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VoIP Continues To Pose Technical Problems

Tom Cordell of Spectrum Communications Explains What Businesses Need to Know When Purchasing a VoIP Phone System

SANTA FE/ALBUQUERQUE, NM — December 17, 2007 — So what is VoIP and why is there so much buzz surrounding it? Simply put, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is the ability to speak over a data network based on Internet Protocol. Its greatest benefit to companies is the dramatic gain in productivity by seamlessly connecting applications as well as interoffice communications. Billed as the next best thing since sliced bread, VoIP has made believers out of many and given headaches to an even larger group of IT and facilities managers. As with the adoption of any new technology, VoIP comes with a price that's not only associated with the equipment, but more importantly the time, energy, and commitment it takes to do it right. Therefore, it's important for every president and business owner to fully understand the inherent technical issues that exist in VoIP and partner with a business communications provider that knows how to overcome them.

VoIP's problems have been widely discussed by telecom professionals since its inception. Unlike industry analysts and observers, business communication providers are in the trenches on a daily basis and truly understand the technology's problems as well as its challenges. Common VoIP related issues include high or low voice levels, known as clipping, and exorbitant noise or echoing caused by poorly configured data networks. Users may also discover a delay before they hear the other person's voice. If additional software is added to the network without modifications then latency will increase deteriorating call quality even further. Even something as simple as an employee accessing a file from a server can cause network congestion that will negatively affect a co-worker's conversation. Therefore, it is critical for IT managers to continually monitor performance and uncover these types of issues.

The allocation of bandwidth for Internet connectivity causes an entirely new set of problems. If there is a lack of upstream bandwidth VoIP will not be effective. Upstream bandwidth is typically minimal compared to its downstream counterpart and quality will be impacted without system enhancement. Furthermore, a growing number of users on an organization's network will put a strain on bandwidth as well as network capacity. As a result, voice quality will decline when the network is overloaded with too many users. Since VoIP is a relatively new technology, it will not be compatible with many legacy systems or LAN/WAN firewalls resulting in an additional investment in other network components.

Before investing in a large-scale VoIP deployment or even in a small trial, you need to know how well your network infrastructure will handle the additional, quality-sensitive voice traffic. Many seemingly well-planned trials encounter delay after delay, exceed cost estimates, and are eventually cancelled when the network proves unable to meet the unique requirements VoIP places on it. Gartner reports that 85% of networks are not ready for VoIP. What's even more shocking is that 75% of companies that do not perform a pre-implementation analysis of their network infrastructure will not realize a successful implementation. Properly assessing the system before, during and after installation will uncover hidden problems before serious damage is done.

Growth expectations are extremely positive for VoIP. According to the Telecommunications Industry Association and Wilkofsky Gruen and Associates, VoIP access in the U.S. will rise to 19.2 million lines by the end of 2007. The issues raised are not deal breakers when analyzing whether VoIP is the answer for your business; however, they need to be taken into serious consideration. Selecting the right business communications partner with a team of technicians that are industry certified on both VoIP technology and equipment will increase your level of comfort, minimize unforeseen problems, and create an environment for seamless transition. The sooner one realizes that the implementation of VoIP is not as easy as plug and play the better the chances for a successful migration.

ABOUT SPECTRUM COMMUNICATIONS

Founded in 1985, Spectrum Communications is a locally owned,

full-service technology company servicing New Mexico with offices in Santa Fe (505) 474-4100 and Albuquerque (505) 888-6464. As technology marches on, digital voice and data networks have “converged” into integrated computer/telecommunications systems that offer many advantages versus traditional analog telephone systems. By employing these latest technological advances, businesses will help to ensure their success – improving their productivity and increasing their “bottom line”. Spectrum Communications evaluates the communications needs of its customers/partners and implements customized state-of-the-art technology solutions. Through emerging technology we help our clients gain a competitive edge and increase their revenues.

To implement these solutions, Spectrum Communications employs staff who are licensed and certified and are experienced in the installation and repair of low-voltage cabling, traditional telephone and voice mail systems. Spectrum holds a New Mexico Contractor license and is insured and bonded. Spectrum is a Microsoft Partner and a certified dealer for ShoreTel (pure VOIP solutions), NEC (converged solutions) and Vodavi (traditional), offering communications systems that can accommodate large VoIP solutions with multiple sites. Customers are thoroughly trained in every component of their system by Spectrum Communications highly experienced customer service team.

The company’s local dispatch center delivers round-the clock service to ensure system reliability. Spectrum Communications also offers comprehensive service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and emergency service guaranteed within 2 hours.

For more information on Spectrum Communications, call (505) 474-4100 or visit www.spectrum-nm.com.