



360IT PARTNERS

"We build lasting partnerships with our clients based on trust, communication, and consistency"

6 Questions To Ask Before You Move To VoIP



Thanks to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and ever-improving cloud technologies, the phone-service options available to you as a small business are plentiful, with more features at a lower cost than were ever available before.

However, with all the options and vendors, separating the good from the bad and navigating the hype can be difficult. Not only are some VoIP systems a complete waste of money, but fees can be "hidden," so what appears to be a big cost-saving decision can end up costing you more in the long run once you've calculated in ALL costs over a three- to five-year period.

Here are six revealing questions you must ask to cut through the hype, half-truths and "little" white lies that could bury your company.

1) What will the call quality be like on my new system?

Companies that sell phone systems and do not install and support computer networks – which is what your VoIP system is running on – are often NOT qualified to recommend or install a VoIP phone system for your office. One of the biggest reasons for VoIP failure (poor sound quality, slowed Internet speeds, etc.) is that the person selling you the system does not understand

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Worried about replacing your aging phone system?

Our partnership with Nextiva provides a concierge level of service and we will walk you through the process step by step! Call us today to schedule a consultation with our in-house expert.



Client Spotlight



Since 1960, Insko Insurance Group has served clients throughout Virginia. We have earned our reputation as a leading insurance agency by offering businesses and families customized insurance programs while providing superior service. As an independent insurance agency, Insko offers tailored coverages underwritten by highly reputable, long-standing insurance companies. Our staff, from the "first impressions" office receptionist to our experienced insurance specialists, is responsive to your specific business, personal and life/health insurance needs. We not only analyze and design a customized, cost-efficient plan, but continue to serve as your experts when your needs change. Throughout the years, our focus has remained constant: We provide quality insurance and protection, investing our resources to ensure that we provide the best advice and coverages for you. Insko is ready to provide you with an objective analysis of your insurance needs. Let's get started – Contact us today! 757-490-1631 or email info@inscogr.com

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how to properly assess your company's firewall, routers, network traffic, Internet connection speeds, as well as a host of other factors, to make sure their phone system will work as advertised in YOUR SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENT. That's because they're phone-system sales guys, not network engineers.

2) How many data centers do you have and are they geographically dispersed?

If the answer is only one, run away! What happens if their ONE data center goes down? Or, more commonly, what happens when the VoIP equipment inside the data center goes down? Your business is without a phone until they get their systems back online! Insist on at least two redundant data centers that are states away from each other to lower the risk of a natural disaster wiping out both data centers at once.

3) What was your uptime last year? What's your guarantee for uptime?

If it's anything less than 99.999%, find a different provider. And don't just take them at their word; ask for documentation proving the reliability of their network in the previous year. If they can't even do that, don't buy their system!

NOTE: Uptime is the system's ability to make and receive calls. If an individual office happens to be down due to an Internet outage, this does not affect the overall reliability of the system, because the system was ready and able.

4) If my phone is unreachable, do you have automatic failover to another phone?

If your provider's system isn't constantly monitoring the status of your network, VoIP system and VoIP phones, you should consider going with another provider. If your Internet goes down, or even a single phone stops working, the system should know that within a few minutes and automatically forward the calls to a predetermined destination (like a cell phone or another office location).

5) Do you monitor my phones and system 24/7/365 for any potential issues?

If you have to tell your provider the phones aren't working, then find another provider. Any quality vendor should be monitoring and maintaining your system for you, using remote management tools. If you are missing calls, move on to a different system.

6) Do you offer a money-back guarantee?

If your provider is not willing to back up their claims with a WRITTEN, no-small-print, money-back guarantee, free of "weasel out" clauses, look for a vendor that does. Every phone-system sales guy is going to tell you how wonderful their system is and how you won't experience any problems. If they're THAT confident, have them guarantee it in writing so you're not stuck paying for a new system that doesn't work.

If you're looking to upgrade your phone system to VoIP sometime in the near future, this free assessment will help you avoid making any mistakes and help you navigate the endless number of choices, techy "mumbo jumbo," conflicting advice and confusion. We'll answer all of your burning questions and determine which phone system is BEST FOR YOU, based on your specific needs, budget, Internet connection and existing network. No charge and no obligation! Simply call us today at 757-499-6761 get started!



Employee Spotlight

Erik Crawford, Systems Engineer

Erik holds a BS in Information Systems Security and the CompTIA Security plus certification. He enjoys coaching his oldest son's baseball team and also plays in an adult baseball league. He has three kids, two boys and a girl. Erik and his wife, Nicole, enjoy watching a good movie together and watching the kids play baseball. He enjoys watching football, basketball, and baseball. He also enjoys working on cars whether it be for maintenance or modifications, and also building and designing websites. He is currently studying for his Masters of Information Security Assurance at Western Governors University.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Your Desk Is Killing You: Do This Instead

The evidence is piling up that sitting all day is bad for your health. Though not perfect, Varidesk offers a compelling solution.

On the plus side, The Varidesk sets up right out of the box – no assembly required. With its weight-balancing system, you don't need any hardware to fasten it to your desk. And it features an attractive, sturdy design. You can lean on it and your monitor won't go crashing to the floor. Springs and levers make it easy to raise or lower it to one of 11 preset levels.

The main flaw is that when you raise it, it also moves forward – a problem if you're in a tight space. All in all, though, it's worth looking at, especially if you have a wireless keyboard and mouse – and enough space in your office or cubicle to back up a bit.

360IT PARTNERS Named to the Roaring 20 List



We are proud to announce that 360IT PARTNERS has again made the 2016 *Roaring* 20 list for the Hampton Roads Region!

Inside Business' Roaring 20 award honors only twenty businesses in Hampton Roads, Virginia who exhibit revenue and employee growth, as well as make significant contributions to the local economy. Eligibility includes being headquartered in Hampton Roads, experiencing annual revenue growth from 2013-2015, and having reported gross revenues of at least \$2 million in 2015.

Martin Joseph, CEO, credits the growth to his team's dedication to their clients' needs. "I certainly couldn't do it without good leadership, and my partners are clearly very dedicated to the growth and success of the company." He also noted the important relationships with their clients, which allows 360IT to be an extension of their company. "[Our clients] look at us as a being a trusted partner in their business."

Want To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

Ready to Play?

Here's this month's question:

To view objects at the surface of water from a submarine under water, the instrument used is:

a) kaleidoscope b) periscope c) spectroscope d) telescope

E-mail Kirsten (kirsten@360itpartners.com) right now with your name, company, and answer!

She will put all the correct answers in a hat and draw the winner at the end of each month.

Being “smart” isn’t just for phones and TVs anymore.

Soon, Microsoft’s Cortana will be able to see inside your fridge. With cutting-edge, fridge-safe technologies, Cortana can identify the foods you place there. After spending some time with your fridge’s contents, Cortana learns your food preferences. It can even offer up recipes or shopping lists to make your life easier. While other smart fridges have cameras that show users what’s inside without opening the door, the Cortana version actually helps you keep your fridge stocked. By the time this fridge hits the market, it will have captured thousands of photos of food packages from around the world. And that means you may soon have a smart new helper when it comes to shopping and fixing meals.

-TechCrunch

Want earbuds that last – and sound great?

Bragi’s new earbuds, named simply The Headphone now have “bragging rights” on both battery life and sound quality. At six hours of battery life, these buds shred all competition. That includes Erato’s Apollo 7 and the Earin buds – both of which wimp out at three hours. Bragi’s Headphone also delivers a crystal-clear sound that beats most Bluetooth and WiFi earbuds. And they let sounds come through from whatever space you’re in. They also receive phone calls and respond to voice commands. Plus, all of this is 100% wireless. They even include a sleek-looking lanyard-style carrying case. All that being said, The Headphone is well worth a look if you’re looking for a great pair of earbuds.

-DigitalTrends

Discover More Information About Our Dynamic Services and Team: www.360itpartners.com



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