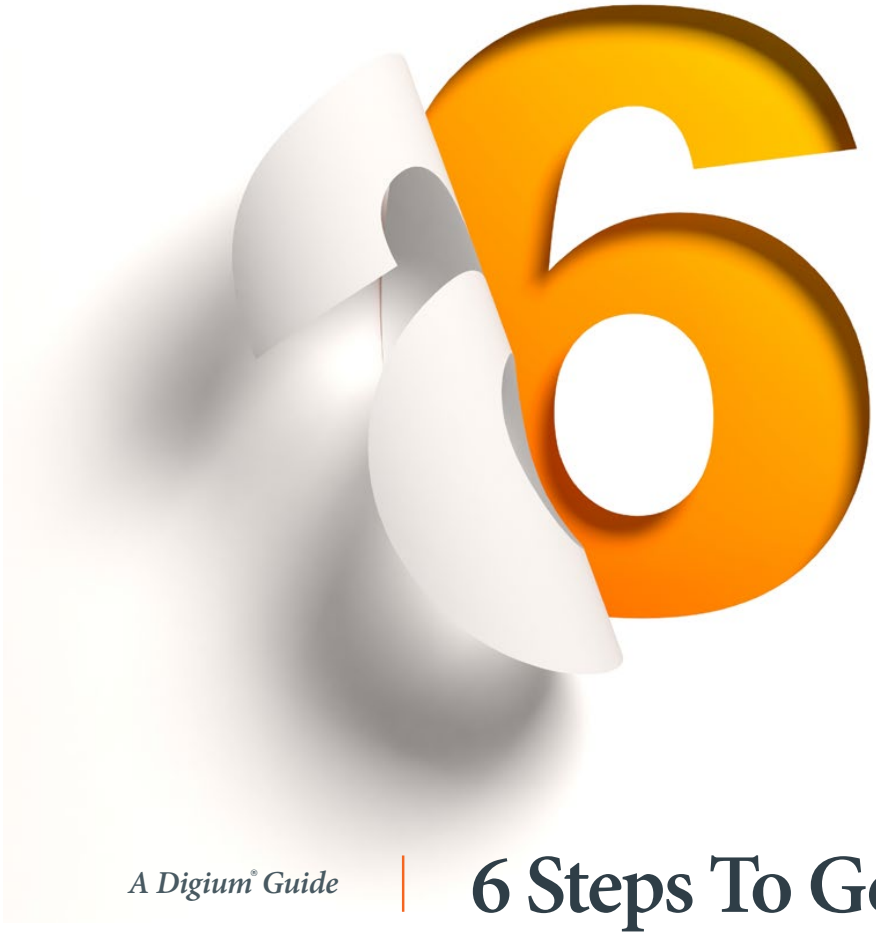


A Digium® Guide

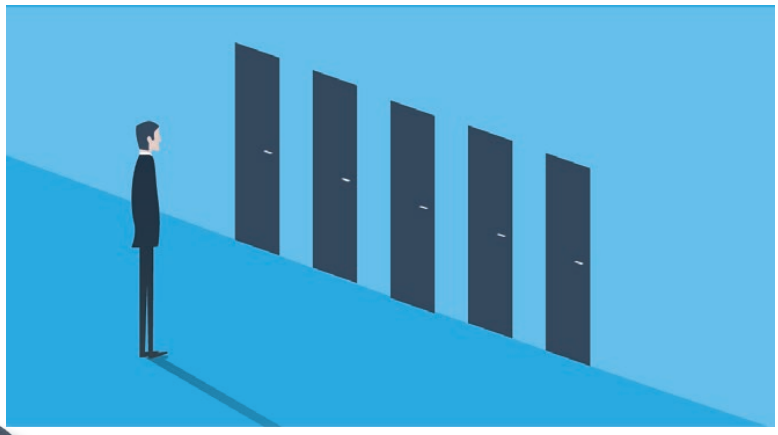
6 Steps To Get Started Selling Virtualized Voice

Companies discover savings, scalability, and high availability with virtualization

Follow 6 steps and realize the advantages of virtualized voice

As a VAR, offering your customers a solution that not only fits their technical needs, but also improves their business, is a win. With virtualized voice and Unified Communications (UC), you can now offer a solution that helps your customers enhance their business operations and addresses their business continuity needs.

Not sure where to begin when it comes to offering virtualized voice? Here's a checklist of things you should consider as you prepare to rollout virtualized voice to your customers.

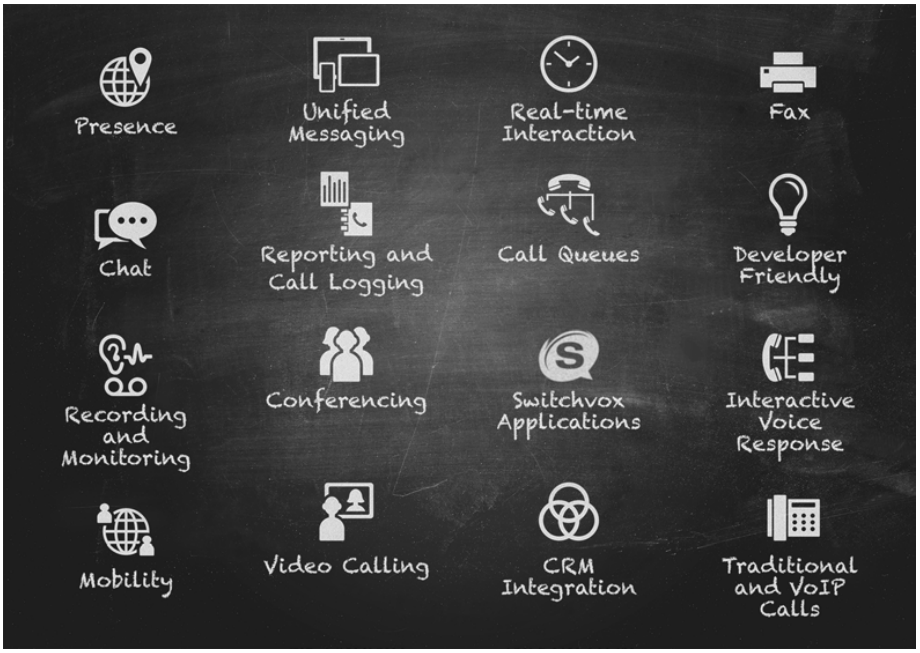


1 Choose the right voice platform

The selection of the right voice platform starts with understanding the features and functions the business needs. In some cases, the business needs will be very simple. For example, they just need basic features like direct inward dial, call forwarding, and voicemail to email. In other situations, more sophisticated features such as call queues, reporting, and multi-level IVRs are necessities.

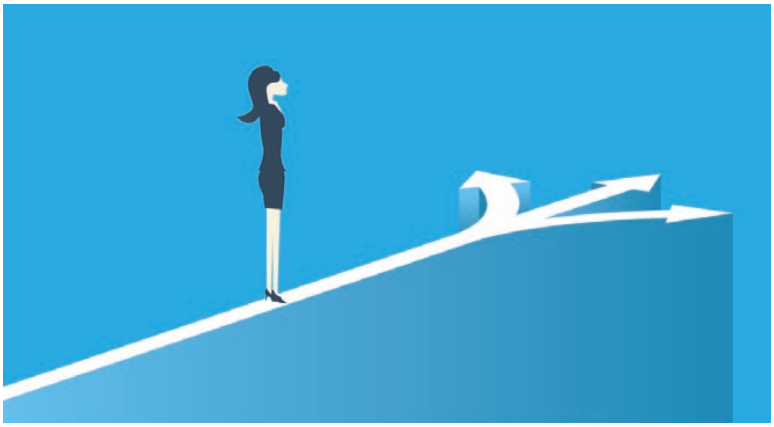
Digium's Switchvox UC solution offers a full set of features with a pricing model that gives you and your customer complete access to every feature, without extra license fees, and no added hardware expense.

Look for a solution that comes with all the features that you will need—now and in the future.



You'll also want to make sure that your vendor of choice is experienced and reputable. Digium was one of the earliest entrants into the VoIP marketplace when we introduced the Asterisk open source project to the world in 1999. Since that time, it has been downloaded and used millions of times in critical voice, video, and chat applications. Now the largest open source telephony project in the world, Asterisk is the foundation for Digium's award-winning commercial UC solution, Switchvox.

Vendor support needs to be available anytime, for situations like rollout, cutover and service interruptions.



2 Choose the right virtualization platform

When it comes to virtualization platforms, there are many different choices. Of course, your experience with a platform and your knowledge about how to configure the right solution will determine your level of success. But, you also need to consider if the UC product you are choosing to deploy is optimized and supported on your preferred virtualization platform. Switchvox has been thoroughly tested on VMWare® to develop appropriate sizing guidelines that ensure a reliable, predictable experience, whether you're setting it up for 50 or 500 users. For the quickest, easiest, and most efficient VMware installation, Switchvox is deployed as a pre-configured OVA file.

Utilizing a solution that has been tested and optimized for a virtualized environment will relieve the possible "finger pointing" problems between the phone system vendor and the virtualization vendor, should you have any issues.

When a voice manufacturer is unfamiliar with a virtualization platform, it becomes easy to pass the buck and blame unknown issues on the virtualization platform. At Digium, we've certified Switchvox to run on VMware and have established a support protocol to ensure a timely resolution to any support call.

3 Size it right

Determine the customer's expected growth path and build in capabilities to accommodate the plan.

With your voice solution and virtualization platform selected, it's time to look at how to properly size for your customer's situation. Correct sizing is critical to ensure that there are adequate resources for all application needs. Resource requirements are determined by the customers planned utilization, so it's important to ask a few key questions.

- How many total users will be on the system?
- How many concurrent calls do you anticipate?
- How many concurrent call recordings?
- How many concurrent conference call participants?

Once you have this information, you can refer to Digium's sizing guidelines to determine your hardware needs. You can find sizing details here:

www.digium.com/virtualized-faqs

Note: For applications with more than 600 users, please call Digium for additional information.

4 Setup your virtualization platform

Based on your conversations with the customer, you now know their business continuity needs, and have documented their existing infrastructure. With this information in hand, you are ready to set up the virtualization platform. Most virtualization platform vendors provide training and certification classes that prepare you for this step.

If you plan to use VMWare VSphere®, they offer information on how to get started, which can be found here:

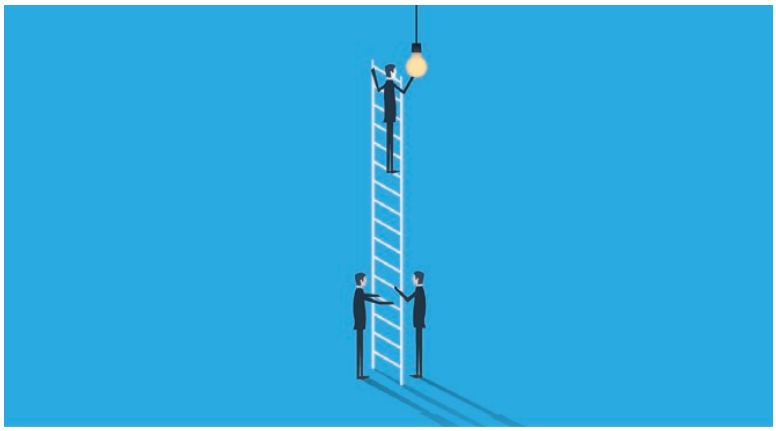
www.vmware.com/products/vsphere.html

If your application requires high availability, VMware also has great information located at:

www.digium.com/vmware-ha

While Digium fully supports Switchvox on VMware, VMware-specific inquiries should be directed to VMware for support. As is standard for most VMware applications, the virtual infrastructure setup, configuration and troubleshooting is done through VMware, while application-specific setup and configuration is provided by the application provider (in this case, Digium).

Your vendor should be able to provide the knowledge required to help you set up your customer's configuration.



5 Configure the phone system

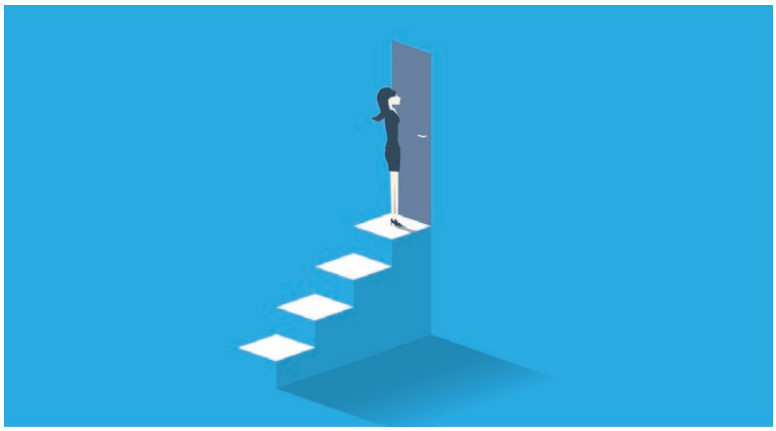
If you're using Switchvox, set up should be a breeze. The simple and intuitive interface allows for easy configuration. In addition, to shorten installation time, many partners will upload a CSV file with name and extension details, which will auto configure each extension.

Unlike difficult traditional phone systems, Switchvox can be configured through a simple point-and-click browser-based interface.

Additionally, you can create a template for different user groups, like sales or customer service, and add users to the template. This will ensure that each user has the right permissions and access to the appropriate features and functions, and it saves time on each installation.

With traditional phone solutions, a technician needed several weeks worth of manufacturer training to be competent in that system. But that's the old way of doing things. At Digium, we believe simple is better. Switchvox is designed to be configured through a simple, point-and-click browser-based interface.

With easy to access and easy to understand, learn-as-you-go online training, Digium makes technical training accessible and quick. In fact, partners regularly tell us they can do a Switchvox install in half the time it would take them to do other phone systems.



6 Connect to the outside world

The last step in the process is to enable your systems to communicate to the outside world. This requires having some way to connect to the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network). Customers have several choices, including using analog or POTS lines, PRI/BRIs, or SIP trunks. You can even mix and match services to get the best connectivity options possible.

Customers can mix analog or POTS lines, PRI/BRIs, or SIP trunks to get the best connectivity options possible.

If you plan to connect using a PRI/BRI, or analog trunks, then you will need to use a gateway to convert that signal to SIP before connecting to your Switchvox instance. Digium offers a series of gateways that will allow you to use a PRI/BRI connection.

If you plan to use SIP trunks, you do not need a gateway. Use the SIP provider's setup utilities and then simply configure Switchvox to utilize it. To make things even easier, Digium offers SIP trunks in the U.S. (lower 48). Choosing a single provider that offers end-to-end products (Switchvox and SIP Trunks) ensures 100% compatibility and delivers an unparalleled support experience, as there is only one provider to call.

Conclusion

While it's not quite as simple as 1-2-3, getting started with a virtualized voice application can be pretty easy. Just follow the 6 steps we have outlined for you.

If you're serious about voice, and serious about virtualized voice, there is one last step that you should consider. Become a Digium Partner. We will help you get trained on our Switchvox platform and help you conquer the virtualized voice market.

www.digium.com/partners

Switchvox is the award-winning business phone system specifically developed for small- and mid-sized businesses, available on-site, virtualized, or in thhe cloud. Switchvox makes it easy to integrate all of your office communications and immediately start saving time and money. Recognized as the "Best Value in UC for SMBs," Switchvox offers a single powerful set of UC features at a price your business can afford. All-inclusive pricing means there are no costly add-ons or unexpected expenses for business-critical features—including mobility! You get all the features of Switchvox with one low price!

Digium's Switchvox UC will help you easily transition from a basic phone system to a feature-rich Unified Communications solution.

Switchvox for VMware

Driven by VMware's disaster recovery capabilities and scalability, Switchvox support for VMware eliminates the need for a dedicated PBX appliance and provides **small and medium-size businesses with a phone** system that meets the needs of an enterprise at a fraction of the cost of traditional voice deployments.

Scalability

Virtualizing Switchvox releases companies from stringent hardware requirements and specifications. VMware provides the flexibility to adjust system resources on the fly, delivering a phone system that grows with the success of your business, and with the performance you demand from your communications.

Disaster Recovery

Downtime is expensive, and virtualization is the key to ensuring that downtime is minimized. Utilizing VMware's disaster recovery tools, High Availability is possible with Switchvox, allowing your company to stay connected to customers at all times.

Save Money

Switchvox support for VMware lets you take advantage of your existing virtual environment, eliminating the need for costly, dedicated voice appliances. Having fewer appliances also significantly reduces maintenance and power costs.

Get started at **www.digium.com/virtualization**

Digium®. We're changing the way businesses communicate.

Founded in 1999, Digium is the creator and primary developer of Asterisk, the industry's first open source telephony platform. More than one million customers in 125 countries have deployed Asterisk-based systems. Digium is committed to ending the days of expensive, proprietary telecom. The Switchvox family of Unified Communications solutions is built on Asterisk and is designed to provide enterprise class features at affordable prices for small and medium businesses. The award-winning line of Switchvox IP PBX phone systems provides more than a phone system— it delivers a Unified Communications platform that integrates multiple features that increase productivity and lower monthly communication costs. It's the affordable solution with a proven return on investment for businesses with 10 to 600 users.

Learn more at **www.digium.com**

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The Asterisk Company

Empowering Communication

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