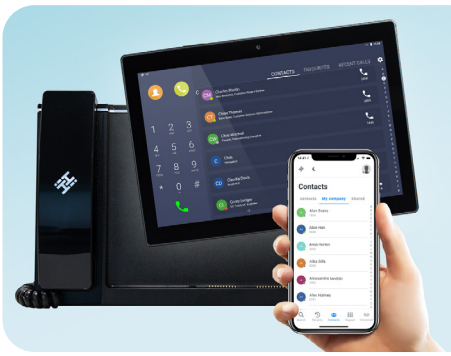
Communications in a Remote & Hybrid Business World

Throughout the past year, in response to the pandemic, companies have turned to remote working. Now, as the UK re-opens and restrictions are relaxed, many are continuing to work from home, while others are moving to a hybrid approach; a combination of remote and office work. Whichever setup your company is adopting, you'll need to ensure your phone system is keeping everyone connected. This guide takes you through some essential considerations, to help you get the most from your system.

1 | Find devices that work for you

A business phone system should now include what's referred to as a "Unified Communications" approach; i.e. there should be an array of devices for you and your team to communicate from. Some may want to return home with their desk phone, while others may prefer to use their mobile with a dedicated app for their calls. Others still may prefer to use software on their computer to handle their work calls. The key here is to recognise the preferences of your team and allow them to work in their preferred way.



2 | Maintain Accountability & Performance

Using mobile phones is an alternative to a business phone system for those working from home. The issue here is one of accountability and performance management. If the employee is using a mobile phone, calls they make will not be recorded in call statistics or call recording systems. Using an app on mobile phones, avoids these problems. This is because the app is part of the overall phone system and calls are therefore recorded and tracked.



3 | Protect your employees privacy

Asking employees to use their mobile phones for company calls can create privacy concerns. This is especially true for employees who are in customer-facing roles, as the customer may feel that they now have a direct line to a member of staff, rather than getting in touch by official routes. This issue is easily avoided by having a desk phone, which is simple to re-deploy from home, and utilising apps on a mobile. These apps will present a company phone number, helping to protect employee privacy.

4 | Set up call routing & hunt groups

In the office, it's easy to answer colleague's calls for them if they are away. Clearly, this is harder when people are working remotely. By using call routing and hunt groups, shorter overflow times can help provide a higher level of customer service. Equally, adding more people to your hunt groups (people whose phones ring simultaneously on a given number) will improve your average answer times, whilst being mindful of disruption to other work.



5 | Encourage Conversation

Working remotely can lead to people feeling more isolated, which is why we've been encouraging our teams to check-in with each other with a phone call periodically. We've found that there remains something more personal about an internal phone call to a colleague in the right circumstances. In short, think about how these types of informal internal communication can improve your team's morale.

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