Cloud4 Blog Guide

Benefits of Hosted VoIP

Attention: Your Phone Number Isn't Working

Businesses do a lot by email these days, but the phone is still a critical tool. Despite the existence of teleconferencing, video calling and real-time instant messaging, it's often better to pick up the phone and call.

Through convention, most businesses have acquired geographical or non-geographical numbers pointing to fixed landline phones. We have also seen a surge of mobile numbers replacing geographical numbers, particularly for businesses who do not work from an office.

The Evolving PBX

Traditionally, businesses have installed PBX systems on premise to handle incoming calls. An old-fashioned PBX requires engineer visits to achieve most management and maintenance tasks.

If you need more lines, fewer lines, or a repair to the infrastructure, it's generally going to be an expensive affair. Phones are hard-wired to desks, and there's no freedom of movement at all.

This is where VoIP steps in to fill the void. A hosted PBX is entirely software based, apart from the device you use to answer the call (your laptop, or your phone, in most cases). So there's no engineer to call out. Need a new line? Add one in a click. Noticed a fault? Your host is there to fix it, under the terms of your monthly agreement.

Call My Mobile

Naturally, the mobile is more portable. But with mobile numbers, we have another problem: people don't trust them. A landline or geographical number can be traced; it has longevity. A mobile phone number could be attached to a throwaway pay-as-you-go SIM. It could be obtained online for free, and disposed of at the end of the week.

For many businesses, mobiles don't give their business gravitas, or a local presence. That matters if you're running an ad campaign and you need people to convert.

Let's face it: the main reason people like mobiles is that they're not in a fixed place. What if you could use your mobile, but advertise a landline? That's exactly what VoIP allows you to do.

You can purchase any number of telephone numbers and route them to your mobile, laptop or tablet, providing you've purchased an extension for each device or user. Numbers are available with your own local area code, or another area code, or even another country.

Switch and Save

Changing the fundamentals of your business can be costly, confusing and more hassle than it's worth. But if you're still using a fixed line phone, VoIP is worth the effort. It will free you from line rental, release you from your desk, and allow you to take more calls as you go about your main line of business. And, most importantly, it'll save you money.

If you're still advertising a mobile number, VoIP's a no-brainer, too. For a small monthly fee, you could advertise a fixed-line number without giving up the convenience of your smartphone. And if you've got more than one business, you can have as many lines as you need, all pointing to the same place.

Intrigued? Find out more. Contact Cloud4 and find out how VoIP could work for you.

How to choose an effective business communication solution

Communication is the most important aspect of any business and although phone systems are prevalent and indispensable on a day to day basis, not all businesses know about Hosted VoIP and how it can decrease their telephony spending whilst giving them more flexibility.

Businesses use telephony to communicate with other businesses, potential partners and clients but the truth is that phones are necessary for simple tasks such as internal communication and interdepartmental collaboration. Modern businesses will search for a more advanced business telephony solution not just to decrease the costs but also enhance user experience.

Today's fast growing and highly mobile businesses are looking towards VoIP to improve their business agility. Why? Because with Hosted PBX you are not bound to the office desk phone. Though many offices with VoIP integrated into their IT infrastructure do have desk phones, they can access all of the features that the desk phone has from practically any internet enabled device such as smartphones, laptops and desktops, with the inclusion of a headset.

Much like many mobile and landline providers, Hosted VoIP providers have packages suited towards the business. However, it can be configured in more ways than landlines and for less than a landline. In addition, as phone calls are handled over the internet, the cost of calls is reduced. Though it may not seem that much of a difference (Usually a couple of pence), it all adds up over the month.

VoIP can provide features found in larger companies to small businesses such as Voice Menus ("Press 1 for accounts, press 2 for services" etc), the ability to access business contacts on the go from a smartphone app, being able to add and remove users flexibly and make international calls from anywhere in the world through the internet, allowing for more productive workers. This can give a small business a competitive edge against rivals, producing a much more professional telephony system without spending excess.

It's typically rule of thumb that outsourcing saves time, effort and money but many forget that it is also very easy to do. You can migrate contacts easily from the handsets to the cloud so that they can be accessed on any device connected and
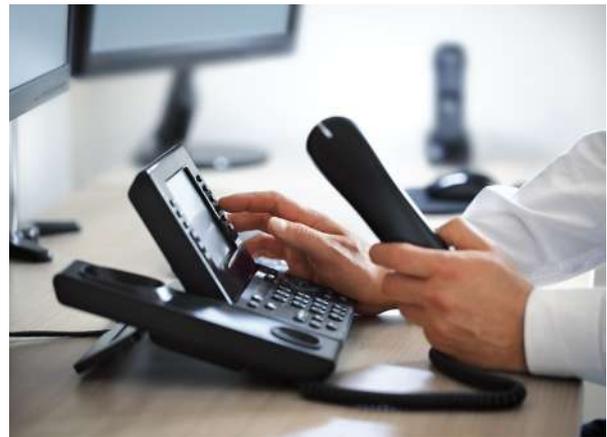
configured with the installed VoIP service. This maintains data control and integrity and allows a business to give more flexibility and trust to remote workers.

One of the biggest reasons many small businesses adopt Hosted VoIP in replacement of Landlines is for the cost. The director of UBS told us "We saved about £400 initially and still save a fortune every month from the cheaper calls, and we got to keep our phone number which was important. When you invest in Hosted PBX, you simply move your business phone system to the cloud, which better makes use of both hardware and software such as Lync and other softphones on desktops, tablets and mobiles, making the system multiplatform and highly flexible.

In short, Hosted PBX is a perfect solution for businesses that are looking for cost-effective and innovative business telephony solution. If your business aims to go mobile, then chances are that you'll want to invest in Hosted VoIP services so that your employees never miss a conversation.

These are not the only benefits. Interested in knowing more how it can help your business and what your options are? **Contact Cloud4 for more information on Hosted VoIP telephony now!**

Case Study - AK Payroll Services Ltd

How we helped to improve AK Payroll's communications

Company name:

AK Payroll Services Limited

What is AK Payroll:

AK Payroll Services, run by experienced Anne Nattress, is a friendly company offering flexible accountancy solutions build around customers' needs and their specific requirements, specialising in payroll implementation.

Requirement:

Flexible and cost-effective business telephony system and a better broadband solution for new premises.

> "Cloud4 has proven to be an ideal partner for our business, providing a simple and affordable business telephony solution without the headaches normally associated with this critical service.
>
> Hosted VoIP is an ideal solution for us as it is both affordable and simple to manage, with low upfront costs and minimal onsite equipment requiring maintenance or support."
>
> **Steve Nattress, AK Payroll Services**

The Project

AK Payroll was in the process of moving to new premises. Although the team knew about the cost benefits and flexibility that hosted VoIP services bring, there remained concerns about how viable it would be in an area where broadband services were generally poor.

The client was nevertheless keen to explore the advantages of cloud-hosted services, including VoIP, and contacted Cloud4 to find out more.

AK Payroll's Objectives

AK Payroll wanted an efficient and reliable phone system which was cost-effective and, if possible, could save the business money.

The new system needed to be secure and well-supported, seamlessly slotting into the new company's new business premises without any interruption to client services.

"I was looking for a cloud-based VoIP solution designed to meet the needs of our small business as we prepared for a move to new offices. We also chose Cloud4 to provide the broadband service to the new premises".

Why Cloud4?

The client came to Cloud4 in need of a trusted and reliable VoIP provider with the knowledge and technical ability to implement a resilient telephone system.

Cloud4 identified the possibility of new superfast fibre broadband ("FTTC") at the client's new premises, meaning that VoIP could work effectively and efficiently for the business. Through close client consultation, Cloud4 was able to provide AK Payroll with both a broadband service and a fully pre-configured phone system which could be used immediately.

Cloud4's knowledge and understanding of cloud hosting solutions, coupled with exceptional personal customer service, reassured AK Payroll that Cloud4 was a reliable partner for its business.

Cloud4 managed the installation of the broadband service for the new premises and ensured that the project was completed on time. Phones arrived ready to be connected to the network enabling us to start using them before the move, reducing the risks associated with putting all systems live at once.

Benefits of Hosted VoIP and broadband from Cloud4 Computers

- Advanced enterprise-grade hosted VoIP PBX with low cost of entry and maintenance

- Superfast broadband connected to VoIP platform for quality voice and data

- Save up to 40% on call costs over traditional telephony

- UK hosted in ISO-27001 datacentres and supported 24/7

After Adoption

AK Payroll's hosted VoIP and broadband solution was a bespoke package, created to meet the client's specific needs; clients always receive only the products and solutions most suited to them, delivered promptly and supported by our expert UK-based team.

Since adoption of the new system, Cloud4 has continued to support the client and has worked with third parties to ensure an optimal broadband service is delivered to AK Payroll's premises, keeping the business well-connected.

Cloud4 Computers is a leading provider of cloud computing, business mobility and IT solutions in the UK and abroad. We focus on delivering unique solutions, supported by outstanding customer service and technical expertise.

Contact us for more information on migrating your company to the cloud:

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