

## USB Phone - Features and Advantages

The USB phone is a computer telephone designed to send and receive calls through the Internet. The USB phone can place and receive calls to the regular phone numbers. It can be wall mounted or placed at your desk. The USB phone connects directly to the USB port of your computer or laptop and allows you PC-to-PC phone calls through the internet, PC to regular phone calls, Static gateway calls and webcall calls. It requires a very small amount of power to run, usually only "sipping" a small amount from your USB.

A softphone on the other hand is software that works like a regular telephone and is operated through a personal computer and not through a dedicated line. Usually, a headset is used that is connected to the PC's sound card or the USB phone. Softphones are part of the VoIP environments. It could be a standard SIP/H323 or proprietary. The usual softphones include the - OpenWengo, Nexge, Express Talk, sipXphone, eyeBeam from CounterPath (formerly Xten), Siphone and Adore Softphone. These phones are compatible with the Internet Telephony Service Providers or the ITSP.

As already mentioned, softphones can work on different environments. Some softphones use the Local Area Network (LAN) to dial through the hardware phone via the VoIP, while others use USB phones done through a call center environment to enable calls and to receive calls.

### Features of USB Phones

There are a number of USB phone manufacturers and some features enumerated may not apply and some features may be applied in combination.

? Many USB phones are designed and can give free and unlimited international long distance calls to a land phone.

? Echo Free - Long distance echo, noises and interference with multimedia settings and hisses are eliminated in most USB phones. The clarity of reception is comparable to land based toll phones.

? Keypad - uses the keypad to dial numbers and accesses voice mails by DTMF.

? Incoming Calls - the phone rings to alert the user for incoming calls using the keypad button to take the call.

? Installation - Installing a USB phone is simple. An installation CD for drivers comes with the hardware together with detailed instructions. Some USB phones will require you to use the computer soundcard occupying the sound channel while others may not.

? Some USB phones may be in the form of a headset, while others may be patterned after a real phone that usually comes with cord.

? Products are already optimized for service providers like Skype, Dialpad etc.

? Utilizes the VoIP (Voice Internet Protocol) transmitting encoded voice through the Internet infrastructure by a standard TCP/IP network.

? Many USB phones has built-in soundcards and can be used at work, at home, on your laptop, on you PC and can be used to call around the world for free.

? Newer models of USB phones do not need a mouse to dial. Instead it uses the key pad that is featured with a cursor allowing you to navigate through the address book, redials, access menu functions, on and off button, pops up IP telephony application, number dialing and send button.

? Usual System requirements: 16 MB RAM, USB port, 2MB of HDD space.

? USB headsets can come with features for multi-media application like speech recognition, MP3, CD's and games.

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### About the Author

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