

Small business growing pains

5 ways

cloud communications free you up
to thrive on your terms

8x8





For a successful small business, “growing pains” are part of the territory.

If you're great at what you do and your business is expanding, the last thing you need is for unwieldy technology to hold you back. For one thing, your communication system should be every bit as flexible, scalable and “multi-talented” as you and your team.

A cloud-hosted phone system can grow and adapt with your business, offering countless advantages over “on-premise” PBX solutions while also lowering costs. You'll also have unprecedented business agility to seize opportunities and compete with bigger players.

Here are 5 ways cloud communications free you up to thrive on your terms.

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Step 1:

Smart features to revolutionise productivity

If you're growing fast, internal changes to your organisation needn't impact productivity, or the experience you offer customers. In fact, the right phone system can help you take things to the next level.

With cloud-hosted communications, state-of-the art features are no longer the preserve of the big guys. Along with HD Voice for an ultra-clear call experience, you'll have call recording, voicemail notification via email and countless other capabilities, as well as the ability to switch between calls, chat and video with a single click. A selection of powerful analytics tools, meanwhile, can help you understand and optimise your operations as never before. All this enhances your people's ability to connect and collaborate, while giving customers a slicker, more efficient service.

A cloud-based platform can also integrate seamlessly with your CRM system, taking productivity up yet another notch.



Step 2:

Make true “mobile working” a practical reality

A small, growing workforce needs to be flexible if it wants to punch above its weight.

With a phone system like 8x8's Virtual Office, your people can access all features and functionality from wherever they are via a mobile app on their laptop, tablet or smartphone. Freeing up your people to work at home or on the move is a great way to make the best use of their talents, while presenting a seamless impression to customers.

But the advantages don't stop there. Opening up a new location becomes easier. Work-life balance improves. International projects run more smoothly. And if the office loses power or a storm cuts off access, your team can log in and still deliver for customers.

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“Simply configure your new set-up online, plug in your phones and away you go



Step 3:

Expand your business, not your phone costs

If you've ever had a conventional PBX system, you'll know how costly it can be to maintain and upgrade, while expanding your system's system capacity to accommodate growth is a tricky technical challenge.

Cloud-hosted systems, by contrast, are easily scalable. Web-based management means that users can be added or removed with a few clicks, while simple per-user pricing keeps costs manageable and predictable. Because technology is deployed via the cloud, upgrades and maintenance are handled centrally by your provider, with no disruption to your premises or day-to-day working.

This makes expanding into new premises and distant locations far less complex, costly and hardware-intensive. Simply configure your new set-up online, plug in your phones and away you go.



Step 4:

A seamless customer service at all times

For a business that's growing briskly, keeping the phones running (and adequately covered) can sometimes be a stretch. A good cloud solution offers streamlined call-handling features as standard to make this headache a thing of the past.

Perhaps customer calls and order volumes are ballooning? Adding more headcount just to cover the phones may be impractical, and a cost you don't need. That's when features like auto-attendant come into their own. The caller is invited to choose from a numbered menu, allowing them to direct themselves efficiently to the right person. There's no need to assign this kind of call-routing task to an alive individual. It saves the customer time, and you money.

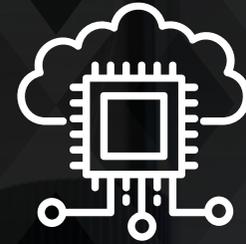
Moving to bigger premises? That's another time when phone downtime is traditionally a threat. As we've seen, the flexibility and mobility of cloud telephony allows for easy relocation and expansion of your system. Just add new users, then order and activate new phones. Even if these aren't available, your team can still access cloud telephony through their mobile app.

Downtime is no longer an issue when you have this kind of flexibility.

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“All your locations and colleagues can be united under one system



Step 5:

Integrated service and billing, however fast you grow

If your customers are globally based or your people operate across a wide geographical area, a conventional phone system adds complexity you don't need. Think multiple service contracts, overlapping bills, accumulated long-distance call charges and separate phone systems to maintain in each location.

Migrate to a cloud solution and this changes. All your locations and colleagues can be united under one system. Better still, services like 8x8's Virtual Office often include a multi-country unlimited calling zone in the contract. All this typically leads to lower bills and easier budgeting – serious advantages for a growing business.

But there's more. Instead of running up substantial mobile phone charges, your company mobiles become an extension of your office system. Expensive cellular rates are replaced by low-cost cloud-based rates, even when using your phone overseas.

A good cloud solution will also include audio and web-based conferencing facilities in the same contract – meaning you don't have to source and pay for these separately. Your people are free to work from anywhere and interact with customers as needed. Training also becomes easier, even if your workforce is always on the move.

Take your growth to the next level

8x8 is a global, multi-award-winning provider of unified communications, colleague collaboration and call centre solutions, trusted by over 50,000 businesses in more than 150 countries. We're also the creators of the world's first communications cloud.

Our goal is to get your customers, employees and applications talking seamlessly, via a single, open and real-time platform that eliminates information silos, turns data into usable intelligence and works across all your devices.

All this makes 8x8 the dominant choice for companies looking to enhance customer experience in a dynamic, scalable and sustainable way, while reducing complexity and cost.

Visit 8x8.com/uk to find out more, or call us on 0333 014 9888

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