



## Features of the Centrex VoIP Service

**Bewcastle Consulting Ltd**

### What do you get?

**The Centrex Service from Bewcastle is highly configurable providing features often found only on high-end telephone systems. We believe that these features offer small businesses the opportunity to present a professional and efficient image to their customers and to provide your staff with helpful productivity tools.**

**The phone has moved on – move on with it for minimal outlay**

#### **Hunt groups**

Hunt groups allow you to group staff together into notional groups, such as accounts, customer service, sales desk and so on. Callers are directed to the group as a whole, not to individuals within it. You may choose to publish a separate telephone number for the group or you may get your receptionist to put callers through to it. Systems come with configuring options so you can decide how to manage calls to your groups, such as ring the phones in turn or ring all the phones. If all the members of the group are busy or unavailable when a call comes in, a voice messaging service takes a message for the group as a whole, or it can be diverted to an alternative extension.

In addition, time-of-day rules allow you to specify the periods when a particular extension is included in a hunt group. You may choose to use this facility if you share incoming calls across different groups of people, maybe part-time workers or if you wish to route calls to an emergency out-of-hours person when the office is closed.

You can also play a message to callers who have been routed to the hunt group. Perhaps you wish to tell them that you are aware of a particular service problem which you are working on. Such a message might be sufficient information that the caller no longer needs to speak to a person.

Of course, each individual member of the hunt group also has an extension number so anyone may call that particular extension to speak to a specific person.

## Phone Menus

Phone menus are also known as IVR (interactive Voice Response) and will be well known if you phone call centres. An automated voice guides you through a menu of possible choices. Up until now, these features were only available on high-end telecoms systems, but now you can have this feature even on entry-level systems.

When callers phone in, they are presented with a company greeting and then given options such as "please press 1 for sales, press 2 for customer services, press 3 for accounts or hold for an operator". You decide what the greeting and the options are and you record the messages yourself. The flexible configuration options of the systems allows you to direct the call to the appropriate extension or hunt group depending on the selection the caller has made.

"Hidden" menu options (ie options which are not advertised to the caller in the greeting) allow your staff in the field to select internal departments, hunt groups or conference rooms.

## Time of day routing

The time of day routing facility allows you to direct incoming calls differently depending on the time of day. You may, for example, have all incoming calls directed to a company voice mail system when the office is closed. Or perhaps you operate an out-of-hours emergency service whereby incoming calls are routed to a duty staff member between 6pm and 8 am.

## Voice mail

Voice Mail is now a well established business tool but VoIP telephony has taken it a step further. If your telephone is unanswered or if it is busy, then you can have your caller directed to your personal voice mail (with your own individual greeting) to leave you a message. What happens then depends on how you have configured the system, but you can choose to do any or all of the following:

- A text message is sent to a specified mobile phone to alert you that you have a new voice mail waiting. The text message tells you the date and time of the message and the telephone number of the person who left the message. You can then decide whether to call them back immediately.
- An email is sent to a specified email box giving the date and time of the call and the number of the person who left the message. In addition, the actual message is attached to the email in the form of an audio file (WAV format) which can be played on any personal computer.
- If your VoIP phone supports a *message waiting* facility, then a lamp will light on your phone and the dial tone will be different to alert you that you have new messages. You can access your voice mail messages simply from your VoIP phone or any other phone (landline or mobile) anywhere in the world!

Voice mail boxes may be set up for individuals and for hunt groups, so you may have different greetings for each, such as "Thank you for calling John Smith . . ." or "Thank you for calling the Accounts department . . ."

## Conference Rooms

This feature allows you to set up a conference call between a number of people. Each person who is invited to the "conference" is given the extension number to call and the access PIN code. When they have entered the correct access PIN code, they are "admitted" to the conference and all parties may speak to each other. In addition, people external to the telephone system may also call into a conference room, maybe if one of your staff who is working at home.

Conference rooms are not just for internal staff and you may choose to give your customers a dedicated telephone number so that they can access the conference room. Maybe you would like to have a progress meeting with a customer or a weekly project review, without requiring the customer to come to your office.

There are some powerful implications and customer service opportunities which come from using Conference rooms. Your

imagination is the only limitation.

#### Call divert

If you are away from your desk, you may wish to have your calls diverted. The Centrex Service allows you to divert calls unconditionally to any other number. This could be an alternative extension, your home number or your mobile, or even to the telephone of your holiday home in Spain! You simply specify to the Centrex service the number which calls are to be diverted to.

#### Call hold, transfer and forward

The telephones work in conjunction with the Centrex service to affect call transfers. These are the sorts of things you can do:

**Forward if busy:** If your phone is busy, the call is forwarded to an alternative number – internal or external - or your voicemail.

**Forward if unanswered:** as above but you set the delay before the call is forwarded.

**Call hold:** you may wish to put a call on hold to answer another incoming call (you are notified of a call waiting) or to call another person in the middle of an existing call. You can optionally play music to the caller when they are on hold.

**Call Transfer:** here, you are transferring a call to another extension. This transfer can be *blind*, whereby the caller is transferred without you speaking to the recipient of the call, or *attended*, where you speak first to the recipient of the call before making the transfer.

#### Music on hold

When a caller has been put on hold, whilst being transferred to another extension, you can optionally play music to them. You can choose the music you want to play by uploading an MP3 file to the Centrex Service. This feature is available on an extension by extension basis, so not all extensions need to have music on hold, maybe you select those extensions where you anticipate a delay in answering.

#### Call logging

Each extension has a call log which records the date and time of each incoming and outgoing call. This may be useful if you operate SLAs with your customers where the time of an incoming support call is important.

This leaflet describes some of the advanced features available from the Centrex Service. The Centrex service is highly flexible and configurable so if you have a particular telephony need, why not discuss it with us and challenge us to meet your particular requirement.

To find out more about how you can benefit from VoIP telephony, please contact us:

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