

Finding Your VoIP

With all of the buzz circulating around the *VoIP Revolution*, it's no wonder you've heard something about it. But what exactly is VoIP and how can it *revolutionize* the way you view communications services?

Unfortunately, there isn't just one simple answer. There are many types of VoIP services that have been created to fit your specific and distinct needs. Fortunately, this means that there is a lot of versatility in the VoIP services available, so that you can find your VoIP. Whether Premise-Based, Hosted VoIP, or managed VoIP, your solution is out there. Let's take a closer look at the different types of VoIP...

Premise-Based VoIP

A premise-based VoIP system is just that, premise-based, at the customer site. This type of VoIP requires the customer to acquire the equipment and make an investment in human capital to manage and operate the system. It is important to note that in an environment with a premise-based VoIP, the customer does not look to the service provider for any material office features, as all of the features (call forwarding, voicemail, etc.) are provided by the equipment. Premise-based solutions often require an on-site visit to the premise when dealing with technical issues, which introduces a period of delay in any troubleshooting endeavor. This can, however, be avoided by getting a higher level (and more expensive) service agreement.

Hosted VoIP Services

Hosted services are designed for customers that want all the features of an IP-based Private Branch Exchange (PBX) without the associated capital, lease or maintenance costs. With a hosted VoIP system, phones will be provided at the customer's premise, and in some cases the router and LAN switch. All of the brains of the system are at the hosted provider's facilities and are managed via a web portal, voice portal and/or toolbar. This differs from a traditional or IP-PBX where all of the equipment is onsite and the connection to the telephone network is via a T-1 or analog line. So in the hosted model the service provider bares the responsibility of providing the service to all the devices and troubleshooting any problems that occur, which can almost always be fixed remotely.

Managed VoIP Systems

A managed VoIP system combines voice and data into a single efficient network maintained by a customer's service provider. A High-Speed dedicated Internet connection is seamlessly integrated from the customer's business to their service provider, engineered for voice quality and productivity enhancing features. A managed VoIP model combines the strengths of a purchased model with those of a hosted service. Managed VoIP telephony outsources ongoing system administration, management, maintenance, support, and updates. With innumerable calling features, managed VoIP provides the customer with efficiency enhancing options for a cost-effective price.

So now you have the basics. The next step is evaluating your IT infrastructure and strategy to see which type of VoIP fits the current state of your company and the direction in which you're heading. Make sure to look past the dollar signs and seek long-term solutions. Remember the cost-value continuum and choose the solution that will provide you with the most cost-effective and efficient solution for your business growth. With the multiple VoIP solutions available to fit your unique business needs, TDS has the answers. Call TDS today and find your VoIP.

You've got needs. We've got solutions. Total ROI.