

A Wireless Landline Alternative

Replace traditional landline applications with this new wireless service.

The idea of eliminating landlines altogether in a residence is not a new idea. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. households with no land line service but at least one wireless telephone jumped to 35.8% in June, 2012. That number could climb to 50.8 million or 42.8% by 2016, says IDC. While wireless phones have been an incredibly valuable and increasingly employed tool for businesses, technology just hadn't progressed to the point where it can replace landlines. Until now. A new wireless landline alternative is providing the functionality necessary to utilize cellular connections for highly reliable backup and supplemental service in businesses and primary service in some smaller companies. There is even the ability to create hunt groups for multiple numbers. Limitations, such as weak signal strength in some places and potential quality of service issues, do exist and must be considered. However, a growing number of businesses can now take advantage of this low-cost, highly flexible service.

Wireless Landline Alternative

Industry trends have been pointing toward a transition to wireless voice communications for quite some time, but the functionality just hasn't been there to support the requirements of businesses. New capabilities, however, are creating

the opportunity for companies to integrate a wireless alternative to landlines for some or all of their communication needs. Medium to larger businesses can effectively utilize the new technology for backup systems with true route diversity and special needs, like remote, off-premise and temporary service. Small companies with only basic voice requirements can totally replace their landline voice connections with wireless service and get good results. The bottom-line benefits can be lower cost, greater reliability and true route diversity for backup and business continuation.

How it Works

The new wireless landline alternative utilizes a special device that connects to the Internet through a high-speed 4G LTE or 3G cellular connection. The desired landline phone number is converted to wireless. A regular landline telephone can then be connected to the router. Traditional hardwired desk sets or cordless phones can be used. Each phone number requires its own router. One of the key features that makes this new system viable for business applications is the ability to create hunt groups using multiple routers and lines. With proper setup, it functions similarly to a landline system when the dialed number is busy. It first sends calls to the primary number, and then to secondary and subsequent numbers based on programmed priorities. It all happens seamlessly and automatically.



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Application Scenarios

Following are potential business applications of the new wireless landline alternative:

DR & Business Continuity – any type of business can implement a highly reliable disaster recovery and business continuity system that provides true route diversity. When landline service is interrupted, strategically located routers with cellular lines can provide seamless service to critical business functions through automatic switchover in some cases. This ensures dependable backup to keep the business up and running through natural disasters, carrier issues, equipment and line issues and any interruption of incoming landline service.

Restaurant – a busy local restaurant replaces its five landlines with five routers, converting the numbers to wireless. They are specially installed so that calls to the restaurant's primary number first goes to that router. If that line is busy, it automatically forwards the call to the second, third, fourth and fifth routers/numbers in order of priority. The business could save as much as 50% or more on its phone bill.

Consulting Firm – the shared office of three consultants and an administrative assistant replaces its four voice landlines with routers and cellular lines, seamlessly porting their numbers. Cost savings are significant.

Manufacturing Company – even with a landline backup system, a mid-size manufacturer recognizes its vulnerability to service interruption and installs ten routers placed throughout its facility to ensure continuous communication with customers, the outside sales force and essential partners. This provides true route diversity, independent of landline connections, which can all be interrupted at once during a disaster, issue or accident.

General Contractor – to equip construction sites with economical voice communications, a general contractor maintains 8 – 12 routers that can be easily moved to any jobsite trailer at a moment's notice. Headquarters phone numbers are ported to the routers to make it easy for customers, vendors and employees to reach the locations.

Home Offices – several employees of a medium size company work from home offices as part of a virtual office environment. Each is equipped with routers, with company numbers that have been ported. It provides an economical option to landlines and creates the appearance that everyone works in the company facility.

Key Features

- Full Voice Functionality – no data
- Battery Backup – 3+ hours talk time, 43+ hours standby
- Caller ID



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- Call Forwarding
- 3-Way Calling
- Voicemail
- Integrated GPS for 911
- E911 Support – where local systems provide service
- Messaging SMS for Network Messaging
- TTY/TTD Compatible

Advantages

There are a number of advantages of the new wireless landline alternative. How they apply to any particular business depends on its size, communication needs, existing systems and other factors. A complete evaluation should be done to determine its appropriateness for each company. In general, the benefits include:

- **Low Cost** – the wireless line charge is about \$20 per month, per line; there is typically a one-time charge of about \$20 for each router.
- **Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity** – extremely reliable backup through the true route diversity of cellular connections.
- **Service Area** – anywhere in the U.S., including Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico & US Virgin Islands.
- **No Long Distance Charges** – within included service area.
- **Mobility** – the routers and phones can be used anywhere in the US where there is an adequate signal (4G LTE or 3G) and a power source. Good

for temporary facilities, field offices, hotels, home offices and other offsite locations.

- **Rapid Deployment** – routers can be delivered and running in just a few days, compared to weeks or even months for business landline connections. It's a good, quick startup option for new and temporary locations.
- **Number Consistency** – businesses can port their headquarters or recognized numbers to cellular lines and route those numbers to any location that has a good 4G LTE or 3G signal.
- **Battery Backup** – the routers have 3+ hours talk time, 43+ hours standby when power goes out, making it a reliable option for backup and emergency situations. The phones connected to the routers must have their own power source.
- **Scalable** – additional routers and phones can be easily, quickly and economically added or removed as business needs change.

Disadvantages

While the benefits make a strong case for the wireless landline alternative, there are some limitations that must be considered:

- **Signal Strength** – a strong 4G LTE or 3G cellular signal is required, which is not available everywhere yet. External antennas may help in weak signal areas. Locations should be evaluated before installing the system.
- **QoS** – because this is a voice over IP (VoIP) system, the quality of service can be



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compromised by cellular traffic spikes. It is not appropriate when guaranteed QoS is required.

- **Application Limitations** – while the wireless system is a good alternative for backup, supplementary service and special applications for medium and larger businesses, it is only appropriate to use as the primary phone system for small businesses, like retail, restaurants, offices, etc.
- **Special Functions** – this technology is not for use with security, fax, DVR, credit card machines and possibly a few other functions.
- **GPS & 911** – not all local 911 systems fully support GPS coordinates.

How to Implement

The new wireless landline alternative can be an excellent option for many businesses. It is virtually a turnkey system for small companies that fit the right profile. The first step is a careful evaluation of factors such as:

- Business Needs
- Current System

- Potential Installation Locations
- Available Cellular Service
- System Configuration
- Cost Analysis
- Other Considerations

If company staff does not have the necessary telecom and IT expertise, it is a good idea to consult with professionals.

Summary

For the first time, replacing landlines with wireless connections within many businesses is a real and viable possibility. Whether it is to provide route-diverse backup, connect offsite locations or totally replace landline service in small businesses, it is an option that should be considered. The cost savings, reliability, rapid startup, seamless installation and reliability can be impressive. It's not for every business, but for some, it's time to cut the cord.

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