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Copier Plus VoIP Can Equal Business Growth



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Many businesses in the channel are considering strategic partnerships, and the addition of VoIP capabilities to a copier business can result in a win-win.

From the perspective of a copier business, partnering can alleviate the burden of growing demands from its customers. The copier industry is tightly aligned with today's business networks — along with a copier is the expectation that it will also be used as a workgroup printer, fax, and scanner, making the copier an integral part of business operations. The cost of building and supporting an IT department to meet these expectations is often a financial and workflow burden on the business.

The industry has been forced to look at other IT revenue streams to reduce and, hopefully, make the copier IT business an additional profit center. Adding IT managed services is a major first step in the right direction. IT managed services simulate copier managed print services. The revenues are profitable and sustainable; however, it's a different business model that often requires totally different management and technical staff.

Partnering with cloud-based phone systems, or VoIP, managed services companies is a good option for copier businesses to consider. VoIP has the ability to produce 50 to 60 percent margins — similar margins to the copier industry of yesteryear. It also provides the business with the ability to deliver additional services — telephone, fax, etc. — to increase revenue and enhance the customer relationship.

When selecting a VoIP partner there are a few things to consider. The VoIP provider should provide:

- Level 1, 2 and 3 customer support,
- All equipment necessary for a deployment,
- Direct billing to the customer and collections,
- Zero CAPX expense, and
- Recurring monthly revenue (research your best options, you should be able to receive 50 to 60 percent).

The goal of such a partnership is to not only increase revenue from the IT side of the organization, but also to increase the value of your business with residual revenues. The partnership should provide all VoIP services, allowing the company to focus in its core copier sales and service, and benefit financially from its business relationships.

A VoIP partnership will differentiate a copier business from others. By partnering with an IT organization — with either a white label or affiliation agreement — the company will increase its value, growing from just a business making commodity sales to becoming a “trusted business advisor.” The business will not only increase revenue from existing business contracts, but also increase the stickiness of the customer relationship, providing ongoing services and providing additional products.