

How a Cloud Business Phone Desktop App Enables Employees to Work Anywhere



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As a technology and a business policy, telecommuting is a tried-and-true business practice that has been around for many years. Nowadays, most organizations — both big and small — offer some form of telecommuting to their employees on a formal or informal basis. These are strong solutions that everyone should be using if they don't want to run the risk of being left behind. Fortunately, relevant applications exist that easily support employees working from their kitchen table, a home office, or the countertop of a coffee shop.



Want to increase productivity and reduce work-related stress? Here's how allowing employees to telecommute through a desktop app can help your organization do just that.

For example, a cloud business phone desktop app can enable employees to work from virtually any location and easily access their full phone systems remotely, just as they can from the office.

Apps can enable a remote employee to screen calls while he or she is on vacation and, if it's from an important account, pick up the call. Instead of dropping everything, he or she can instant message a co-worker back at the office that they need to expect an incoming forwarded call. And all this can be done from an app on a computer, tablet, or smartphone with a cloud business phone system that allows you direct access to network services.

What to Look for in a Cloud Business Phone Desktop App

Telecommuters can use a cloud business phone app to work from home, the road, or even a local cafe, enjoying a little liberation to do their jobs away from headquarters. Consider the use case of a road warrior calling directly from a phone app to an airline contact center to change bookings for a canceled leg of a connecting flight itinerary. This type of real-time customer experience is critical for employees who travel frequently.

When considering a desktop app for cloud business phone systems, it's important to select core capabilities that deliver real business value while untethering your employees from their cubicles and desk phones. For example, the softphone built into these apps allows remote and on-the-go workers to use their cloud business phone service straight from their laptops. Non-negotiable features offered straight off the app from the cloud-based phone network should include:

- Sending and receiving texts from customers
- Messaging between co-workers and among groups
- Saving business contacts to the network then viewing them later within the app
- Being able to stay in touch with coworkers, anytime and anywhere

A cloud business phone desktop app is easier to implement and has a broader payback in worker applicability and cost reduction than many managers and business owners may imagine. And telecommuting is not just for large enterprises anymore. For example, a 2017 survey of 10,000 employers found that up to 25 percent of workers at small businesses work from home at least occasionally, according to Small Business Trends. And the practice among white-collar professionals is growing, with remote workers being added in bookkeeping, human resources, marketing, web development, information technology, and others.

Increasingly, businesses find this makes more financial sense because they are able to decrease their company overhead for office space and utilities, but to do this you need the right technology. A cloud communications phone system, complete with mobile and desktop apps, can make it happen. This can be bought and deployed in hours, even by small-or-medium-sized businesses.

Giving employees the ability to telecommute, collaborate, and enjoy flexibility in their workdays is a win-win for everyone involved.

Mobile and Desktop Apps for Group Collaboration

It's important to consider not only ways to help keep employees in contact with each other, but also how to extend collaboration outside the office. Look for business solutions that enable co-workers to use a mobile app or desktop apps that enable working in creative ways to stimulate cooperation. These applications should provide workers with the following capabilities:

- Make real-time video calls with anyone using a business account

- Thread all text messages — personal and business — through a unified feed
- Share image attachments with team members throughout the account
- Use instant messaging in private or group business conversations
- Work across Android or Apple devices

Building a Quality Telecommuting Program

Now with these mobile capabilities, companies can build quality telecommuting programs to offer employees flexibility and extra time to get more work done from any location. But just because you are able to do something doesn't mean you can just start — not without a plan. As with any business program, a formal policy must be in place laying out working conditions, policies, and examining a host of contingencies, as an article in the Chicago Tribune recently suggested. To maximize benefit from these systems, organizations must ensure:

- Highly focused remote working environments
- Effective communications infrastructure
- Understanding about established work hours
- Forward planning for offsite workdays
- Mandatory onsite training and team meetings
- Supervision of telecommuters
- Clear and established measurement of productivity

Mobile and cloud desktop phone apps can catalyze success through collaboration technologies such as video conferencing and screen sharing. In addition, management techniques such as quarterly meetings of full-time telecommuters can help re-establish bonds among departments and align team and company goals.

Giving employees the ability to telecommute, collaborate, and enjoy flexibility in their workdays is a win-win for everyone involved. And with telecommuting growing increasingly popular, it's definitely time for organizations to start implementing it if they haven't yet.

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