

# The WayCommunicator

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## VoIP Explained Easily

With the increased adoption of high-speed Internet across the U.S. and abroad, it has become much easier to send and receive large amounts of data without affecting bandwidth. What this means for consumers is that they can now download huge files quickly, browse multiple web pages simultaneously, and even make telephone calls over the Internet; an emerging technology known as VoIP.

VoIP stands for "Voice over Internet Protocol" and it is quite simply a way of using the Internet to make and receive telephone calls. The primary reason VoIP is becoming so popular is cost and convenience; as VoIP is significantly less expensive than typical local and long distance telephone service offered by the phone companies. Additionally, one high-speed Internet connection can serve for multiple VoIP telephone lines.

How does VoIP Work? A normal telephone line would do nothing if it weren't connected to a network called the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network). This is how the traditional phone companies route telephone calls from one person to another. In VoIP service, the PSTN is replaced by the Internet as the network for routing phone calls, and is proven to be faster, more efficient and cost effective. Using VoIP, a person's voice is transmitted into digital data that is then sliced into small fragments called packets that are sent across the Internet at lightning speed. These packets are then reconstructed and heard on the receiving phone. In order for VoIP phone calls to have the same quality that consumers are accustomed to when using traditional phone service, a certain bandwidth (the amount of data that can be sent) is required. Broadband Internet access, either cable or DSL, provides the necessary bandwidth for VoIP phone service to be found acceptable by consumers.

In addition to making high-speed Internet access more cost-effective, VoIP service provides subscribers with significantly cheaper local and long distance telephone service. Most VoIP providers charge between \$20 - \$25 per month for residential service, which includes unlimited calling to the U.S. and Canada. Additionally, all the features that traditional phone companies charge extra for like voice mail, caller ID, call waiting, three-way calling, and the ability to choose your own phone number are included in the price. Another driver for using VoIP is that it is portable. In other words, consumers can take their phone number anywhere they move to; even if it is just on vacation.

Cost savings, free features, portability -- VoIP is the emerging technology at the root of all these trends. Consumers should expect to see a lot more news about VoIP in the coming months and years.

## President's Message

We have had a busy start to the new year here at WayComm Consulting. We moved into our new office facility in Sea Girt over the holiday break and also welcomed two new employees to our practice—Matt Perkins, Business Development Manager, and Geri Ricca, Analyst. With the addition of these new employees we hope to take our business to record levels of success in 2007.

In this issue we will continue to report our findings on the use of VoIP phone systems—particularly the one we are using in our own offices. We hope that it will help you learn more about this emerging technology, how it works, and what the pros and cons of using it are.

As always, if you have any telecom related questions or concerns, we are here to help.

— Wayne Sos



## WayComm Hosts its First Business After Hours

With the help of the Southern Monmouth Chamber of Commerce, we held our very first Networking After Hours event in our new office on February 1st. We were pleased to have a wonderful turnout, with more than 50 people in attendance.

We celebrated the Grand "Re-Opening" of WayComm in our new location and attendees were able to exchange business cards in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. Our thanks goes out to all who attended and helped make our first after-hours event such a great success. We will certainly be hosting more in the future!



## VoIP for Small Business—Our Story

We chose to install a VoIP Centrex for our office phone system. In a nutshell, all of the switching gear, voice mail, etc. is housed in our provider's central office and our phones are connected to our office network and cable broadband to the switching system.

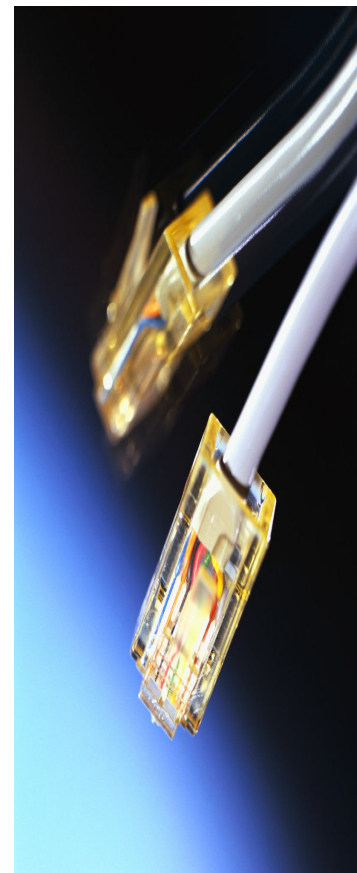
The service has been reliable; however, our inexperience with the technology caused a few problems where our service went down for a few hours once. I was adding some workstations to our network for our new employees and while testing, I plugged something in wrong to our router which caused three days of poor voice quality. Our provider was helpful, but in the end it was our problem to diagnose and fix.

**Strong points:** We can move our phones anywhere that there is a network connection in the office. Anyone can take their phone home, plug it into their broadband connection, and be on our phone system. We can communicate just as we are in the office; i.e., transfer calls, use the intercom, voice mail etc. Soon, our sales people will have "softphone" installed on their laptops and have an extension provisioned to it. They will be able to access both our office support systems and phone system from any place that has a network connection (home, airport, McDonalds, Starbucks, etc). Also, the cost for the phone equipment was about 50% of a traditional phone system and our service costs have been reduced by about 50%.

**Weak points:** It is still a new service. Since there are not that many users of the technology yet, our provider is depending on people instead of process; meaning, when we have a problem it takes longer to get it resolved and making changes has not been easy.

We think that over time, this service will become the standard for small business; however, it is still "bleeding edge" technology that should only be considered if you have good IT support or a very strong IT person on your staff.

We will keep you informed of our progress with the system.



## Five Ways to Be Memorable (in a good way!)

Have you ever attended a networking event, collected a bunch of business cards, and when you go through them the next day, you can't remember who many of them are? Well, you certainly don't want to be one of those that other people can't remember. It's good to pass out business cards, but if people don't remember you, they probably won't be calling you to follow up, and they certainly won't keep you in mind for their future needs or possible referrals. Here are five tips on how to make yourself when meeting other people face-to-face:

- 1. Be distinctive.** A brightly-colored tie, an unusual necklace or other jewelry, even just impeccable grooming can all help you stand out in a good way. It's not that you want to be identified just for that, but anything that helps people separate you from the crowd will help them remember you. You don't have to be outlandish -- just don't blend in completely with the crowd.
- 2. Be fully present.** Be fully engaged and aware of the people you interact with -- listen well, respond promptly, maintain eye contact, etc. Many people seem to be "half there," so being fully engaged helps you stand out.
- 3. Ask thought-provoking questions,** such as "How did you get started?" or "What do you enjoy most about what you do?" If you follow #2 and this will flow naturally. You must "take a genuine interest in other people."
- 4. Reinforce your keywords.** People aren't going to remember long descriptions of what you do, or likely even that 15-second intro that many experts teach you to make. People will at best remember a few key things about you, such as your name, company name, your business/industry, your product, or your location. *Anything* you say that reinforces one of the five items above helps make you more memorable.
- 5. Contribute to the group conversation.** Don't hog it, and don't say just anything in order to say something publicly, but saying one really smart thing at your table or in front of the whole group will make you much more memorable than a half hour of semi-conscious small talk. Create value for others and you create value for yourself.

Remember that *you are your business*. The impression that *you* make on people is the impression they will have of your business, so make it good and make it memorable.



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