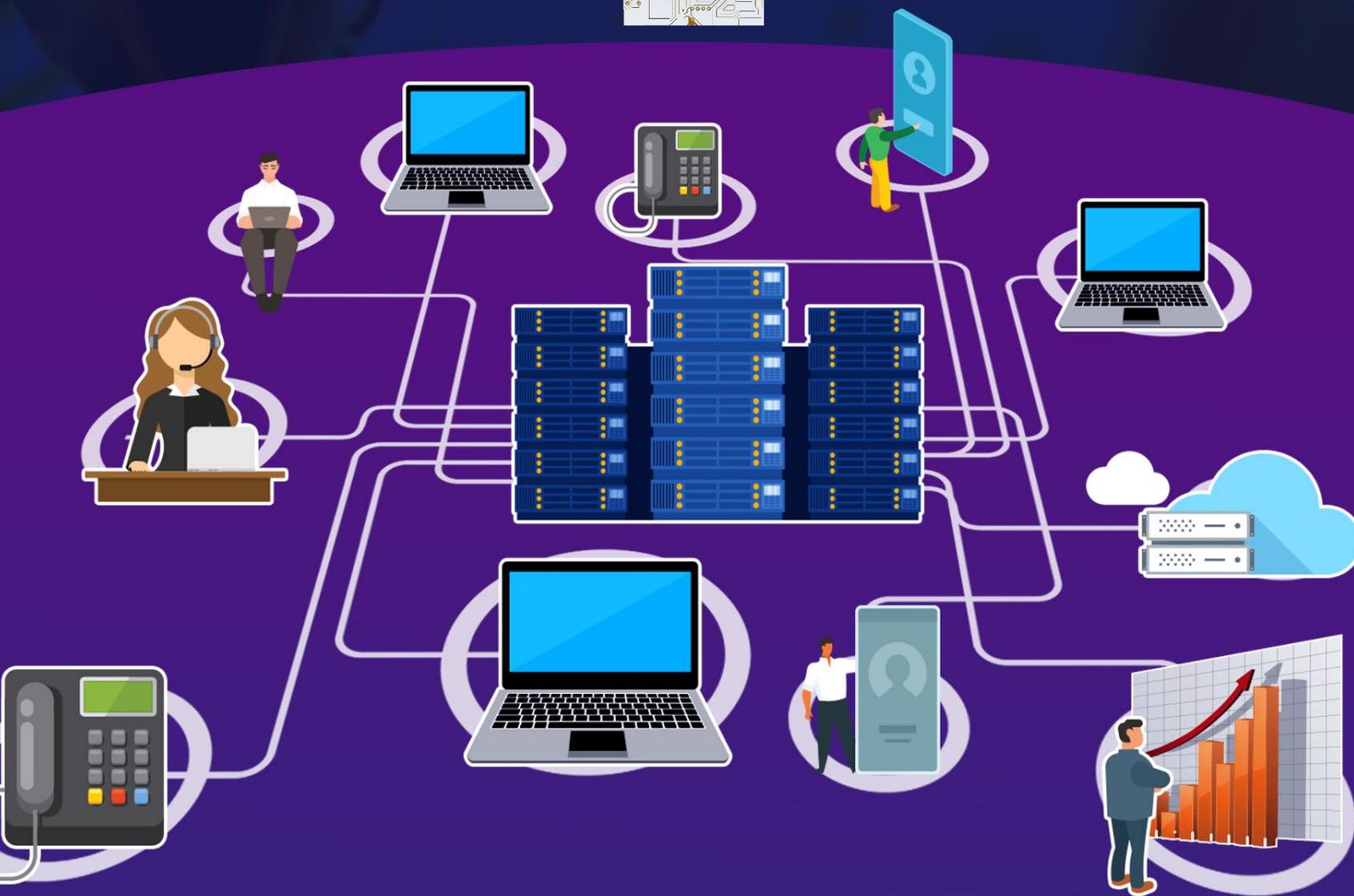


CONNECTING YOUR CALL IN THE CLOUD:

BENEFITS OF P B X



Picture a switchboard operator at a bank of cords connecting a business. Thank goodness we're beyond that, right? The next stage was a hulking telecommunications hardware setup in your office. One of the companies controlling the market maintains and upgrades expensive phone lines.

We can be past that now, too. Today, businesses can host their own private branch exchange (PBX) in the cloud. This ebook talks about what's involved and how business benefits from hosted PBX.

Chances are your business is using conventional telephone lines today. Cloud-based calling is a more recent development. Some companies are more comfortable with what they know. Maybe they haven't had any difficulties with their current service and see no incentive to make a change. Voice over internet protocol (VoIP) quality and reliability concerns are another stumbling block.

Still, businesses are migrating from legacy PBXs to voice communications using IP networks. We'll discuss the benefits of this move next, but let's first clarify the differences between legacy PBX and cloud-based PBX.

The legacy PBX is a phone system that resides on-premises, with hardware in an equipment cupboard. A telecommunications provider installs, upgrades, and maintains the hardware and software. Inbound and outbound calls travel on traditional lines owned by the phone company.

Cloud-based PBX can be hosted or on-premises. The on-premises version, also known as an IP-PBX phone system, is like the legacy model, except that your business takes responsibility for the hardware and software. Calls are routed online using more current technology, but it's an added responsibility for your IT team.

Then, there's hosted PBX or VoIP, where you partner with an internet phone service provider. They house the hardware and handle the technology maintenance, upgrades, and security. Your business pays a monthly service fee.

Next, I'll outline the many benefits of cloud-based hosted PBX.

VoIP has come a long way

You may have experienced choppy voice, hearing your voice echo, or audio jitter with VoIP in the past. Cloud-based PBX offers improved quality of service (QoS) today.

Better compression rates and faster internet speeds have dramatically improved IP communications. Solution providers dedicate bandwidth and configure QoS to prioritise voice communications. They can also establish data packet loss resilience schemes to guarantee excellent call quality.

CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

Is your business one of the few that has returned to all on-premises work? Lucky you. Across industries many businesses have employees working from home. With hosted PBX, your people can continue to make and receive phone calls as if working in the same building. The customer won't even know the difference.

Hosted PBX services can also include:

- **call forwarding** – forward a call to the right department, and that employee's home office phone rings;
- **toll-free calling** – widen reach with virtual toll-free numbers that workers can receive on-site or remotely;
- **queue management** – reduces customer waiting times by implementing rules to route calls;
- **call recording** – great for companies with agents to train or compliance requirements;
- **auto attendant** – transfers callers without their having to interact with a receptionist.

Companies can also cut disruptions by integrating the existing solution with cloud PBX. As long as your legacy PBX

supports SIP Trunks/VoIP, you won't even need extra hardware.

COST SAVINGS

Traditional telecoms priced their services based on their monopoly over supply. Customers had few choices of provider and doing without a business phone was impossible. Plus, the business wanted its own dedicated phone lines. So, the company could charge for expensive hardware installation, maintenance, and upgrades.

Cost savings begin with a cloud-based PBX at the hardware level. Instead of the big upfront capital expense, you budget a monthly operational expense. You also regain space on premises previously taken up with the phone equipment and reduce your power bill, which contributes to sustainability efforts.

As for the phones themselves, there are several handset options, but you can also choose from soft clients (like apps). They work on iOS and Android smartphones and tablets, or PC and Mac desktops.

With hosted PBX, you also get more value out of your data expenditure, as you're now using those lines for voice, too.

You can also save with a voice communications solution that is not limited by geography. When your workers are global, get a plan including unlimited and international coverage. Finally, with hosted PBX, you're only paying for what you need, when you need it. We'll talk more about scalability next.

SCALABILITY

Are you old enough to have waited for the telephone repairman? You've at least waited for a cable provider to show up. It can take days. When it comes to business phones, you can't afford voice communication downtime.

One big advantage of cloud hosted PBX is that it is quick to install and scales up and down easily. You no longer need to pre-allocate space to accommodate expansion. The business can commission new lines for a busy season or before a major event, then decommission those lines when the peak period ends.

Provisioning a new phone can be as simple as a few clicks on a desktop dashboard.

CONTROL

That dashboard gives you the ability to manage your business communications from anywhere. A cloud-hosted system provides easy-to-use Web portals to check and maintain the network.

These systems also provide access to real-time data. You can track activity from ongoing or missed calls to call rates and active or available agents. You can also dig into individual employee activity, review call recordings, and analyse all traffic to make informed decisions.

Industries with audit and compliance needs gain recording and various reporting tools, too.

One more area of added control? You now have the flexibility to move your communications to another vendor when you want. The traditional telecommunications vendor locked in your business. Since provisioning is so much simpler now, it's easier to make changes as needed.

BETTER DISASTER RECOVERY

The traditional telephone system had a single point of failure, but hosted PBX is dependent on the internet, so you no longer rely entirely on actual phone lines that can deteriorate, be vandalised, or, worse, rendered inoperable for days due to a flood, fire, or other natural disaster.



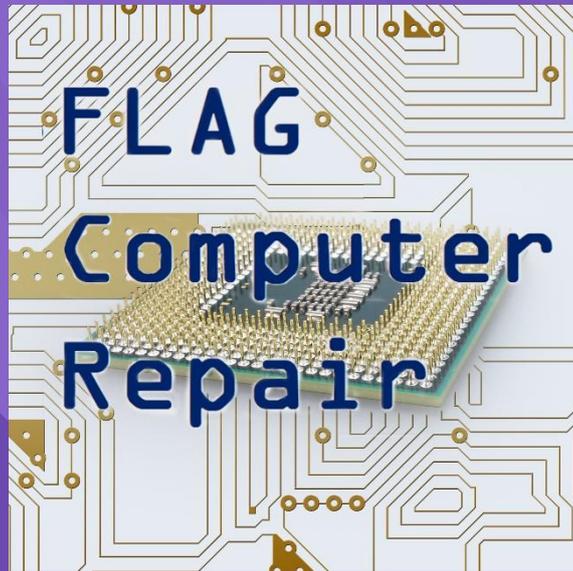
Hosted PBX providers establish a redundant infrastructure to ensure consistent service. They will have many data servers spread out over geographic locations to ensure availability of another option. When there is a natural disaster in one area, the communications can be switched to a healthy server.

WORK SMARTER WITH CLOUD-HOSTED PBX

Ultimately, a cloud-hosted PBX solution gives you reliable, secure voice communications. Enjoy greater flexibility, costed savings, and improved data insights. A virtual PBX offers a competitive advantage, while setting you up for everyday calling and resilience, too.



Interested in moving to a cloud-hosted PBX solution? We can help you identify the best solution for your business needs. All you need to do is make a call to 07976 151148.



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