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8 Reasons More Companies are Moving Their Communications to the Cloud

The sport of business is a competitive one and, increasingly, companies are using cloud-hosted business tools as an advantage to communicate and collaborate more efficiently. The rapid movement to cloud-hosted phone systems is a case in point, as IT teams endure the limitations, frustrations, and cost of managing their traditional or custom-built systems.

If this scenario sounds familiar, you're not alone. For numerous mid-size and enterprise companies, hosted phone systems offer better voice, mobility, and collaboration tools within a single solution. But just as important, cloud systems can be managed virtually, eliminating the expensive infrastructure and maintenance required by legacy systems. So, the potential to streamline and decrease costs is clear.

Consider 8 Top Reasons More Companies Are Moving Their Communications to the Cloud:

1 More Workforce Productivity

Switching to a cloud-based phone solution can certainly make it easier for employees to communicate and stay productive. **Employees have access to the system even if they're working remotely or on the go on their mobile phone, tablet, or other device.** They can even take their IP desk phones home, plug into internet, and enjoy the same business phone features they have back at the office.

Cloud phone systems also extend business-grade hosted VoIP services to cloud-based business applications such as email and customer relationship management (CRM) to connect phones, people, and devices like never before. From video calling and conferencing to instant messaging and more, increased collaboration makes work more productive.

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2 Savings and More Efficient Spending

The prospect of saving money with cloud-based technology, versus traditional phone technology, is significant. Consider that cloud systems don't require expensive on-premise voice and data hardware. Plus, cloud systems are managed virtually, so phone vendor maintenance visits are no longer required, adding extensions is easy, and expanding to an additional location requires no "buildout" at the new site.

For many organizations, the move to a cloud-hosted system represents an efficient shift from capital expenditures to operational expenditures, as well as the potential to reduce total cost of ownership. In addition, working with a more capable cloud-solution provider, businesses can consolidate their vendor services – such as their ISP, local and long distance carrier, conference call provider, IT consultant, PBX maintenance, etc.—under a single provider. This can be a big relief, especially if you've ever experienced an issue where multiple vendors point at each other for answers.

3 Business-Enabling Voice and Collaboration Features

We've all become accustomed to instant access to information and the latest technology, and cloud phone systems provide just that for your employees and future employees. **With a cloud phone system, the latest features—and updates to existing features—can be delivered seamlessly onto the system for the entire customer base, eliminating the hassle of a technician visit for upgrades.**

Employees have access to premier calling features, mobile solutions that integrate with the full phone system, collaboration features such as video conferencing, and integration of devices and data—all through a single provider. Also, numerous applications are available that seamlessly integrate the phone system with popular business applications from Google®, Salesforce®, Microsoft® and others.

With a true unified communications platform, businesses are in a position to improve productivity across the organization. They can also leverage their innovative business tools—and mobility features that allow employees to work remotely—to attract top talent.

4 Integrated Mobility That Keeps Business Moving

With more mobile employees distributed across multiple locations, it's no wonder businesses demand better mobility solutions. **Mobility is an area where cloud-based and traditional phone solutions differ greatly. With a cloud solution, employees' mobile devices become just another end point within the phone system.** This is referred to as "integrated mobility," where calls generated on the mobile platform are recognized on the recipient's caller ID as a call from the business. And users have the same phone system functionality that they have back at the office.

Traditional providers, on the other hand, can offer separate business mobile lines ("separate mobile"), but they're not tied into the company's business phone system. So, your employees would maintain a separate office line and mobile line, without integration with the company's phone system. There are also costs involved with adding additional business lines to accommodate traditional mobile needs.

With the integrated mobility of cloud-hosted systems, employees can leverage their mobile devices to create a true unified communications network. For the company, integrated mobility makes it easier to establish a smart BYOD (bring your own device) policy—with voice, IM, and collaboration capabilities accessible where employees choose to work.

5 The Option to Connect Your Legacy System to the Cloud

For some companies, it makes most sense to connect their legacy phone system to the cloud. And the right provider can offer both a flexible and feature-rich path to the cloud through Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) Trunking.

SIP Trunking leverages the power and scalability of the internet to transmit voice, video, data, text, and other unified communications. It's often a popular—and cost effective—option for businesses since it allows them to get more mileage from their existing system. Plus, private SIP interoperability allows them to connect with existing phone hardware.

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6 Easy Scaling as Business Grows

Unlike traditional systems, cloud-based phone solutions enable businesses to scale quickly without the need to configure complicated hardware and tap into costly IT resources. With the phone system hosted in the cloud, extensions and features can be added virtually and quickly.

Also, unlike a traditional private branch exchange (PBX), a hosted PBX does not require customers to take on extra equipment to get the advanced features necessary for communicating at today's speed of business. Whether the business utilizes a fully hosted solution from the start or connects its legacy system to the cloud via SIP trunking, customers can scale easily and cost-effectively on demand.

7 Business Continuity, Even Through a Disaster

Traditional phones systems are hosted on premises at the business location, while cloud-hosted systems operate in data centers with redundant power and cooling. As a result, cloud systems can remain in operation—with employee access on any device—even during emergencies or when the business location is out of commission. Events like the loss of internet or power are also manageable, since customers can preset the system to automatically redirect calls to mobile numbers or other locations.

Traditional, on-premises systems meet emergencies at the business location quite differently. Events such as a downed or cut phone line, for example, can halt service for an unknown period of time. And most traditional systems offer no form of remote access. If the office location is out of commission, so is the business phone system.

The name of the game is reliable service and business continuity, and cloud-hosted phone systems support these priorities very well.

8 A Better Customer Experience

It takes a lot more than a great phone system to cultivate happy customers. But adopting a reliable cloud-hosted phone system with clear HD voice, efficient routing, and service-oriented voice and collaboration features is a good start.

In addition, some cloud systems offer integrations with leading customer relationship management (CRM) applications, allowing more visibility to the customer on the call—right on the computer screen. For example, let's say that some of your employees use the Salesforce integration and receive a call from a customer. With this integration, the customer's account information instantly pops on the screen, enabling your employee to reference key information in real time to serve the caller better.

Also, the information that is collected, entered, and analyzed can help improve customer communications today and well into the future—particularly in a cloud-based call center environment.

Indeed, cloud phone systems offer outstanding call-center functionality designed to enhance agent productivity and ease operations supervision. Such solutions offer easily customized call pathways, fluid messaging opportunities, and seamless ability to scale up or down as business dictates.

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Looking to Make a Switch? Vonage Can Help

Our hosted platform empowers businesses with a full suite of feature-rich communication solutions. Every business is different, and our teams work with you to deploy a solution that serves your organizational priorities and integrates as desired with existing technology. A partnership with Vonage comes with ongoing support, technology on demand, and the reliability of the Vonage cloud.

We invite you to contact a representative today.

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