



## **Choosing the Right Communications System for Your Business**

Selecting the appropriate telecommunications systems for your business can be a daunting task. Before choosing a new system or service, it is important to develop a clear understanding of your company's communications needs, in the form of a written preliminary plan that you can show to potential providers. Your firm's plan should include three interrelated elements: a detailed assessment of your company's specific service needs, a schedule and a projected budget.

First, evaluate your specific service needs for telephone, fax, and Internet connectivity. Consider how you want your company to deliver your services over the telephone. For example, if it is important for callers to have swift access to members of your staff, you might want to think carefully about whether and how to offer automated attendant services. If you have an established business, you can evaluate call volume and calling patterns by analyzing previous telephone bills. If your company is just beginning operations, you will need to estimate your expected usage. It may be helpful to look at startup usage and growth patterns for similar businesses.

Count the number of phone extensions your employees will need. Decide whether you will want options such as call transferring, call forwarding, caller identification, speed calling, call waiting and conference calling. All of these factors will affect the complexity and the rates of your telephone service. It is critical to take into account the short-term growth of your company, so you can create a system that will be able to accommodate your business into the future.

If you intend to use fax machines, evaluate the volume of incoming and outgoing faxes and the number of employees needing to access these machines, and purchase enough machines to handle the projected traffic comfortably.

Increasingly, personal computers and networks have fax capability. While this may not be an option for all businesses, it may be a way to decrease your costs and increase productivity.

Deciding whether your company needs to rely on the Internet for internal and external communications now or in the near future will help you choose the most useful technology for your business. Factor in your expectations for growth when determining the level of Internet service you will need. For example, if you expect your company to become more dependent on email communication, you may find it important to have especially swift and reliable Internet service and the option to easily add email accounts.

When scheduling, develop a list of all elements needed for the project and the sequence in which they must be completed. Set target deadlines for completion of each phase of your project. This will be helpful as you begin to speak with vendors. Check with the BBB for a reliability report.

And finally, determine your budget for setting up or upgrading your communications system.

Depending on your needs and the complexity of service and equipment, communications options can range from reasonable to extremely costly. Be realistic about how much you have to spend, and set spending limits for specific time frames. Examine plans that are within your spending range.

4/5/2002

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The BBB has recently added a grade scale for accreditation ranging from A+ through F. The BBB bases its grades on a proprietary rating formula that takes into account 16 weighted factors, including incidences of a business's behavior that have been verified and evaluated by BBB staff. The letter grade represents BBB's confidence that a business is operating in a trustworthy manner and is making a good-faith effort to resolve customer concerns.

Everglades Technologies is proud to say that we have achieved an **A+** grading with BBB which validates the time and attention we have focused on ensuring that our customers receive excellent customer service.

As a Metropolitan New York member of the Better Business Bureau (BBB), Everglades Technologies supports the BBB goals of encouraging and recognizing honesty, fairness, and reliability in business practices. We pledge to do the following:

- Uphold Better Business Bureau Standards and Codes for Business Conduct.
- We will uphold Better Business Bureau's Standards, including operating within the law, and complying with the BBB Codes of Advertising and Online Business Practices.
- Give our customers a high degree of confidence in our business by participating in Better Business Bureau Arbitration, if necessary ("Customer Commitment Program").

Through BBB membership, we offer this arbitration opportunity to our customers as a meaningful way of standing behind our products or services.