

Cloud UC Migration Check List for Healthcare



Introduction

Migrating on-premises to cloud telephony is a smart decision for a lot of businesses. It brings down management overhead, increases agility and moves expenses from capital expenses to operational expenses. However, for healthcare organizations, careful consideration must be done before migrating to cloud telephony due to the nature of the business. In this document we will go over some important check list that will help you make the right decision.

Telephony System during WAN Outage

One of the critical things for hospitals to consider is the importance of telephony system during an internet outage. During an internet, WAN or telephony service provider outage, the phone systems will not function. You will not be able to even call extension to extension during such outage, unless your system comes with survivability feature (not common for cloud telephony). For large hospitals and healthcare facilities, this can impact patient safety. For smaller facilities and medical offices type set up this may have less impact.

Clinical Communication

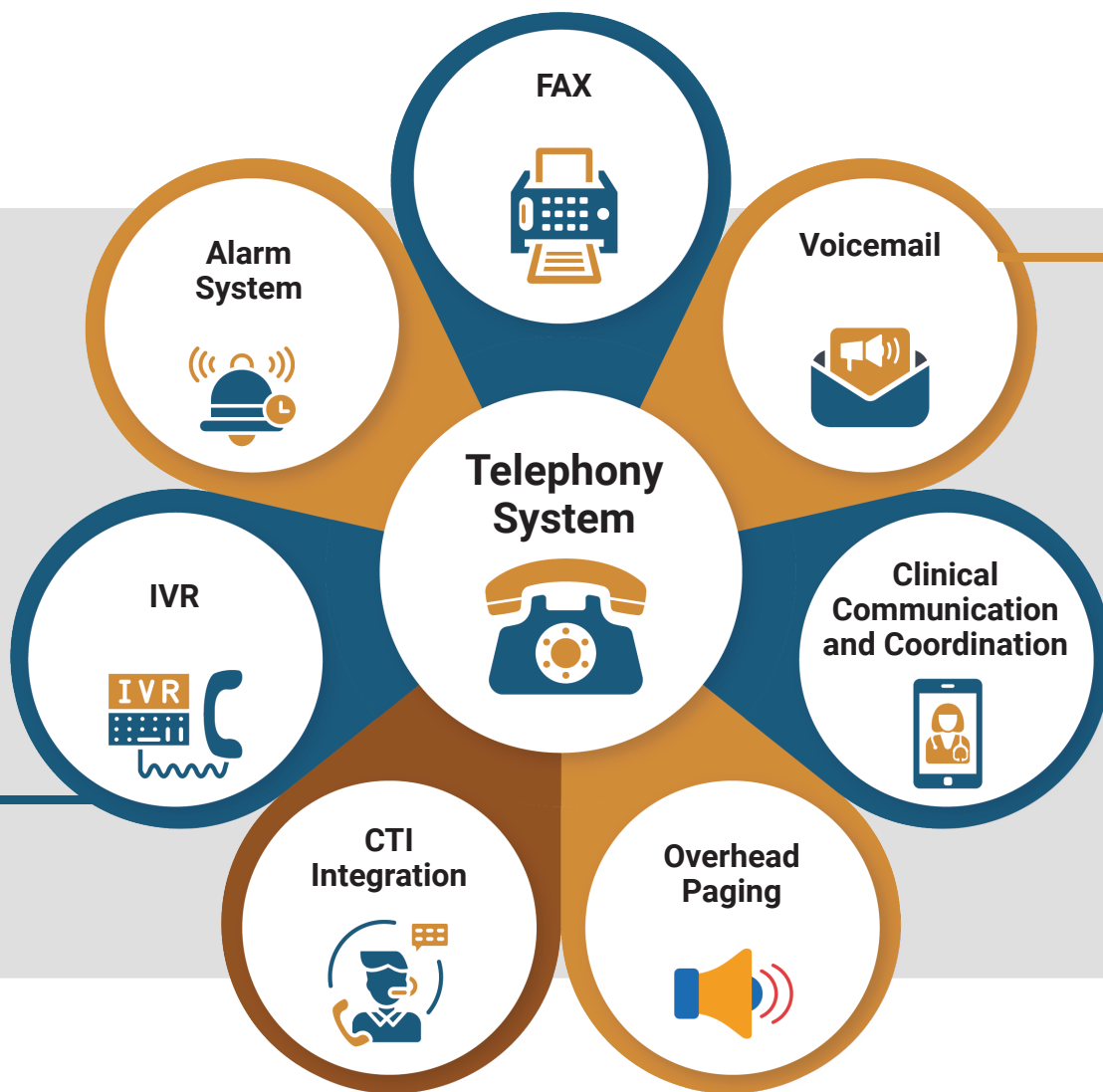
Healthcare facilities that use clinical communication tools such as Vocera Badge, Voalte or other such providers must ensure that these integrations continue to work when migrating to cloud telephony. Integration with these systems must be tested and validated before making a decision.

Paging System

Most hospitals use paging system. Ensure the new system works with your existing paging adaptors or new adaptors are compatible with the existing paging system.

Bed Side Phones

Hospitals with in-patient care will have bed side phones. These phones are usually analog phones. Cloud provider may give you individual Analog Telephony Adaptors. However, if you have higher number of beds, you may want a compatible high density Analog Gateway.



FAX Machines

A lot of hospitals still use traditional FAX machines. When migrating to cloud telephony, make sure you are getting adaptors that will help you continue using traditional FAX machines

Fire Alarm System

Depending on your local code, you may be required to have phone lines dedicated for your fire alarm system. Make sure your current fire alarm panel requirements can be matched with the cloud provider you decide to go with.

Security Alarm System

New burglar alarm systems use LTE connections. However, we have run into old burglar alarm systems that use traditional phone systems. We once ran into an old system that was using pulse dialing.

Interactive Voice Response

Make sure the current IVR is mapped out properly and tested. If there any specific feature such as Call Back are supported by the new cloud vendor.

Voicemail and Privacy

Often patient data may reside in voicemails. When voicemails can be forwarded or accessed by other users you may be liable for HIPAA violation.

Music on Hold

If your system currently is using any Music on Hold services, make sure it can be integrated with the new system.

RED Phones

If your facility is required to have 911 phones, make sure you have a plan for those phones. RED phones are usually direct 911 lines.

Soft Client

A soft-client is part of the telephony solution for all cloud providers. If you are already using an existing soft-client such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Cisco Webex client, make sure you have a plan in place to continue using the same tool or a different tool. One important to note is that clients such as Microsoft Teams can provide you calling capability between extensions, but may or may not have PSTN capability. This depends on your Microsoft365 licensing.

Caller-ID

Most healthcare providers want to hide the true caller-id when physicians call out. Instead, they would like to use a generic number. Make sure this is accounted for during the migration process.

Number Porting

Large companies usually buy DIDs in bulk. Even though they may only be using a fraction of these numbers, they buy an entire range with future expansion in

mind. When you migrate your numbers to a cloud provider, they usually charge you a minimum fee per month for each number they maintain. When you have thousands of numbers, these can add up a big amount every month.

PoE Switch Capability

Ensure that the new phones and their power requirement meets the PoE budget of your existing switch. If you are currently not using a PoE switch this can be a significant additional line item in your budget.

Head Set Compatibility

When you migrate to a cloud-based phone system, you most likely be installing new phones. Make sure your new phones are compatible with the existing headsets. Otherwise, you will need account for new headsets in your budget.

CTI Integration

CTI integration allows users to place and receive calls from a soft-client on your computer, but the media is actually coming directly from the phone. With improved codec and better computing system, the usage of CTI integration has come down significantly.

Call-Center Integration

The nature of your call center and how it is integrated with your telephony can be a big decision maker when migrating to cloud. Some large businesses have large call centers which is an entirely different unit by itself. Call center users may or may not integrate with rest of the corporate telephony. In some cases they use two different clients, one for call center and one for corporate telephony. In some cases, both corporate telephony and call center uses the same telephony client and end device. When migrating to cloud you need to decide whether the call center is also going to migrate to cloud. If not, how will call center users communicate with rest of the company. They are so many uses cases for this situation depending on the kind of business and the inter-company interaction that happens.



Summary

Migrating to cloud-telephony can be a very good option for many businesses. However, a careful evaluation of the existing system must be done before making a decision. Business and technical use cases, financial impact and end user retraining must be taken into consideration.

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