

# GROWERTALKS

## Features

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## Upscaling Your Customer Contact

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Many florists, nurseries, growers and retailers have switched to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone systems from traditional phone landlines to run their green businesses more efficiently. This is because VoIP, unlike traditional phone lines, truly transform the way professionals communicate through numerous features and benefits already built into the system, and VoIP comes with substantial cost savings.

VoIP enables individuals to talk to each other over the internet instead of through old copper-wire landline systems, which are becoming relics. When one uses a

VoIP phone, they're not tied to a specific location. They can make and receive business calls from their computer, tablet or smartphone.

Here are the eight questions to ask to help choose the best VoIP provider for your business.

### **Is the VoIP provider scalable?**

With the increase in employee turnover, the VoIP service needs to be able to easily scale up or down. Ask:

- How long does it take to add a new user?
- What's involved in removing a user?
- How does pricing change as you add or remove users?

### **Is it easy to manage?**

To monitor your VoIP service, you'll need management tools and reports. Ask:

- Is there a single cloud-based management portal or tool to make changes?
- Can you make updates, changes or customizations from anywhere?
- What types of reports are available (e.g., calling reports, VoIP call quality)?

### **Do they offer all the features you need?**

VoIP providers vary on features and capabilities. Beyond making calls, your business may need additional features, including a mobile app, chat and video conferencing. To determine features and capabilities needed, talk with employees who make the most calls like sales, marketing and customer care. Once you have a list, you can better choose the VoIP provider and plan that meets your needs.

## How is voice quality?

Voice quality is an important factor in choosing a provider. It's important to know the technology variables impacting this. For example, if employees have inadequate bandwidth, they may have problems during calls. Or if a provider routes calls through a data center far from where the call originated, that could impact voice quality. Ask:

- Does the provider offer HD voice, which may make it easier to understand people on conference calls?
- Does the VoIP service offer handsets? The hardware in VoIP phones affects the ease of access for many features. If headsets are important to employees, ask the VoIP provider what devices they support.

## How easy is it to set up service?

Departments in your business may need help setting up new technologies, so it's important to evaluate how easy it is to set up. Review the VoIP provider's documentation. Check to see if it has up-to-date manuals, videos and other online resources to make setup easy. Ask:

- Do you have to buy additional hardware, or can you use your current hardware (e.g., desk phones, employee laptops and smartphones)?
- Can you install the service yourself or does it require a technician?

## Does the VoIP service support remote work?

In the wake of COVID, remote working is widespread and should be supported by your new VoIP provider. Do they offer mobile apps, making it easy for employees to place and receive calls from their preferred devices, and advanced features like video conferencing?

## How much money can you save by switching?

You'll likely reduce telecommunications costs by switching to VoIP. [GO HERE](#) to use the VoIP Savings Calculator to find out how much you can reduce your monthly bill.

## Does the VoIP provider have a good reputation?

Identify VoIP leaders by looking for high ratings from publications like *PC Magazine*, which annually surveys readers and makes Business Choice Awards.

As green businesses grow, having a phone system that aligns with the public's expectations is critical. Unlike traditional landlines, VoIP systems come with powerful features to help you make the right impression the first time.

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If you would like additional information about VoIP, [GO HERE](#) to download the free guidebook "The Complete Guide to VoIP Systems."

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*Jim Gustke is Vice President of Marketing at Ooma and is responsible for all aspects of marketing and customer acquisition for the company. Ooma Office is proud to have recently won PC Magazine's Business Choice Award for Best VoIP System for the tenth year in a row. For more information, visit [ooma.com](http://ooma.com). For questions or comments, email [press@ooma.com](mailto:press@ooma.com).*