

How Virtual PBX Services Work

Private branch exchanges (PBX) are telephone networks that are created for one particular company or organization. PBX systems allow companies to have one main external phone number that is shared by many employees with internal extension numbers. PBX systems also usually have several other features such as voicemail, auto-attendant services, faxing, automated call distribution, and many more.

The installation of a local private branch exchange for a company is expensive, complicated, and labor intensive. In the 1990s, the advent of the internet and data packet switching allowed engineers to create virtual PBX systems for companies that did not want to or could not install a local PBX system.

Virtual Private Branch Exchanges are a form of hosted PBX systems that allow companies to use a private branch exchange system without having to install the equipment and hardware necessary to use a PBX system locally.

All of the functions of the PBX service that would normally take place at the location of business are performed by the virtual PBX service at their site, allowing businesses to save valuable time and money on a staff that would be required to maintain and operate a local PBX service.

Virtual PBX services have evolved from their beginnings to include some very advanced features now such as: voicemail to email services (some services transcribe the actual voicemail to text), voicemail to text notifications, call screening functions, call forwarding, call from website buttons, automated greetings, and more. New and advanced functions are always being released and improved upon by virtual PBX services.

The way that many virtual PBX services work is through VoIP (voice over internet protocol). VoIP allows data lines and IP networks to be used to transmit voice data. The result of using VoIP is that virtual PBX services can use their own servers and other hardware to host the service without their clients ever having to deal with hardware or software problems.

For most virtual PBX services, the first step that a new customer would perform is to choose one or more (if the service allows multiple numbers) toll-free or local numbers among those that are available. This is the number that would be shared among the employees of the organization.

Also, a business's current number can be switched over to the service in many cases. After the number is selected, the customer can choose between pricing levels and features that the business requires of that particular virtual PBX service.