The Modern Age of
Business Telecoms

Why use digital technologies across the entire business?

- Combat declining growth and shrinking margins.
- Compete with intensifying competition.
- Seize opportunities that could make you stronger and more profitable than before.

The Drive for Digital Telecoms

It's no secret that core voice and messaging are shifting and shrinking as new communication channels open up. In recent years, technologies such as Skype, WhatsApp and Snapchat have shifted customers' communication preferences around quality, security, speed and cost. But digitalisation shouldn't be seen as a threat, as traditional telecoms can also be innovative.

We also shouldn't forget that although text-based communications are convenient and commonplace, speaking to someone on a voice call allows better relationships to be built. Customers also feel more trusting of and connected to your company after hearing a friendly and reassuring voice.

Why Voice Still Rules

Does the acceleration of digital communications necessarily mean the decline of the telephone?

Although the hardware itself can be replaced, we think that there will always be room for the spoken word in business telecoms.

- Talking is the most efficient way to convey service offerings, wants and needs.
- The spoken word allows people to express sentiments and emotions in ways that text-based communications can't.

A recent University of Sussex Innovation Centre study found that:

- Text communications are better as transactional communications channels.
- Spoken communications are better for trust and relationship-building.

Did you know?

The telephone is close to **150 years old**.

Key Business Telecoms Considerations

Enabling omnichannel

Today's customers engage with multiple channels during their customer journeys, and they expect these engagements to be seamless and connected. However, many businesses are limited in meeting these expectations due to slow processes, and rigid technology systems.

What is omnichannel?

"a multichannel approach to sales that seeks to provide customers with a seamless shopping experience, whether they're shopping online from a desktop or mobile device, by telephone, or in a brick-and-mortar store."

Omnichannel solutions address the entire customer journey from beginning to end.

Key questions to help you create a seamless omnichannel experience:

- What would the customer's ideal journey feel like?
- How does the customer journey flow across functions, channels, and devices?
- What processes and technology do you need to support it?
- How do social, mobile, and cloud technologies work together?
- What pain points do you need to eliminate?

Companies that can get the multi-faceted customer journey right are companies that will succeed into the future.

20%

Rise in productivity when employees have the flexibility to work remotely.

IT needs to support telecoms solutions

Streamlining the telecoms environment requires updating legacy IT applications to enable new systems to work effectively.

Key IT considerations to support better business telecoms

- Load balancing
- Server deployment
- The ability to adjust load volumes and capacity

6 out of **10**
customers will ditch a company
because of poor telephone service

The time to ditch the desk phone!
Why your old phone systems need to be replaced

Out-of-date phone
systems harm productivity

Fail to improve
customer experience

Difficult to configure

Poor on features

Expensive to maintain

6 Reasons to Bring Your
Phone System into the Cloud

1 It's cost-effective

Since your phone system will be hosted online, your business can save money on phone hardware and maintenance. Call rates are also normally cheaper than traditional landlines.

3 Enable a mobile, flexible workforce

In an increasingly connected world, workforces are becoming more mobile, able to work from multiple locations across multiple time zones.

Although email, text and instant messaging are prevalent communication tools, voice calls still form an important part of doing business. It's the most personal way to make a connection, bringing together teams across multiple locations and establishing relationships with your customers.

Mobile phones are increasingly important business tools, which increases the pressure on businesses to find a mobile call recording solutions, especially in heavily-regulated industries.

2 Get better communication with your customers

Cloud telephony helps you to maintain consistent communication with your customers, allowing you to stay connected when you're out of the office and don't have access to a desk phone. This is especially useful for travelling sales teams, project managers out in the field, freelancers and other remote staff.

With a cloud phone system, your staff can manage calls:

> From your desk phone
> At your office
> On your mobile
> On your computer

It's almost like taking your office with you.

On average, businesses **save 50-70%** when switching to VoIP.

4 Data and analytics

We live an information age of data-driven decisions. Every customer-focused organisation stands to benefit from better insight into its staff's daily activities. This improved insight relies on improved data.

Digital telecoms give your business more in-depth data to enable analytics that can help you identify inefficiencies, improve productivity, and provide better customer service.

Aside from stats such as dropped calls… companies using digital telecoms can also benefit from access to richer data - the actual content of calls and conversations.

Recorded and automatically-transcribed calls can provide some interesting data sets. For example, the ability to identify the more successful words and phrases that result in a sale.

5 Integrate your CRM and communications

Integrating your voice system and your CRM can go a long way in ensuring that your customer's experience is consistent and connected.

Imagine the power and potential of…

> Recording landline and mobile phone calls in your CRM
> Populating your CRM will call data for reporting and analysis (total calls, length of calls, call history etc.)
> Having complete visibility across your customer journey

With cloud-based voice solutions, all this and more is made possible.

When your CRM and voice system work together, you can avoid losing information, use call recordings for monitoring and training purposes, and improve your staff's productivity.

50%
of new CRM deployments are now cloud-based.

6 Easier for IT to manage

In many companies, the IT team is expected to manage the telephone system, even though they usually lack telecoms experience. The telecoms world is very different from the IP-based world that traditional IT is used to operating within.

The challenges of supporting and maintaining telephony systems

> Ageing telephony deployments.
> Systems that have been bolted together from varying suppliers in complex ways.
> Noone in the business is willing to take ownership these systems.
> IT lacks the experience, confidence and time to support old telephony systems.

With cloud-based telephony, the cloud provider will take care of most of the telecoms management.

What's the difference between cloud and hosted telephony (PBX)?

Although many people make the mistake of thinking that hosted and cloud phone systems are the same, there are key differences between the two.

What is a PBX?

A PBX is a business telephone system (also known as a telephone switch) that serves a private organisation. It performs concentration of central office phone lines and provides intercommunication between the organisation's telephone stations.

The differences:

Cloud	Hosted phone
Your provider takes care of everything for you - all the maintenance and management of applications and equipment.	You are responsible for management and resource usage.
Easily add multiple users to support a growing company.	Harder to scale, with more work required to set up a new user.
Server is stored elsewhere, at the location of your provider.	Some PBX systems use on-premise infrastructure installed locally within your company.
Supports usage across multiple locations	Largely limited to on-premise connections.
Easier for IT to manage.	IT teams lack experience in the realm of PBX.
Better resilience (uptime and performance).	Less reliable and harder to fix.
Easier to upgrade the services.	Upgrades usually require additional hardware investment and are harder to implement.

All these points considered, there is rarely a logical reason to deploy a traditional physical PBX in today's world.

The Pros and Cons of VoIP

VoIP telephony uses an internet connection instead of a traditional landline.

The Pros

It's simple to set up

To set up a VoIP system, you only need an internet connection, calling device, and VoIP software.

On the move

VoIP services are not fixed to a specific location, allowing you to use your mobile phone as an extension of your office phone. This is a major benefit for companies with employees who work remotely.

More features

VoIP offers more than just voice, with a wide selection of additional features, such as video conferencing.

It's cheaper

VoIP calls are significantly cheaper than landline services and offer free international calls. The installation and maintenance of the hardware and software also come at a lower cost than that of traditional systems.

Scale up or down

VoIP systems only rely on an internet connection, allowing for an unlimited number of lines.

Streamlined services

A fixed monthly cost makes financial management easier, and having one supplier for both data and voice provides greater efficiency and linking of technologies.

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The Cons

Security

The security of the line is reliant on the level of security of the internet connection. For this reason, VoIP connections are easier to remotely hack than landlines, especially if the network security is not set up to be resilient as it can be.

Internet-dependent

VoIP calling relies on the level of quality and stability of your internet connection. Businesses with high call and internet traffic volumes may experience network issues if their Internet connection is not fast enough or if the power is out.

Software issues

If an unstable operating system or VoIP is used to host calls, the quality and reliability can be compromised.

Low-speed connection

Businesses without a high-speed connection or those in more remote areas may not have a suitable connection speed for high-quality VoIP.

Did you know?

> 31% of businesses that use VoIP systems do so due to its cost-saving and productivity-boosting features.
> 40%: Lower cost for small business' local calls.
> 30%: Reduction in conferencing expenses.
> 43: Minutes saved per day due to more efficient message management.
> 55: Minutes saved per day by mobile workers.

Leave your business telecoms to the experts

At Smarter Business, we can provide clarity on your business telecoms questions. Once we fully grasp your infrastructure and operational requirements, we can then go to market and help secure the best available deals for you, taking your business telecoms into the future.