The Essential VoIP Checklist

VoIP is the modern phone system for the modern team. But, not all VoIP was created equal. As the business owner or manager, you want to understand what makes a good VoIP provider and what you need to have in place to get the most out of the system. To make this task easier, BCS have put together an essential 8 point checklist.

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bcsVoIP

1 — Evaluate Whether Your Network Is Ready For VoIP

VoIP data consumption ranges between 0.5 MB-1.3 MB per minute of call. This number fluctuates based on the technology employed by your VoIP provider as well as the caller's use habit. As such, depending on the call usage you expect, you may need to look at upgrading your current Internet connection speed.

2 — Ask About Number Portability

If you have existing phone numbers that you wish to keep, make sure you check that the provider has the capability to port these over. Some providers may not be capable of porting your phone number to their service. This is the type of information you are better off knowing beforehand.

3 — Dig Out Your Recent Phone Bills

When asking for a quote, provide a recent phone bill as this will help the provider to understand your call usage. This will also help calculate what you might save by moving your business to a new provider. If you're worried about passing on financial information on what you are paying, you can simply send a bill with usage listed but costs blanked out.

4 — Check For Software Integrations

It may be that some of your line of business software, such as Sage, Salesforce etc., has the facility to integrate with IP based phone solutions. Features like being able to dial directly out of your CRM save time and help drive efficiencies in your business. Most VoIP providers will be happy to help you with this process following a review of your current infrastructure.

5 — Select A VoIP Provider With Support That Meets The Needs Of Your Business

Finding a provider that can offer you all the functionality you need is one thing, but they may not be able to offer you the level of support your business needs. A phone system going down can be disruptive and expensive, in terms of lost business and unhappy customers. Make sure that you check service issue response times. These can range from 15 minutes to 48 hours! Ensure you choose a provider that matches the needs of your business.

6 — Ask About Features And Functionality

VoIP offerings can vary a lot in terms of features and functionality. Make sure you are clear on what you want from your new system. You may not know everything that is available with a modern phone system. Typical features include: Auto-call attendants; Call recording; Call forwarding; Call queues; Live phone statistics; Performance reporting and more. A good provider will want to understand your business and build the perfect system for your needs.

7 — Consider The Hardware You Will Need

Moving to VoIP offers the opportunity to move away from physical phones entirely. You can receive calls using a software application on your PC, laptop, smartphone, or tablet (known as a 'Soft Phone'). This may or may not be a fit for your business, or you may decide on a mix of both. Desk phones are still compatible with VoIP, but if you're planning on reusing your old phones, you will need to check they are compatible with a modern VoIP system.

8 — Don't Forget About Training

A smart new phone system won't be much use if your team aren't properly trained to use it. Change can be a daunting prospect and not all users will pick up the technology at the same pace. For an efficient and pain free migration, ensure that you have a team training plan built in with any VoIP provider you move to.