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# How To Take The Fear Out Of Buying Your Next Phone System



This White Paper is brought to you by your friends at The Fulcrum Group, Inc.



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# Keep Calm And Get The Facts...

## *On Your Next Phone System*



Just the mere thought of installing a new business phone system is likely to elicit a stress response from most people.

When it comes to re-evaluating the usefulness of outdated phone systems, we've seen it all. As longtime Voice Over IP (VoIP) Specialists, we've prepared this comprehensive list of mistakes and misgivings as a helpful resource for you in your evaluation process.

### ***Common Mistakes When Buying a New Phone System***

When it comes to buying a new phone system, it's easy to make mistakes. If you're like most people, you only buy a new phone system every few years. So take our advice and don't make these common mistakes:

- 1. Buying a system that doesn't match your current AND future needs***  
No one can predict the future, so it's nice to have a system that is expandable, customizable, and feature rich to meet all of your current and future needs.
- 2. Buying a system that is missing advanced unified communications features like mobility, call recording, and call center***  
You may not find that you use all of these features upfront, but you'll be surprised by how implementing advanced unified communication features, even with a small set of users, can have a big impact on your business
- 3. Buying on-premise system when cloud makes more sense (or vice versa)***  
Cloud is all the rage, but is it right for you? Or is on-premise a better fit? What about a hybrid on-premise/cloud design?
- 4. Buying a system and doing your own installation***  
Your phone system is the most important way that your customers can reach you. Getting a properly implemented phone system is of major importance. Having an expert help you with the implementations means you get a properly implemented, reliable phone system that is customized to your business work flow. And you can stay focused on what you do best, which is run your business.
- 5. Buying a system based solely on price***  
As Benjamin Franklin once said, "A bargain is something you have to find a use for once you have bought it". Don't buy the wrong phone system just because the price is cheap.



## Dealing With Common Fears

Here's a sampling of what we've found to be clients' top fears about purchasing a new phone system:

1. *My network's not ready.*

Make sure you have switches with layer 3 routing capability and can handle quality of service to prioritize voice traffic. If buying new switches, consider Power over Ethernet.

2. *I can't afford any downtime during the deployment.*

If you have a traditional phone system currently, you can easily deploy a new VoIP phone system side by side.



3. *I've heard that sound quality and reliability are an issue with VoIP.*

T-1 PRI still provides the best quality and reliability but with some planning, SIP trunking can provide quality service that is reliable. Picking a carrier that can provide both the Internet service and SIP trunks can provide end to end Quality of Service for best voice quality.

4. *There were so many problems with my last phone system installation - I can't do that again!*

Going through a rigorous process to determine your requirements, getting multiple proposals, contacting

references, and selecting the solution that most aligns with your needs will give you some peace of mind. And being actively involved in the implementation will also go a long way in preventing small problems from becoming big ones.

5. *Those UC features look great, but there's no way we could learn to use them!*

When you buy a new phone system, make sure that you don't skimp on end user training. End user training is a small investment that can result in real bottom line impact.



6. *I have no idea how to get started...*

Reading this white paper is a great way to get started!



7. *What about security?*

Security is a major concern with VOIP systems. Compromised VOIP phone systems can be used for toll fraud, costing you thousands of dollars. Be sure you choose a vendor who has background in IT networking and security.



8. *How do I deal with redundancy?*

Building in redundancy, high availability, and disaster recovery/business continuity is part of any good phone system. Many carriers have the ability to route calls to another destination in the event of RING NO ANSWER (usually meaning phone system down). And there are many options for redundancy, including answering services, Cloud PBX, and more.

### 8 Tips When Considering A New Phone System



When you're breathing easy and have evaluated your current phone system and how it aligns with your current and future business goals, you may or may not determine you should move forward with a new phone system. If you are leaning toward the latter, here are 8 helpful tips to consider:

1. Be aware of the benefits Unified Communications features provide. Mobility, call recording, call center and other features can unite ALL of your tech tools to work for you. These features can help your business improve your processes AND your bottom line.
2. Know whether an on-premise system or one hosted in the cloud would work best for you. Cloud systems often have limitations on certain features like call recording, and usually have very limited customization options. In addition, voice quality can suffer if you don't use private circuits to the Cloud provider.
3. Consider more than just the initial price of the system when comparing costs. Take a more long-term approach by looking at Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) over 3 or 5 years.
4. Document what you like about your current system. Determine your "needs" and your "wants". Your most used features of your current system will be the basis for your "Must Have" list. Seeing demos of different systems can help you brain storm your feature list. And so can talking to other people who have recently made a new phone system purchase.
5. If you've determined upgrading is in your best interest... Get bids from multiple vendors and consider TCO costs rather than just up-front costs.



6. Ditch analog phone lines.  
Move to SIP or T-1 PRI. SIP and T-1 PRI have significant functional and quality advantages over analog lines.
7. Consider the resources you have to maintain your system.  
Does your IT staff have the time and resources to maintain the system?
8. Choose to be actively involved in the implementation.



At The Fulcrum Group, we have been assisting clients with Unified Communications/VoIP solutions since 2007. We utilize UC in our own business environment, making rigorous use of the Call Center for our Help Desk and the Conference Bridge daily for various sales and engineering team huddles.

If you would like assistance with evaluating how UC can complement your business strategy, feel free to reach out to us at [info@fulcrumgroup.net](mailto:info@fulcrumgroup.net) .

