

## 21 EASY WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR OFFICE TELEPHONE BILL

**Note – if you need help and advice, contact us for a free review – we will do the hard work for you and we guarantee we will save you money without reducing quality.**



NB – Note you will need to have a recent phone bill, including itemisation handy!!

1. Have a close look at your phone bill. If you are a small UK Business spending less than £ 500 per month, your should definitely be paying no more than the following:

UK calls (local and national) – 1 pence per minute

Calls to UK Mobile phones (excluding the 3 network) – 9 pence per minute

Calls to Western Europe (most countries) – 3-4 pence per minute

Calls to the US – 3 pence per minute

If you are spending more than £ 500 per month it should be easy to get even better rates!

2. If your bill does not tell you the call duration or it is not broken down into destinations, there will probably be a reason. The reason is that your provider may have done this intentionally in order to make it difficult for accurate comparisons to be made!! We suggest your ask for more billing information.

3. Ask your provider to send you written confirmation of the following:

Your full tariff

Any minimum call charges or set up fees per call?

Any discounts applied?

Whether they calculate bills to the nearest second

Whether they round up to the nearest penny

Whether they charge by the minute or by the 'unit' – if it is 'unit' buyer beware!!

Any call capping they apply

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Any minimum contract you are obligated to (avoid long contracts)?  
What level of cover you have on each line?



Only when armed with this information can you make a true comparison. Check what they are telling you with your actual bill!

4. Beware of bundles! Whilst there are possibly good deals to be had, we have found in the past that anyone with more than one service bundled with another only means that it is difficult to work out true costs.
5. Look at the destinations you are calling. There is no point paying for great rates to France if you are a French company without having negotiated good rates to other possible destinations. This is sometimes where carriers can regain profits whilst 'loss leading' with main rates.
6. Have a close look at all the lines (and services) you are paying for. Have you correctly identified them all (would you know where to start without a telecommunications expert) and are they necessary? Can your connections be optimised by a review or by using different technology?
7. What service levels are you paying for? Any critical lines should have 'Level 3' or 'Level 4' cover with the line provider – otherwise, when there is a fault you could be waiting hours or days for resolution.
8. Internet connections – when was the last time you re-negotiated your contract. If your connection is 3 years old, have you checked you cannot improve speeds and/or reduce costs?
9. How do you know who within your business is costing what? Can you get 'extension billing' from your provider so you can see which person within your business is costing you the most money?
10. Do you have home or remote workers? Are they included on your bill in order to benefit from your company tariff? If they use the phone a lot, have you considered giving them extensions off of your office phone system so that calls between the two parties are free?
11. Do you have more than one office – as above, have you considered linking them for free calls – if there are a lot of calls between offices, this could be a major area of savings?
12. Typically, 50-80% of your calls will be to UK mobiles. Have you looked at ways in which you can reduce these costs using Mobile gateways?

13. Mobiles? When was the last time you reviewed your mobile package and your landline package together? If you do them separately, you are not looking at the whole picture!!
14. Which carrier do you use? Are you still with BT for lines and use another carrier for calls? The UK telecommunications market place is very complex and it helps if you have a reasonable understanding of how it all fits together so you can make an informed decision.
15. Have you moved away from BT? If so when and how do you know you are still getting a good deal? Is it CPS/WLR or LCR and do you realise that with CPS your calls can be moved without your authorisation?
16. Are you on 'Cable' (ie Virgin Media, NTL, Telewest etc)? How do they compare now if you have been with them a while and do they deliver?
17. Are you tempted by VoIP because it is cheaper? Do you know what it is, really, and more importantly how it could help your business? Beware here as you really need to take good advice. The claims that you can save 30% on line rental (eg by using SIP) should be heavily scrutinised if you are to maintain quality!!
18. Are your lines and calls with a hosted service provider? How is this going and are you really saving money and enjoying the functionality that you could have had with a more traditional service?
19. Does your provider/agent/dealer regularly review all of this for you? Have they ever been to your premises? Have you ever met them? Most providers will wait until you are threatening to leave until they offer you better rates!
20. Lastly, don't get swayed by ridiculous claims like 'We can save you 40% on your bills'. Such a claim cannot be made by anyone until a thorough review has taken place in the detail mentioned above. And beware if someone says they are 'working in conjunction with BT'!! They are more than likely not!



As you can see from this document, we at First Office Systems clearly understand the complexities of the telecommunications market place in the UK and regularly do reviews for our customers, whether we supply and maintain their telephone system or otherwise.

Naturally, we would be very willing to offer you a free review. Please call us on our special e-shot number, 01892 676703 or e-mail our special e-shot address at [advice@firstoffice.co.uk](mailto:advice@firstoffice.co.uk).

19/9/2011