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Cost Savings with Hosted Voice



In the past 10+ years since the Great Recession, companies of all sizes have watched their budgets carefully, making it their goal to be mindful to do more with less. Voice over IP (VoIP) supports this goal by slashing costs for voice communications while giving your business more functionality.

In fact, savings on up-front and recurring costs are the main reason that many companies switch to Hosted VoIP from Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS), premises-based PBXs, and Key Systems. But, economics isn't the only factor. Other reasons include:

- Support for growth
- Reliability, business continuity
- Customer service
- Ease of installation and set-up
- Support for remote workers and road warriors
- Service for multiple locations from a single provider
- The ease with which callers can reach the right person by phone on the first attempt

CLOUD-BASED FOR SUPERIOR SERVICE AND SAVINGS

Traditional phone systems require the installation and ongoing maintenance of PBX or IP-PBX equipment at each business location.

Traditional phone systems and services require a separate network for the phone network versus the high-speed internet access. Sometime doubling the costs. Traditional phone systems and service require long-distance plans and a requirement to add features (like voicemail, auto-attendants, etc.) to the line configurations.

In contrast, a hosted or managed voice service delivers phone system functionality that is hosted by the provider and accessible from any business location. Hosted Voice is far more flexible and easy to manage than a location-based system.

Several other factors contribute to the lower TCO available with Hosted Voice services. These savings, detailed in this whitepaper, include:

- Significantly lower start-up costs
- Minimal maintenance costs
- Considerable savings on long-distance
- Scalability and flexibility to support growth
- Affordable multi-site coordination
- Cost avoidance for traveling and remote workers
- Built-in business continuity
- Enhanced productivity and efficiency

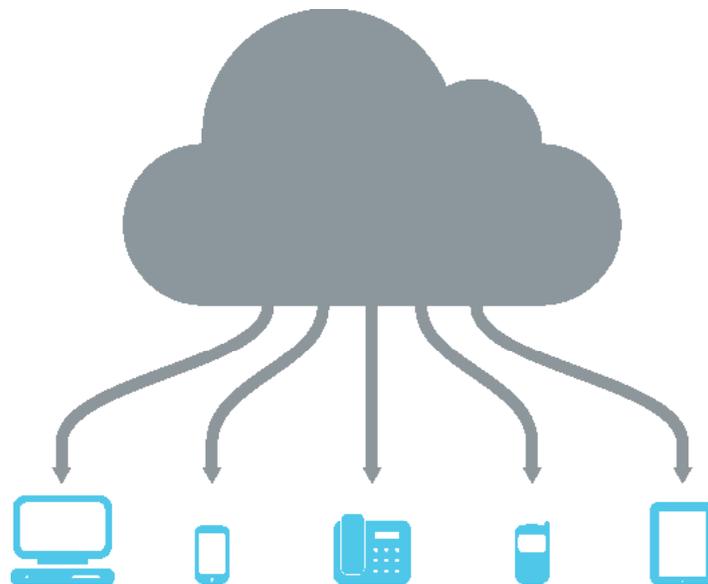
LOWER START-UP COSTS

It's commonly known that the capital investment for a Hosted Voice solution is typically much lower than for a Key System, PBX, or other location-based voices solution.

Hosted Voice gives you all the functionality of location based-systems and simply integrates multiple locations. This is primarily because Hosted Voice does not require on-site equipment, a major expenditure that for most businesses requires a long-term lease commitment. Plus, upgrades are fork-lift replacements.

To implement Hosted Voice service, businesses only need to purchase or rent IP phones and, with some providers, voice gateway equipment or a specialized router. Most providers offer a wide range of affordable phone options suited for particular roles. Voice gateway equipment is relatively inexpensive and useful for both troubleshooting and ensuring Quality of Service (QoS).

Additional start-up savings come from the opportunity to combine voice and data on one network. This lowers infrastructure costs and allows businesses to get more value from their broadband investment by operating both voice and data over one connection. If voice and broadband are purchased from the same provider, businesses may save even more with promotional offers or bundling discounts.



Most companies that switch to Hosted VoIP report savings of 50% or more compared to their previous phone service.

AVOID MAINTENANCE COSTS

Because Hosted Voice requires less onsite equipment, there is less to upgrade, maintain, and repair, which lowers maintenance costs and reduces onsite repair calls.

With Hosted Voice, features and user profiles can be managed virtually from anywhere. Typically, administrators can manage changes, add new services and equipment, access help and support, and otherwise manage their service by using a web portal. And users often have access to similar online self-service tools for managing features, call routing, and more.

REDUCE LONG- DISTANCE COSTS

Hosted Voice can significantly reduce long-distance costs with its low, competitive calling rates. For businesses that operate regionally or nationwide, interoffice calls often comprise a significant subset, even a majority, of long-distance calls. With a Hosted Voice system, calls between locations are considered “on-net” and can be made free of charge, for even greater savings.

Hosted Voice pricing typically begins with a flat monthly rate per employee for basic service and features. The per-employee rate plan may or may not include long-distance calling. Buyers have two basic long-distance billing options:

Long-Distance Option	Description	Suitable for...
Metered	Pay per Call	Little to no long-distance calling
Unlimited	Nationwide and/or international calling included in per-employee rate plan	Heavy long-distance users

OFFERS SIMPLE, INEXPENSIVE SETUP AND MANAGEMENT

Unlike traditional voice systems, Hosted Voice solutions don’t require you to have or hire specialized skills. And on-premises equipment is minimal.

Setting up your business phone system with Hosted Voice is simple, straightforward, and typically fast. Often a voice implementation expert guides the process for a smooth transition for all your office locations and remote workers. You can manage your own moves or changes, no telephone closet rewiring necessary. Even adding services or features, getting support, and paying your bill online are easy if your provider offers a self-service administrative portal. Plus, if there’s a portal for users, they can control their own call routing and manage features themselves, keeping these tasks from over-burdening one person.



SCALE UP OR DOWN ACCORDING TO BUSINESS NEEDS

Hosted Voice offers the benefit of virtually unlimited scalability, as long as bandwidth is increased when necessary to support additional call volume. Businesses pay only for the number of phone lines they need. Expanding or contracting is as simple as adding or subtracting a phone and service plan.

Hosted Voice is also “future proof.” There will never be a need to buy a new, up-to-date phone system because the service provider continuously updates and improves the service with new features and capabilities as they are released, avoiding voice system obsolescence. In contrast, although IP-PBX providers run their features on localized hardware and can introduce new features at no extra cost, this option requires onsite maintenance to program the new features.

AVOID EXCESS COSTS WITH ONE UNIFIED SYSTEM FOR ALL LOCATIONS

For companies with more than one business location, Hosted Voice offers even more savings.

Rather than purchase separate onsite phone equipment for each location, businesses reap the benefits of a single, unified phone system that operates across all locations. That means one provider, one bill, one voicemail system, extension dialing between locations, and centralized management of all users and features.

Companies with multiple offices can lower personnel costs by sharing a single receptionist or eliminate the need for a receptionist with an auto attendant feature. Plus, it’s not necessary to retain a voice administrator with specialized skills at each location to rewire the telephone closet for each move, add, or change. Multiple locations can often share one voice administrator to perform these tasks remotely, and IT staff can often install the phones, voice gateways, and routers.

IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY FOR TRAVELING AND REMOTE WORKERS

54% of U.S. workers work remotely at least once per month, with 48% working remotely at least once per week.¹

Hosted Voice service provides a range of options for simplifying communications and keeping remote, traveling, and mobile employees connected. These options and features make it easy for customers and partners to reach you regardless of location; they also consolidate and control communication costs.

Some Hosted Voice providers offer a telecommuter service, allowing employees who work from home to connect seamlessly with the business phone system by simply plugging a specially programmed IP phone into their broadband connection. This eliminates the need to reimburse remote workers for disparate communication services and keeps them closely connected to the rest of the business.

Individual home offices using such a solution have the same phone service capabilities as any other location, including extension dialing and call transfer. They also share the same voicemail system and can make free calls to and from other business locations.

For employees who occasionally work from home, travel, or attend a lot of off-site meetings, some Hosted Voice providers offer an advanced feature that lets them use their business line for inbound and outbound calls on any phone – even a personal cell phone, home phone, or hotel room phone.

When employees place calls through the provider's web-based interface, calls made from any phone appear to come from the business office and long-distance charges are billed to the business account. This eliminates the need to pay hotel long-distance rates and surcharges, and simplifies expense administration (no more long-distance reimbursement hassles).

In addition, Hosted Voice service makes it easy for one number to follow employees wherever they go. Advanced call forwarding options and features—such as mobility web apps and simultaneous/sequential ring—are easy to program from any location with Internet access. With a few clicks of the mouse or taps on a smart device, employees can receive business calls on their smartphones or home phones without giving out those numbers.

Highly mobile employees can even eliminate the need for desktop IP phones altogether with softphones. With a headset and a software-based phone installed on a desktop, laptop, or tablet computer or smartphone, users can access Hosted Voice service from anywhere.

With Hosted Voice, all call routing and forwarding occurs offsite on provider equipment. Therefore, if a call comes in and is forwarded to a mobile phone, no bandwidth is used at the business location. This is in contrast to an IP-PBX system, which requires double the bandwidth to forward an inbound call to another phone or device (one call's worth of bandwidth for the inbound call and one call's worth for the outbound/forwarded call). That means that when multiple employees are out of the office and taking calls from a home office or mobile phone, a business needs twice as much bandwidth to avoid overloading the circuit.

¹OWL Labs: [45 Key Remote Work & Telecommuting Statistics for 2019](#)

AVOID COMPLICATED DISASTER PLANNING WITH BUILT-IN CONTINUITY

Hosted Voice offers protection from a minor disaster, such as an equipment failure—or a major catastrophic event, such as earthquake or flood.

Because voicemail, call processing, and advanced features are hosted on the provider's network, they remain available even if something goes down at the business location. This means that even if nobody in the office can receive calls, callers never hear a fast busy signal. Voicemail will continue to function and messages can be retrieved remotely.

Employees that have Internet access can immediately use their softphone for calls or forward their calls to another phone, allowing voice communications—and business—to continue virtually uninterrupted. If a Hosted Voice auto attendant is in use, it will continue to function as an automated receptionist, and the outgoing message can be quickly reprogrammed from anywhere to give up-to-date information to callers.

Reconfiguring the entire system is also much faster and easier than the requirements for a PBX or IP-PBX system, or set-up call forwarding rules for POTS. Plus, you can set up all the rules for your disaster recovery plan. If a major disaster hits, businesses using Hosted Voice can move employees to another facility with IP access and set up a disaster recovery site in a matter of days or even hours.

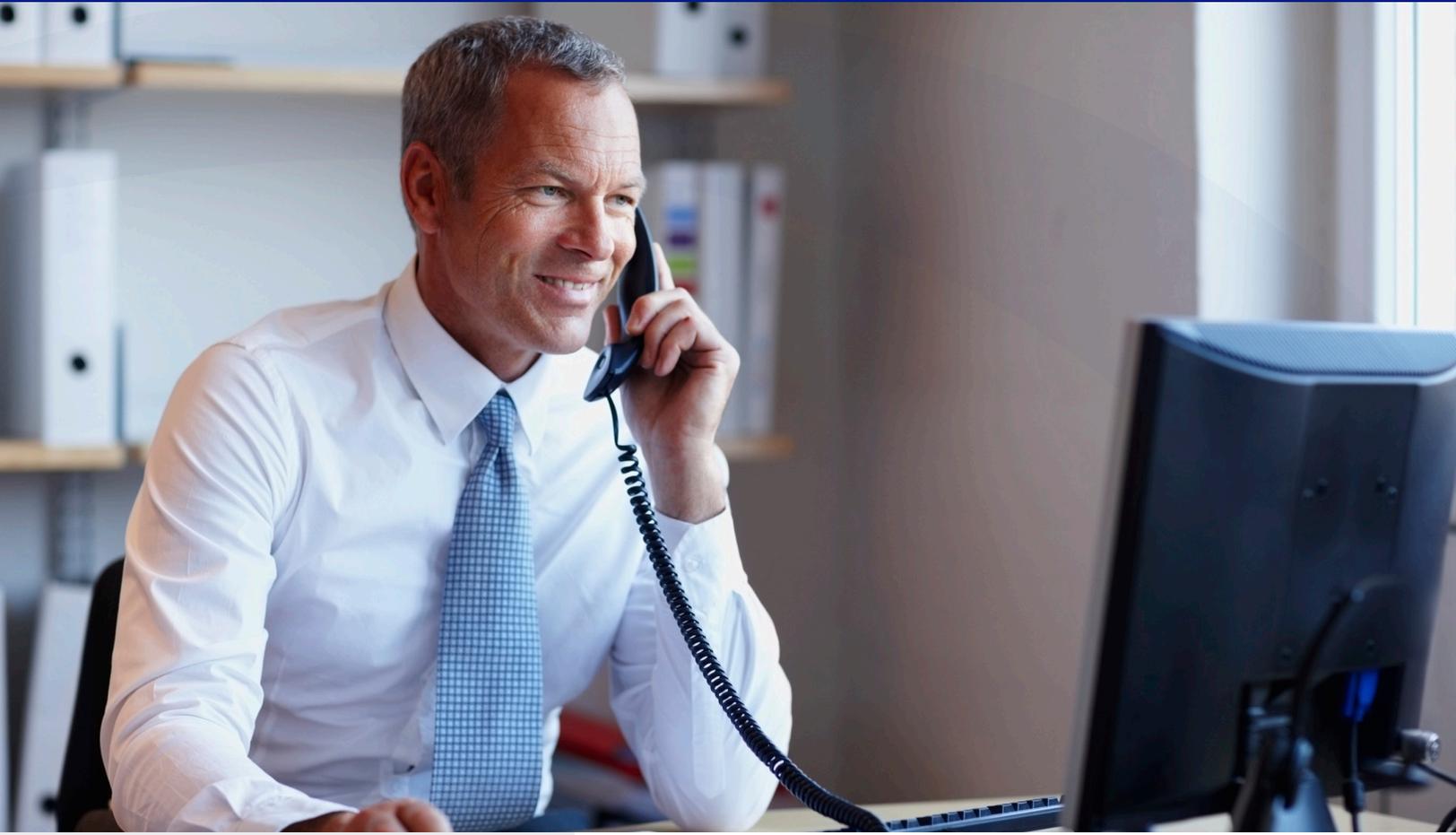
GET MORE FOR YOUR MONEY WITH INCLUDED FEATURES

The features and flexibility of Hosted Voice offer significant efficiency and productivity advantages.

Features—including mobility web apps, sequential ring, and advanced call forwarding—allow employees, no matter where they work, to give out one number and stay available to customers and co-workers. Users can receive copies of their voicemail messages as audio file attachments or as a transcribed message delivered to their inbox, making it easier for mobile employees to review, respond to, or forward messages even while attending another call.

Auto attendant can lower personnel costs by eliminating the need for a receptionist or allowing administrative staff to focus on other priorities. Many Hosted Voice providers also offer integrated on-demand audio conferencing. This feature eliminates the need for a third-party conference call provider and supports collaboration among employees at distributed locations.

With many Hosted Voice services, individual users can manage features from any location through a web-based portal. Some providers take it a step further, offering a toolbar plug-in that integrates Hosted Voice functionality with Microsoft® Outlook and Internet Explorer. Toolbars serve as intuitive dashboards, making the service easy to use right from the desktop. Users can even click-to-dial a number from their list of Outlook contacts or right-click on any phone number they find on the Internet.



THE FUSION CONNECT ADVANTAGE

ENABLING THE CONNECTED ENTERPRISE

Optimize your business communications, costs, and continued collaboration from any place or device, with crystal-clear quality. Securely connect your business locations and remote workers.

LEADING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

Fusion Connect's optimized platforms leverage leading technologies, meaning seamless integration of solutions across your virtual and fixed technology platforms.

DEDICATED SUPPORT TEAM

Our 100% U.S.-based expert tech support is available 24/7 to keep your business online and available regardless of the situation.

Visit www.fusionconnect.com to learn more.

Or, contact a Fusion Connect Business Consultant today at **888-301-1721**.

