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5 Steps to VoIP

By Olivia Tan

So you're ready to enjoy unlimited long distance calling and lower monthly phone bills. Well, before you make the switch, here are five steps that will help you get the VoIP plan that is best for you.

Make the Decision

Yes, it is new technology, and sometimes we are scared of the unknown. VoIP technology is on the rise and many high profile computer companies are already switching to VoIP and in return are becoming service providers. AOL, Sprint, and Verizon are offering VoIP as well as Internet Messaging services such as Yahoo, MSN, and AOL IM. First you must come to the decision that VoIP is best for you, your family, or your business needs. Research VoIP on the web and its providers. Talk to people that you know have already made the switch. Once you have made your decision to switch to VoIP, you are ready for the next step.

Choose the Plan that is Right for You

A good idea is to make a written list of your needs, wants, and features in a phone. This will help you compare different plans and choose the service provider that will best fit your needs. If you are looking for residential or business service, make sure that you note that in your list. Residential plans usually come in two forms— basic (which is a certain amount of minutes) and unlimited (which will give you unlimited local and long distance talk time). Business plans can include amenities such as multiple phones, greater minute talk time, greater unlimited calling plans, business features bundled with your plan, faxing and voicemail to your computer capabilities, and extras such as yellow page listings. Check with the company to find the plan that meets your requirements.

Setting up the System

Some service providers will send you the equipment that you need to begin using VoIP. You will first need to make sure that your computer system is compatible with the VoIP service. You will also need to have high speed Internet already installed with your computer. If you are using VoIP for a business or for a call center, it is best to leave the installation to a professional. Installing VoIP for a residence or

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home office is typically simple enough for most residents to do themselves.

Choosing your Phone Number

One of the best features that VoIP has to offer is the freedom to select your own telephone number. If you just want to transfer your old number to your new VoIP system, check with your service provider before making your final decision. Many VoIP providers will allow you to transfer your phone number.

If you want to select a different area code, this option has many advantages. First, for friends and family members who don't have unlimited long distance calling, selecting the same area code as them can save them money. They will appreciate being able to call you as if it were a local call.

This strategy is also very beneficial for those whose businesses are targeting specific areas. Say there is a California company, yet they want to increase business in Tampa, Florida. By selecting the

Tampa, Florida area code, they can increase sales and productivity by having a local number for customers to call. This also reduces the need for a toll free number.

Install your Features and Accessories

VoIP comes with many features included in your service plan. For residential customers these include Voicemail, Caller ID, Call Forwarding, Call Block, and Do Not Disturb. Always check with your service provider for a detailed listing of the features included with your plan. For Small businesses, amenities such as multi phone users, free fax lines, and integrating your VoIP and web features are all available. VoIP also contains many of the same features bundled with basic plans as well. When you are choosing a provider, compare their business plans and select the one that best fits your business needs.

As VoIP technology continues to advance, a new array of accessories appears on the market. Today you can choose from VoIP phones, headsets, and even VoIP videophones that work as a web camera incorporating video with your audio.

Olivia Tan is co-publisher of

All VoIP Solution

. She provides tips and review on

Voip conference

software

and

Voip phone service

What Is VoIP Technology?

By Sandra Stammberger

You may have heard the term Voip used a lot in the media, but are not sure what everyone is so excited about. Here you will find the answers to your most sought after Voip technology questions.

What is Voip technology?

Technically, VOIP is Voice Over Internet Protocol, or voices traveling over internet lines and wires like other information would. So, what does this mean to you? A lot. Even if you don't have a clue what Voip technology is, you may still be utilizing it everyday if you have a digital phone line or if you use a microphone hooked into your computer to speak to others while you are connected to the internet.

What is Voip technology going to do for me?

Digital phone and services like it keep costs down for the company, which is passed on to the consumer. It is usually much cheaper than a traditional land phone line, especially if you want extras such as caller ID and call forwarding.

What is Voip technology going to lack?

As great as Voip technology may be, there are some drawbacks that one using it for your phone service should realize. First, most digital phone companies do not provide access to emergency assistance numbers, such as 911 for those in the US. This may leave your household vulnerable if you use digital phone. Some consumers overcome this by keeping a basic plan with their traditional phone company provider or have a cell phone available in case of an emergency.

Another drawback to Voip technology in the form of digital phone is that if your power goes out, so does your phone. When you have a service through a traditional phone company, you can still access your line even during power outages as long as you do not need a second power source to run it (ex: cordless phones need a second power source to run, so when the power goes out so does your phone). This is not so with digital phone. However, once again having a basic plan with your traditional phone company or having a cell phone on hand may remedy this problem.

What is Voip technology overall?

Voip technology can be an asset to anyone. It keeps the cost of having a land phone line cheap while still allowing us to communicate verbally without having to rely solely on cell phones. The next time you are taking a look at your high-price phone bill from your phone company, take another look at digital phone and Voip technology in general. You may rack up savings that you never even knew existed.

For more information about VOIP visit

<http://www.voip-2006.com>

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