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A Virtual Phone System is More than Just Voicemail by [Alex Christopher](#)

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When many people think of a virtual phone system, their minds are automatically drawn to highly customizable voicemail options. The truth is that virtual phone systems are more than just voicemail; they can provide automatic phone attendants, virtual telephone numbers, call forwarding and voicemail-to-email features as well.

Auto-Attendants

When a small business has more than one department, as many do, it is very important for the business to provide their callers with an automated option for getting themselves to the correct department or person to handle their call. For instance, if a customer is calling to schedule an appointment they can press "1" while callers who want to speak to someone in billing may be asked to press "2." This process eliminates frustrating intra-office transfers that can become a headache for business employees, as well as for clients and customers. In the event that the party is not available to take a call, the caller should be able to leave a message or speak with an answering service.

Virtual Telephone Numbers

Many businesses use a landline telephone number, but without a virtual phone system, this number will reach no farther than within the walls of the brick-and-mortar business. The assignment of a virtual telephone number allows calls to that number to be routed into different business departments, as well as to employees' own personal telephone numbers, if necessary. Meanwhile, all their telephone numbers are kept completely private and hidden from the calling clients and customers. These virtual telephone numbers, with the addition of extensions, help organize calls and, therefore, better organize the business itself.

Call Forwarding

Call forwarding is another important option for any small business. In order to effectively maintain costs and reduce overhead spending, it may be necessary for certain employees to share duties within their departments. Call forwarding allows businesses to make changes to the auto-attendant feature in order to discern who gets specific calls when customers choose an option. Call forwarding is also useful in situations when an employee is working out of the home or from out of town; all of their calls that are placed into the virtual telephone system still reach them on their private telephone numbers.

Voicemail-to-Email

Checking voicemail is often a tedious part of managing a small business. It can sometimes be difficult and extremely time consuming to weed out important telephone calls that need to be returned immediately from those that may be able to wait a bit longer. Voicemail-to-email allows employees to check their voicemail via their email accounts by simply logging in and reading the name of the caller, the telephone number that they called from and the nature of the call. This is either done via voicemail-to-text technology or a live person who checks and monitors voicemails for email translation. These voicemails are prioritized in order from the most important to the least important.

It is quite evident that virtual telephone systems can provide small businesses with much more than just voicemail. For auto-attendants, call forwarding, telephone privacy and even voicemail-to-email,

any small business can certainly benefit from the use of a virtual telephone system.

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Alex Christopher is a marketing representative for a [iTeleCenter](#), a company that provides local, 1 800 and toll free phone numbers in conjunction with a [virtual phone system](#) to their clients. Services include call forwarding, voicemail and more.

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