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Understanding Online Fax Service

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Many business enterprises have already bid adieu to the cumbersome traditional faxing methods and switched over to online or internet faxing. Online fax, simply stated, is using the Internet and the email facility to send/receive your fax messages. The greatest benefit of online faxing is it is a paperless, inkless, more secure, and low cost and lot more convenient operation as compared with using the old traditional fax machine. Besides, you can avail your fax facility anywhere, anytime - wherever you have the Internet access.

For obtaining online fax facility, you will have to sign-up with a reputed and reliable Internet fax service provider who will allot a local or toll-free fax number. You will also be given an online interface (site) where you can view, send and receive your fax messages. It is also possible to store your faxes online. Your faxes will be sent to you via email as attachments, normally in TIFF or PDF formats.

Unlike, traditional faxing, you do not require a fax machine nor a separate dedicated fax line. But you must make sure to tie up with a service provider who will offer 24X7 online fax services as communication is critical to any business and you can ill-afford to take any risks.

Most online fax service provider companies offer you around 300 combined pages of incoming and outgoing messages per month. Some provider companies may quote rate per pages while others may quote in minutes. Though these are the market norms, there are some fax service providers who offer even better deals.

You will have to shop around and try to get the most favorable terms without compromising on quality and reliability of the provider. International fax services will understandably cost more. The one saving grace is - most service providers will offer a free 30-day trial period and hence you can try and satisfy that the provider you select is the right one for you.

Users unaccustomed to the concept of Internet faxing may wonder how the system works. There is a simple step-by-step process for sending and receiving an Internet fax. To send Internet faxes, you simply have to attach whatever document you want to send via fax to an email. Documents can be created using a scanner or they can be created with a software application word processor. The message is sent and received by the Internet fax provider.

The process for receiving faxes is equally simple. For you to receive an Internet fax, the sender addresses the fax to the number you obtain upon sign up. The Internet fax provider receives the fax, decodes it and sends it as an image file to your email address. You can rest assured that using Internet fax options are affordable and the process is also nothing complicated.

Of course, online fax service has its own disadvantages. The receiver's computer must be turned on because the software for that service needs to be running. But there are also some online fax services which are free and without the use of such software. But the benefits of online fax vastly outweigh the traditional fax methods. Internet faxing has enabled users to receive faxes through e-mails, mobile phones, hand-held organizers, and PDAs.

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