



# Preparing your business for migration to Cloud Telephony

A step-by-step guide



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## Preparing your business for migration to Cloud Telephony

You are probably already aware of the many benefits of moving to a cloud-based telephony system: cost savings, flexibility, business continuity and enhanced customer service. You may have already decided that making the change will be of benefit to your business and an essential step in promoting growth.

However, many business owners have concerns about how the migration process will effect the business – will there be ‘downtime’ where customers are unable to get through? Will there be disruption to communication between colleagues, having a negative impact on workflow?

We can offer reassurance that with careful planning, neither of these scenarios need become a reality, and the process can be a smooth and painless one. The following is a step-by step guide to analysing, designing and implementing a future-proof telephony system.

### Step 1 – Analyse your existing telephony system

Map out all the components of your existing telephony system, including:

- All the business phone lines & Direct Dial Ins
- Business phones & touch-tone button systems
- Dedicated numbers, extensions and Freephone numbers
- Local numbers
- Business mobile numbers
- Voicemail & voice recordings
- Call queues & redirects

By listing all that your business currently uses, you have the base level requirements for your new telephony system. However, this is also an opportunity to make improvements, so look for pain-points in the existing system or process and then consider ways to resolve them. An experienced SIP provider will also be able to advise on this.

### Step 2 – Think ahead for your business needs

As well as providing the opportunity to work on flaws in the current system, migration to cloud telephony allows you to plan ahead and design a system that is perfectly suited to the business needs, now and in the future. Don't hold back here - many things are made possible with cloud telephony. Take the ‘In an ideal world...’ approach to thinking of what would benefit the business and its staff.



Areas to consider are:

- Possible cost savings
- Flexibility & Capacity
- Ability to upscale
- Unified Communications
- Remote / Mobile Working
- Business Continuity

Document your findings and enhancements to the system, so you have a clear plan to share with your chosen SIP (cloud telephony) provider.

### Step 3 – Choosing a SIP provider

Consider the following points when comparing different providers:

1. **Security** - discuss the security and data protection measures that will keep your business and users safe
2. **Support** - what level of on-going customer support do they offer? Ask about their Service Level Agreements (SLA's)
3. **Price** - costs should be competitive, but also include the level of service you require
4. **Connectivity** - will your existing bandwidth be sufficient, or will you need to increase this to use their services?
5. **Communication** - do they use jargon when talking about their services, or speak in plain English to ensure everyone understands?

Once you have chosen your preferred SIP provider, and shared your documentation on provision requirements, you can start to discuss any additional considerations.

### Step 4 – Final stages of preparation

Your service provider will be able to advise on any additional equipment or services you require, for example:

- **Increased bandwidth** - this may be needed in order for your Internet connection to handle voice data
- **PBX (private branch exchange)** - this is the hardware system that handles routing and switching calls, and it may not be compatible with your new SIP service. If not, you will need to upgrade to an IP PBX (Internet based)
- **IP phones** - are your existing phones compatible with the new system and able to handle SIP calls?
- **Switches** - the switching infrastructure required for your new telecoms network



## Step 5 – Installation and testing

Once everything has been agreed between you and your SIP provider, including the timeframe for installation, you can hand the migration process over to them. When installation and basic testing are complete, you will need to put the system through its paces, which includes any relevant procedures in your Business Continuity Plan.

## Step 6 – Porting numbers

When the system has been rigorously tested, and you are confident that everything works as it should, it is time to port the existing numbers to the new system. With business numbers this usually takes around two weeks, depending on the porting agreement in place with your existing provider. You should receive confirmation when the numbers have been successfully ported.

## Step 7 – Switch off your ISDN service

Once all the desired numbers have been ported, you can contact your existing provider and ask them to disconnect your phone-line and close your account. You will need to ensure that all previously used ISDN equipment is shut down.

## Sit back and enjoy the benefits of Cloud Telephony

With time put in to the planning stages, assessing your current system and future requirements, switching to cloud telephony is relatively straightforward. Your business will then begin to benefit from the cost savings and increased productivity that SIP trunking can deliver.

For more information on how cloud telephony can help your business and the service you offer your customers, or to discuss specific requirements, please call **0161 788 0000** or email **sales@incom.co.uk**

