**HOW TO SELECT A TELEPHONE SYSTEM FOR YOUR BUSINESS**

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SMB's (Small and Mid Size Businesses with 5 to 500 employees) have certain specific communications feature requirements that are needed in order to support growth, success, and customer satisfaction. They require a business communications system with a strong set of features that apply to their specific business needs.

However, the current communications market, with all of its technologies, has become overwhelming to the business consumer. What was once a simple concept- the quality transport of voice communications- is now being driven by extensive telephone system feature lists rather than customer needs or business issues that can be solved by the use and application of the latest technologies.

The SMB generally does not have technical staff to dedicate to telephone system research and selection, nor do they have the capital equipment budget or experience necessary to install, maintain, and upgrade the latest communications technology.

## WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT CRITERIA IN SELECTING A NEW BUSINESS TELEPHONE SYSTEM AND SERVICE PROVIDER?

The business owner needs to consider his current and future requirements when planning a telephone system upgrade. He should look for a telephone system **and** vendor that can provide the following minimum features:

- ✓ **Reduces Communications Costs-** with flat rate, fixed, all inclusive pricing for equipment, broadband connection, installation, training, monitoring, maintenance, updates, warranty, and support

- ✓ **Single Vendor Provides Full Telephone System Management-** with an all-inclusive turnkey service offering that includes around the clock maintenance and monitoring

- ✓ **System Scalability and Technology Advances-** grow your business 1 seat at a time while preventing obsolescence

- ✓ **Provides Advanced Features That Enhance Your Business-** PBX and Key System functionality, Auto Attendant, Unified Messaging, Conferencing, and Fax

- ✓ **Ensures reliable communications with your customers-** multi site and mobile worker support *seamlessly connects* remote offices and mobile workers into a unified telephone system

- ✓ **Guarantees Voice and Call Quality-** with around the clock call monitoring and a managed voice only network

✓ **Provides Reliability and Disaster Recovery-** with alternate call routing and backup systems

## WHAT TECHNOLOGIES ARE AVAILABLE IN TODAY'S BUSINESS TELEPHONE SYSTEMS?

**Traditional premise based systems**- basically 25 year old PBX and Key System technology and equipment. These systems are generally purchased or leased by the customer, reside on the customer premise, and connect to a "Telco", such as Verizon, using either analog telephone lines, or T1, for the transport of voice calls over the PSTN(Public Switched Telephone Network). Three companies are usually involved- the equipment manufacturer, the equipment installer, and the service provider(i.e.: Verizon).

**Premise based VOIP systems**- State of the art PBX and Key System technology. These systems are generally purchased or leased by the customer, reside on the customer premise, and connect to a "SIP Provider" such as Speakeasy or Megapath, for the transport of voice calls over a broadband connection to the provider's network, and on to the PSTN. Typically four companies are involved- the equipment manufacturer, the equipment installer, the broadband provider, and the SIP service provider(i.e.: Speakeasy).

**Hosted VOIP systems-** State of the art equipment located in a central location somewhere in the U.S., that provides a subset of PBX and Key System features and route calls over the Public Internet through a broadband connection to telephones at the customer site. These systems are "shared" among thousands of users. Typically three companies are involved- the local equipment installer, the broadband provider, and the Hosted VOIP Service Provider.

**Managed (VOIP) Business Telephone Systems**- A new paradigm of state of the art full featured PBX and Key System technology located at the customer's premise. These systems connect over a fully managed and dedicated voice only broadband connection to the provider's network. Special purpose built monitoring and diagnostic equipment pro-actively monitors every call end to end- around the clock. **One company** provides the complete service- equipment, telephone service, and support, eliminating issues and finger pointing.

## ADVANTAGES TO A "MANAGED BUSINESS TELEPHONE SERVICE"

Managed Business Telephone Service, or MBTS, is a new telecommunications service that has evolved out of three different technologies available today- VOIP (Voice Over IP), Hosted VOIP, and "Managed Services" or "Software as a Service" from companies such as NetSuite and Salesforce.com. Managed Services are enjoying widespread success in the SMB Market- defined as Small and Mid Size Businesses ranging from 5 to 500 employees.

MBTS is a fully managed, business class, full featured telephone service. It is a premise-based, all-inclusive system that provides a flat rate, fixed monthly cost for equipment, installation, unlimited calling, maintenance, warranty, and support—thereby eliminating the cost and overhead associated with equipment ownership.

With MBTS, the telephony and communications applications are running on special purpose built equipment **at the customer premise**. The system uses Advanced Digital technology to transport calls telephone calls over a fully managed and dedicated high speed network, unlike traditional VOIP.

The entire system- from the service provider's equipment to the telephone handset, is managed and monitored around-the-clock for reliability as well as voice and call quality.

The MBTS System provides full PBX and Key System functionality equivalent to large scale Enterprise Telephone Systems. Auto Attendant, Voice Mail, personal voice and fax messaging, audio and web conferencing, and find-me/follow-me call routing.

The system also seamlessly connects multiple locations, remote offices, and mobile workers into a unified system

The benefits to the SMB are significant- they hand off complete responsibility for their communications system to <u>one</u> service provider, who is ultimately responsible for managing the complete telephone system and Quality of Experience.  One stop shopping and accountability for all of a businesses communications needs!

## SUMMARY

Communications technology is rapidly changing, and IP based voice communications is becoming the new standard.

MBTS gives the business owner access to the latest communications technology to help reduce costs and improve their business, without the large up front cost for equipment and the need to dedicate and train internal staff.

The business owner can outsource their entire communications system from <u>one</u> service provider, who is responsible for managing the complete telephone system and Quality of Experience.

Managed Business Telephone Systems combine the best features of Hosted VOIP and a premise based IP PBX into a system that truly provides a hands-off approach to communications.  One stop shopping and accountability for all of a businesses communications needs!

*Tom Cerabona is President and CEO of Kinetech Voice Technologies.  Tom is a 25 year Telecommunications Industry Veteran who has pioneered the widespread deployment of business telephone and voice processing products for AT&T and other companies.*

*The company specializes in providing Managed Telephone and Communications Systems throughout the greater New York area.  Their unique all inclusive fully managed telephone systems are designed specifically to meet the needs of Small to Mid Size businesses by reducing costs and improving communications and reliability.  Tom can be reached at tomc@kinetechvoice.com, www.kinetechvoice.com*