Consider these five factors when migrating from Centrex to cloud communications.

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Upgrading from Centrex to advanced, cloud-based unified communications (UC) solutions can increase your company's productivity in so many ways. Imagine what your enterprise can accomplish with features like multiple device support, desktop clients and application integration, easy collaboration and sharing, support for mobile and remote workers, and so much more!

The sooner you can migrate from your existing legacy phone service, the more quickly you can realize your new benefits. But before migration can take place, considerable planning is necessary. The extent of your upgrade and associated advance in technology can all affect the time to implement your new solution.

Here are five of the most critical factors your IT staff and service provider should consider when migrating to your new cloud solution:

1. Managing user requirements

A successful Centrex migration should result in meeting all of your end-user requirements. To do so, migration projects need to carefully balance supporting existing capabilities with implementing your new, exciting capabilities.

Ways to approach these requirements include: feature mapping, job functions, communications needs, or device types to be used by each user type (phones,

mobile apps and desktop clients) – including the similarities, differences and new features between new and previous systems.

2. User adoption and training

A major challenge for any application upgrade is end-user adoption. Driving use of new and enhanced voice applications is especially challenging. Users often skip training and/or forget how to use new features when needed.

It's essential to ensure you have: a thorough implementation plan established before the migration begins, a communications plan (before, during and after the migration), training events, online and video-based training, online help and job aids, and the use of "super users" as influencers in your company.

3. System administration and provisioning

Your migration plan may require special considerations like Wide Area Network (WAN) bandwidth availability, or custom provisioning for separate voice and data services. With UC, system flexibility extends to the private WAN infrastructure and system administration.

You also have the option of managing the entire agency system in-house, or creating super admins and group admins to manage their particular teams/groups. You can easily determine management configurations and feature rules for moves, adds and changes.

4. Security for networks and mobile devices

Centrex operates in a virtual "walled garden," highly resistant to hacks and spoofing. As a result, your legacy phone service doesn't easily integrate with other applications and devices. Verizon provides you with solutions that have the proper security measures in place.

Security measures must be implemented without sacrificing the system's flexibility and adaptability, or network and mobile device security. IT staff can unintentionally put your systems at risk, whether due to lack of training or skill level. So, be sure to include a review of operating procedures in your migration plan. A trusted service provider partner should have the people and process templates to help you through these considerations.

5. Local Area Network (LAN) equipment and engineering

Migrating from Centrex to UC enables businesses to consolidate local networks into a single, physical netowrk to carry both voice and data traffic. An aspect often overlooked, however, is the special demands of voice traffic on a LAN specifically designed for data traffic.

It's important for your IT team and serivce provider to consider these new demands of a single LAN when developing your migration plan. This includes not only the right amount of bandwidth, but also capacity considerations, resiliency and redundancy, and deploying the right equipment prior to the commencement of user migration.

The Verizon Team has the expertise to work closely with your IT staff to provide a smooth migration planning process and implementation.

With Verizon's Virtual Communications Express, you can continue to utilize the features associated with Centrex yet benefit from additonal features and applications to meet the needs of a 21st century workforce. Find out more about Virtual Communications Express:

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