

Traditional approach or state-of-the art. Why not have the best of both?

Making the journey from traditional telephony to a Voice over IP communications strategy is all the rage at the moment. Many companies have embraced the new technology with brand-new IP telephony systems, benefiting from free inter-site calls anywhere in the world, vastly-improved telecommunications features and the many other business advantages which these can offer. However, there are just as many companies who have taken the cautious option, preferring instead to 'sit back and see what happens' before even considering making any such daring changes.

One barrier to any company's decision to move to a VoIP solution, be it hosted or by changing to a completely new IP telecoms system, could well be a relatively recent investment in a traditional PBX system. If you have spent serious amounts of budget on this at any time in the last three years or so, the thought of starting again so soon might be more than you're willing to consider. But what if there was a middle ground? Keep the system that you have already, but give it the ability to route calls over the IP network instead of via traditional telephone lines. Retain your existing analogue or digital handsets yet have the flexibility to add pure IP users whenever and wherever you want. And all with guaranteed carrier-grade Quality of Service. The best of both worlds!

A Hosted IP Telephony solution can be a complete alternative to purchasing your own IP telecoms system, but it can also be used in conjunction with your existing PBX to facilitate a new technological innovation called Business Trunking. This is still a hosted IP Telephony service, but one which links to your traditional phone system via the PRI circuit you already have. Outgoing calls are routed through your existing PBX and then via a Media Gateway which turns the voice call into a piece of data communication. From this point, the 'call' is then routed over a Managed Bandwidth service, which guarantees Quality of Service by always prioritising the voice traffic.

Calls that are routed this way are typically up to 20% cheaper than traditional calls, whilst all calls routed within a pure IP network – for example to your other sites or to other companies with a similar infrastructure – are free of charge. This offers a migratory approach towards a full IP communications strategy, but at a pace that is right for your business - and one which enables you to exploit new VoIP technologies, whilst still protecting previous investment in traditional PBXs.



More about Managed Bandwidth services

The two main providers in the marketplace today are EasyNet and Tiscali, both of whom will work with a Hosted IP Telephony provider to develop a complete solution for your business that includes a managed bandwidth connection with guaranteed carrier-class Quality of Service.

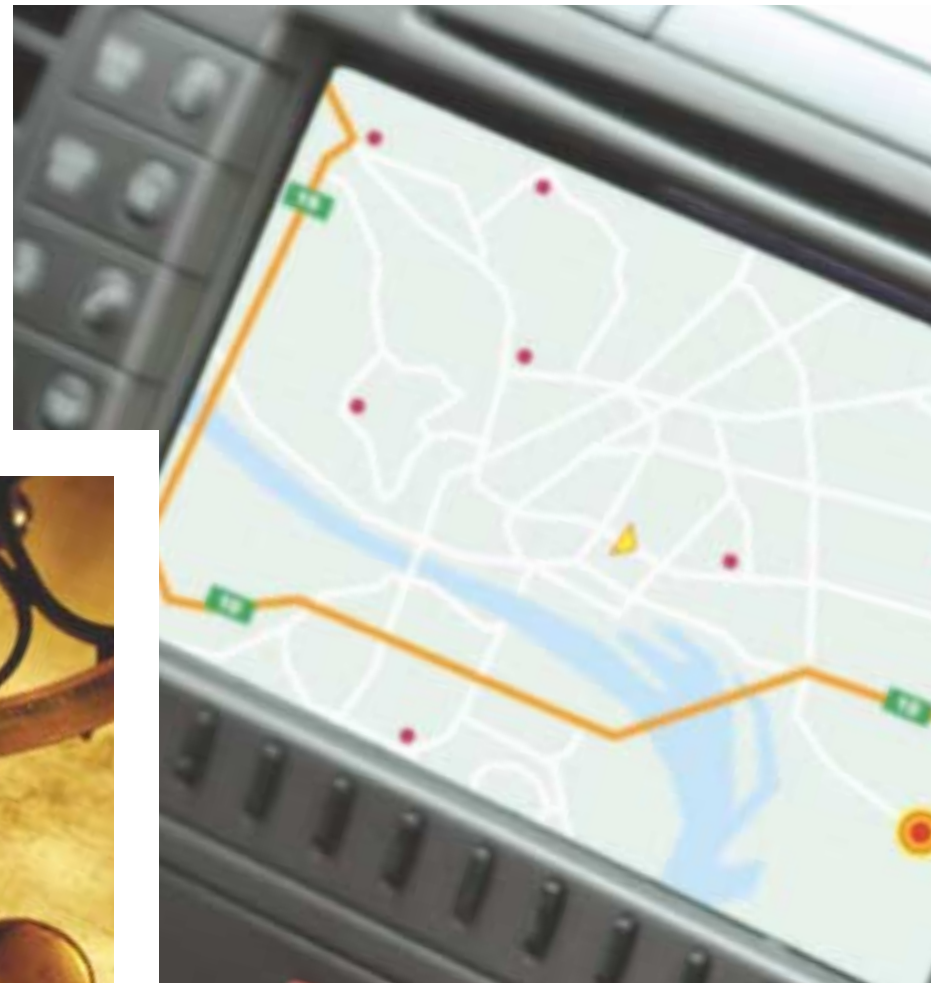
All of these services are fully managed and consist of dedicated point-to-point connectivity. They are available across a fully-redundant backbone network and provide a number of features which enable high-capacity, high-quality networks to be deployed for a range of requirements. These include voice and data traffic of course, but also high volume LAN traffic, network infrastructure

deployment, storage area networks, broadcast media and disaster recovery.

More about Media Gateways

One of the leading providers of media gateways in the industry today is VegaStream who offer a range of dedicated VoIP gateways, collaborating with service providers, technology and channel partners to enable easy integration with existing systems. They have a number of award-winning products which are based on international communications standards – including both SIP and H.323. These deliver an open and non-proprietary VoIP solution that can be seamlessly integrated alongside existing communications investments.

A Hosted IP Telephony solution which includes Business Trunking gives you all



the advantages of retaining your existing equipment, whilst also giving you the additional features and benefits of IP Telephony. All for a minimal initial outlay and a cost-effective monthly charge. It really is the best of both options, giving all organisations the ability to tread carefully into the wonderful world of VoIP.

To find out how you can take advantage of new IP Telephony technologies whilst still protecting your traditional telecommunications investment, please contact Hipcom on 0870 1610 799 or email info@hipcom.co.uk to talk to one of our technical team.

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