



The Definitive Guide To Choosing The *Right* Phone

Buyer Beware!

**Do NOT Buy New Phone Service For Your Business Before Reading
This Guide To Avoid Getting Trapped In An Impossible-To-Cancel
Contract**

For An Expensive, Frustrating Phone System You Hate

System For Your Small Business

Read this guide to discover:

- ✓ The uncensored facts about the phone system industry that no phone salesperson will ever tell you but that you should know before buying.
- ✓ How to cut through all the technical mumbo-jumbo and confusing features to know the essential attributes and features to look for.
- ✓ A hidden “gotcha” clause phone system vendors try to put in their contracts that lock you in forever and legally bind you to pay thousands of dollars in penalties to cancel – even if the phone system and service don’t work as advertised. Do NOT sign a contract if this clause is in there!
- ✓ The proposal “shell game” of hidden costs, taxes, and unanticipated monthly fees that 99% of all phone system salespeople WON’T tell you about before you buy that trick you into thinking you’re getting a bargain (you’re not).

Provided as an educational service by:

Chicago Business VoIP

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Why I Wrote This Report

A Personal Letter From: Bob Welker Owner, **Chicago Business VoIP**

Dear Colleague,

Choosing a new phone system is a critical decision you want to get right. Choose poorly, and you'll be endlessly annoyed and hamstrung with a confusing, complicated, and limited system that is constantly breaking down, dropping calls, and frustrating you (and your customers!) with poor sound quality and non-existent support.

Worse yet, many phone system vendors will lock you into a long-term contract that you will have to pay HUGE fines to get out of, even if the service is terrible and the phone doesn't work as advertised. Further, you're busy – and switching phone systems is no easy task. And what if the new system is as bad (or worse!) as the one you just got rid of? The devil you know keeps you stuck – after all, it's very, VERY difficult to determine if a phone system will work as advertised UNTIL you sign on the dotted line.

You can see the dilemma, which is why I wrote this report.

From grossly confusing “geek speak” to misleading advertising, hidden fees, onerous contracts, and horrible service, I felt it was time someone told the plain truth about finding an easy-to-use, fairly-priced, quality phone system that will work as advertised – or better!

I sincerely hope that by making this information public, we will help raise standards within the phone system industry and give YOU helpful information to avoid making a costly decision you'll deeply regret.

Dedicated to serving you,

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Phone System Marketing Is Out Of Control! How To Avoid Falling For The Hype (And Making A Poor Choice)

If you're like most of our clients, you're probably looking for an honest expert who can advise you on which phone system is suitable for your specific situation and needs. One that is easy to use and works as advertised.

The problem is that phone system marketing is out of control online, with dozens of pure marketing sites posing as "best of" directories that are nothing more than marketing firms that are experts in search engine optimization (not phone systems) that sell leads and directory rankings to the highest bidder. They are NOT interested in providing sound advice to you – they are interested in getting you to click or request a quote so they can sell your lead to multi-million and billion-dollar companies like Ooma, RingCentral, Vonage, etc.

Marketing for "business phone systems" is one of the most competitive online, with a single Google click costing anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 – for a single *click*! Is it any wonder that your search for "business phone systems" is full of SEO-optimized directories and big corporate players who can afford such outrageous marketing fees?

NONE of these sites provide helpful information to make a good decision. The marketing directories that rank phone systems don't tell you how they rank their "top" providers or "best rated." They often don't provide details on how the reviews are verified for integrity (if checked), and all reviews are anonymous. And they certainly are light on facts and transparency. Clearly, this is NOT how you want to choose your next phone system, and you can bet your bottom dollar that these sites won't be around to help you if the phone system you buy turns out to be a giant disaster.

Another marketing trick many uses is offering free phones and "phone lines as low as..." type offers. These are often used as marketing bait to lead you into thinking you're getting a good deal – but buyer, beware! We all know you get what you pay for, so these offers are perfectly acceptable PROVIDED the phone performs as it should.

That's why we wrote this guide. Much of the advertising we see for phone systems is misleading and fails to tell the WHOLE truth. Yes, there certainly ARE good money-saving deals out there. Not all of them are fake – **but "lowest price" should not be #1 on your list of criteria when deciding on a new phone system because the money saved initially will be long forgotten and lost to countless hours of frustration later trying to make a bad system work.**

We cannot change how the business phone service industry advertises, but we can help you navigate the "geek speak" and half-truths. There ARE good phone system vendors out there. Lots of them. You have to know what to look for and what questions to ask – which is what this report is about.



The Two Biggest Problems With VoIP Phones And How To Avoid Them

First of all, VoIP is an overused term that confuses many people. They think it's a phone on your computer, a software application, or a physical phone you plug into your PC.

Those all were the early iterations of VoIP. Today, a "VoIP" phone is more of a SERVICE than a physical phone (although physical phones still play into this). With a VoIP service, you can use any cell phone, your PC, or other devices to make calls and send messages, allowing you to make and receive calls from any location with a reasonable Internet connection.

But many people fear moving to a VoIP for two legitimate reasons. The first is call quality, and the second is "What if the Internet goes down?" So let me address both of those valid concerns and why this is not an issue with the RIGHT phone service provider.

Problem #1: Call Quality

It's true that in the past, VoIP phones have been notorious for garbled, choppy, low-quality sound and dropped calls. However, the technology operating these phones has come a long way in the last couple of years, and Internet bandwidth (a key component to call quality) is faster and cheaper.

So any sound quality issues you might have on a new VoIP system are due to two problems – your bandwidth isn't sufficient, or your firewall, router, and computer network (where the phone now resides) are not set up correctly for the phone. That's it.

This is why it's critical for your phone vendor to assess your network before selling you a phone to ensure the phone you're buying will work on the network you're plugging it into.

KEY POINT: Big phone vendors like AT&T or RingCentral, and 8x8 will NOT do this assessment before selling you a phone. They will take your money, ship you a phone in a box and leave you to set it up. When the call quality is horrible, and you call them for help, they'll point the finger to your Internet provider, bandwidth, or computer network and wish you good luck. They WON'T troubleshoot that issue for you, so you want to buy a phone system from a local company that will own 100% of the setup, problems, and call quality.

Problem #2: What If The Internet Goes Down?

Undoubtedly, the internet WILL go down, but that doesn't mean your phone system has to. That's because the "brain" of the phone is not hosted in your office. It's hosted in a secure and highly-reliable Data Center with multiple backup systems for Internet connectivity. Therefore, when your local Internet goes down, you can have the phone automatically set up to do several things, such as:



- Route to a designated backup location or a VoIP application on your cell phone.
- Go to an auto attendant you set up to allow the person to leave a voice mail, similar to your after-hours call system.
- They can leave a voice mail, which can be e-mailed to you.

A good phone system vendor will set this up in advance, so calls have automatically handled the way you want and instantly “failover” without you having to do anything.

The Truth About All VoIP Phone Systems That No Salesperson Will Tell You

Here’s the biggest “secret” to the phone system industry that you won’t see any vendor advertising: ALL phone systems have the same features and capabilities.

Sure, there are a few things some phone systems can do that others can’t, like connect via wifi or have a touch screen, but for the most part, it’s a highly competitive field, and every feature offered by one phone system is offered by them all. So all the marketing hype about how *their* phone system is “the best” or better than the rest is just marketing propaganda that should be taken with a grain of salt.

So how DO you compare, and what IS the most crucial point of differentiation that you need to look for?

Here it is: The most important “feature” is not in the phone itself but in the after-sale SERVICE – who is setting it up, who will be there to install it, configure it, and make sure it works, and whom you will call when you need help.

It should not surprise you that most small business owners and office managers do not know how to properly set up and customize a phone system for their office, nor do they want to learn. They also don’t want to become experts at their phone systems – they want an EASY-TO-USE system that consistently works.

That’s why you want to really investigate the after-sale service. When something goes wrong, or you can’t get the system to do what you want, how easy is it to get fast, easy, and helpful support? Further, who will conduct the cutover to the new system and ensure it works?

Here are two critical questions you need to ask the vendor about support BEFORE you buy:

1. **Who will set up my new phone system and customize it for my specific needs and situation?**

Get specifics here. Some vendors ship you a phone and require you to set it up yourself.



Sure, they'll *tell* you all you have to do is "plug it in," but rarely is anything that easy. Instead of doing it for you, they'll give you the 100-page instruction manual you'll need to muddle through and a "customer support" website that will require you to search through hundreds of questions to find the answer to your problem, which is time-consuming and frustrating. Rarely do these sites provide the answers you need quickly.

Then the day of the cutover, you're scrambling to make the system work, frantically trying to figure out how to troubleshoot it and set it up.

Worse yet - if you **CAN'T** get it to work and you **CAN'T** get it to do what you want it to, how will they help you? Do they have local techs who will come to your office and set it up? Troubleshoot it? This brings me to the next question...

2. **How do I get help if the phone system isn't working or I can't get it to do what we need?**

As outlined above, we all know how exasperating it is to try and get a "customer service" person to help from a big, nameless, faceless corporation.

So we recommend you look for a reputable, local phone service provider who will not only set up the phone system for you and customize it for your specific needs but also provide personalized support, training, and help over the phone AND in-office support should the need arise.

One Final Key Point: As discussed above in the "Problems With VoIP," you really want to work with a phone service provider like CBV. Because your phone resides on your computer network, the network must be assessed before installing a phone to ensure it can properly handle the added bandwidth requirements and to ensure the firewall and router are configured properly. Only CBV offers a free onsite readiness assessment before the sale.

By assessing **BEFORE** you buy, you can prepare in advance and be aware of any additional costs you may incur with the phone.

Again, many phone vendors won't do this assessment (or won't do it properly) and then will sell you a phone, only to let you discover later that you have to incur hundreds or thousands of dollars in costs to make it work.

18 Critical Questions To Ask BEFORE Signing A Contract To Avoid Hidden Fees, Onerous Contracts And Bad Sound Quality

In addition to the above questions about support covered earlier, here are 18 additional questions you want to ask **BEFORE** signing on the dotted line:



1. How long have you been selling, installing, and supporting phone systems?

CBV has been providing telecommunication services for 13 years.

2. How can I be sure your system's sound quality will be excellent?

As previously discussed, make sure the person selling you the phone actually assesses your network and bandwidth to guarantee the phone will sound and perform flawlessly. Ask them to guarantee that in advance so you don't have any unpleasant surprises of a faulty system or additional fees and ongoing bills, you didn't budget for.

3. How can I cancel and get out of the contract? What are the fees involved?

This is a very important question to ask, especially if the phone system doesn't perform the way you want.

4. Do I need special cabling?

Cat5e data cables are recommended but not required. We offer WiFi-enabled desk phones as well as softphone and smartphone solutions.

5. Do you offer any money-back guarantee?

Yes - CBV is so confident in our service and ability to deliver quality business communications solutions that we offer a 60-DAY 100% MONEY BACK GUARANTEE! We will refund you 100% of your "amount due at signing" if we cannot deliver a satisfactory service to you within 60 days of installation.

6. Can I keep my current phone number? Are there any additional costs involved in keeping my number?

Yes, of course! This is called "number porting," and CBV can handle the whole process for you. First, you will send us a list of the numbers you would like to switch over from your previous carrier to CBV. We will then send you back an LOA (Letter of Authority) permitting CBV to request that your losing carrier pass ownership of the number to us. Once you have completed the LOA, we can submit the port for a specific date and time. However, it is up to the losing carrier when the port will be completed.

7. Does the quote include taxes? What other ongoing fees and costs are there?

This is a VERY important question because many phone system salespeople leave off the cost of taxes. Our quote does NOT include all the taxes that are involved in business telecommunications services.

8. What features are included? Which ones cost extra?



CBV has multiple features that are included with your monthly service subscription. A few of them include softphone desktop applications that allow you to make and receive work calls directly from your computer or laptop. We also have CBV Mobility which is a smartphone application that allows you to make and receive business calls anywhere, anytime. And if you don't want your Mobility app to ring while you're off the clock, we've installed a do not disturb button to mute the app.

9. Does your system include International calling?

Yes, we have international calling.

10. Will it work with my current firewall, router, Internet, and network settings?

This needs to be assessed BEFORE you buy a phone system, otherwise, you could be faced with additional fees. However, CBV is an over-the-top phone service solution. Meaning, we can use our solution "over the top" of any existing internet connection.

11. Does your system support faxing?

Yes, we have e-faxing.

12. If my employees need to work from home, how does your phone system accommodate that? How does the transition happen if we suddenly have to work remotely due to a covid-type shutdown or other disasters?

As previously stated, CBV is well equipped with a suite of products for the remote worker. This includes CBV Mobility, available in all major app stores. We also have a softphone solution so your employees can work from home while making and receiving calls from their laptops or home computer. Again the only thing our service requires is an internet connection. Whether that be the LTE of your smartphone, wifi connection, or data cable.

13. Who does the transition to the new phone, and how long will I be down during the cutover?

CBV is proud to call our installations a "Non-Event". We make it as painless and straightforward from the user's perspective. We can assist in installing the phones by having one of our technicians come on-site. After the phones have all been connected to the internet in some way or another, you will be able to make calls. Assuming we've already completed the porting process from your previous carrier.

14. What type of training do you offer for my employees using the phone?

CBV has a full team of support staff that will send out user guides to each employee during our installation process. We also have a support button installed on every field device, so if you're ever stumped on how to do something. CBV support is one button away.



15. Can you SHOW me how to change office hours, how calls are routed, how to add a new employee, set up out-of-office, etc.?

CBV can assist you with all this. Not only can we show you how to do it, we can do it for you.

16. Can you provide me references from other RECENT clients you installed this phone system?

We have multiple online reviews and testimonials on Google and our website. You can view them on our Google Business Page or visit www.cbvusa.com

17. Do I have to record my own voicemail and auto-attendant messages, or will you do that for me? Help me find voice talent? Music on hold?

CBV has a very wide range of voicemail audio to choose from as well as your own voice-over option if you'd prefer to use your own voice. You can send us any script, and we will apply that to your auto attendant.

18. Does your system handle emergency 9-1-1 calls?

We not only handle 9-1-1 calls. CBV is alerted by email every time one of our devices dials 9-1-1.

The Most Important Features To Look For

As I said earlier, almost all phone systems are the same. However, here are a few features you want to make sure are included or at least available:

Voice Mails E-mailed To You

This is a feature many of our clients don't ask for (initially) but later tell us is one of their favorites. Here's how it works: You miss a call to your CBV device. The caller rolls over to voicemail, and leaves a quick message stating who they are and why they're calling. Our voicemail transcription tool will then send you an email containing the voice message you have just received. Simple as that, you can now read your voicemails instead of wasting the time to dial into and listen to them all.

Text Communications To Clients

This is particularly important if your business ships products and services OR relies on client/patient appointments. We live in a mobile-dependent society and many



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customers, clients and patients prefer to receive text communications over phone calls.

Call Routing When The Internet Goes Down

Another key feature to have is instantaneous, automatic fail over for phone calls if and when the Internet goes down.



The Next Step: A Free Phone And Communication Assessment

Are you ready to make a move to new business phone service? Curious if you could save money on your phone and Internet bills? Do you HATE your current VoIP system and want to find a replacement – but are stuck in a contract you don't know how to get out of without paying huge fines and early cancellation fees?

Then we'd like to offer you a free phone and communication Assessment to answer these questions:

- **Is your current network environment (bandwidth, firewall, router, etc.) able to handle a VoIP system?** We have a diagnostic tool we can run on your computer network to ensure a VoIP phone would work. We'll reveal any additional costs you might have to incur in advance so you're not unpleasantly surprised AFTER you buy.
- **Is it possible for you to get out of a long-term contract with a phone system that you HATE?** We'll review your current contract and tell you if and what can be done. Sometimes there are loopholes that give you an out. In some cases, we can negotiate on your behalf to get you out or significantly reduce the fees. In some cases, the NEW system will save you enough money to more than cover the initial payment of early cancellation. We'll go over all of this for you when we meet.
- **Can you save money on your phone and Internet bill?** It's very common for us to save our clients between 10% and 25% without sacrificing quality. As we said earlier, this is a highly competitive industry and vendors DO have unadvertised discounts and incentives you can take advantage of if you know where to look (and we do!).
- **Are you losing sales and opportunities because clients and prospects can't get to someone when they call your office?** Are prospects hanging up because they aren't getting to anyone live? How exactly ARE calls being handled in your office? Are clients calling your sales rep's personal cell phone, and is that acceptable to you? With your permission, we can conduct a "secret shop" exercise and report back details on how your customers and prospects are being handled when they call your office (you may be shocked).

At the end of this assessment, you'll have all the answers you want as to whether or not it makes good business sense to upgrade your phone service.

We hope you become a client, but if not, that's okay too! You have my personal guarantee that absolutely NO high-pressure sales tactics will not be used at any point during our engagement. We simply want this to be a delightful, informative and positive experience for you.



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How To Request Your Free Phone Assessment

There are 3 ways to communicate with us and schedule this free assessment. They are:

Go online to: www.cbvusa.com

Or call us direct at (312) 646-1148

Or e-mail me direct at Bob@cbvusa.com

Looking forward to serving you,

Bob Welker

Chicago Business VoIP
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www.cbvusa.com

P.S. Even if you don't have an immediate need for new business phone service, having this Assessment done is an easy, no-cost way to have "fresh eyes" looking at what you're spending on your phone and Internet, as well as to pinpoint problems with your bandwidth, firewall and router that could be causing phone problems, poor sound quality and dropped calls.

In the 13 years we've been supporting IT and phone systems for small businesses in Chicago, we've never been able to find a "perfect" setup with zero problems or ways that I can improve your situation. At the very least, the peace of mind you'll gain from having a credible 3rd party reviewing your systems is worth the little bit of time it takes, and this is truly an easy, non-invasive process.



Here's What Our Clients Say About Our Phone System And Support:

Provide A Turn-Key Solution That Works At A Very Competitive Cost

"We first implemented one of the self-service VOIP phone providers (that has limited to no customer service) that you set up yourself and maintain yourself. After a year of issues and frustration, we switched to CBV and found the cost equal to or less than what we had but included white-glove service. CBV will provide a turn-key solution that works at a very competitive cost. It's a very low-risk change, and I'm confident that CBV will resolve any issues that arise." – **Kieth Mayer, Power Grid Components Inc, Bessemer, AL**

Simply Put, They Get The Job Done

"CBV is not just a vendor but a true partner to our company. CBV advises on a number of areas outside of business communications. When I call CBV they're always there. Every time. They make me feel like I'm their only client. There are a lot of decisions to be made when awarding a phone service vendor and to most, many parts of this technology can be confusing. You need to choose a vendor you can trust and rely on 24/7. When choosing CBV you are choosing a true partner. Simply put, the team just gets it done." **Jeff Williams, Shore Capital Partners, Chicago, IL**

CBV's Support Services Have Been Tremendous

Using CBV has allowed 7 Layer Solutions to focus on what we do best, which is to provide high levels of IT-managed services support for our clients. More often than not, voice service gets grouped into standard IT, but it is not. Voice service is a specialty, so partnering with CBV has allowed us to retain high levels of customer satisfaction for all IP-connected devices, including phones. ? If there is an issue with voice service we always get a 'live' person to work with immediately. CBV's support services have been tremendous, and this includes the initial onboarding support through regular daily support. If you want to focus on your core business and not worry about call quality, or phone hardware problems or are frustrated dealing with your voice service support, CBV is the company for you." **Bernie Barbaric, 7-Layer IT, Chicago, IL**



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Why Choose Us?

1. We GUARANTEE our service with a 60-day Money-back guarantee. Simply put, if we can't make your CBV service work to your satisfaction we will refund 100% of the money you paid CBV.
2. We GUARANTEE you'll love our after-sale support and service. Each handset CBV deploys has a CBV support button on it. When you need service for your system all you need to do is press this button to be connected to a live CBV engineer who is trained and ready to help you. Service and Support are CBV's biggest differentiators.
3. We have the right solution no matter what your business needs are. In the office, at home, on the road or on the beach. CBV has the right solution for your needs.