Voice-Over-Internet Protocol (VoIP)
Frequently Asked Questions

VOIP FAQ

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What is VoIP?

Q: What is VOIP?

A: VOIP is an acronym for Voice-Over-Internet Protocol. VOIP is a unified communications service that provides voice integration with other services, such as video conferencing, messaging, and data, and delivered via the internet over the campus wired and/or wired network, or any data network to which a device is able to access..

Q. What is Unified Communications?

A: Unified Communications (UC) is defined as the integrated delivery of voice, video and data over a single platform to support asynchronous or synchronous communication.

Q: What is Internet Protocol?

A: Internet protocol is what allows you to access web sites and the Internet. It allows you to exchange data with other sites on the web. VOIP converts your voice into data packets, and then sends the data packet across the internet to connect with other VOIP users or across the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) to connect with people not using VOIP service.

Q: Can you give me a brief technical overview of how VOIP works?

A: Voice-Over-Internet Protocol refers to calls that traverse networks using Internet Protocol (IP). The voice stream is broken down into packets, compressed, and sent toward its final destination by various routes (as opposed to establishing a single, 'permanent' connection for the duration of the call like a traditional phone line), depending on the most efficient path, which can vary from call to call. At the other end, the packets are reassembled, decompressed and converted back into a voice stream.

Q: Are VOIP calls secure?

A: Yes, almost all VOIP calls are encrypted to ensure call privacy.

Q. Will people who are not on a VOIP network be able to contact me?

A. Yes, calls originated from the traditional Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) will connect with the VOIP platform.

Q: Can I keep my university number?

A: Yes, whether you are using a landline, a university provided mobile device, or your own mobile device your university-assigned telephone number will not change.

Q. Is 4-digit extension dialing available with VOIP?

A. Yes. People working in the Downtown Campus Center (DCC) can call people within the DCC and legacy campus buildings using 4-digit extension dialing.

Q. Can people working in the legacy campus buildings call people in the Downtown Campus Center using 4-digit extension dialing?

A. There are additional costs to implement 4-digit extension dialing from the legacy campus buildings to the Downtown Campus Center. These costs are pending financial review.

Q. Does VOIP require electricity to work?

A. Yes, since VOIP is a service that requires network equipment to operate electricity is required. If power to a UCM building using VOIP fails, there will be a 2-hour backup that will enable users to continue with their business. If after 2-hours the power is not restored, there is an assumption that people will vacate the building until power is restored.

Q. Will other campus locations move to VOIP?

A. Not immediately. The Downtown Campus Center is Phase 1 for the UCM VOIP platform project. It is the expectation that VOIP will be scaled campus-wide, following next with the Project 2020 buildings.

Q: What equipment is used with VOIP?

A: There are two types of VOIP services: phone-based and computer-based. These services allow you to make phone calls using either your regular phone, an app on mobile devices, or a softphone client on a computer (via a headset with a microphone).

Q. How is the Quality of Service with VOIP?

A. VOIP QoS (Quality of Service) is determined by voice or data prioritization. Voice packets are prioritized when network congestion is detected, which maintains the quality and fidelity of the voice call.

Q. Can I make a call with my assigned number without physically being at my desk?

A. Yes, you can login to any available handset and make a call that will appear to be originating from your number.

Q: Can I take my number with me when I travel?

A: Yes, most providers allow you to use your VOIP service wherever you travel. A broadband Internet connection or a cellular data plan is required.

Q. How is VOIP service different from traditional telephone services?

A. The VOIP telephony service model is different from traditional voice telephone services in that a phone number is assigned to an individual (versus a physical location or device) and the individual manages voice services in whatever manner best suits one's needs.

Making and Receiving Calls

Q: How do I place or receive a VOIP phone call?

A: You use VOIP the same way you use a regular landline: by picking up the phone to answer it, or dialing a number to make a call.

Q: What differences are there between making or receiving a local call and a long-distance call?

A: In terms of technology, or how you dial the number, there are no differences.

Q. Is Caller ID available with VOIP?

A. Yes, Caller ID is available with VOIP. Depending on the service providers signaling protocol, Caller ID will appear as a name or a phone number.

Q. Is Call Forwarding available with VOIP?

A. Yes, Call Forwarding is available with VOIP. Unlike current call forwarding functionality, VOIP provides users with the option to call forward to multiple devices providing extended range of serviceability.

Q. Can I make and receive international calls?

A. Yes, users can make local, long distance, and international calls.

Q: Can I call any phone or just VOIP phones?

A: You can call any phone number in the world, whether that number be a local, long-distance, mobile, or international number.

Q: Can VOIP make and receive calls to and from the traditional telephone network?

A: Yes, users can make and receive calls to and from the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) lines. Any type of call (e.g. local, long distance, international) can be completed.

Q. How is VOIP different from a landline?

A. Unlike a landline that requires fixed equipment and copper wire to connect the person to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), VOIP connects callers through a broadband Internet connection with various receiver/transmitter devices that include smartphones, softphones, and desk phones. VOIP

users can also connect to cellular networks – if using a mobile device where Internet connectivity is not available.

Q. Does VOIP have Auto Attendant capabilities?

A. Yes, Automatic Call Distributor/Distribution (ACD), also known as Auto Attendant, is provided with VOIP.

Q. Is text messaging available with VOIP?

A. Yes, text messaging is available with VOIP.

Q. Is voicemail available with VOIP?

A. Yes, voicemail is available with VOIP.

What is a Softphone?

Q. What is a Softphone?

A. Basically, a softphone is a phone that lets you make calls over the internet from a computer or other smart device. As the name would imply, it is a piece of software that acts as a phone interface, allowing you to dial phone numbers and carry out other phone related functions via a screen (PDA or Computer) using your mouse, keypad or keyboard.

Q: Do I need a computer to use VOIP?

A: No, you do not need a computer to use VoIP. You can use a mobile device with a VOIP app or a VOIP handset. You do need a computer if you are going to be using a softphone — because a softphone uses your computer as a phone.

Q: Does my computer need to be on for me to make a call?

A: No, unless you are using a softphone, which requires the computer to work. If you are using a mobile device or a VOIP handset, you need only an internet connection.

Q: Can I use the Internet and my phone at the same time?

A: Yes, you can conduct work on the Internet and talk on the phone at the same time.

Q. Will Outlook integrate with VOIP?

A. Yes, Outlook will integrate with VOIP. This integration provides the user with easy Click to Call service capabilities.

VoIP on Mobile Devices

Q: Can I use VOIP on my smartphone?

A: Yes, VOIP can be used on any smartphone with the use of an installed app.

Q: Can I use my mobile device when I am not on the campus network?

A: Yes, a mobile device with the VOIP app installed can be used outside of the campus network. Accessibility to a broadband Internet connection or a cellular data plan is required.

Q. How is VOIP different from cellular service?

A. VOIP connects callers using a broadband Internet connection. Cellular service requires a voice plan that permits the call to be transmitted across a cellular (e.g., 4g, LTE) network.

Q. Can VOIP calls be made across cellular networks?

A. Yes, VOIP users using a mobile device can make and receive calls across cellular networks. A voice/data plan is required.

Q. What happens if I make a call on the network and drop off the network during the call?

A. If you make a call on the network and at some point during the call you go off network, the call will automatically roll to an available cellular network, which maintains call continuity. Charges will apply while on the cellular network.

Q. Will I be able to use VOIP from a remote location?

A. Yes, if you are using a mobile device with the VOIP app and have access to a broadband internet connection or cellular network you can use the service.

Q. How will I know the difference between an incoming VOIP and an incoming cell call on my mobile device?

A. For incoming VOIP calls, the VOIP softphone app will automatically open to let you know it's a VOIP call. Additionally, you can configure a different ringtone to differentiate a VOIP call from a cellular call.

Q. What happens if I receive a VOIP call and a cell call simultaneously?

A. This depends on how you have your settings configured. For example, incoming VOIP calls can be configured to forward to voicemail or forward to another person after x number of rings. Or, you can answer either one of the calls, place the caller on hold, and answer the other call. How you decide to configure your communications device will depend on how you perform your daily operations.

Instant Messaging in VoIP

Q. Is the Instant Messaging function with the VOIP softphone application a true Short Message Service (SMS) Text service?

A. No, the Instant Messaging (IM) function with the VOIP softphone application only provides IM service to the UCM campus constituents.

Q. Is there a one to many text service available with VOIP?

A. No, Short Message Service (SMS) text is not available with VOIP.

Q. If someone forwards their VOIP number to me, how will I know if an incoming call is for me or that person?

A. If someone has their VOIP number forwarded to you and you receive a call for that person, a message will appear that indicates "forwarded by (name of the person forwarding the call)". This applies to the VOIP desk phone and softphone application.

Q. Can call recording and call monitoring be completed with VOIP?

A. Yes, but this currently requires a 3rd Party solution. A business case will need to be submitted for budget review and approval for these services. Our Business Partner expects to deploy their cloud based solution for call recording early 2018.

VoIP Ordering and Billing

Q. How are VOIP services billed?

A. There is a one-time equipment cost and, typically, a low monthly recurring cost for the specific types of services provided. Unlike traditional telephone service, there are no local or long distance phone charges incurred for calls made over the campus network or over any wireless or wired network.

VoIP Conference Calls

Q. How many people can be on a conference call at one time?

A. This depends on which package the user selected. For the Basic User, 3-way conferencing is included. For the Premium User, 15-way conferencing is included.

Q. How do I schedule a conference call on the VOIP platform?

A. Whether you are a Basic or Premium User or using a VOIP softphone or desk phone, you, as the scheduler, will have to contact people individually and join them to the call.

Q. What video-conferencing service is integrated with VOIP.

A. Presently, Skype for Business is integrated with the VOIP platform.

Q. Is Zoom integrated with VOIP?

Q. No, presently Zoom is not integrated with the VOIP platform, but will be available as a video-conferencing service across the campus.

Q. How much space is required for the VOIP softphone application?

A. The VOIP softphone application requires 50 MB of space.

What about Faxes?

Q. Are faxes secure with VOIP?

A. No, secure faxes require a 3rd Party solution or additional gateway equipment. If there are business processes requiring secure faxes, a business case will need to be submitted for budget review and approval for this service.

Q. Can I receive faxes with VOIP? And, how does this work?

A. Yes, you can receive incoming faxes. You simply assign a VOIP number as fax and provide it to anyone who needs to send documents through a fax service. The document is delivered to your mailbox as an email attachment. However, the document is not secure during transmission.

Q. Can I send faxes with VOIP?

A. Yes, you can send faxes, but to do so will require a 3rd Party solution or additional gateway equipment. The Office of Information Technology is researching options and will update when information is available.