



Ready, Set, Transition! Transitioning to a VoIP Environment

Are you ready to retire your outdated PBX and transition to a Voice over IP (VoIP) environment? If you answered "yes," you're not alone.

More than:

- Sixty percent of best-in-class enterprises surveyed by the Aberdeen Group are planning a transition to an IP-enabled network over the next two years.
- Forty-five percent of companies have IP PBX deployments under way, and an additional 29 percent are evaluating or testing the technology, according to Forrester Research.

By 2011, the consumer VoIP market will total nearly \$44 billion worldwide.

– In-Stat

The consumer VoIP market is booming as well. In 2006, total VoIP subscribers worldwide increased by 34 million, says In-Stat, a high-tech market research firm. By 2011, In-Stat predicts the consumer VoIP market will total nearly \$44 billion worldwide.

What's the draw? Many experts believe VoIP, which allows organizations to route voice traffic over their computer networks, is the technology of the century.

“A major push for mass-market VoIP services has been under way for the last several years,” says David L. Schmidt, president of SAI, a leading usage management service provider to Fortune 1000 companies. “VoIP's draw is about cost savings, easier management and capabilities that link caller ID to customer databases. In addition, VoIP plays a critical role in an organization's unified communications system and is an integral part of its security and business continuity policy.”

TECHtionary.com, an online technology resource and tutorial provider, agrees with this analogy. In its white paper *Ten Steps to Successful VoIP Implementation*, it lists the “hottest benefits and features” of VoIP:

- Lowers total cost of ownership
- Enables personal administration of service and features
- Simplifies billing
- Enables unified messaging
- Supports multiple sites
- Improves audit trail
- Reduces/eliminates the concept of “local” versus “long distance” and variable per-month charges

Watch a VoIP demo (Flash, 1.1 MB)

Making the Case

Two years ago, Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, made the transition to VoIP to expand its telephone services throughout the campus. After extensive research and analysis, the university switched 6,500 of its phone lines over to a VoIP environment, but left about 1,300 phones intact with their Centrex system.

“We kept a small percentage of the phones with our old system as a backup, just in case the VoIP system didn't perform well,” says Dennis Risen, project manager in the university's IT department. “We weren't looking for VoIP's added features for the Centrex phones either.”

Although it's still in the pilot stage, Case leaders are chalking up the program as a huge success and have even devoted a large section of their website to the VoIP program, which serves as a tutorial of sorts for students and faculty who use the system.

Thwarting Security Threats

Although early preparation and planning are critical to the success of VoIP implementation, organizations must also address and thwart security threats that affect the VoIP environment. Hackers, eavesdroppers, viruses, spam, and other assaults against voice traffic are all possibilities. Fortunately, secure VoIP is achievable. Qualified vendors can provide intrusion-prevention systems to protect against VoIP threats.

One such vendor is SAI. Five years ago, SAI introduced a device called the DataSafe to enable organizations utilizing VoIP to keep their network data secure.

“DataSafe closes any potential security breaches in IP networks with multiple overlapping layers of security in a system designed to protect an organization's local area network,” Schmidt explained. “It deploys a firewall, and features login identification and password protection before access to the LAN is granted. It also employs point-to-point and uses FTP push technology to transfer encrypted files.”

In its white paper *Securing Your Network for IP Telephony*, Cisco Systems offers its expertise on building a secure foundation, and agrees, “Security should be built in layers so that the compromise of any one system or feature does not compromise the entire network.”

It's Time to Transition

Once an organization gets buy-in and support from everyone—like the enterprise voice team, and network operations, applications, voice, and business units—it's time to start the transition.

As a leading provider of usage management products, SAI can help companies make a smooth transition to a VoIP environment. To learn how SAI can help your organization with usage management and VoIP, complete our contact form or call us at (800) 775-0025, ext. 4516.

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