

Finding a good Small Business VoIP Provider

Good business sense tells you to make the most of every opportunity that comes along. Whether that's an opportunity to expand your business on an international stage or to save money on something as fundamental as your monthly phone bill, every business opportunity has to be grabbed with both hands to make your company a success. So a system that can potentially do both for you is an opportunity not to be missed.

VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) is just such an opportunity. For business users, the advent of this new technology opens up new possibilities and new ways to save a considerable amount of money at the same time. Unlike most new technology, VoIP doesn't require any additional equipment to install. All you need is a PC and a broadband connection. Unlike traditional phone systems, VoIP uses the Internet to connect between PCs on the same system, allowing you to make and receive calls on your computer. If you use a VoIP provider, that range is expanded to allow you to make VoIP calls using a traditional hand-held phone, thus improving the quality of the calls. It also means that your recipient doesn't have to have VoIP at their end, which is a step up from the early PC-to-PC only VoIP systems.

VoIP works in a unique way. It breaks down the voice into transmitted digital data packets and then sends it through your broadband connection in the same way as it sends all other data. The result? Cheap instant calls that save your business money. VoIP can be used in any size organisation, making it applicable for both small and medium business users. If you are looking to break into a foreign marketplace and this involves a high volume of calls with potential clients or suppliers, business VoIP may be the best way of maximising your international business contact potential without increasing your expenditure. Because VoIP uses the Internet to send calls, the location of your original call is irrelevant, as the proximity to the destination cannot be determined, thus avoiding the long distance charges that would normally be incurred on a traditional landline.

[Business VoIP](#) has one big advantage if your location is part of a network of outlets that are all part of the same company. By using business VoIP, you can call anyone within that network regardless of their location by simply dialling the appropriate extension number. Business VoIP also offers customers standard features such as voicemail, call forwarding and caller ID as well as additional features such as softphone support and outlook integration.

You do have to consider a few external factors before rushing to install VoIP as part of your business communications package, however. VoIP runs through your Internet broadband connection so you must ensure you have sufficient bandwidth, although VoIP providers do not require substantial amounts of bandwidth, some even allow you to dictate how much bandwidth you would like to dedicate to your VoIP calls. Power outages can also interfere with the operation of the system, so it may be worthwhile thinking about a UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply) system if one hasn't already been installed.

VoIP is quickly establishing itself as a fast, efficient and cheap way of making phone calls. It makes sense that businesses, still struggling in the grips of a worldwide recession, should take every opportunity to make their business as efficient as possible. Talking to a VoIP provider and discussing your business needs is the first step in a small investment that could garner big savings as your business grows. It also means that you'll be able to make international calls without worrying about the cost. And it could be that one international call that propels your company onto the global stage.

About the Author

Costas Kariolis - Online Marketing Manager of Vonage UK. Vonage are leading [VoIP providers](#) for home & small [business voip](#) users. Offering cheap international calls and free international calls to landlines via an internet phone service for a set monthly fee.

For interviews, quotes, images or comments contact:

Costas Kariolis

Online Marketing Manager

E-mail: theteam@vonage.com

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