

Phone System Feature List

Business phone systems and have been around for decades. They come in a variety of sizes and capabilities and cost from a few hundred dollars for a barely functional set of multi-line phones (not really a phone system) to tens of thousands of dollars for a high end Private Branch Exchange (PBX). If you wanted, or needed, more capability you paid for it, and you paid a lot for it.

The systems have always been built with a custom electronic controller and lots of expensive hardware, until now. Our phone systems do away with the expensive hardware and use relatively inexpensive computers instead of a custom controller to give you *the best of both worlds*, more features and capabilities and at the same time lower costs.

We can do this because our phone systems use Internet technology (VoIP[†]). We've all seen how the Internet Revolution has vastly improved our written and visual communications; think of our phone system as the Internet Revolution applied to voice communications.

Don't get caught buying yesterday's technology.

In the following pages we describe features commonly found on phone systems in various price ranges. Although the exact feature descriptions and prices ranges will vary we think the list provides a reasonable overview. Note that several feature descriptions build upon or expand a previous description of the same feature.

A phone system has always been a large investment, with a lot of attention paid to features, because those features must support all the business's needs for years to come. Making the wrong purchase decision can be a big mistake, leaving you with an under-powered system, costly upgrades or worse, retirement before its time.

It is good that our phone systems **support ALL FEATURES** described in this paper. We could brag about that, but we have something better to say. Because our systems use computers and Internet technology they can be reprogrammed to support features that haven't even been thought of yet! In other words with our phone system you will never be stuck with costly upgrades or obsolescence.

[†] Voice over Internet Protocol – a method of sending voice conversations over the Internet

Features Found on Legacy Phone Systems

Low End Legacy Phone Systems (\$500-\$3000)

Call Transfer - Between Stations

Call transfers are accomplished by putting a call on 'hold' and then picking up the call on another phone. There is no music-on-hold because 'hold' is really just a muting of the handset microphone.

Voice-mail

Voice-mail may be available but often there is only a single voice-mail box for the whole company or for each incoming phone line.

Call Forwarding

Incoming calls can be forwarded to another phone number, but this capability is *actually an extra cost feature of the phone service provided by the phone company* (call forwarding for about \$5/month).

Conference Calling

Conference calls are limited to 3 participants because this capability is *actually another extra cost feature of the phone service provided by the phone company* (3-way calling for about \$5/month).

Call Transfer - Blind

Calls may be transferred to another station but the initial recipient of the call does **not** get the opportunity to talk privately with the transfer-to party before actually transferring the call

Mid-Range Legacy Phone Systems (\$3000-\$8,000)

Voice-mail

Voice-mail boxes are available for each staff member, with custom and temporary ("I'm on vacation, talk to Bob if it is urgent") messages. Retrieve, delete or forward messages from any station, or phone.

Auto-Attendant

A recorded message may direct callers to enter an extension number to reach a staff member directly.

Music-on-Hold

Callers on hold can listen to music-on-hold, but this often requires an attached radio or tape player.

Call Forwarding

Incoming calls may be forwarded directly to a station, or as a result of a menu selection. Calls may also be forwarded between stations or to voice-mail.

Features Found on Legacy Phone Systems (cont)

Call Transfer - Announced

In an announced transfer the initial recipient of the call may talk privately with the transfer-to party before actually transferring the call.

Settable Open Hours

Ability to set the hours during which the phone system will handle calls normally. Outside those hours callers will hear a closed message and be directed to voice-mail.

Speed Dialing

Commonly dialed phone numbers can be saved and dialed by pressing a button or a special dialing sequence.

Do Not Disturb

A station will ring busy when put in the '*do not disturb*' mode.

Last Call Return

The phone number of the last caller is temporarily saved and the call may be returned by pressing a button or a special dialing sequence.

High-End Legacy Phone Systems (\$8,000 - \$15,000+)

Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

This powerful feature is a completely configurable menu system for the caller. The caller may "Press 1 for Tech Support, Press 2 for Sales ...". Pressing '1' may go to another menu, or place the caller in the tech support queue, or ring all phone in tech support, or forward to a cell phone, or, almost anywhere.

Configuration GUI

System feature may be configured with a point-and-click Graphic User Interface (GUI).

Voice-mail

Voice-mail boxes are available for each staff member, station, department or function, with custom or temporary ("I'm on vacation, talk to Bob if it is urgent") messages. Retrieve, delete, save or forward messages from any station, any phone or any computer.

Voice-mail to Email

Each system will have some level of unified messaging where different streams of communication (email, SMS, Fax, voice video, etc) into a integrated into single, or, unified 'message store', accessible by a variety of different methods.

Features Found on Legacy Phone Systems (cont)

Music-on-Hold

Includes complete control over the music or custom recorded message callers on hold will hear. The message or music may be different for every different phone number or department.

Flexible Open Hours

Ability to set the days and hours for each phone number and/or department during which the phone system will handle calls normally.

Call Transfer - To an Outside phone

Calls can be transferred to an outside phone at the station level.

Ring Groups

Ring multiple phones at once, the first one to answer gets the call.. Unanswered calls may go to voice-mail or rollover to another ring group.

Call Forwarding

Incoming and internal calls may also be forwarded to another station, a menu option, ring group, or even a cell or home phone.

Direct Inward Dial

An internal station can be reached directly from the outside without going through the IVR or a receptionist.

Costly Legacy Phone Systems (\$15,000 - \$50,000)

Full Conference Bridge

A full conference bridge allow *more than 3* internal *and* external participants. This feature is normally found only on system in the higher end of the price range.

Branch Office Support

Calls may be transferred between stations at physically separated (even in different cities) without dialing the outside phone number of the other office.

Call Queues

Callers are placed in a queue when call volume temporarily exceeds staff capabilities. Callers listen to music or messages and are dequeued to the next available staff member.

Call Detail Records

Call detail records show the number called from, called to, Caller ID, station, time and duration for every call local, long distance, incoming and outgoing call.

COPBX Phone System Special Features

In addition to all of the features listed above:

Future Proof

Because our phone system is 100% VoIP it provides every feature found in legacy phone systems costing tens of thousands of dollars. Not only that, because it is computer based it knows who called, what number the caller called from, what number the caller dialed, all the times the caller called before, and much more. If it can be done by a phone system, ours already does it or can be programmed to do it.

Call Manager

Call Manager presents a real-time picture of all calls. View the status of each incoming call, who is on the phone and with whom they are talking. If you recognize a call you should handle, a click of the mouse sends the call to your station.

Web Access to Voice-mail

Pull up a web-page to see all of your voice-mails listed, along with calling number, Caller ID, date-time and duration. Click to play the voice-mail on your computer's speakers. This is a great way to quickly peruse your voice-mails, skip unimportant messages and delete messages you no longer need.

Telecommuting

Your phone system can seamlessly include a telecommuter's home phone, *without giving out anyone's home phone number!* Because calls can be forwarded, or transferred to any PSTN phone and *be transferred back again* no one will know that your telecommuters are not at the next desk!

Unlimited Stations

Need to grow? No problem! Adding an station is easy as assigning an extension number. No expensive phone system hardware to purchase.

Ad Tracking

Place a different phone number in each phone book, mailer, TV ad or anywhere you advertise. Our phone system automatically tracks the number of inquiry calls coming to each number, and where they came from.

Branch Office Support

Not just supported. All your offices really are on the *same* phone system. Everything works just as if all your staff members are sitting at a desk across the hall, even if they are physically halfway across the country.

COPBX Special Features (cont)

Ticket System & Database Integration

Automatically pull up your customer records based on the number called from. Or, carry Ad Tracking to the next level by creating a ticket for each sales prospect. Track progress from initial call to final sales. Analysis will show you which marketing campaigns are generating calls, the quality of the sales leads and the number and value of each resulting sale. By making your advertising dollars work more efficiently you can *easily* save more than the total cost of your phone system!

Analog, VoIP and Soft-phone Phones

All the flexibility you would ever need. Use analog phones to keep costs down (without sacrificing functionality). Use cordless analog phones for staff members who need to move about the office. VoIP phones make handling large call volumes more convenient. Soft-phone software turns your laptop or desktop computer into another office extension when you are on the road.

Configuration/Feature Server

The Configuration/Feature server database contains a complete model of the your PBX's functionality. With a few simple clicks of the mouse you can rearrange your auto-attendant menus, add stations, assign numbers, change forwarding, reconfigure ring groups, modify menu options, and more.

Call Parking

Call parking is our version of 'on hold', only better. Because calls can be parked and unparked from any phone, even PSTN and cell phones, you can transfer calls to and from any phone. This allows us to extend the full functionality to *any* phone *anywhere*!

Call Detail Records

Instant access to call detail records for today, yesterday, this month and last month.