

## VoIP and Long Distance - Your Savings Choice

VoIP is highly praised for its wonderful savings when it comes to long distance phone calls. VoIP is the acronym for Voice Over Internet Protocol. This refers to the transmission of audio, over the Internet, to an awaiting PC user or other VoIP user. Calls may even be routed from a computer to a standard landline phone.

VoIP is changing the way the world looks at telephone services. Because VoIP is neither PSTN (the public switched telephone network) nor Circuit Switching Networks, it is a new technology complete to itself. VoIP is referred to as Packet Switching, because the audio is transferred as a packet then sent over the Internet.

When VoIP began to surface on the Internet there were many programs that you could download to your computer, absolutely free, and then place long distance calls. Some of the more familiar programs include Dialpad and Skype.

Today, there aren't many VoIP providers that offer their services for free. However, you can experience free VoIP (including free long distance calling) with simply a computer microphone and speakers. Programs such as Ad Calls, Skype, Yahoo Messenger, AOL Instant Messenger, ICQ, and MSN all offer free forms of VoIP and long distance calling. The trick with all of the above programs (except for Ad Calls) is that the other user will need to have the same program running on their computer, and at the same time for you to make a VoIP connection.

However, you will be able to communicate in real time and see what all the fuss is about VoIP. Chances are that once you make that first free long distance call, you will want to learn more about the services and products offered by VoIP service providers. By using an Internet Messaging program with VoIP, you will discover the full potential that VoIP has to offer.

Many residential owners prefer VoIP long distance plans due to the fact that it is considerably more inexpensive than standard phone services. By comparing the different VoIP provider plans, you are certain to find a plan that is right for you. Not only does VoIP offer tremendous savings on long distance there are many other great benefits to switching to VoIP. For instance many of the features that are included with VoIP for free, are available for fee with other landline telephone services. These include Voice Mail, Call Waiting, Call Forwarding, Caller ID, Call Transfer, and Do Not Disturb. Also, since VoIP is carried over the Internet you will discover that all of these calling features are fully integratable with the Internet. This means that not only can you access your Voice Mail through your E-Mail, but you will also be able to handle your Voice Mail, and change settings for your applications through the Internet.

Business owners are also pleased with VoIP and their amazing calling plans and inexpensive and unlimited long distance features. Many employers reimburse employee's phone usage and if a mobile employee is using a cell phone, between roaming charges and long distance calls this can become quite an expensive burden for a small business to bear. VoIP can offer unlimited calling features, unlimited local and long distance calling all for a small monthly fee.

Other businesses are taking advantage of VoIP for their needs such as mobile employees, sales men, and call centers. Many employers are outsourcing their work to countries where they can inexpensively hire laborers. For them, VoIP is a must have. They are able to establish call centers virtually worldwide, and they don't have to concern themselves with incredibly high overseas rates. Employers are pleased with the flexibility and ultimately increase in productivity offered to them through VoIP services.

VoIP also allows users to select their own area codes. Many of these area codes can be selected anywhere in the United States or in other countries. You will need to check with various service providers to determine which area codes they can offer you. This is an incredible tool that can increase productivity and sales not only in the business-to-business arena, but can also save money for home users and their family and friends. The benefits to VoIP are vast and the more people are exposed to VoIP and its savings, the more people who decide to make the switch to VoIP.

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