

How SIP Trunk Channels Revolutionize Video Communications — Inside the Office and Out



By EVAN WADE - Contributor

There's a reason session initiation protocol trunking — typically known as SIP trunking — has grown in popularity and enterprise saturation year over year since its inception: It provides a simple, robust way for organizations to send voice calls "over the firewall." Companies with complex phone systems have long used technologies that leverage the protocol to simplify, expand, and empower their communications capabilities, all while decreasing the prohibitive long distance fees presented by their landline phone systems.



With SIP trunk channels, communicating with your remote workers is more affordable and easier than ever before.

But SIP trunk channels don't just offer simplified calling structures and vastly reduced long distance bills. The protocol is also a powerful tool in the modern communications structure, offering businesses an easier way to introduce or expand a suite of unified communications tools. Here's how SIP connections, cloud-based video tools, and their distributed and nontraditional organizational structures work together to make your business's services stronger.

SIP Trunk Channels: The Basics

Does your organization still rely on a traditional private branch exchange (PBX) for most of its calling activity? Have you recently — or not so recently — ditched the PBX in favor of something newer, sleeker, and cloud-based? Either way, with the cost and general difficulties of the PBX, there's a good chance your memories of the technology aren't so fond.

SIP trunking takes an organization's communication activity and sends it over a data connection — which means it has several advantages over the plain old telephone service. Not only does it slash or completely get rid of long distance bills, many providers allow businesses to maintain a virtual presence via the phone numbers they utilize, freeing organizations from the area codes and prefixes of their geographic region. That makes running a multi-location business easier than ever, since SIP trunking handles an organization's communications as a single entity with account administration and billing managed centrally.

Compared to managing a complex PBX or web of regional providers, this basic simplification can create huge efficiencies for the client organization. Technical concerns, line additions, and even minor feature additions become much easier when every line on the company's bill is under a single umbrella.

Combined with the other unified communications formats SIP trunking can help support, you'll build a versatile, flexible, and highly scalable tool that can handle just about anything.

Enabling the Future of Communication

A SIP connection's capabilities shine in a modernized, multi-format communication structure. With the financial and production efficiencies it creates, thousands of organizations have spent less money and effort on their most valuable communication tools — all while adding capabilities that employees, clientele, and partnering organizations need to communicate at their best.

Just consider the complexity of the standard PBX setup. Even for simple voice calling, the technology requires an extensive amount of hardware at each linked location, with additional hardware needed every time a new line or basic feature is added. Features like videoconferencing, instant messaging, and shared work spaces have to be handled through a separate service — there's no easy way to link these capabilities to a landline.

But SIP trunk channels work over a data network. Since the protocol is designed to facilitate a broad, constantly evolving variety of tasks, the same tools that require individual appliances can be carried over the same network. There's no need for individual circuits for calling and videoconferencing.

The savings this introduces are attractive enough for single-location businesses, but the advantages really shine for distributed organizations. Instead of installing specialized hardware and circuits for each location that needs a videoconference connection, the business saves with each unit of the organization it adds to its collection of SIP trunk channels.

Compared to the standard PBX setup, SIP trunking decreases complexity for IT teams, providing critical functionality needed to have truly unified communications. Rather than assembling multiple tools in a piecemeal fashion, the protocol's universal approach to

communication formats carries all the data it supports over a single connection.

Supporting the Remote Workforce and Business Growth

Of course, branch offices aren't the only form of distribution in contemporary business. With working from home moving from a rare perk to a baseline expectation, and smartphone- and laptop-equipped employees able to work anywhere they choose, any technology that extends the organization's video communications outside the normal four walls is a welcome addition.

SIP trunking is an ally for a growing business. Instead of hardwired connections, new channels can be added with a few clicks of your mouse. Devices used by remote employees can be added with little effort. In practice, this means roving sales agents, field-based employees, work from home professionals, and anyone else can maintain the same video presence as the employees at the office.

These strengths are just a small part of the utility SIP trunking offers an organization. Combined with the other unified communications formats it can help support, you'll build a versatile, flexible, and highly scalable tool that can handle just about anything.

Contact Vonage Business to learn more about SIP Trunking's value in the workplace and beyond.