Choosing the Best Phone System for Small Businesses

by James Allen

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The earlier perception that PBX systems were affordable only by large corporations is no longer true. There are been tremendous technological advancements in the field of telecommunications that today small businesses can avail sophisticated phone system with an array of valuable features.

The market is flooded with many types of small business phone systems in a variety of configurations with a range of features and concomitant benefits. We are today living in the Internet age and most small business phone systems run on Internet Protocol (IP) networks.

There are many factors that you need to consider when selecting the right phone system for your small business. First of all, understand what type of telephone system and what features/facilities your small business exactly needs. Some of the sophisticated features that todayâ€™s phone system offer are - Auto attendant, Conferencing, Call Forwarding, Call Transfer, Find Me Follow Me, Fax facility, Voice Mail, Music-on-hold, Unified Messaging.

VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) - For this system, you will need computer network bandwidth and each VoIP system makes specific recommendations for equipment. Some may need new hardware such as dedicated routers for each carrier. But others let you use regular phone equipment with the proper adapters. While VoIP technology experienced a troubled start, it is now a perfect option for many small businesses. Combining traditional voice phone features and services with the potential of the Internet, VoIP technology can combine voice and data traffic.

VoIP also can help small businesses reduce the cost of international calls, as well as the cost of multiple hard-wired phone lines. The primary disadvantage of a pure VoIP system is its dependence on the internet. If your internet access is disrupted you phone system will not work.

Virtual PBX - Virtual PBX services offer an auto-attendant PBX system on top of your existing mobile, land, and VoIP phone lines. The cost of the Virtual PBX (or hosted PBX) systems will depend on features and the number of lines, and can save you lot of money. Third parties typically host and administer virtual phone systems that offer many of the same services and options available with a traditional phone system. Virtual phone systems can provide a wide range of options and services with little to no initial cost.

Key Service Units (KSUs) -These modern small business phone systems offer more than just access to a hard-wired phone line. Features available in these systems include integration with cellular service and email, as well as traditional options such as voice mail, advanced call routing and Integrated Voice Response systems.

The Cellular Phone - This technology allows integration with traditional small business models. Thus, many small business phone systems have the ability to forward calls to a cellular number, thereby allowing employees to travel and work outdoors while remaining in constant contact. Smartphone technology also can be integrated with voice mail, email, internet access, document sharing and text messaging to create a virtual office.

Choosing a phone system for your small business may seem like an easy task until you study the variety of options and customizable features. With so many different versions of small business phone systems available it is necessary to have a good understanding of the different products before you make your final selection.

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James Allen - About Author:
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