



# Business Communications - Rethink Your Approach





## Take the Next Step in Communications and Grow Your Business

Despite changes taking place across the business world—such as the rapid adoption of technology in nearly every sector and business size—one constant remains: the telephone is still an important means of communication and collaboration for every organisation.

But business phone systems have extended well beyond the receiver sitting on your desk. Modern business communications encompass messaging, video conferencing and collaboration capabilities on a variety of devices. Voice continues to be a critical way for businesses to connect employees and customers, but savvy businesses know that they need much more in order to succeed.

### Cutting the Cord on Legacy Phones

How can small and medium businesses get all of these new features—in addition to voice—in a way that makes sense for them? With cloud communications, the latest business phone technology is available to every organisation,

regardless of IT resources or budget size. Instead of ungainly telephone equipment hosted at your business location or paying for a limited set of features from a landline provider, cloud communications delivers all of the latest communications advancements over the Internet as an affordable, simple-to-manage service.

Cloud-based phone features can be accessed from smartphones, tablets, laptops and desktop computers, allowing employees to work efficiently at home or on the road. Of course, desk and conference phones remain an important part of the equation, and cloud communications integrates all of your communications technology into one easy-to-use solution.

### When Connections Matter Most

Beyond simply making and receiving phone calls, cloud communications provides advanced features like auto attendant, extension dialing, call recording, conference bridges, messaging and video conferencing to even the smallest businesses.

In order to stay competitive in today's hyper-connected world, small and medium businesses need every communication channel open to them. While it's true that voice communications have been the mainstay of business for decades, customers now expect to connect with businesses any hour of the day, seven days a week. Customers also want to communicate with businesses on their platform of choice, which could be a chat service, video call or conversation over the phone. All of this means your business must be able to respond to customers around the clock on a number of platforms.

Changing your communications system can be daunting, but rather than thinking about new communication and collaboration features as adding complexity and costs, consider how these can help your business grow. Increasing your availability and presenting a more professional front translates into happier customers and more sales. Additionally, adopting new cloud communications technology helps your employees be more productive and achieve higher employee retention. How much is boosting workforce efficiency, acquiring a new customer or closing a sale worth to you?

## The Surprising Truth About Customer Experience

As social media and online review websites have become more popular, customers are increasingly looking for a great overall experience from the companies they do business with. It's no longer enough to offer a competitive price or standout product. In order to truly excel, businesses must provide an exceptional customer experience from the moment a customer contacts them right up until the transaction is complete. Of course, the most successful businesses know how to stay engaged with customers long after the initial sale is over.

Let's take, as an example, a restaurant where the average bill per customer is £50. A potential customer looking to make a reservation comes

up with a short list of exciting new restaurants they're interested in after searching online or using a mobile app. If they can't get through to make a reservation on the first attempt, they will likely try the next establishment on the list.

By making itself available using an auto attendant or call queuing feature, the restaurant stands to make an additional £50 or more each time a customer gets through and makes a reservation. Delivering a fantastic customer experience clearly pays off!

Other types of businesses can benefit as well. A home improvement contractor who spends most of the day on job sites can use an auto attendant to route calls, even if the office has a receptionist. Now when calls come in after hours or during the receptionist's lunch break, they are routed to a person instead of sitting in a general voicemail box waiting for a response.

With cloud communications, missed calls are a problem of the past. Simultaneous ringing ensures that your laptop or mobile phone alert you that a call is coming in when you are away from your desk. You can answer on either device and have a crystal-clear conversation, just as if you were speaking over a landline. Conducting business is no longer restricted to the confines of your desk.

Cloud communications also offers analytics, which businesses can use to track important metrics, such as peak call times. Empowered with this data, small and medium businesses are equipped to meet increased call volume by scheduling more staff. What's more, the less time customers spend on hold, the higher their satisfaction rates.

Additionally, intelligent routing allows customers to choose which department or individual they would like to speak with, thus reducing the number of steps it takes to connect with the appropriate person who can resolve an issue or finalise a purchase.

## Taking Your Business Anywhere

On the surface, these state-of-the-art phone system features might seem like more than your business needs, but in reality these are critical tools you can use to improve your operations and grow your business. From a practical standpoint, cloud communications ensures your business can keep running and you can keep working, even if bad weather strikes or a sick child forces you to stay at home.

Softphone functionality (making and receiving calls over the Internet) and mobile apps let you stay connected to colleagues and customers no matter where you are. You can make and take calls using your laptop, just as if you were in the office. Or you can use a mobile app to turn your smartphone into an extension of your desk phone and handle calls without revealing your personal phone number.

What's the value in making your business available to customers anywhere, anytime? Customers have fundamentally changed the way they communicate and, to stay competitive, you need to change the way your business communicates.

## Collaboration for the Modern Workforce

It's not only your customers who are delighted when your business taps into the latest and greatest communications technology. The proliferation of mobile phones, messaging apps and collaboration platforms means that your employees expect access to this technology while they are working as well. Businesses that adopt new communication and collaboration solutions experience a rise in productivity and better business outcomes. That's because employees have the tools in place to do their best work.

For instance, dialing directly from a computer with just a mouse click saves time and ensures accuracy, especially during outbound campaigns. Immediately seeing which team members are online and available to answer a question makes everyone more efficient. Chat capability that's integrated into your online company directory lets employees communicate via instant messaging so that decisions are faster and customer service improves. Video and audio conferencing enable you to meet with remote colleagues and customers worldwide while dramatically reducing your travel expenses.

By moving to cloud communications, your business will have all of these collaborative features—and more.

## Discover the 8x8 Advantage

When you are reevaluating your approach to communications, it's imperative that you pick a trusted provider who delivers powerful solutions at business-friendly prices. 8x8 cloud communications solutions can help your business gain more customers, make more sales and increase employee productivity. Your employees will have the flexibility to work wherever they want, using whatever device is most convenient.

With 8x8, businesses can get phone service features like unlimited local and long distance calling; an auto attendant that lets callers dial by name, extension or company directory; ring groups; conference bridges; music or message on hold; and extension dialing. You can also keep your existing business, toll-free and fax numbers, and enjoy low international calling rates.

Beyond voice, 8x8 lets employees, customers and collaborators easily connect over other mediums, including texting, instant messaging and video conferencing. Cross-platform messaging, instant screen sharing and high-definition video calls are just some of the ways that businesses get more when they choose 8x8.



In addition, 8x8 offers a mobile app that allows users to make and take office calls using their smartphones, stay in touch with colleagues and customers using instant messaging and participate in virtual meetings. This is just another example of how cloud communications from 8x8 can help your employees work more efficiently, attract new customers and grow your business.

Along with these standard business features, 8x8 also features customer relationship management system integration so employees can see relevant customer information right away and get to resolutions faster. What's more, 8x8 analytics provide small and medium businesses with insights into their organisation, allowing them to evaluate every customer and employee interaction to ensure optimal customer service.

With any cloud solution, it's important to understand the architecture behind the service. 8x8 cloud communications solutions are designed with built-in redundancy and no single

point of failure. Our secure, top-tier data centres are located in geographically dispersed sites across the globe. We designed our service this way because we take your business as seriously as you do.

And because we know how agile your business is, 8x8 service plans are designed with flexibility in mind. Mix-and-match pricing allows you to choose the plans you need for each employee, rather than purchasing a one-size-fits-all plan with features not everyone in your organisation needs.

## The Next Phase of Your Business

Rethinking your business communications strategy doesn't mean fundamentally changing how you do business. But when new communication and collaboration features help you land a new account or service a customer from a remote location in a way you couldn't before, you may find your business changing—for the better.

### Ready for the next step?

To learn even more about how 8x8 can elevate your business communications, contact an 8x8 Solutions Expert at **0333 043 8888** or visit **[8x8.com/uk](https://8x8.com/uk)**.

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8x8, Inc. (NYSE:EGHT) is a leading provider of cloud phone, meeting, collaboration and contact centre solutions with over a million business users worldwide. 8x8 helps enterprises engage at the speed of employee and customer expectations by putting the collective intelligence of the organisation in the hands of every employee. For additional information, visit [8x8.com/uk](https://8x8.com/uk), or follow 8x8 on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

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