



# Alternate Access Quarterly Newsletter

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## Five Reasons to Buy a New Phone System Now

The year is quickly coming to an end, and many small businesses (SMBs) are excited to bid 2009 – and hopefully its economic ups and downs – a final farewell. As you assess the year and plan ahead for 2010, are you considering how your business can enhance its communications?

Before you close the 2009 books and file those ever-certain tax returns, peruse our five reasons why you should purchase a new phone system in Q4.

*(Continued on page two...)*

## Holiday Closings

Alternate Access will be closed for the winter holidays as follows:

November 25-27, 2009

December 24 and 25, 2009

January 1, 2010

## How a Phone System Can Propel Your Business through the Holidays

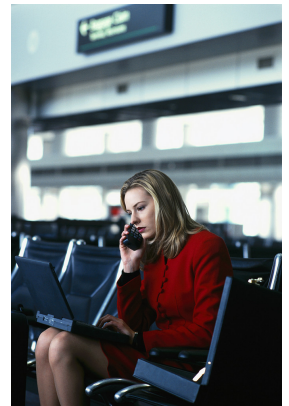
Look around you. The holiday season is already being thrust upon us by anxious retailers. Businesses of all types have felt the impact of this uncertain economy. This year has been a particularly tumultuous one for many SMBs, but there is still time to end the year on a positive note. A VoIP phone system can help you ensure that your business receives each prospect's call, that your employees manage communications efficiently and that you market your business every minute of the day.

No SMB can afford to miss a prospect's call during this critical holiday season. With VoIP, your sales staff can set up call routing via your auto attendant so that every call is answered – even when taking time off or during holiday breaks.



Another benefit of call routing is to ensure that emergencies are handled expediently. Imagine that a long-term customer has a last-minute emergency, and your office has already shut down for the holiday. In a panic, that customer frantically searches for and calls every number he has for Joe Salesperson who does not recognize the number – so he doesn't take the call. With VoIP, that situation can be eliminated. The customer would have reached the sales rep with one call thanks to call routing and enhanced caller ID.

*(Continued on page two...)*



## Alternate Access President Participates in Chamber Panel

### Executive Women's Luncheon to Cover the Power of Your Personal Brand

Adrienne K. Lumpkin, marketing expert and our company president, will join an esteemed panel of local businesswomen for the Oct. 15 Chamber Executive Women's Luncheon. As part of the four-person panel, Adrienne will offer attendees insight on how to successfully market themselves in a competitive marketplace.

Whether just launching a career or planning a complete career change, event attendees will benefit from the real world advice of these successful women. For more information, visit the Executive Women's Luncheon webpage on the Chamber's website .

*(Five Reasons continued...)*

**Reason #1: Receive a Substantial Tax Break!**

Purchase and install a new phone system by Dec. 31 2009, and you may be eligible for a tax break. In February "The American Recovery and Reinvestment Tax Act of 2009" was signed into law, extending the \$250,000 Section 179 limit that was in place for tax year 2008 to tax year 2009.

The Act retroactively extends the 50 percent bonus depreciation, which means you may be eligible to immediately write-off 50 percent of the cost of your new system, rather than depreciating it over several years. Of course, you need to consult with your tax advisor about the deductibility of any equipment prior to purchase.

**Reason #2: Lower Your Total Cost of Ownership with VoIP**

Companies that make the switch to VoIP often realize a decrease in monthly phone bills. Pair that cost savings with increased employee productivity, and the return on investment may be considerable.

Combined with the tax break identified above, your business will see experience an ROI even faster.

**Reason #3: VoIP Technology Gives SMBs a Competitive Edge**

Updating your communication system with the newest VoIP technology and applications allows you to increase utilization of system features and enhance management control.

**Reason #4: Simplify Communications with Unified Communications**

Today's phone systems aren't like your granny's. Unified communications enables you to receive all communications – voice mail, faxes and e-mail – via one central location. Why check your office voice mail box...then your cell phone voice mail box...then your e-mail inbox...it's time consuming.

**Reason# 5: Your Current Phone System May Be Obsolete**

Like all technology, as your phone system ages the chance of system failure increases, markedly. Furthermore, the telephony boards in many older systems are being retired, making the boards and their replacement parts no longer available. So, if these boards fail for any reason, you may not be able to replace or repair them in a timely manner – or worse, at all. Why get stuck? Be proactive in selecting and implementing new technology before you are caught in a jam.

*(Propel Business continued...)*

VoIP also offers presence management, which can be a critical tool during the holidays when time out of the office – social events, school events, picking up family at the airport, etc. – increases dramatically. It can be difficult for a receptionist, office manager and even department managers to keep track of the revolving door that is holiday vacation time.

Presence management allows employees to keep up with each other's status via a Graphical User Interface. Simply view the GUI on your desktop PC to see which employees are on vacation, out of the office, on a call, in a meeting or any other number of options.

Combine call routing with presence management to ensure that you have coverage at all times during the holidays. Even if an employee is working from home, they can be reached in an emergency without divulging their location or personal phone number.

While your prospect or customer is waiting for the call to be routed, use that time to market your business to them. A VoIP phone system allows you to change your on-hold messaging, so you can promote holiday discounts, sales or promotions to a captive audience. Or, use your on-hold messaging to inform callers of special holiday hours. You can even use it to share some of your favorite holiday music with your customers – making the holidays more pleasant for you and them.



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