

Exponential Value: Networking Phone Systems Within Multiple Offices

In recent years, data infrastructures have grown in capability to link across multiple office locations within a company, unifying all critical business systems across the organization. Yet many companies tend to still have their phone systems in silos. Just as a single, centralized data infrastructure yields substantial cost and productivity benefits, so will a unified phone platform deliver significant advantages to a business. And with the latest advancements in IP networks and SIP trunking, the cost to implement a networked phone system has never been lower.

How much can a centralized network save you?

Consider a business with three offices:

- Each has their own receptionist at a salary of \$30,000/yr.
- Each has an independent voicemail platform at a cost of \$12,000 each.

By utilizing one network that covers all three offices—with one voicemail system and one receptionist that can route calls to any office — this company could save over \$80,000.

Financial Benefits

When an organization deploys one phone network to multiple office locations, they are gaining solid economies of scale from centralized auto-attendant and voicemail platforms. Technology and maintenance costs are greatly reduced. Staffing requirements, such as the need to have a receptionist at each individual office location, are also reduced.

Now consider the long distance benefits. Suppose you have offices in Tampa and Cleveland. The Tampa office needs to put a call in to a client in Ohio. The call can be routed over your centralized VoIP network to the Cleveland office, then through a local phone carrier to the client. This type of call routing will provide significant cost savings for the daily operations of your business; depending on the number and location of your corporate offices.

Productivity Benefits

With a networked phone system, calls can be transferred and forwarded between offices seamlessly. Calls to one inbound number can be routed to various offices across the network. One receptionist can see the status of every employee, even if that person is 3 states away. Voicemails can come in on any line and be accessed from any extension, in any state — or accessed remotely through Unified Communications.

Maintenance of the network is also greatly simplified. IT staff can usually perform programming and troubleshooting from any location in the network. Moves/add/changes can happen without having to send a support resource all the way out to the office in question.



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Customer Service Benefits

When a prospect calls into a non-networked system, and they need to be transferred to a department in another office, that person must be given a new number. The prospective customer must then hang up and dial the other number — an eternity in which that person might decide to give up on the call altogether.

With a networked system, a caller can be transferred to multiple extensions, and as many offices as necessary, to provide the assistance that person is seeking. And as far as the caller knows, all employees could be right in the same building.

Customer service can then be taken to the next level with an IP network, where voice and data are fully integrated. Through this technology, voice communications can be tracked and managed as a lucrative sales and customer information channel to support your core business goals. A company can track the customer experience, reveal and resolve call management problems, and evaluate and optimize the enterprise-wide communications infrastructure.

What to look for

When upgrading your phone system, be sure you select a vendor that has a product that is network capable. And be sure that it has the capability to evolve with your business. If your network can expand smoothly as you add new offices, you will have the ability to grow seamlessly and cost effectively — while building new and stronger customer relationships.



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