

FREE Small Business Advisory Guide:

The 7 Most Costly Mistakes Companies

Make When Choosing A New Phone

System...

And How To Avoid Them



This exclusive insider's report will reveal:

- Eight critical questions you should ask any phone vendor before signing a contract.
- How to avoid getting talked into unnecessary bells and whistles and expensive maintenance contracts.
- How to avoid getting locked into a complicated system that you can't support in-house, or expand without significant upgrade costs.
- What features and support to demand in the basic package.
- Why it's so important to purchase an "open system".
- The single most important feature in a voice mail system; overlook this feature and you'll regret it forever.

The 7 Most Expensive Mistakes Companies Make When Choosing A New Phone System... And How To Avoid Them

No matter which way you look at it, buying a new phone system can be a significant investment for any business.

It can be an *even more* expensive and frustrating process if you end up making many of the costly mistakes that trap buyers into:

- Paying too much for unnecessary bells and whistles and ongoing maintenance.
- Getting locked into a complicated system that you can't support in-house or expand without significant upgrade costs.
- Not getting the features you need in the base package.

Worse yet, once you've spent the time and money to install a new system, you're pretty much stuck with it and the last thing you want is an overpriced, complicated system that requires a lot of outside maintenance.

Who I Am And How I Can Help You Avoid Making A Bad Decision On Your Next Phone System

My name is Benjamin Schissler and I'm the Chief Technology Officer of WesTec Services. Over the last 5 years we've installed and maintained a variety of business technology equipment, such as computers, copiers, printers and phone manufactured by a variety of different companies. We have been able to provide our clients with a simple, easy to use seamless technology network. A major part of this technology network is the phone system. Voice communication continues to be an important part of a company's overall business communications.

I am also intimately familiar with most types of corporate phone systems, including everyone from the big vendors to the smaller, lesser known systems. I specialize in helping companies with 25 to 100 users make smart, cost-saving decisions when buying a new phone system.

Unfortunately, a lot of companies get suckered into buying an overpriced, complicated phone system simply because they didn't know all of the options available to them, or simply because they didn't know how to ask the right questions when interviewing phone vendors.

With so many choices, it can be very difficult to make an educated decision without spending days or weeks researching all of the vendors and options you have. That's why I created this report; I wanted to arm buyers with a quick reference to help them make the absolute best decision when buying a new phone system.

Buyer Mistake #1: **Not planning for future needs**

Before you buy a system, make sure you have answers to the following questions to plan ahead for future needs:

- How many new employees do you think you will hire over the next 5 years?
- Will you have remote offices or employees working from home?
- Do you think you will open other branches in the future?
- Do you need the ability to do call reporting / call accounting?

Look for a system that will allow you to add new features and expand your system later on at virtually no additional cost. A good question to ask your vendor is, “If we decide to add these features later on, what will it cost us in total hardware, software, and services?”

Buyer Mistake #2: **Not buying an open system**

A truly open system is one that will work with the equipment you already own or plan to purchase later on including phone headsets, toll fraud equipment, or tabletop conferencing equipment. How do you know if the system you are buying is truly an open system? Make sure it:

- Works with off-the-shelf, standard telephones
- Runs on an industry standard operating system (such as Microsoft Windows or Linux).
- Can easily be maintained remotely by vendor after the initial installation.
- Can interface seamlessly with off-the-shelf software applications such as customer management and sales force automation without the need for complex programming.
- Will work with any other phone equipment you purchase.

Buyer Mistake #3: **Not getting enough voice mail**

Don't underestimate the value of voice mail. The last thing you want a customer to hear is, “Sorry, you cannot leave a voice mail message because this user's box is full.” To avoid this all together, make sure your system has unlimited ports of voice mail. Also, your system should have the ability to set up an unlimited number of voice mailboxes.

Buyer Mistake #4:

Not buying a system that can be easily maintained

Anyone who has ever owned a traditional PBX or legacy telephone system knows the incredible costs for maintenance, support, and upgrades. In fact, because all maintenance activities on these types of phone systems requires vendor involvement at \$150 or more per visit, **lifetime maintenance costs on a legacy PBX typically run as high as 40% of the system cost.**

In other words, that \$50,000 phone system will really cost you \$70,000 before you're done. If you want to add, delete, or change a user's extension, can your vendor do it remotely or do you need to wait 2 days for the guy to come out, and pay \$150? This is a no-brainer; make sure your system can easily be supported remotely in most instances and you'll save a lot of time and money.

Buyer Mistake #5:

Paying for technical support

With any new system, you are bound to run into a few snags and have questions. Make sure the vendor provides free, unlimited phone and e-mail support at a minimum for 90 days.

Buyer Mistake #6:

Not buying next generation features

While you might not think you want or need next generation features such as Voice Over IP (the ability to run voice calls over your computer network to save on phone bills), web interactions, and e-mail integration, the system you buy should allow you to implement these features very inexpensively some time in the future.

Look for a system that imbeds:

- Voicemail
- Messaging
- Automatic call distribution
- Operator console
- Call forwarding
- Call detail reporting
- Follow-me dialing
- Web based click-to-talk

These embedded features will eliminate the need to purchase these applications separately down the road. If the system you are considering requires complex infrastructures, implementations, or pricing schemes to add these features on, look for another system.

Buyer Mistake #7:

Not choosing the right vendor

A telephone system is the lifeblood of most businesses. A system failure that lasts only minutes can cost thousands of dollars in lost business. You must be sure that your vendor is capable of properly supporting your business. Ask potential vendors:

- Do you offer a money back guarantee?
- How long have you been selling this system?
- What is your relationship with the manufacturer?
- Do you have references?
- How do you handle my service request?
- What do you charge for support?

A good vendor will guarantee your satisfaction and have a solid history with the product they represent. They will encourage you to check out the product and provide you with access to the material you need to do your research.