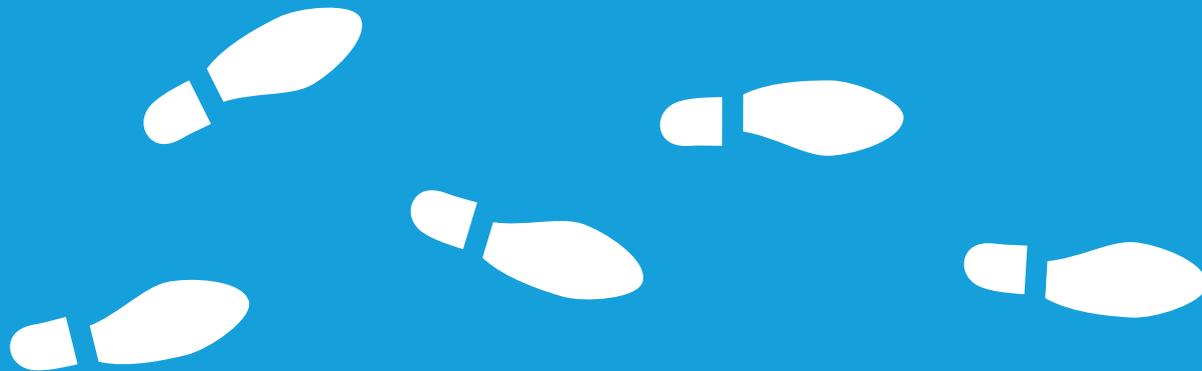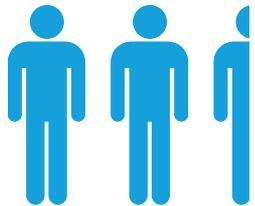# 5 STEPS

To a Successful Switch to VoIP

or

Voice Over Internet Made Easy

Switching your phone system to a VoIP provider may seem like a daunting task, given the vast array of cloud and onsite system providers out there, but it's actually a pretty painless process – once you know what you need. To determine which system will work best for you, use our simple five-step guide to better understand your needs and options.
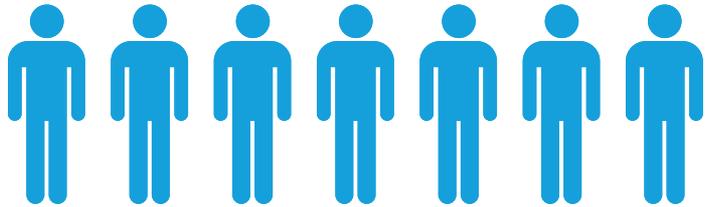
7.3 billion people
on the planet

3.2 billion people
on the internet

Around 44% of the world's population has an internet connection. In 1996 it was only 1.3% . Make sure your VoIP provider has solid experience in providing VoIP services.

(Source: http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users Sept. 2015

STEP 1. FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU NEED

Understanding the scope of your phone needs before you invest in a service is critical to the success of your switch. Before you buy, you'll want to consider two topics that have a big impact on the type of VoIP phone system that's best for you: locations and employees. To make sure you've got your bases covered, arm yourself with answers to these questions:

LOCATIONS

1. How many locations and remote workers does your business currently have?

2. Do you plan to add office locations or teleworkers in the next few years?

3. Do you have traveling employees who need mobile access to the phone system?

4. Do you have utility areas that need phones, like kitchens, lobbies, break areas, labs and waiting rooms?

5. Do you have conference rooms that need phones?

EMPLOYEES

1. How many employees do you have?

2. Does each employee need a desk phone?

3. Do you have a receptionist? How many?

4. Do you have employees that specialize in making or receiving customer service calls? How many?

5. Do you have seasonal or special project employees that only need phones temporarily?

6. How many employees do you expect to add in the next year? Two years? Five years?

STEP 2. ASSEMBLE THE TEAM

Next, you'll want to identify the people at your company who will be involved in the process of selecting and implementing your new VoIP phone system. The first two on the list should be the person who has final approval and the person who best understands the technical infrastructure of your locations.

It's also wise to consult with leaders from a variety of departments. Today's phone systems offer advanced communications tools, and involving key decision-makers from across the company helps ensure that everyone can weigh in on the features they need to be more productive.

Some of the departments that typically have unique phone needs include:

- Sales & Marketing
- Finance & Accounting
- Executive Team

- Customer service
- HR & Administration
- IT & Technical Operations

Every leader in each department has a unique purpose and certain requirements in their communications systems.

STEP 3. CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS

Today's VoIP phone systems come with an array of features and capabilities; some of which may be critical to your business, and others not so much. Before you make a list of your "must-haves" versus your "don't needs," it's smart to do a little investigating into some of the exciting new features modern VoIP systems offer that you may not have considered before. Some of the advanced and productivity-boosting features you may want to add to your must-list include:

1. Instant Messaging & Group Chat

2. Online Meetings with Web Desktop Sharing

3. On-Demand Conferencing

4. Salesforce® and Business Application Integrations

5. Voicemail to Email Transcription

6. Mobile Phones with Full Office Phone Functionality

7. Call Recording

8. Video Calling

9. Contact Center Call, Chat & Email Routing

UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS

VIDEO · HYBRID · IM · WEB SHARE · ONSITE · CONFERENCE · MOBILE · VOIP · CLOUD

UC
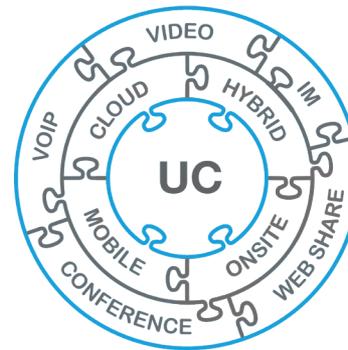
How many communications apps do you use every day?

Do you instant message, use a smartphone, or a conference calling service? Do you make video calls or subscribe to an online meeting service?

"Unified communications" means combining all the ways you communicate into one integrated system. Look for a vendor that offers a single, streamlined app that does everything for you.

STEP 4. MAKE IT WORK

Once you know what you want your new VoIP phone system to do, you'll need to consider how it will work. Phone systems with unified communications can be deployed as a monthly service via the cloud, or as equipment you manage onsite, or as a hybrid of both.

Call on the assistance of your IT staff or a trusted system integrator, who can help answer the following questions:

1. What type of cabling is currently available in your office and teleworker locations for both voice and data?

2. What are your data needs?

3. What types of broadband connections are available?

4. Do you have contracts with broadband and/or voice providers? If so, when do they expire?

5. Does your company currently use cloud services?
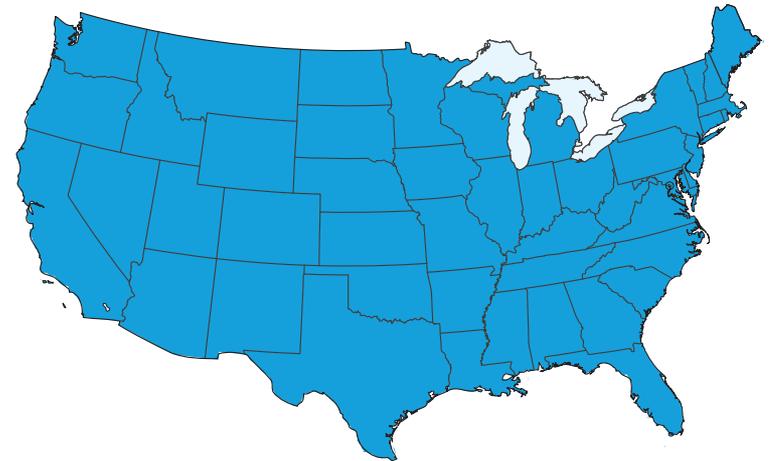
VoIP uses existing internet infrastructure, eliminating the need for a separate phone lines. Broadband internet is available to 98 percent of Americans, but we are the 17th in the world in terms of Internet speed. A private Internet connection ameliorates hiccups that can occur on public lines.

Source: http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/08/26/home-broadband-2013/
Source: http://www.xconomy.com/boston/2015/01/08/state-of-the-internet-us-connection-speeds-rank-17th-in-world/

STEP 5. ASK A DOZEN QUESTIONS

There are lots of VoIP service providers out there, so it might seem complicated to determine which one deserves your business. To help you separate the great from the not-so-good, **here's the top 12 questions to ask a VoIP service provider before you buy:**
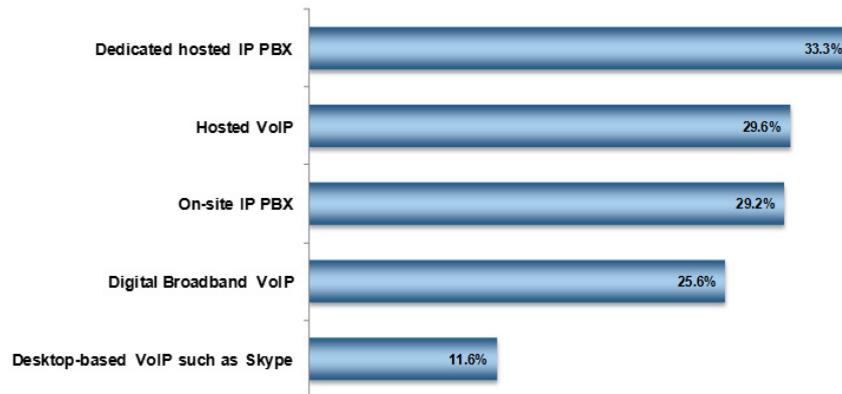
1. Do you have VoIP customers like me, similar in size, industry and complexity?

2. Can you show me analyst reports, case studies, customer testimonials or other ways to measure customer satisfaction?

3. What kind of user experience and range of unified communications do you provide?

4. Do I have to pick a cloud or onsite system--could I do both?

5. How much training is required to administer or use the system?

6. What are the details of your implementation process and how do I get help and support?

7. Who will support my users if they have questions or problems after installation?

8. Do you have a service level agreement in place?

9. How do you guarantee call quality and availability?

10. What are the initial, monthly, and ongoing maintenance and support costs?

11. What can you tell me about your company history and strength of your financials?

12. How do I know you will be around to support me for the next five to seven years?

BONUS STEP. FIND AN EXPERT

We hope "Five Steps" has helped you feel confident in your decision to make the switch to VoIP. For even more information, find a trustworthy specialist who knows cloud, onsite and hybrid phone systems and can help determine the right solution for your business.

Find your expert at: www.mitel.com/findareseller

VoIP: Intent To Migrate

Category	Percentage
Dedicated hosted IP PBX	33.3%
Hosted VoIP	29.6%
On-site IP PBX	29.2%
Digital Broadband VoIP	25.6%
Desktop-based VoIP such as Skype	11.6%

WHAT'S MOST POPULAR?

If you're like most businesses looking to change to VoIP, you're one of the 63% of buyers looking for a hosted (cloud) solution. Or perhaps you're one of the 30% seeking the control of an onsite system.

(Source: IDC's 2014 U.S. Enterprise Communications Survey)