

IBM Converged Communications Services – IP telephony

Highlights

- ***Offers greater cost control over traditional communications infrastructures***
- ***Facilitates improvements in personal and organizational productivity***
- ***Allows the creation of new and improved business processes***
- ***Helps to create competitive advantage and differentiation in the marketplace***

Putting converged networks to work with IP telephony

Internet Protocol (IP) telephony can no longer be considered a risky proposition best left to bleeding-edge businesses willing to trade dial-tone reliability for unproven cost savings. IP telephony today has gone mainstream, as evidenced by thousands of successful IP telephony implementations at enterprises worldwide, along with the realization that innovations in communication will require the integration of voice with business applications. Today, IP telephony—the delivery of voice signals as data packets across IP networks—represents an opportunity for enterprises to reduce costs, improve organizational and individual productivity and create differentiating advantage in the marketplace.

Industry research indicates that the adoption of IP telephony solutions is accelerating. Yet IP telephony in the enterprise is not a simple undertaking. There are pitfalls to be avoided, and enterprises need to properly plan and design an IP telephony solution to help minimize problems with performance, scalability and process change that might counter any cost-saving advantages.

When your business is ready to adopt IP telephony, IBM Converged Communications Services – IP telephony includes a full range of consulting, integration, deployment and run services designed to help you build an IP telephony solution to meet your unique needs. These services can help you design, deploy and manage IP telephony infrastructure solutions that can reduce the costs associated with managing and maintaining separate voice and data equipment and networks, and increase the productivity of your employees. IP

telephony services from IBM focus on network preparation and design and the deployment of desktop IP phones, PC softphones, voice over wireless LAN phones and person-to-person video telephony, all of which form the foundation for innovative converged communications environments.

Using IBM Global Services' proven methods and intellectual capital and our experience in deploying IP telephony solutions, IBM can help design and deploy an IP telephony solution that helps you meet your immediate and long-term business objectives and establishes an ideal platform for future growth.

Lowering the costs of building and managing communications infrastructures

IP telephony offers significant potential for cost savings over traditional communications solutions. For example, the use of multiple networks for voice, data and video requires that they each have their own hardware, software and management applications to keep them up and running. All of these infrastructure elements require an initial investment as well as ongoing management costs, and they are often proprietary. Additionally, each network requires management and maintenance personnel who have specific expertise and skills. Those

people and resources can be better used for more strategic initiatives. Traditional Public Switched Telephone (PSTN) voice networks also incur costs for connectivity, tolls and international call charges.

IP telephony services from IBM can help you plan and execute cost-reduction initiatives, helping you pinpoint where savings are possible, including utilizing managed services from IBM for maintaining an IP telephony environment. Our proven methodologies for analyzing return on investment (ROI), such as those used in our solution definition workshops, help determine solution requirements based on various scenarios and vendor choices, and can offer more predictable cost-reduction results.

IP telephony eliminates the traditional voice network and puts all voice, data, call-switching, IP communication and collaboration applications on standard data servers, where they can be managed in a centralized, cost-effective way. Unlike proprietary private branch exchanges (PBXs), which have limited line and call capacities, IP PBX systems can be quickly

and easily expanded to accommodate changing demands just by adding additional servers or storage capacity. With IBM Converged Communications Services – IP telephony, you can design a networking and server infrastructure that accommodates your growth plans—allowing you to add new business lines, new locations and new employees faster and more easily than traditional communications systems would allow.

Depending on your preference, you may wish to use your IT staff to manage your IP telephony systems as applications; or you may choose instead to rely on IBM managed services for telephony, eliminating the need to have voice-specific expertise in house. We can show you how management of IP telephony can be accomplished via Web-based management interfaces for moves, adds or changes (MAC)—for example, adding new users to the system or making large-scale changes such as adding a new branch office. The added speed and efficiency you'll gain can lead to savings over traditional systems.

IBM can also show you how you can gain further cost savings by bypassing the PSTN and routing calls between internal sites via public IP networks to eliminate long-distance and international toll charges.

Helping to drive increases in personal and organizational productivity

While the potential to reduce cost is a significant motivating factor in deciding to deploy IP telephony, the expanded communication and application integration capabilities offered by IP telephony are also high on the list. The integration of voice and video with collaborative applications can create intelligent, productive business communication tools. IBM Converged Communications Services includes design and integration capabilities that can allow your employees to take advantage of unified messaging applications that combine e-mail, voicemail, videoconferencing and other communications mediums into a single interface.

Using our vast and varied IP telephony application development and integration capabilities gained from global implementations, we can show you how your employees can assume greater control of how, when and where they communicate. For example, a field sales employee could route incoming calls from customers or prospects to a mobile phone or another colleague based on their availability—so your employees would spend less time playing “phone tag” and more time selling and solving customer problems.

Facilitating the creation of new and improved business processes

For the individual employee, IP telephony can mean greater freedom and flexibility; for the enterprise, it can also make it easier not only to improve existing business processes but also to create new ones. IBM's network consulting services for IP telephony focus on assessing, planning and designing the best converged network and IP telephony applications to meet your business objectives. We can show you how combining a converged network, IP telephones and video devices and the Web can transform your business.

Web-based collaboration tools and the integration of IP telephony with customer relationship management applications can help employees find information and resources faster, reduce the number of steps required to help a customer and contribute to more efficient, customer-focused interactions. IP telephony can also improve self-service processes through interactive voice-response applications that allow customers to check on the status of orders or see inventory levels.

IP telephony can also improve internal processes, including processes associated with employee training programs, time and attendance, benefits enrollment, accounting and sales, as well as collaborative processes such as engineering and research and development.

Transforming a cost center into a marketplace differentiator

Staying ahead of the competition requires a focus on innovation and a commitment to seeing opportunities where others see challenges. IP telephony and a converged communications infrastructure offer you the potential to take what is traditionally a cost center and transform it into a business asset with the potential for differentiated customer service that can make it a profit center. With the new communication and collaboration capabilities enabled by IP telephony, you can better serve customers, meet evolving customer expectations for how they want to interact with your business, and facilitate better and faster exchange of information with your suppliers and business partners.

IP telephony can also support the strategic evolution of your business, allowing you to add new product or service offerings more quickly, improve merger and acquisition processes, and confidently pursue new revenue streams via new sales channels. With IBM Converged Communications Services – IP telephony, IBM can help you develop innovative strategies for business success, using not only new IP telephony technologies, but your existing investments and business processes as well.



Why IBM?

Utilizing trained and experienced IBM network consultants, architects and specialists, integrated communications services from IBM can provide full lifecycle services for IP telephony solutions. We can assess your needs, help you identify the available alternatives, and create an IP telephony solution architecture and design, and a proposal for implementation.

When you're ready to implement your design, our experienced network integration and deployment services team can draw on our extensive project management and subject matter expertise to put your solution into a production environment. And if you want to take further advantage of our expertise and worldwide resources, our managed services can help keep your production environment up and running.

In addition to our own broad range of hardware and software products and services solutions designed for IP telephony, IBM has significant partnerships with the major networking vendors and services providers, including Cisco, Avaya and Nortel. This ability to design, execute and manage end-to-end IP telephony solutions based on industry-leading products and services offers you a compelling choice for the future of your business.

For more information

To learn more about IBM Converged Communications Services – IP telephony, contact your IBM representative or visit:

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