

## Six Benefits that PRI Brings for Business Communications

*Many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are unable to fully leverage VoIP telephony because of the limitations of their Internet connectivity. Thankfully, there are technologies that can be infused into their existing infrastructure without inflating the budget. PRI lines help to create a multifaceted digital phone system in which the call quality is not sensitive to data bandwidth on the regular Internet connection.*

As per a Google study<sup>1</sup>, the most common reason for which people use a business phone service is to get their queries answered by a real human. Instead of going through the maze of IVR to derive information, they prefer to speak to someone and get direct answers to their questions. Don't blame them. No one wants to have a conversation with a machine.

To maintain high standards of their service and improve customer experience, businesses must understand the nature of phone calls and accordingly choose a phone system for their organisation. The most relevant options today include Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), Session Internet Protocol (SIP) Trunking and Primary Rate Interface (PRI).

For organisations that cannot yet invest in voice communication infrastructure based on IP data connectivity, PRI lines make for a reliable and sensible choice for a phone system.

### Understanding PRI technology

As a telecommunications standard, PRI has been facilitating business voice communication services for more than four decades. It enables the transmission of voice and data packets in forms of electrical pulses through copper cabling infrastructure and networks. The circuit incorporates two pairs of copper lines that terminate on a modem from the vendor's site to the business (subscriber)'s website.

Usually, there are 30 channels on a single link. The number of channels can also be scaled up in multiples of 30 (with each new link) as per the growing business needs.

Here are six benefits that make PRI lines better than conventional PSTN lines for business communications:

#### 1- Clear digital voice

The digital voice quality for calls over PRI channels is much superior to the call quality afforded by a Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) line. Calls are established easily. This is because, with PSTN lines, the digital signals are converted to analogue signals at more than two points. Such conversion can create disturbances that spoil the call quality.

On the other hand, the end-to-end digital PRI connection enables voice clarity, and all callers can communicate effectively on a single line.

#### 2- Pooled billing and cost saving

A business that must have the infrastructure for at least 30 callers will have to pay multiple bills if it uses 30 PSTN lines for this setup. With PRI, however, there is only one bill to be paid for a single line that brings 30 call channels. The cost of terminating 30 analogue PSTN lines is also more than that of terminating a single PRI line.

Another cost-related disadvantage with PSTN is that some analogue trunks unintentionally get used more often due to uneven call distribution, and some lines might lie unused even below their 'free-calls' limit. PRI eliminates this problem as all thirty channels billed together are under the same calling plan.

### **3- Direct inward calling**

Direct inward dialling (DID), or direct inward calling as we like to call it, is a built-in feature available with PRI lines. It is not possible with a PSTN and has to be added through an EPABX box, which drives up the costs.

So how does DID help?

A business can publish different telephone extension numbers for its employees/departments to help customers and other external parties get in touch with them directly. Tata Tele Business Services (TTBS) provides 100 unique numbers for DID with PRI.

When all agents/departments have their separate numbers, the people they call will receive that distinct number on their caller ID. If a customer or stakeholder misses such a business call, they can later connect to the same department or agent directly. Contact centres of businesses can leverage the DID feature of PRI lines to differentiate their services.

### **4- Automatic call distribution (ACD)**

The multiple numbers on 30 lines can also become the hunting lines in an organisation. They enable automatic call distribution wherein if one line is busy, the incoming call can automatically land on the next free channel, and the customer will not hear a busy tone. ACD facility is provided by default on PRI lines.

As against this, on analogue PSTN lines, when one number is busy, the caller (customer) has to wait or disconnect and then manually call a different number. ACD feature needs to be separately provided if a business needs it, and that again is billed for separately.

### **5- Multiple communication features**

Since they are digital phone lines, PRI links ensure high quality for voice communication. In addition to this, they can also be used for data transfer, video conferences and fax transmissions. Furthermore, all these functionalities can be used simultaneously – on different channels – without any adverse effect on quality.

Netcore Solutions, a leading marketing automation and digital marketing services company, was facing connectivity and communication issues with frequent downtime. It was challenging to manage an array of online activities on the server, but this was necessary for the core operations.

PRI Lines deployed by TTBS helped the organisation to address the challenge. With high-quality voice calls, data transfer and video conferencing functioning on these links, Netcore Solutions not only reduced the bandwidth load on its internal server but also recorded higher productivity leading to better revenues.

### **6- Security**

Thanks to their digital framework, PRI lines are more reliable than PSTN lines. It is not easy to tap into a digital PRI link and listen to an ongoing conversation. Besides, troubleshooting is simpler with PRI lines. They are usually on a fibre core ring that gives them some redundancy for a failover.

A small or medium enterprise that has limited access to a fibre-optic Internet or high-speed data connectivity can deploy a reliable and high-quality digital telecommunication system with PRI lines.

The PRI solution by TTBS has 30 channels delivering voice, data, image and video services on a single link. Each channel can be configured as incoming, outgoing or two-way.

To know more about this business offer, call us at 1800-266-1800.

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