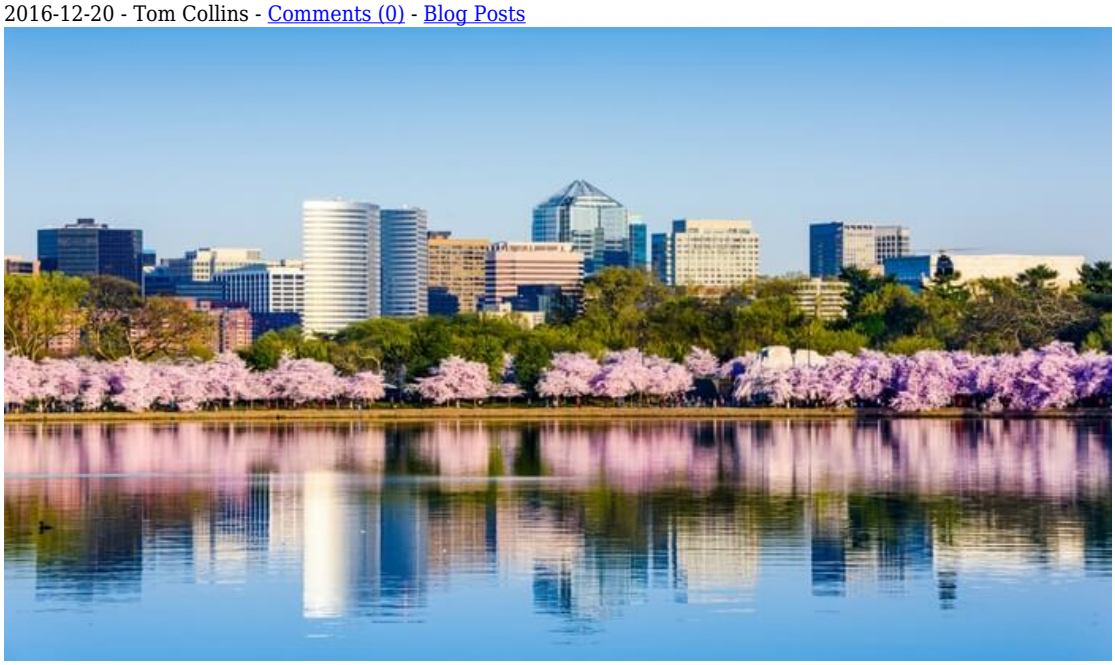
The Best IP PBX Phone Systems for Small Business and Enterprises

2016-12-20 - Tom Collins - Comments (0) - Blog Posts



Looking to move from a legacy PBX to hosted phone service? Moving to the cloud improves every aspect of communications for both small business and enterprise, making it easy for customers, partners, and staff to connect via telephone and conference in others, regardless of their physical location.

IP PBX for Small Business

Picking through the various options for IP PBX to find the right fit for your business can be challenging. To make a wise decision, you'll want to ask the following questions.

Scalability

- Will your business be able to add lines and functionality on an as-needed basis to support growth?
- Is is easy to change your plan if need be?

Bandwidth

- Does your potential provider have an option for a direct connection or is phone service over the public Internet?

Cost

- What are the fee and billing structure?
- How long is the contract?
- Do you need to buy telephones?
- Are there any additional fees for support?

Service Provider

- How long has each vendor been in business?
- What is their reputation for customer service?

Features & Usability

- Does this phone system offer the features you require?
- Are they easy to implement and use?

Flexibility/Customization

- What kind of options are for customization are available to you?
- Do they meet your company's needs?

With these 6 factors in mind, let's break down the options for cloud-based PBX options.

The PBX Phone System Market

The market is diverse, with many competitors fighting for customers in a commodity market.

The major carriers offer nationwide coverage with a wide scope of services, from data centers to phone service. Smaller local and regional providers often re-brand and bundle services as a reseller of the large incumbent providers. Others provide their own Internet connections, but may not have options to upgrade to a direct connection.

Here's a closer look at these options and some of the providers worth evaluating.

Bring Your Own Broadband Providers

Companies like Vonage that offer phone service to homes and businesses are recognized nationwide and are a quick and easy phone service provider. For the vast majority of households and smaller companies, these Vonage may be a strong option.

Fonality is another choice, recognized as a top business VoIP solution by PC Mag. By

offering some advanced business-centric capabilities, Fonality bridges the needs and cost requirements of very small to medium-sized businesses.

8x8 is another strong contender with functionality to support virtual offices and call centers.

What do we mean by Bring Your Own Bandwidth or BYOB?

The providers mentioned above offer a variety of Internet solutions to power the phone system. What they have in common is that they all rely on the public Internet, what we call BYOB, to operate. BYOB Internet does provide some challenges, especially for organizations that are dependent on communications and pushing the limits of their current phone systems.

Challenges of BYOB IP Phone Systems

Latency & Call Quality

On a shared connection, your phone call goes out into the world in packets which bounce around and then all meet up again at the other end of the line. On a shared connection, packets may arrive in the wrong order or even get lost or delayed along the way. These slight data packet miscues can result in static, jitter, latency and dropped calls.

Reliability

Another common complaint of organizations on low-cost systems is the reliability. When you have a multiple-vendor solution, it is easy to feel like everyone's pointing fingers at each other when troubleshooting. Is the problem occurring in the phone system data center, wiring in your office, or at your ISP? When the Internet "goes down" you have to investigate throrughly in order to pinpoint the problem. Meanwhile, your business is at a standstill.

When BYOB Isn't Good Enough

While BYOB Providers may be inexpensive solutions for smaller businesses, companies that rely heavily on communications need higher quality of service. Having a direct connection to your hosted PBX switches is a night and day difference for most users. Not only that, but providers who supply a direct connection can also become a single-source provider for all telecom needs - which is an additional boon for businesses.

Vendors that offer unified communications, including direct Internet connections, major cloud service connection, and standalone data centers, may seem beyond your needs right now. But the fact is, small to medium organizations benefit from their ability to join in on the economies of scale offered by these providers.

A direct connection from Atlantech Online means all those data packets that make up your phone calls move in one prioritized stream between your phone (wherever you are) and the intended listener.

What is the best IP Phone System for Medium to Enterprise Organizations?

At Atlantech, we offer a state-of-the-art IP PBX phone system by leveraging our redundant BroadSoft platform. Read more about our hosted phone service options here.

Finding the Right Balance

A competitive market is always good for the buyer. And there are plenty of choices out there. A low-cost option may initially catch your eye, but downtime, jitter and latency problems, and poor customer service are not worth the risk to your business. A single vendor ISP phone system can better fit your needs and help you scale as necessary.

At Atlantech, we bundle the best of all components for our customers. Let us prove it to you.

If your small business or enterprise is based in the Washington, D.C., area, give us a call. We will do an audit of your needs and make a recommendation that fits your needs and budgets. Pairing Atlantech services with a best in class PBX system is a solution worth considering. We believe you'll see it is the best option in the D.C. Metro area for IP PBX.

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