

# The Benefits of Hosted VoIP Phone Service for a Distributed Workforce

**Addressing the challenges of a decentralized  
telecommunications network**

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Distributed workforces have become the new norm for a growing number of businesses. As a result, corporate management must find ways to maintain efficiency while improving customer satisfaction and profitability. As the concept of a distributed workforce takes off, how are businesses making the most of their employee and client relationships while boosting their bottom line?



**By integrating multiple regional, branch, and home offices under a single corporate phone system, organizations can boost employee productivity and streamline communications.**

### **Identifying the high costs and diminished productivity of a decentralized telecommunications network.**

Many businesses today are using a mobile, distributed workforce to carry out day-to-day business operations, whether it's to conduct in-person sales calls, provide flexible work hours for telecommuters, employ home-based customer service agents, or maintain multiple sites and branch offices. Typically, these remote employees work from regional or home offices using independently managed telecommunications platforms.

While a distributed workforce enables greater employee flexibility and more responsive customer service, it can also create new financial and productivity inefficiencies. For example, many companies end up with a jumble of incompatible and redundant phone systems—overpowered, expensive PBXs at branch offices or satellite locations, combined with basic residential phone service for their remote workers or telecommuters.

In addition to the high cost of maintaining multiple business phone services, this approach can add new administrative burdens. For example, a back office may find itself picking through individual phone charges on monthly expense reports to correctly determine charges and reimbursements—a tedious and costly process that serves up different results every month.

By connecting remote employees under a single Internet-based communications solution, 8x8 Virtual Office hosted VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) phone service allows businesses to capitalize on the benefits of a distributed workforce without paying the excessive costs associated with traditional landline phone solutions.

**8x8 Virtual Office enables businesses with multiple locations to enjoy advanced telecom features and unlimited calling plans for a fraction of the cost of legacy phone services.**

### **8x8 Virtual Office Reduces Spending and Increases Efficiency**

Businesses with distributed workers can realize immediate savings on monthly phone service costs by connecting all users within the same telecommunications network, virtually eliminating long distance charges. While this is not possible with traditional wireline telephone networks, it is easily accomplished on 8x8's hosted IP telephony platform.

8x8 Virtual Office business phone service incorporates VoIP technology, enabling it to work over the Internet instead of traditional public telephone networks. By transporting all incoming and outgoing calls over a high speed Internet connection and harnessing the power of today's IP networks, 8x8 VoIP phone service is more cost effective and feature-rich than traditional phone service.

All that's needed to use the service—and all of its hosted PBX features—is an 8x8 IP phone and any public or private broadband Internet connection.

Under this single, Internet-based phone system, remote employees receive all of the same telecom benefits they would get as if they were right in the main office. This includes the ability to call co-workers at headquarters or other locations using extension dialing instead of placing long distance calls between different phone systems. Employees who make frequent external long distance calls can be put on unlimited calling plans at much lower and more predictable fixed rates compared to the more costly calling plans that traditional telecom carriers offer.

### **Fortune 500 Health Care Business Seeks a Cure**

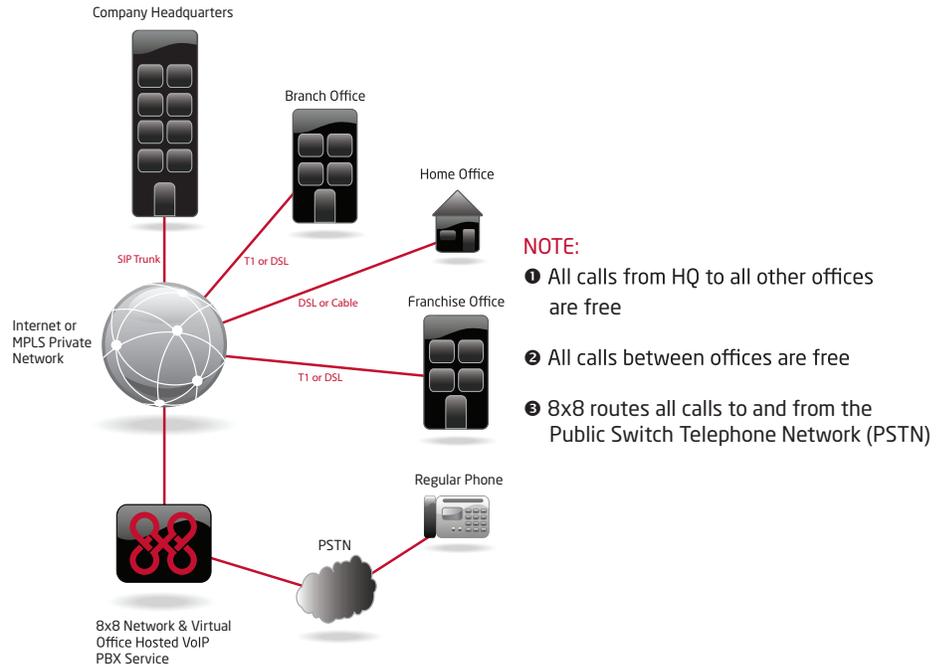
A Fortune 500 health care services company with a widely distributed sales force was looking for a way to consolidate and reduce telecom expenses. The company employs hundreds of regional sales reps to call on doctor's offices, pharmacies, and medical centers within their specific sales territories. The reps typically work out of their home offices using local phone service, and submitting monthly expense reports. The corporation was also looking for ways to help these remote sales reps work more efficiently with the corporate and branch offices.

#### **The Right Prescription**

After researching alternatives, this health care solutions supplier selected 8x8 Virtual Office Business Phone Service. Now, the reps can place unlimited calls—including conference calls—for a flat monthly fee. This gives the corporate office predictable telecom expenses on a consolidated monthly invoice, eliminating the need to reconcile and audit hundreds of individual telecom expense reports every month. In addition, the reps can dial other offices and other employees using extension dialing, and easily transfer calls. And, when a rep leaves, the company can easily reissue the phone number to another rep, so they never lose a lead or a sale.

#### **Clean Bill of Health**

The corporation was able to cut their telecom expenses by almost 50%, while dramatically increasing the efficiency of its sales force.



Typical Distributed Enterprise Deployment between Headquarters and Remote Offices

### 8x8 Virtual Office Benefits for the Distributed Workforce

There are a number of benefits companies can gain by using 8x8 Virtual Office. These include:

#### Equipment Savings

- A hosted solution means no expensive PBX hardware to lease or purchase and no hefty maintenance agreements to negotiate. This is particularly valuable for businesses with multiple sites
- Some vendors require phones to be purchased in minimum quantities, in sets of 10 for example. With 8x8 there is no need to overspend—order the exact number of IP phones needed.
- When employees move offices, they can take their phone with them. If they leave, the phone can easily be transferred and customized for the next employee.

#### Reduced Monthly Service Charges

- With a set monthly service charge from a single vendor which includes unlimited local and long distance calling, 8x8 Virtual Office simplifies budget and expense forecasting
- Extension dialing facilitates employee-to-employee and site-to-site communication without incurring long distance charges.
- Take advantage of volume discounts by consolidating all lines under one provider.

#### Improved Efficiency

- Add more lines to existing sites, or set up phone service at new sites quickly and easily as business requirements evolve.
- Deal with only one monthly bill, instead of rounding up and reimbursing remote worker expense reports.

- Employees can change their own phone settings either on the web or using a voice response system, freeing up corporate support resources.
- Invoices can be customized to include itemized calls.
- Remote sales and service agents can actively participate in ring groups so they can take their turn accepting sales and service calls just as if they were in the physical call center.

### Enterprise-Class Calling Features

- Mobile workers get the tools they need to close business faster whether they are on the road, offsite, or on vacation with call forwarding and one number access.
- Included features like voicemail to email, one number access, Outlook integration and online call management provide increased productivity at no additional costs.
- A built-in conference bridge at no additional charge delivers more value for less money while adding a valuable business tool.

### Conclusion

Whether at home, remote worksites, or WiFi hotspots around the world, 8x8 Virtual Office is allowing employers and employees to toss out old ideas about the way they work in favor of more streamlined business processes, increasingly flexible working environments and better bottom lines.



Sales  
P: 866.862.2811 (Toll-Free)  
F: 408.980.0432

NASDAQ: EGHT  
[www.8x8.com](http://www.8x8.com)