but we'll make sure everything looks like business as usual from your customers' perspectives.

21 How do I get started?

If you've chosen to partner with a VoIP provider over a low-cost alternative, your first step should be a consultation. This will clarify your business needs with a potential provider and the total cost of ownership.

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Want to learn more about our customized VoIP service plans? Schedule a free consultation today!

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