PBX FOR THE CLOUD ERA: VIRTUALIZED, MANAGED AND MAINTAINED

White Paper

kinetic business
by windstream
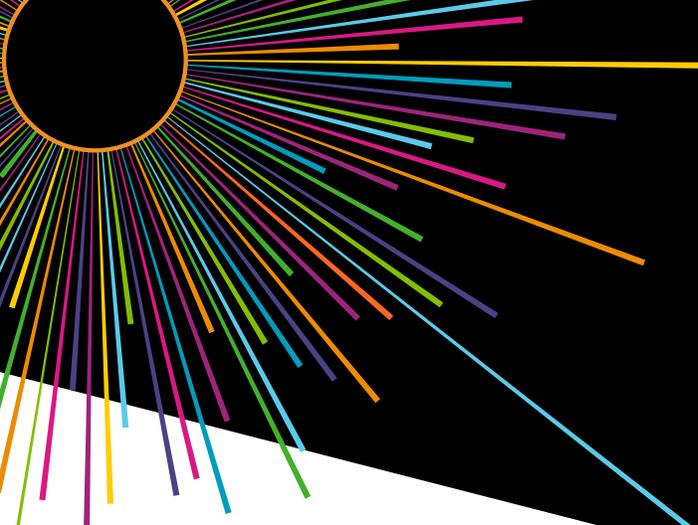
Communication: The Foundation of Business

Communication, in all its various forms, is the foundation of every business. Yet one of the key technologies for enabling business communication—the traditional private branch exchange (PBX)—also introduces several challenges. In the past, owning and managing your own PBX likely saved your organization a considerable amount of money, and enhanced vital communication among employees, partners and customers.

At the same time, rapid changes in technology, along with ever-increasing business demands, are causing a growing number of businesses to consider alternatives. The traditional PBX is no longer the only solution for enabling business communication.

Technology Is Evolving

With the emergence of new generations of technology comes the disruption of older technologies. Voice and data networks used to be completely separate. Circuit-switched telephony networks carried analog voice traffic while packet-switched IP networks carried digital data. However, since IP networks offered significant cost and efficiency advantages, it was only a matter of time before they began to carry digital voice in addition to data. Today, reliable, high-performance IP networks carry a mix of voice and data traffic.

As many forms of network traffic converge to IP-based networks, PBX hardware is also evolving. IP PBXs, for example, use Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to carry telephone calls over IP networks. Basically, this means that you have one network carrying both voice and data traffic.

Business Demands Are Increasing

As business demands change and increase, even IP PBXs are evolving to meet those growing requirements. Customers are always seeking better value, competitors are always seeking greater advantage and companies themselves must evolve in order to keep up with changes. The always-on, constantly connected world in which we live and work requires us to have rapid access to information and collaboration tools at all times, from wherever we may be working. This is especially true for companies with dispersed workforces. And with capital budgets under pressure, business leaders are continually asked to do more with less.

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Businesses already have plenty of challenges without the extra burden of purchasing, upgrading, managing and maintaining their own communications systems. This becomes compounded when companies expand and/or support multiple sites. Unfortunately, businesses that continue to rely on traditional, on-premises PBXs have less time and resources to spend on overcoming their core business challenges.

PBX for the Cloud Era

These days, it seems that nearly every facet of communication can be taken to "the cloud," and the PBX is no exception. Modern PBX solutions let organizations focus on their core mission rather than on keeping up with technology. In addition, these solutions have two important attributes—virtualized and managed—each of which offer unique business benefits.

Virtualized

A virtualized PBX is a subscription-based, cloud phone system delivered "as a service" by a provider. A virtualized, or cloud-based, PBX provides several advantages over traditional, on-premises PBXs.

By choosing a virtual PBX, you can avoid a number of operating costs such as space, power, cooling, monitoring, management, maintenance and more. Virtual PBXs also make supporting distributed workers very easy, as each require only an Internet connection and a connected device—which can be a VoIP phone, laptop, tablet or mobile phone. Additionally, the subscription-based nature of a virtual PBX solution helps minimize capital expenses because it is delivered on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Managed & Maintained

As described earlier, monitoring, managing and maintaining phone systems can keep companies from focusing on their core business. In contrast, a cloud-based PBX solution lets specialists carry those burdens. The right provider will handle all the usual challenges such as technology upgrades and regular system maintenance, as well as unforeseen problems. Moreover, cloud-based communications systems can easily scale up or down to adapt to your changing business needs, and their low-maintenance nature allows for organizations to easily make their own line changes or additions via a web-based application, without the need for IT involvement.

What to Look for in a Cloud Services Provider

Choosing the right cloud PBX solution provider is critical. Businesses often prefer an all-in-one provider that offers network and voice support. Additionally, service providers should have the ability to quickly respond to requests and offer high-quality phones and accessories.

Unified

It's important to look for a provider that can deliver a highly scalable communications system with enterprise-class features. The ideal solution should include a large range of embedded applications and the ability to support both real-time and non-real-time unified communications tools such as email, unified messaging, instant messaging, presence management, faxes and voice messaging, as well as audio, video and web conferencing, contact center and mobility.

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If you have existing software that you want to use in conjunction with your cloud-based PBX system, you'll want a provider that supports integrations and has the ability to seamlessly connect disparate systems to form one cohesive communications system.

Customization

Every business is unique. Each has its own processes, configurations and preferred methods of communication. That's why the provider you partner with should have the expertise to assess your environment and customize a solution for your specific needs. That solution should support easy updates as your business grows and your requirements evolve.

Kinetic Business by Windstream: Helping Businesses Evolve Their Communications

Whether your business is small or large, what you need is a trusted advisor. Kinetic Business by Windstream is a provider of enterprise-class voice and network services, including cloud-based communications services to businesses of all sizes. The skilled experts at Kinetic Business can assess your needs and design a solution tailored to your business, working with your existing hardware and systems and optimizing them with cutting-edge solutions from top manufacturers.

Voice offerings from Kinetic Business include:

- **Cloud-Based UC** – OfficeSuite UC® is an award-winning, cloud-based unified communications and collaboration solution that lets you easily manage call routing and auto attendants using a simple online management tool. This subscription-based solution offers high availability, flexibility and scalability by delivering various communication and collaboration applications and services—including messaging, presence and conferencing.

- **SIP Trunking** – A converged voice and data connection compatible with existing analog, SIP trunking or PRI systems is a cost-effective way to benefit from VoIP features while extending the life of your current phone system.

- **Business Lines** – Phone services from Kinetic Business offer the reliability you need to support all of your basic and secondary business communications applications at pricing you can afford.

Conclusion

When you are ready for a new PBX, consider a virtualized and fully maintained communications solution from Kinetic Business. Their cloud-based communications solutions can require little to no capital outlay and can be customized to meet your specialized requirements. You need a solution that will support your communications needs today and prepare you for future growth, and Kinetic Business can deliver that with industry-leading expertise, reliability and affordability.