Choosing a Phone System

That Will Increase Productivity, Improve Efficiency and Reduce Costs

altice
business

Abstract/Summary

Business Hosted Voice coupled with Unified Communications (UC) capabilities provides several benefits to companies of all sizes. Businesses can realize both initial and long-term savings with a voice over IP (VoIP) solution. Adding a UC component has the added benefit of freeing employees to seamlessly move calls anywhere using multiple devices.

A Hosted Voice solution is easier and less expensive to manage and support which means there is less reliance on IT teams or outside contractors for moves, adds and changes. And, capital investment is minimal.

Businesses can take advantage of many rich calling and collaboration features in their Hosted Voice with UC solution. Call routing features can improve handling of inbound calls to a call center; collaboration, instant message and UC presence features help to improve employee productivity and mitigate the challenges of a remote staff.

Introduction

Your business has many priorities. With so many things to focus on, you may not be thinking about your phone system – it does the job, so why change it? But what if your phone system was able to help your employees be more productive?
Or it could help make your employees more productive? Or provide a means to respond more quickly to your customers?

If these outcomes are important to you, then switching to a Hosted Voice with Unified Communications solution service should be on your priority list. Technologies such as Voice over IP (VoIP), especially when provided through a "cloud" based service deliver an impressive array of capabilities, and at a price point that fits all budgets.

A legacy phone system, with its outdated technology is very expensive to maintain, is difficult to scale, and does not deliver modern features that your business needs to succeed.

Are you moving or adding a new location?

Switching to a Hosted Voice service when moving offices or expanding locations will not only save your business time and costs, but will give you the opportunity to take advantage of useful features you never had with your old system. Moving can provide challenges, it is difficult and expensive to move an old phone system to a new location. The cost of uninstalling it, transporting, and reinstalling it can represent anywhere from 20-40 percent of the cost of an entirely new system.

Adding an additional office location is another reason to consider switching to Hosted Voice. Transferring the entire company to Hosted solution in this situation will not only be easier to manage but will only nominally increase the time and effort it takes when compared to what it would take to maintain and monitor two separate phone systems (or more, depending on how many office locations you have).

Can your current phone systems grow with your business?

Most legacy premises phone systems have a maximum number of phones they can support before having to purchase additional equipment. With a cloud-based service like hosted voice, you can easily add additional lines as your business grows.

Increased customer calls can also tax your legacy phone system. If you don't have enough incoming and outgoing phone lines, customers will get a busy signal, which leads to hang-ups, and potentially ends in lost revenue. A Hosted Voice system can be set up to have a potentially limitless number of lines that are activated when all real phone lines are busy. These lines can play music on hold or have a custom Interactive Voice Response (IVR) to direct callers to the right person.

Enhance Productivity

If you have an outdated phone system, you are missing out on the productivity enhancing features that are available with a Hosted Voice. Below are just a few of these capabilities:

- **Call Reporting –** Hosted Voice systems provide offer impressive call reports and stats, as well as the ability to track and monitor individual phone calls – features that are extremely valuable to a business call center or inside sales team.

- **Unified Communications mobility and softphone applications –** Make and receive calls, instant messenger, presence and video calling all built into apps that run on your PC or Smartphone

- **CRM integration –** Calls that come into the dektop app can automatically pull up your CRM application to quickly search your customer or user accounts

- **Call queues, such as Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) –** Manage call volume by setting up agents in answer queues and send calls to specific business units to via routing rules

- **Integrated Video Conferencing –** Allows you to uplift a small team meeting to a large group meeting. Also schedule and manage meetings with the Outlook plugin

What is Hosted Voice?

Hosted Voice makes all of the features and capabilities of a best-in-class phone system available to you without the need for a big capital purchase. With Hosted Voice, the service provider hosts and manages the phone system in their network. As a business, you do not have to worry about the expense, maintenance or other downsides to purchasing a physical phone system. Instead of that big up-front investment, you pay only for what you need.

With Hosted Voice, companies can expect:

- **Low or No Capital Costs** – Unlike premise-based systems, the "brains" of Hosted UC reside in the cloud, so there is very little to no equipment to purchase, resulting in limited up-front costs – and often these are included as part of your monthly bill.

- **Predictable Operating Expense** – Monthly service charges are usually calculated on a per user basis. If you have 10 employees each with a telephone on their desk, your monthly operating cost will be 10 times a set fee. If you add people, you'll know exactly how your costs will increase.

- **No Maintenance Expenses** – Because the service provider owns the equipment, they are responsible of all the costs associated with maintenance.

- **Business Continuity** – Availability of UC service during disaster. Desktop and mobile clients can be used even when customer physical location is not available.

- **No Obsolescence** – The service provider hosting the system will routinely upgrade the service so that new enhancements are delivered on an ongoing basis.

- **Feature-rich** communications for improved call handling and routing, UC mobility, and collaboration.

Benefits of Hosted Voice

By investing in a Hosted Voice solution, businesses can reduce expenses, improve employee productivity, increase flexibility, and better serve customers:

Month-over-Month Cost Savings

- Hosted Voice reduces overall cost-of-ownership, because there's no phone system equipment to buy or lease.
- Most business Hosted Voice packages come with unlimited nationwide calling, resulting in a dramatic savings in long-distance costs.

Less Reliance on IT – Hosted Voice is easier and cheaper to manage and support, in part because the Hosted Voice service and its features reside in the cloud.

- Hosted Voice eliminates the need to maintain hardware.
- Easy moves add and changes - all can be done via simple software changes,
- Users can manage features and call routing themselves via an easy-to-use web interface.

Improve Productivity

- Visual Voicemail – Easily check voice, video and fax messages from a single message center. Voice messages can even be translated into text so you can read them without dialing in to retrieve them. Listen, delete or respond at the touch of a button.
- Collaboration – Host and record conference calls using desktop and mobile clients, eliminating the need for a third-party conferencing solution.
- Contact Management
  - Instant Messaging
  - Presence provides availability status of contacts using both calendar and phone status
  - Integrate contacts on any device
  - Search, call and edit any of your contacts effortlessly and keep themsynchronized.
  - Send instant messages to other people in your corporate directory who are using the same service, no matter what device they are using

Unified Communications Mobility

- Seamlessly move calls from device to device, or from cellular to Wi-Fi, even in the middle of a call.
- Employees can work from anywhere and use all the features they value so much when you're in the office, and all connected to their office phone number.
- Quickly change call routing using an easy-to-use web portal.

Success Stories

Customer: Multi-location Auto Services Business

Challenge	A multi-location automotive services business wanted their technicians to be able to quickly identify a customer, and the details of their last visit. They are using a custom, but off-brand CRM system to manage their customer base containing more than 1.5 million customer records. They were also seeking a call recording solution, which was necessary to maintain their customer satisfaction guarantees. Sales management also planned to use recordings as a key component of an improved employee training program.
Solution	This regional automotive service customer took advantage of several advanced features in their Business hosted Voice solution. In addition to providing Hosted Voice handsets at all locations, they added CRM Integration which allowed sales and support to instantly know which customer was calling, and the ability to view their account information. With Screen Pop from their CRM, the customer can be identified as soon as call is received. Using Call Recording – all calls can now be recorded for analysis and training purposes.
Impact	Upon installation of Altice Business Hosted Voice, sales and support employees were able to decrease their call durations by more than 20%. Recordings from those calls were used to develop a comprehensive training program that is used for new hires as well as ongoing coaching.

Customer: Regional Healthcare Staffing Agency

Challenge A regional healthcare staffing agency was seeking a new communications solution for their outbound agents. They have several remote users and were seeking ways to improve the efficiency and productivity of each agent. Robust reporting was crucial to their improvement plans.

Solution With Call Queuing they were able to implement several enhanced features to help them manage their agents and Calls.

The Admin Web Portal's built in Supervisor Dashboard displays calls in queue and agent activity. This allowed the supervisors to view and download detailed statistics.

The Agent Dashboard is powerful tool that allows them to see calls in queue and wait time.

The included Pre-Built reports and Ad-Hoc Reporting tools enable the team to review real-time and historical data like Calls by Day, Calls by Queue, Call Detail by Agent and Call Duration Summary.

Impact Implementation was quick and painless, and they were able to quickly improve how they tracked their agents and were able to provide targeted training training. Agents were able to save time because they were able to monitor their status and calls in real-time, resulting in increased customer contact and sales. Ongoing training efforts were also improved using he Call Recording.

Summary

Altice Business Hosted Voice is truly the last phone system you'll ever need. It delivers best-in-class capabilities at a price that fits all budgets. In addition to the advantages described earlier, here are a few additional benefits:

Cost Savings

A bundled price for everything you need to run your business. Altice Business Hosted Voice includes everything you need to support the voice and data needs of your business. Included with the price of each "seat," or user, is:

- Full feature set plus a web portal to customize the business or employee experience

- Business-wide features such as Auto Attendant and Music on Hold

- Equipment and installation

There are no hidden costs – you simply pay a flat rate per employee per month and that's it. As your business expands, you can simply add new users to your account. Hosted Voice provides you all the features you need and then some. If you're on an older system today, you'll be thrilled with the functionality that's available in Hosted Voice. Included are the features you'd expect – call transfer, voicemail, call forwarding, and the like. However, what really makes Business Hosted Voice exciting are capabilities such as:

Unified Communications for Voice Anywhere

Altice Business's platform allows you to integrate your Apple or Android devices, laptops and PCs into your Hosted Voice service for on-the-go voice anywhere communication. It includes downloadable clients for:

- Windows based laptops/desktop computers

- Android-based mobile devices and tablets

- Apple devices and tablets (iPhone, iPad, MacBook)

The Altice Business platform integrates your mobile device with desk phone functions and enables you to send and receive calls from any connected device. You can also Instant Message, Video Chat, integrate with Microsoft Outlook contacts, and move active calls between devices.

Communication and Collaboration

The Altice Business Unified Communications add-on provides fully integrated collaboration and messaging features for seamless communication and collaboration.

- Instant Messaging and Presence, and SMS capability

- Video Conferencing for meetings and webinars

- Integrated collaboration capabilities for Desktop and Application Sharing

Quick and Easy Customization

An easy to use web portal enables you to customize your phone system so that you and your employees can easily customize your individual phone system experience to suit the way you do business.

Have an employee that's out of the office a lot of the day? With the click of a mouse, a user can take advantage of Altice Business Unified Communications powerful remote office capabilities to have their desk phone and mobile phone ring simultaneously or use the mobile client to receive calls anywhere.

Want to distribute inbound sales calls to a group of employees? Again, a click of a mouse in the web portal lets you set up a hunt group that can ring your sales team's phones simultaneously, in sequence, or in a specific pattern.

Customer Service

Altice Business is located where you are. Should there ever be a question or problem, our trained staff will solve it to your satisfaction – quickly. Compare that to other providers that serve customers with an 800 number in another state or even another country and you'll understand why local is better.

Voice Quality and Security

Since Altice Business Hosted Voice is a service that's fully managed, we ensure a superior experience. This is not a product that uses the commercial Internet to route voice calls. With Hosted Voice, end-to-end quality and security are assured. All calls are routed over our reliable fiber-optic managed network automatically prioritizing voice to give your calls highest quality.

Conclusion

There are a lot of options out there when looking at a phone system. It may seem like the status quo – no change – is the safest bet. However, the pace of technology has now made possible an impressive array of services available to all businesses. Now can be the right time to evaluate your needs and see if new capabilities can help your business be more productive. You will find you can make a big jump forward without increasing your current spend and perhaps even saving money.

With Altice Business Hosted Voice and UC, Altice Business is delivering a best-in-class phone solution with no up-front costs that allows you to buy only what you need. We take care of all the details – phones, equipment, installation, training, and ongoing service – so you can focus on your business. Best of all: we're local – we're available around the clock to help solve any problems you might have.

Call or email us today to find out how Altice Business Hosted Voice and Unified Communications solutions can help your business.