



Buying A New Telephone System

A quick guide for schools, colleges, and universities



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Introduction

At West Pier Telecom we know how confusing and time consuming purchasing a new phone system can be, this only becomes harder if you have been tasked with the job but are not very technically minded. We have taken the time to boil this process down to 4 simple questions or steps. Please see below our quick guide to purchasing a new phone system.

Step 1 - Is it time to upgrade?

Sometimes the person or persons responsible for implementing a new telephone system will be instructed to do so without having to give justification, i.e. As part of a companywide initiative or as



a necessary step in achieving a specific goal, e.g. integration with a 3rd party system. If however the choice to upgrade your company's telephone system now or in the future is not obvious then there are 2 main questions you should be asking yourself.

QA. What does a modern phone system offer me that I am not getting now?

Mobile working, advanced call routing and instant messaging are all useful tools that your business can benefit from if you upgrade your system. You will have to weigh up how necessary these tools are to your business success.

QB. Will upgrading provide me with a return on investment?

Buying a new phone system can be costly, in some circumstances however the cost can be offset completely or in part by a return on investment. One of the more common ways in which some of our customers have offset the price of a new system is by switching their ISDN phone lines to SIP which cuts call costs, line rental and offers 2000 free minutes to mobiles per month. Other cost benefits of a new system include a lower cost of ownership and increased employee productivity.

Visit our [SIP Trunks calculator](#).

What are [SIP Trunks](#)?

Step 2 - What are your objectives or needs?

Choosing the right system for your business is not just about spending as much money as your budget allows. You need to identify your needs and wants at the start of the project and then find a solution that enables you to fulfil these, this may include integration with a 3rd party solution. Sometimes you may not even know what solution will best suite a need, for instance you may want to enable your employees to be able to work effectively on the road but how to enable them is not immediately obvious, do they all employees need a mobile phone or can they use a soft phone on their laptop? It is also worth considering a partner that can supply any other cabling or networking services that will accompany your upgrade as having to deal with one partner is often simpler and more cost effective when compared to working with multiple partners that all supply different services.

A good place to start is with a simple list of needs and wants e.g., integration with Office 365 or instant messaging. Once you have these written down you can start talking to suppliers about which

system suites you. Always remember that 3rd party applications are often a cheaper or even better way to obtain features usually only found on expensive systems. Always remember there may be more than one way to meet a need, you should be seeking a possible solution from more than one supplier so get an opinion from each one regarding each business need you identify.

Please see below just some of the ways in which we have helped schools, colleges and universities operate by improving their telephony infrastructure:

- Voice mail to email for absenteeism reporting line
- Upgrading traditional phone lines to SIP can cut call costs by 80% and reduce to SIP
- Voice mail WAV files can be copied into the SIMs database records for reference
- Handsets in classrooms could be locked and accessed by a PIN code 999 calls can be made without password
- Paging to individual phones, groups of phones or ALL phones
- Unified Communications mobile client can be used on and Android or IOS handset when on school trips abroad to eradicate call costs to and from the UK.
- Unified Communications lap top client (2 included) would allow users to take and make calls from home or off site with a blue tooth or USB headset
- 5 years software support is included in the system price
- Optional integration with SIMs database for screen popping and click to dial
- NEW Schools discount offer has been included in support costs saving 25% on maintenance and support
- WiFi handsets can be added to the school system where NO cabling exists

Step 3 - Objectives vs budget?

Balancing needs with a budget is important when choosing a system. You may have identified a need for conferencing capabilities on your new system. If however you decide that you cannot afford the extra capital needed to purchase a system with video conferencing as standard then, you may want to consider whether voice only conferencing capabilities will do as the functionality is widely available on inexpensive systems. If you require advanced contact centre capabilities then again you may be faced with a choice. Is the cost incurred by buying a system with built-in advanced contact centre capabilities worth the extra cost or will a cheaper 3rd party software solution with less functionality meet your needs. Again, your ideal partner may be the one that meets your needs with creative solutions as opposed a mainstream costly solution.

Step 4 - Shortlisting suppliers and choosing a system?

The 2 most important things to check immediately when selecting a shortlist of partners is reputation and accreditation. If there is a particular solution or manufacturer that you are interested in then it is often worth asking the manufacturer directly for recommendations as they often have a list of preferred partners based on customer satisfaction and feedback. A knowledgeable partner may be able to offer different options when trying to provide solutions, it is often in these options where the best deals can be found.

Once you have identified a list of potential partners then speak to them about the right solution for you. Each partner may have a different answer or more than one option and that's ok, get a quote for each one and then weigh up your options. Remember to ask questions every step of the way. Don't just base your decision on price, whilst it is always almost a factor you want to find a price that you and the provider are happy with.

If you are unsure of whether you want a hosted, on-premise or hybrid system then speak to your shortlisted partners about the pros and cons of each deployment model. Most good suppliers will offer their flagship telephone systems in both a hosted and on-premise format.

Contact Us

If you would like further information on the Ericsson-LG solution or any other areas relation to telephony or IT, call West Pier Telecom today and we would be happy to help.

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About West Pier Telecom

West Pier Telecom provide award winning business telephone and networking products, support and consultancy services. Our areas of expertise include on-premise business telephone systems, hosted telephony, contact centre solutions, telephone maintenance and support, internet connectivity, network solutions, Avaya Scopia video conferencing, business mobile phones, SIP trunks, business relocation services and handsets and desk phones.

We go out of our way to give provide an outstanding service to businesses no matter what their size. Our clients include small local companies as well as local and international ones.

TUI Travel Plc (First Choice and Thomson), Lactalis McLelland (Seriously Strong Cheddar), Ebay, Harwoods Group, AXA PPP, NAHT, JML, Age UK, Royal Navy Destroyers and Sandhurst Military Academy.



Website: www.westpiertele.com