

Business Phone System Buyer's Guide

A practical guide for Managing Directors and business owners looking to choose the right phone system for their organisation.

Why Your Phone System Still Matters

Your phone system is often the first point of contact between your business and a potential customer. Poor call quality, missed calls, or limited reporting can directly impact revenue, reputation, and staff productivity. Modern cloud-based phone systems are no longer just about making and receiving calls – they are business tools.

Key Questions to Ask Before You Buy

- How many users do you have today, and how many will you need in 12–24 months?
- Do your staff work remotely, in the office, or both?
- Do you need call reporting, call recording, or call analytics?
- How important is business continuity if your internet or power fails?
- Do you want your phone system to integrate with CRM or other software?

On-Premise vs Cloud Phone Systems

On-Premise Systems

Traditional systems installed on-site. These often require higher upfront costs, ongoing maintenance, and can be harder to scale.

Cloud Phone Systems

Hosted in the cloud and accessed via desk phones, mobiles, or computers. They are flexible, scalable, and typically billed per user per month.

Features That Actually Matter

- Call reporting and analytics – see answered vs missed calls.
- Auto-attendants and call routing.
- Mobile and desktop apps for remote working.
- Call recording for training and compliance.
- Disaster recovery and failover options.

Costs to Watch Out For

Not all pricing is transparent. Look out for:

- Long contracts with little flexibility
- Hardware that isn't future-proof
- Extra charges for basic features
- Support that is outsourced or limited

The PSTN Switch-Off (But Not the Only Issue)

While the PSTN switch-off has driven many businesses to review their phone systems, it's not the only reason to change. Scalability, reporting, customer experience, and remote working are now far bigger drivers for most SMEs.

Final Advice for Managing Directors

Don't buy based on price alone. Buy based on reliability, support, reporting, and how the system supports your commercial goals. A good phone system should make your business easier to run, not harder.