COMMWORLD of Kansas City

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VoIP Continues To Pose Technical Problems

Bob Bennett of COMMWORLD of Kansas City Explains What Businesses Need to Know When Purchasing a VoIP Phone System

KANSAS CITY, MO — January 22, 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 the Internet. Its greatest benefit to businesses is to help companies with multiple office locations tie or network them together to appear as one entity. This may eliminate long distance charges between branches resulting in an immediate improvement to the bottom line. 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. VoIP is not a walk in the park. 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. Many times IT departments will replace all switches, hubs and modems, at great cost, thinking it will suffice in implementing VoIP. The majority of the time, all of the equipment need not be replaced. 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 properly implement VoIP in the most economical and effective way.

A Converged Solution usually proves to be less costly, more trouble free and more effective than a 100% VoIP installation. Converged means a combination of traditional Digital technology and VoIP technology, utilizing the reliability of Digital and benefits of VoIP.

VoIP's problems have been widely discussed by telecom professionals since its inception. Unlike industry analysts, data (IT) departments 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 signal levels. 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 time it takes for that IT manager to perform those duties takes away from the time he/she would normally spend managing the data needs for the organization.

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 must know how well your network infrastructure will handle the additional, quality-sensitive voice traffic. Many seemingly well-planned trials encounter delay after delay, greatly exceed cost estimates, and are eventually cancelled when the network proves unable to meet the unique requirements VoIP places on it. The Gartner Group 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 Digital and 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 COMMWORLD OF KANSAS CITY

COMMWORLD of Kansas City has provided superior business telephone system products and services since 1981. **COMM**WORLD specializes in the most reliable, high quality telecommunications products from leaders in technology -- Toshiba, ESI, Samsung and Comdial to name a few. Bennett stated, "Customers no longer need to be frustrated with multiple contacts. Our 'one point of contact' concept means your business can come to **COMM**WORLD for Business Telephone Equipment, Converged Systems, VoIP, Voice Mail, Unifed Messaging, Local/Long Distance/Internet Service, Voice & Data Cabling, Video Surveillance, GPS Fleet Management and more. With **COMM**WORLD you get technology solutions that WORK to increase business productivity, protection and profits." **COMM**WORLD of Kansas City is located at 6200 Main Street in Grandview, MO. For more information, call (816) 763-1100 or visit www.commworld-kc.com.