



The 7 Most Expensive Mistakes Companies Make When Choosing A New Phone System... And How To Avoid Them

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No matter which way you look at it, buying a new phone system can be a significant investment for any business.

But it can be an **even more** expensive and frustrating process if you end up making many of the costly mistakes which trap buyers into

- Paying too much for unnecessary bells and whistles and on-going maintenance.
- Getting locked into a complicated system that you can't support in house or expand without significant upgrade costs.
- Not getting the features you need in the base package.

Unfortunately, once you've spent the time and money to install a new system you're pretty much stuck with it; the last thing you want is an overpriced, complicated system that requires a lot of outside maintenance.

Who I Am And How I Can Help You Avoid Making A Bad Decision On Your Next Phone System

My name is John H. Johns and I'm the President of Innovative. Over the last 15 years I've installed and maintained more than 225 phone systems for a variety of different companies in the Southern California area.

This background has made me an expert on just about every type of corporate phone system, including big vendors such as NEC to the smaller, lesser known systems such as the AltiGen Phone Systems, which we carry and support.

All too often I see people getting short-changed when buying a new phone system because they didn't know what to look for, or because they get overwhelmed and confused by the number of choices and options available.

If you are in the market for a new phone system, this report will help you to ask the right questions and get exactly what you need – not a bit more or a bit less at the best possible price.

Buyer Mistake #1: Not planning for future needs

Before you buy a system, make sure you have answers to the following questions to plan ahead for future needs:

- How many new employees do you think you will hire over the next 5 years?
- Will you have remote offices or employees working from home?
- Do you think you will open other branches in the future?
- Do you need the ability to do call reporting / call accounting?

Look for a system that will allow you to add new features and expand your system later on at minimal additional cost. A good question to ask your vendor is, "If we decide to add these features later on, what will it cost us in total hardware, software, and services?"

Buyer Mistake #2: Not buying an open system

A truly open system is one that will work with the equipment you already own or plan to purchase later on including phone headsets, toll fraud equipment, or tabletop conferencing equipment.

How do you know if the system you are buying is truly an open system? Make sure it:

- Works with off-the-shelf, standard telephones
- Runs on an industry standard operating system (such as Microsoft Windows).
- Can easily be maintained in house (change extensions, add or delete users, change features) by end-users with a graphical user interface software.
- Can interface seamlessly with off-the-shelf software applications such as customer management and sales force automation without the need for complex 3rd party equipment
- Will work with any other phone equipment you purchase.

Buyer Mistake #3: Not getting enough voice mail.

Don't underestimate the value of voice mail. The last thing you want a customer to hear is, "Sorry, you cannot leave a voice mail message because this user's box is full."

To avoid this all together, make sure your system has unlimited "ports" of voice mail. Also, your system should have the ability to setup an unlimited number of voice mailboxes.

Buyer Mistake #4: Not buying a system that can be maintained in house.

Anyone who has ever owned a traditional PBX or legacy telephone system knows the incredible costs for maintenance, support, and upgrades.

In fact, because all maintenance activities on these types of phone systems requires vendor involvement at \$150 or more per visit, **lifetime maintenance costs on a legacy PBX typically run as high as 40% of the system cost.**

In other words, that \$50,000 phone system will really cost you \$70,000 before you're done.

If you want to add, delete, or change a user's extension, can you do it in house or do you need to call the vendor, wait 2 days for the guy to come out, and pay \$150?

This is a no-brainer; make sure your system can easily be supported in house by end-users and you'll save a lot of time and money.

Buyer Mistake #5: Paying for technical support

With any new system, you are bound to run into a few snags and have questions. Make sure the vendor provides free, unlimited phone and e-mail support at a minimum.

Buyer Mistake #6: Not buying "next generation" features

While you might not think you want or need next generation features such as Voice Over IP (the ability to run voice calls over your computer network or internet to save costs), web interactions, and e-mail integration, the system you buy should allow you to implement these features very inexpensively some time in the future.

Look for a system that embeds the following:

- Voicemail
- Messaging
- Automatic call distribution
- Operator console
- Desktop Integration
- Call forwarding
- Call detail reporting
- Follow-me dialing
- Web based click-to-talk

These embedded features will eliminate the need to purchase these applications separately down the road.

If the system you are considering requires complex infrastructures, implementations, or pricing schemes to add these features on, look for another system.

Buyer Mistake #7: Not choosing the right vendor

A telephone system is the lifeblood of most businesses. A system failure that lasts only minutes can cost thousands of dollars in lost business. You must be sure that your vendor is capable of properly supporting your business.

Ask potential vendors:

- Do you offer a money back guarantee?
- How long have you been selling this system?
- What is your relationship with the manufacturer?
- Do you have references?
- Can I visit the site of an installation you've done?
- Do you have support available 24/7/365?
- Can I have access to cell phone numbers for your technicians?
- What do you charge for support?

A good vendor will guarantee your satisfaction and have a long, close history with the manufacturer they represent. They won't be afraid to allow you to talk to their existing clients, or take you on a site visit.

If the vendor doesn't have good answers to these questions, chances are they could leave you high and dry.

Here's What Others are Saying About Our Phone System Installations and Support:

"When we decided to upgrade our phone system, there were two things I needed to find: a very inexpensive solution and a vendor with an excellent track record.

I found both with Innovative. They gave us a new system with tons of features for less than some of the used systems we looked at. **Even though I have vendors calling here all day long trying to sell me similar solutions I stick with John because I can trust him to do a great job. I couldn't ask for a better service.**"

- Clarence White, IT Director of Western Territory, Salvation Army

"When you get right down to it, the main difference between one phone vendor and another is their speed and quality of service. Unfortunately, you don't always know how someone is going to perform in those two areas until its crunch time.

As the IT Manager of a call center, **I've worked with several other phone vendors in the past and can honestly say John is by far the most responsive and professional.** If we have a problem, we can get him on the phone right away and depend on him to get it resolved the next day or sooner. I have no hesitation in recommending him to anyone."

- Bradley Dean, IT Manager, JDR

"We prefer to work with vendors who specialize and have extensive expertise in one area; that's why we rely on Innovative to support our phone system.

I am completely satisfied with the service and support Innovative provides, and all of the employees are happy with the phone system. **They show up when they promise, and are very reliable, and above all, their products work.**"

- Bob Graham, Senior VP of IT Systems, Farmers and Merchant Bank

"John does a great job for us both with the phone system and with supporting our network. **Since installing the new phone system, we've lowered communications costs while improving the way calls are handled.** I only wish I could use him more often!"

- Nilton Porras, System Administrator, East Valley Medical

Some More Technical Information About AltiGen Phone Systems And The AltiServ VoIP Platform

AltiServ™ Phone Systems are next generation business phone systems that offer superior functionality and a low cost of ownership to businesses from 8 to 600 users. At the core of each of our phone systems is a highly scalable and complete IP-PBX offering cost effective Voice over IP enabled solutions for any sized business.

The AltiGen product family supports logical stepped increments of 25, 50, 100, 200, and 300 users per chassis including support for T1/E1/PRI high-capacity trunking. AltiServ has the ability to continue to expand by networking multiple sites or systems together (local and remote chassis networking) for implementation of up to 600 extensions. These exceptional scaling and networking capabilities are the hallmarks of the AltiGen Distributed Intelligence Network Architecture (DINA).

At the core of each AltiServ system is a complete IP-PBX business telephone system, including automated attendants, superior voice mail and comprehensive call detail reporting (CDR). AltiGen systems feature unified messaging and built in computer telephony integration with Microsoft Exchange™, Outlook™ and the new Microsoft CRM. AltiGen Systems Support single and multi site operator consoles and both IP and analog extensions.

For businesses with Contact Centers or Call Center needs, the AltiServ Contact Center (ACC) is a comprehensive call center module designed to enhance the capabilities of an AltiServ IP-PBX telephone system. For more advanced implementations the AltiContact Manager (ACM) is a turnkey multi-media contact center solution. ACM includes the complete call switching platform and basic IVR, an Advanced Call Router, all application and reporting software as well as the customized agent and supervisor interfaces to satisfy the needs of a call center.

AltiServ™ saves you money. To maximize the return on investment, the telephone solution you choose must have tools to increase productivity and control costs. With AltiServ, you can manage your own system and reduce the need for outside technicians. Communications with your remote offices and remote workers can be done with VoIP to eliminate toll costs.

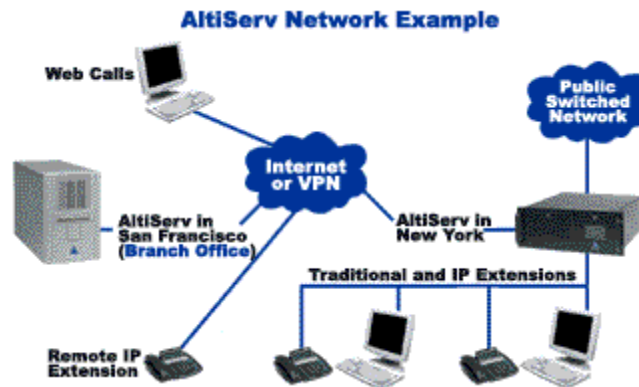
With flexible call routing and easy to use features increase your employee productivity. AltiGen gives you a powerful and affordable business tool to enhance the relationship with your customers and improve your company communications.

AltiServ IP-PBX and Call Center solutions are recognized for quality and innovation. With more than 17,000 installed, you are assured of proven reliability. AltiServ telephone solutions have over 35 industry awards including CT Labs' "Best of Breed". The AltiServ™ IP-PBX and call center solutions offer today's businesses superior IP-PBX technology.

Voice over IP (VoIP)

Every AltiServ system is designed from the Ground Up for the Internet Communications Era. Traditional ways of communicating have rapidly given way to a new world ushered in by the Internet. AltiServ with Voice over Internet Protocol (IP) is designed for the new Internet era where data and voice converge into a single streamlined network. AltiServ gives you a wealth of features and sets the stage for the ultimate

multimedia communications environment. With AltiServ you're ready to meet the Internet Communications Era head on.



VoIP Hop Off Call Support - allows an extension password protected access to T1 or CO trunks on a remote system and 'hop off', to access an outside telephone number.

Voice over IP Trunking Network Multiple Branch Offices with IP - AltiGen technology provides an integrated Voice over IP Gateway uniquely suited to businesses with multiple branch or remote offices. - The AltiServ IP PBX can be implemented for 8 to 320 users per system.

Multiple systems can be linked together cost effectively up to 600 extensions. These can be in a single site, a campus environment or multiple locations anywhere in the world using Voice over IP technology. AltiGen offers simplified networked system management capability with our Distributed Intelligence Network Architecture (DINA).

IP Extensions - One of the key features in of AltiGen IP-PBXs is the support of IP Extensions. This feature allows a standard H.323 based IP phone to be an extension of the AltiServ system, just like a traditional extension.

Since IP extensions do not require a dedicated cable to run from the phone to the phone system, they could exist anywhere on the company LAN or around the world via the Internet as long as the data connection is reliable and fast. The AltiGen IP extension enables three new remote employee environments, remote offices, telecommuters and remote call center agents.

Call Us Today at 909.287.7900 to learn more

Or Visit Us at www.PurelyInnovative.com