7 Things to Check Before Replacing Your Business Phone System

Use this checklist before you request quotes or approve a switch. Check each box when you have a clear answer, and bring any gaps to your provider review.

1 Count phones and busy-hour calls

The number of phones or extensions is different from the number of outside calls your team needs to handle at once.

- ☐ I listed desk phones, shared phones, users, extensions and locations, including expected growth.
- ☐ I estimated the most outside calls happening at the same time, both incoming and outgoing.
- ☐ I asked how the quote counts each item and what happens when call capacity is reached.

2 Compare the full cost

Request an itemized estimate so every provider is quoting the same needs.

- ☐ I have the recurring total, including estimated taxes, fees, add-ons and any usage charges.
- ☐ I have one-time costs for setup, hardware, shipping, installation, training and number transfers.
- ☐ I know which promotional prices expire and what the ongoing price becomes.

Quick planning notes

Phones / extensions needed _____

Peak simultaneous outside calls _____

Questions to bring to the review _____

Protect your numbers and continuity

3 Plan how your numbers will move

Confirm that the new provider can transfer every number you want to keep. Number transfer is also called porting.

- ☐ I listed all numbers, including main, direct-dial, fax and any numbers tied to other services.
- ☐ I confirmed the account details and authorization the new provider needs, plus the cutover contact and timing.
- ☐ I will keep existing service active until the port is confirmed complete and calls are tested. I will then check what remains active or billable.

4 Check what equipment can be reused

Get a model-by-model answer before buying replacements or assuming existing equipment will work.

- ☐ I have written compatibility and provisioning requirements for phones, headsets, network equipment and any adapters.
- ☐ I confirmed ownership, lease or return obligations, plus any unlock or administrator access needed.
- ☐ I identified fax, alarms, door entry and other special lines for separate compatibility review with their vendors.

5 Make an outage and emergency plan

Internet-based calling can be affected by internet or power loss. Ask your provider to explain the limits of your exact setup.

- ☐ I know how calls will route during an outage, who enables forwarding and how we will test the plan.
- ☐ I reviewed backup internet and power needs for the entire calling setup, plus an alternative way to make emergency calls.
- ☐ I confirmed emergency-calling setup, location information and the process for updating it when phones move.

Choose the fit and check the terms

6 Verify features and support

Ask for a demonstration of the work your team does every day, and get support expectations in writing.

- ☐ I checked call handling, voicemail, mobile or desktop access and any integrations we actually need.
- ☐ If needed, I confirmed business texting registration, costs and limits, plus recording access, storage and consent requirements.
- ☐ I know support hours, contact methods, escalation steps and what onboarding or training is included.

7 Read the agreement before signing

Compare quotes for the same phones, users, call capacity, features and contract period.

- ☐ I checked the term, renewal process, cancellation notice, early-exit costs and equipment obligations.
- ☐ I know how adding or removing users changes the bill and whether prices can change during the term.
- ☐ I have the final itemized quote, written scope and responsibilities for setup, number transfers and testing.

Your next step

Bring your current phone bill, a list of phones and numbers, and your three biggest calling frustrations to a free business phone review with Millwest Communications.

Request your free business phone review

millwest.net | 928-457-0110 | sales@millwest.net

Further reading

FCC: Keeping your phone number when changing providers
FCC: VoIP and 911 service
Features, compatibility and transfer timing vary. Confirm details in your written proposal.