eGuide

Business Growing Pains: 5 Ways VoIP Helps
5 Ways VoIP Eases Business Growing Plans

If your business is growing, you probably already know that growth also means continually expanding needs, ranging from more employees to new office space to more sophisticated equipment. In particular, communication systems often become a stumbling block for small businesses trying to expand.

Here are five hurdles that owners of rapidly expanding small businesses often face, and how business VoIP can help you jump over them:

Problem #1: Not being taken seriously as a small company
Solution: A business VoIP phone system helps small businesses present a professional front to customers, no matter how small the company really is. Services like auto-attendant—an automated receptionist that can route your calls for you—show customers that you are just as tech-savvy and in control of your business as your larger competitors.

That has been the experience at Epiphany Partners, a small, highly specialized, research and consulting group with small offices spread across the U.S. The company chose 8x8 hosted VoIP to manage its expanding need for business communications.

"8x8 business VoIP lets us share one main number across all our locations and allows for incoming calls to ring at phones in California and Minnesota. In addition, the virtual phone allows us to make calls from anywhere in the world as if we’re in our offices," says Roger Halualani, formerly a principal at Epiphany.

"Most importantly, 8x8 VoIP allows us to better collaborate by calling extensions to reach people in other sites, and we also have access to Internet fax and conference bridge facilities. We never really considered a ‘standard’ PBX since it wouldn’t allow us the flexibility to interact with the other offices without purchasing multiple systems; VoIP was the most efficient solution for our business."

Problem #2: Lack of flexibility for mobile and remote workers
Solution: Business VoIP can help tie together mobile and remote workers, to maximize productivity, give them access to all the capabilities they’d have in an office, and still present a unified, professional front to the world. VoIP systems also let employees work remotely, both when they’re traveling and when bad weather indicates the need for a work-from-home-day.

Employees can easily access a VoIP system from a desktop computer or mobile device and fulfill their tasks even when they can’t be in the office.

"8x8 business VoIP has provided me with a mobile office," says Allan Gluck, Director of Operations at the ETC Foundation. "I can be..."
reached anywhere, whether I take my IP phone with me or use the app on my Android. And, the international rates that I can access using that app on my smartphone save me more than the monthly cost of the line!"

For many small companies, just being able to work when and where the opportunity arises lets them use all available talent. And sometimes, it means that when life changes for employees or owners, business can still go on as usual.

Michael Coop, owner of his own agency, recently reported that shortly after transitioning to business VoIP, one of his key staff members learned that her husband’s job was transferring to a location about 90 miles away.

“My employee had worked for me for 28 years and I certainly didn’t want to lose her,” he says. “By using a remote desktop and VoIP, we were able to seamlessly arrange for the employee to telecommute,” says Coop. “It works so well that most of my clients don’t even realize that she isn’t in my office when they talk with her. Were it not for 8x8, I would have suffered a significant loss of talent and experience.”

So if your workers need to work from home or from a remote location—occasionally or all the time—business VoIP is a great way to tie them together so well that customers might never know the difference.

Problem #3: A small staff unable to easily cover increasing inbound calls

Solution: Keeping the phones covered as your business grows can be a challenge. Adding more headcount just to cover phones is often impractical. A more streamlined way to handle inbound calls is required, and hosted VoIP fits the bill, with options like auto attendant and call routing to the employee best suited to handle each call. Some VoIP solutions even provide more advanced capabilities that let companies manage their own call centers, either for sales operations or for customer service.

“I love the fact that all of my employees have their own voicemail and direct numbers to their offices,” says Erica Jean Kopcznski, CEO of Timeshare Real Solutions. “This eliminates the cost of a secretary!”

Features like the auto attendant—an automated receptionist that can route your calls for you—allow your company to be more efficient and project a professional image. Callers to your main number hear a professionally-recorded greeting “For sales, press 1; For the company directory, press 2 etc.” and can self-select the department or person they wish to speak with. This saves both time and human resources.

Jason Walsh, VP of Sales and Merchandising at Mode Distributing, agrees. “We recently started a luxury appliance distribution system. We are a young aggressive company with the technical savvy to know that
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receptionists are not necessary in a small office environment,” he says. “We now have integrated control of our communications and can efficiently grow our business to multiple times larger, knowing that the system we run will allow us to move forward at a rapid pace.”

Problem #4: Costs associated with the expansion of offices and traditional telephony systems

Solution: The cost of expansion goes down considerably with business VoIP compared to traditional telephone systems. The main financial advantage of VoIP systems is that they scale easily. Based on business needs, lines can be added or removed quickly.

“We needed to save money and decided to have a home office instead of being in an office park with rent,” says Susan Hebert, owner of Ambassador World Travel. “I was able to make our move without any disruption to my business. And, I am paying less for my phone service now than when I was in our office at the other location.”

Problem #5: Worries over downtime during relocation to a larger office

Solution: The flexibility and mobility of business VoIP solutions also allow for easy relocation when more space is required, since turning phones on and off is much easier than installing new lines or messing around with a PBX system.

"When we moved our offices, the idea of having to ‘start over’ with a new phone system was overwhelming,” says Dave Spetrino of Plantation Building Corp. “But the next morning, our phones arrived. We were ‘up and operating’ in a few minutes, and the ease and ability of customizing our preferences online was unbelievable.”

Also, with VoIP, every person in a company can communicate via softphone, mobile device or desktop computer, and share files and data seamlessly. With mobile and computer access, downtime is unnecessary.

Business VoIP is the practical, efficient and cost-effective solution to these and many other communication concerns. Switching to VoIP not only makes good business sense; it could be the catalyst that pushes your company to the next level!

Visit 8x8.com to learn more about business VoIP solutions to fit your company’s growing needs.

To learn more, call 866-862-2811 or visit www.8x8.com