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CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS:

TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO NEW HEIGHTS

with a **Cloud-Based Phone System**

WHY CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS?

Your phone system plays a critical role in your business operations and in your company's success. This eGuide explains cloud technologies and identifies the top ways your business can benefit from a cloud-based phone system. Use it to better understand cloud communications and to determine if a cloud phone system is right for you.

OVERVIEW

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eGuide:

TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO NEW HEIGHTS WITH A CLOUD-BASED PHONE SYSTEM

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BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE MODERN WORKPLACE

Today's workforce demands more than just voice solutions, and instead, requires a complete communications solution that lets them interact with ease, in ways that they prefer.

Unified communications solutions from the cloud – also referred to as Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) – addresses the broader scope of business communications by integrating commonly used applications. By delivering a total solution, UCaaS eliminates multiple screens and enables users to increase productivity, streamline workflows and collaborate with ease.

CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS 101

Chances are, you're already using cloud technology in other aspects of your business. G Suite by Google Cloud®, Microsoft Office 365® and Dropbox® are just some examples of cloud-based applications.

The cloud simply refers to software and services that are hosted by the provider and run on the Internet instead of equipment housed in your building. Since the documents, emails, photos and other software that live in the cloud are available from any device with a secure Internet connection, you can access the information from anywhere.

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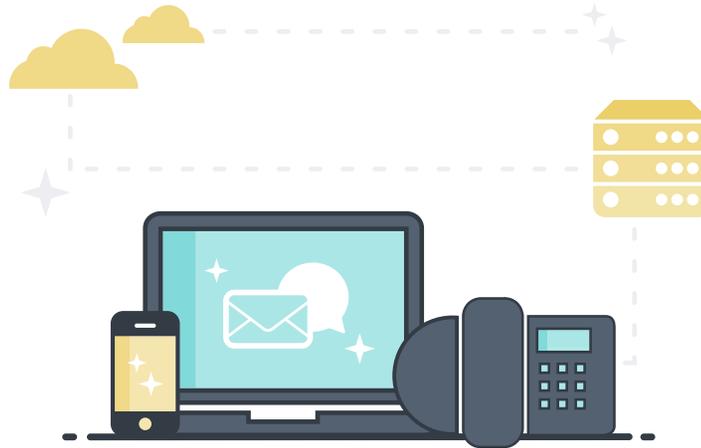
CLOUD VS. ON-PREMISES

A cloud-based phone solution offers unique benefits that a traditional on-premises system cannot. A brief description of each deployment alternative is provided below:

On-Premises Phone System

- You fully own and operate the solution

- You are responsible for overall maintenance, upgrades, reliability and security

- Typically acquired as an upfront purchase, and accounted for as a capital expense

Cloud Phone Service

- Applications hosted remotely, run either by the cloud provider or a hosting partner

- You consume the service as a monthly subscription expense

- Cloud provider manages the service, relieving in-house IT of most or all network-related tasks

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ON-PREMISES CONSIDERATIONS

With an on-premises solution, IT maintains controls and, as a capital expenditure (CapEx), there are minimal-to-no ongoing costs to finance the solution. But you also need to consider:

- ❯ These days, **capital funding is harder to come by**. Plus, you also need to factor in the additional costs of maintenance, changes/adds/deletes, upgrades and replacements.

- ❯ With technology constantly evolving, there is risk of the **equipment becoming quickly obsolete.**

- ❯ If your IT resources are limited, the **complexity of the deployment** may pose problems in implementation and user adoption.

- ❯ An on-premises solution may have **limited flexibility when integrating with new applications** and supporting new sites.

5 MOST CITED REASONS
for Moving to Cloud Communications:

1 | AGILITY

2 | TOTAL COST OF OPERATIONS

3 | RESILIENCY

4 | LACK OF IT RESOURCES

5 | SCALABILITY

Source: "The State of Cloud Communications," 2015 No Jitter Research

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HOW DOES A CLOUD-BASED PHONE SOLUTION DIFFER?

❯ Maintenance: Cloud phone systems require minimal-to-no onsite equipment, eliminating the need for a PBX that takes up valuable time from your IT staff as well as space in your building.

❯ Value: There are minimal-to-no upfront expenses as you pay monthly on a subscription basis. Plus, with many cloud providers, long distance charges and maintenance and installation fees are either very low or non-existent.

❯ Accessibility: Employees have access to the same features and functionality no matter if they're in the main office, working from a remote location or on the road.

❯ Integrations: CRM, ERP and other apps turn a cloud phone system into a communications hub that enhances productivity and collaboration.

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IS A CLOUD-BASED PHONE SYSTEM RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Certain business dynamics are custom-made for the cloud. Do you see your business reflected in the list below?

1 | Rapid Growth and/or the Need to Support Seasonality

The built-in flexibility of the cloud makes it a great fit for companies that need to scale.

2 | Multiple Locations

If you're moving or adding offices, cloud systems make it simple to add new users quickly.

3 | Mobile Workforce

A cloud-based phone system provides mobile access, so employees can communicate anytime, anywhere, from numerous devices.

4 | Dynamic Regulatory Environment

The right cloud provider will stay current with common industry requirements, ensuring compliance and conformity across multiple locations.

5 | Limited IT Resources

Cloud communications offer expert installation, ongoing support and automatic software upgrades.

6 | Outdated Equipment and/or Equipment Coming to End of Life

If it's time for an upgrade, there's no better time to consider moving your communications to the cloud.

7 | A Need to Improve the Customer Experience

UCaaS solutions offer greater integration opportunities that, in turn can help you meet the distinct needs of your business.

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BENEFITS OF A CLOUD-BASED PHONE SYSTEM

Cloud communications can help your business to be more agile. UCaaS solutions are often more affordable, flexible and reliable, providing greater access to innovative features designed to make your employees more productive.

"While the benefits still largely revolve around *cost savings,* the reasons for deploying UCaaS are to

EMPOWER EMPLOYEES & IMPACT THE BUSINESS

on a variety of fronts."

- AMY LIND, IDC RESEARCH MANAGER

IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY & PERFORMANCE WITH UCAAS

4

Unified communications solutions go beyond telephony by seamlessly integrating applications used by workers every day, no matter their device or location. By enabling you to take advantage of various features, a cloud-based phone system can deliver time-saving capabilities such as:

Call Recording

Call audio can be captured and delivered to your inbox, so you can listen to it anytime.

Voicemail Transcript

Voicemails can be transcribed and sent directly to your inbox.

Automated Attendant

Your phone system can automatically answer and route inbound calls to the people best qualified to solve the problem.

Mobility

Your business line can ring to your desk phone, cell or both. Also, laptops or desktop computers can have soft phone capability by simply plugging in a headset.

Instant Messaging

Collaborate and communicate with other employees across the office, across town or across the globe.

Desktop & Web Sharing

Raise the quality of your online meetings by digitally sharing important visual materials.

Video Conferencing

Video integration delivered from the cloud provides a seamless environment that offers ease of use, centralized management and typically have a lower cost of ownership overall.

CRUCIAL DATA & REPORTING

A cloud-based system also offers metrics and data to help improve internal processes.

- **Call Reporting:** Reports such as call detail records enable you to report on valuable information that can provide valuable insights into your business.

- **Works With the Apps You Use:** Integrate with popular business process applications for stronger team performance.

- **Improve Efficiencies & Costs:** Find a cloud vendor that offers pre-packaged integrations to speed implementation and eliminate custom programming fees.

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MOVING TO THE CLOUD AT A PACE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Cloud-based phone systems have wide appeal, especially for organizations that want to focus their resources on running their businesses, not managing technology. But for organizations that want to take a more measured approach to the cloud, a hybrid phone system may be the right choice.

A hybrid phone system provides the best of both worlds — the control of an onsite system with the ease of cloud – by balancing a mix of models based on comfort level, budget, locations and priorities.

HYBRID: A MEASURED APPROACH TO CLOUD

With a hybrid deployment, you can transition to the cloud at a pace suited to your needs. A true hybrid solution, delivered by a single vendor, provides a combined, flexible approach that protects a company's investment in its current phone system while still tapping into benefits of cloud services.

Hybrid Scenario Examples:

- Your business is adding new offices and making greater use of remote workers

- You want onsite control with remote sites supported in the cloud, while providing a consistent user experience for all

- You're looking for a simple way to gradually transition to cloud telephony

- You want a solution that will work with what you have today, preserving your investment while also giving you the greatest flexibility for the future

SHORETEL CONNECT CLOUD: A CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTION DESIGNED TO GIVE YOU MORE

More Integrations

ShoreTel Connect CLOUD integrates with countless applications, so your business can do more.

More Flexibility

ShoreTel Connect CLOUD makes it simple to add or subtract phone lines.

More Value

Includes unlimited local and long distance calling,* no PBX boxes and no maintenance fees.

*on applicable service plans

More Mobility

Your team can use their business phone line and number through their personal cell phone.

More Features

A robust PBX feature set as well as feature-rich VoIP phones.

More Simplicity

ShoreTel Connect CLOUD provides a complete unified communications solution with an exceptional user experience for all users, no matter their location or device.

WHY WAIT?

Isn't it time you gave your phone system a fresh look? Learn how ShoreTel Connect CLOUD can benefit your business. Visit **shoretel.com** or call **844.746.7383**.

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SHORETEL. WE MAKE INTERACTIONS SIMPLE.

ShoreTel® (NASDAQ: SHOR) provides businesses worldwide with communication solutions that make interactions simple. From **business phone systems**, **unified communications** and **contact center** solutions to a fully **hosted voice and SMS** development platform, ShoreTel delivers unmatched flexibility and ease for companies looking to increase productivity and drive innovation. ShoreTel offers solutions in the **cloud**, **onsite** or a **hybrid** of both, giving customers the freedom to choose the best fit for their business needs now and in the future. Headquartered in Sunnyvale, Calif., ShoreTel has offices and partners worldwide. For more information, visit **shoretel.com**.

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