

## Why No Business is Too Small for a Phone System

**Is your small business just too darn small to need a professional phone system? Absolutely not!**

Whether you are running a one-person shop out of your home office, managing a remote team, or huddling with your staff in a small office each morning, your company needs a business phone system. In fact, not having a professional phone system could put you at a disadvantage to your competition.

People expect to get routed into a business phone system when they call a company, store, or office. After all, that's been the way we've done commerce in the U.S. since the 1960s. For about 80 years before that, all calls, both business ones and personal ones, got managed through a single switchboard in the town or neighborhood.

The telephone operator managed things by plugging a cord into each person's jack on the switchboard, and then letting you talk through the cord. But as American businesses grew in size and scope after World War II, that system no longer worked, so big companies set up PABXes (Private Automated Branch Exchanges).

By the 1970s, phones had grown integral to the life and work of businesses of all sizes. More and more companies began to use exchanges, and business phone systems grew increasingly complex and sophisticated. TDM (Time Division Multiplexers) PBX systems came on the scene, bringing with them features such as call transfer, auto-attendants, dial tone, and hold music. Numerous other innovations in the PBX system followed over the next two decades.

### Paving the Way For Advancement

Then came the internet..

And thanks to the growth of the internet, in 2008, businesses got the option to use VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), and everything changed. VOIP allowed businesses to route calls through software on a computer instead of through traditional telephonic communication structures. By doing so, businesses could record calls and gain access to data that let them improve their products and services. VOIP eventually gave way to cloud. And here we are in the digital age with secure, fast phones at our fingertips using any one of several possible systems.

Today's small business can do more with a virtual phone system built for businesses than a major corporate could do with a state-of-the-art PBX system just a few years ago. That's just one reason people expect to encounter a sophisticated, ultra-modern phone system when they call a business of any size.

If you run a small business, your customers and clients need to see you brand as up-to-date and professional. Talkroute can help you do just that at an affordable price using our mobile app that lets you turn your smartphone into a business line.

Still wondering if your small business needs a professional phone system? Here are 12 reasons we say, Yes, it does!

#### 1. Any size business must sound professional.

Just because you're a small business doesn't mean you have to sound like you're small, does it? No matter what size your company is, professionalism is always a business owner's goal, and having a professional phone system can help you achieve that. Customers may judge your business based on how you take their call. Getting

a generic “hello,” landing in someone’s mailbox, or waiting for a callback can signal that you might not be the most professional operation in your industry.

Sometimes you have to run your business from your cell phone, of course, and that’s fine, but you can still show class when you answer the phone. Instead of just saying, “Hello?” without any system in place, for example, it’s much better to add that phone to a virtual phone system, so that calls can get routed through an auto attendant, or at least a formal greeting, before being passed to your phone.

## **2. High-volume periods could result in lost revenue.**

“Expect the unexpected” is a good motto to follow in order to keep your business running smoothly. One or two single phone lines might be enough for a new business on most days, when you’re only getting the regular number of calls. But what about the unexpected days? What about when there’s an avalanche of customer calls? Your CX — and consequently, your revenue — will suffer if you can’t get to the phone in a timely fashion.

During those times when you get surprised with a heavy volume of calls, you could have customers frustrated and hanging up, due to long wait times or not being able to get through to you at all. This is where professional phone system features like hold queues and additional lines become an invaluable resource.

## **3. You can prepare for your business to grow.**

Maybe you’re running a recent tech startup or a newly-opened small business and haven’t exactly scaled up yet; but you probably plan on growing your business to something bigger one day, right?

That means you will have to be prepared to handle the scaled-up responsibilities that come with owning a larger, more profitable business. As with much of your original infrastructure, the phone situation you have now will probably not be able to handle the heavier load that will inevitably come as things progress. That’s okay, though, because you no longer have to invest in an expensive phone system like it was 2009. You can go with a virtual phone system instead. The great thing about using a virtual phone system is that you can put it in place now, and upgrade your features along the way as your business grows.

## **4. A real phone system makes it easier to do business.**

Employing a professional-grade phone system for your business just makes everything easier. You can keep business calls separate from personal calls, create a virtual secretary by using a Call Menu, stack multiple calls on hold, and keep business voicemail separate. More than that, you don’t have to worry about missing important calls.

## **5. Make your small business sound like a large business.**

One of the key benefits to using a professional phone system is the ability it gives you to make your business sound like a large organization, keeping up that all-important first impression on your customers.

Everything your callers hear, from the audio prompts to the voicemail greeting, suggests that you’re doing serious business and that you’ve got it together.

You know you are serious about what you do, but unfortunately, that commitment may not come across to your customers if your operation feels small to them when they dial you up. Using a virtual phone system can provide a huge benefit to your overall operations while simultaneously instilling confidence in anyone who contacts your business.

## **6. Your customers want to text you, too.**

As more and more Americans like to communicate by sending brief typed messages over the phone, texting is becoming a major way customers and businesses talk to each other. It's fun, easy, and shortens the perceived response time. A single personal phone can't really help you do text for business unless you are a very small shop, and it might be tough even then. But a virtual phone system can give you a separate number for your business that lets you keep personal and professional texts separate.

And if you own an e-commerce store or a retail shop, you may soon find yourself inundated with texts from customers who want to buy more of your product, add on something new, or get help solving a problem. So you need a larger, more elaborate system that can help you manage them. For most small businesses, that just means turning each team member's smartphone into a business line. If you really scale up into enterprise-level work one day, then you'll want to look at more sophisticated technology.

## **7. Voicemail transcription can be invaluable for your sales team.**

Using a business phone system lets you take advantage of services such as voicemail transcription in which recorded voicemails get turned into text either by a human or a robot and then forwarded to the recipient. For people in sales, this is gold! It can also improve your customer service, privacy, mobility, and competitive advantage by turning hard-to-hear audio into quickly scannable text.

## **8. Call forwarding means your team never misses a contact.**

A phone system lets you get the caller to the right team member without a hassle. Your customers or clients don't want to be dumped into a generic voicemail pit nor do they want to be given the runaround from person to person. Call forwarding lets you direct the right call to the right employee anytime, even if that person is out of the office, on a sales call, or in a meeting. They can quickly check caller ID and decide if it's better to answer now or return the call at a more opportune time. No matter, your customer gets taken care of quickly, efficiently, and personally.

## **9. Local numbers give you hometown favorite status.**

A call service or an old phone number from back when you lived halfway across the country might sound like an easy option for your small business, but it strips you of an important piece of your branding — locality. Despite (or perhaps, because of) the rapidly shrinking world, people are starting to love all things local. Think about the burgeoning shop local, eat local, and travel local movements. You might not have to eat farm-to-table produce at every meal to demonstrate your commitment to the community, but you probably should have a local area code at least.

That might not mean you have to give up your personal number, though. With Talkroute, we can help you get a local number for business that routes to your personal phone while you keep your personal number for friends and family.

## **10. Conference calls.**

Conference calls might get annoying, like this clever conference call in real life, but they're an undeniable part of modern business life. With geographically dispersed teams, work-from-home programs, and traveling sales leaders, you have to use video conferencing or conference calls if you plan to get everyone around the same virtual table.

And conference calls are just easier with a phone system. Yes, you can use a free meeting system such as Skype, but after a few frustrating sessions, many small business owners try to find more sophisticated software as soon as they can. A phone system can make it easier for everyone to call in to the same place at the same time using the same software.

### **11. Integrating your phone system with your CRM can 10x your sales teams' valuable information.**

By integrating your phone system with your CRM, you can improve efficiency, save money, and increase productivity. You can also boost your sales team's overall mood since it will save them a lot of busywork. This integrated system automatically and accurately updates customer and prospect records after each call without the team member having to type everything in by hand, rely on notes, and hope that they didn't miss anything.

The system can also predict the future, allowing your team member to be ready to assist the customer from the moment the call connects and removing the customer's need to repeat — and reinforce — every bit of their dilemma.

A good phone system meshes nicely with the major CRMs, including Salesforce, Hubspot, and Zoho.

### **12. Call monitoring and reporting can help you keep improving.**

How many times have you heard, "This call may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes?" While it might get old to hear that line repeated in a cheerful, robotic voice, a recorded call can provide a business owner with information that lets them improve service quality, customer experience, and business accuracy.

Phone technology has come a long way since the town operator plugged a wire into two jacks and let folks gab away. But the simplicity of that system is coming back into vogue through the latest technological innovations. Today, small businesses can blend an old-fashioned operator's personal touch with the sophistication of a major company's phone system — all at an affordable price and an easy-to-use style.

Source: Talkroute