



!Mikro Memorandum

An Occasional Newsletter from !Mikro Computer Consulting

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Techy Talk Time?

VoIP, also known as Voice over Internet Protocol, is a technology that allows you to make telephone calls over an existing Internet connection instead of a regular (analog) telephone line. Some services that use VoIP only allow you to call other people using the same service, usually done when making PC to PC phone-calls, now also PC to landline or cell phone calls (Skype, Google talk, etc.). Other services allow you to call anyone, anywhere (as long as they have a telephone number) including: local & long distance, mobile, and international numbers (Vonage, Verizon, Net2Phone, others. Check reviews of the different companies here). This type of VoIP service allows you to use a traditional telephone that plugs directly into a phone adapter.



The great thing about VoIP is many additional features are included in the monthly fee. These features include: unlimited local & long distance calls into the US & Canada, voicemail, call waiting, caller id, three-way calling, just to name a few. Most VoIP service providers typically charge between \$20 and \$25 dollars a month.

VoIP is a revolutionary technology that has the potential to completely redesign the entire world's communication infrastructure. VoIP providers have already been around for several years and growing at a tremendous rate. Currently, there are over 6 million users of VoIP worldwide and that number is growing exponentially.

Below are other issues concerning VoIP that uses a regular phone and phone line.

1. A Brief Explanation of VoIP?

VoIP allows you to make telephone calls over an existing (broadband) Internet connection. VoIP converts a voice signal (analog) from your telephone into a digital signal that then travels over the Internet to the desired location. It then converts the digital signal back to analog so the person on the other end can hear what you are saying.

2. How To Make a VoIP Phone Call?

The first step of making a VoIP phone call is to subscribe to a service. Once you sign up for service, the VoIP service provider will then send you a broadband phone adapter, which plugs directly into your internet connection. You will then have to plug your existing telephone into the phone adapter. Lastly, all you have to do is pick up the telephone and dial the number.

3. What Kind Of Equipment do You Need?

You need three things in order to use VoIP:

- (a) A high-speed Internet connection (either cable or DSL);
- (b) A broadband phone adapter (provided by the VoIP service provider); and
- (c) Any standard (analog or digital) telephone.



Is there a difference when placing a local or long distance call when using VoIP? Not really. VoIP phone calls are made just the same way as traditional calls are made. When dialing local calls, all you have to do is dial 7 digits (555-1212) and when dialing long distance, all you have to do is dial 11 digits (1-408-555-1212).

4. Who Can You Call?

You can call anyone, anywhere as long as they have a valid telephone number. It can be a local call, long distance call, international call, cell phone, toll free, 911 (assuming they have E911 capability) and 411 directory assistance. Most VoIP providers will not allow calls to 900 or 976 telephone numbers, nor will they accept collect calls.

"Outdated" Operating Systems

Are you running Windows 98 on your computer? On July 11, 2006, Microsoft ended support for Windows 98, Windows 98 Second Edition, and Windows Millennium Edition, including security updates. If you use one of these operating systems, your computer is quickly becoming a security risk. Without new security patches, older systems are exposed to new security threats, and remain vulnerable to attacks.

News about Vista

Vista is Microsoft's first major overhaul of Windows since 2001. It promises numerous updates to performance, security and productivity. The operating system is expected to be out in the last part of 2006 to collaborating hardware partners and to consumers in the beginning of 2007.

New operating systems from Microsoft usually requires more PC hardware and this version is no exception.

The minimum hardware specs for the OS show that Vista will run on just about any PC sold over the last few years, its most advanced features—including the three-dimensional Aero user interface—will require additional performance, causing at least some consumers and corporate IT departments to check their current hardware before upgrading.

The software maker's Windows Vista Premium Ready PC specifications call for a 1GHz processor, 1GB of RAM and 128MB of dedicated graphics memory, along with a fairly recent graphics processor that meets several additional specifications, so that a PC can run Aero. The machines must also have at least a 40GB hard drive or 15GB of free space and an internal or external DVD-ROM drive. That means that most of the new computers bought today will have most of the specifications, but look for computers saying they are "Vista Ready."

Keyboard Made Simple

Windows system key combinations

- F1: Help
- CTRL+ESC: Open Start menu
- ALT+TAB: Switch between open programs
- ALT+F4: Quit program
- SHIFT+DELETE: Delete item permanently

Windows program key combinations

- CTRL+C: Copy
- CTRL+X: Cut
- CTRL+V: Paste
- CTRL+Z: Undo
- CTRL+B: Bold
- CTRL+U: Underline
- CTRL+I: Italic

General keyboard-only commands

- F1: Starts Windows Help
- F10: Activates menu bar options

Factual Fun

When a flea jumps, the rate of acceleration is 20 times that of the space shuttle during launch.

