

Growing uptake drives market for hosted VoIP

Hosted VoIP is moving into mainstream business communications, according to the testimonies of key figures on the hosted playing field.

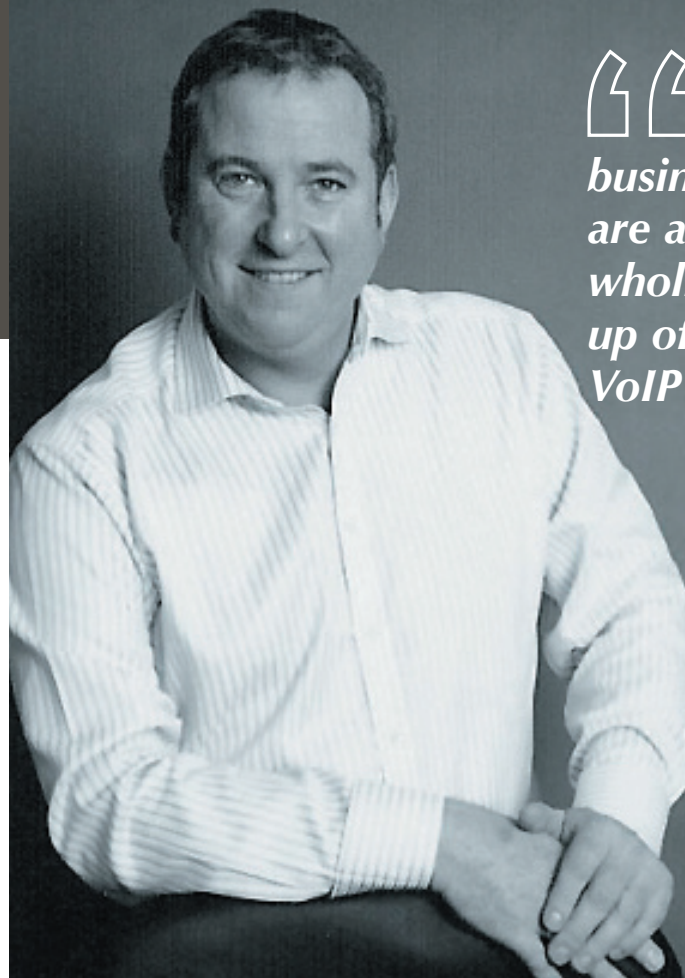
Hosted VoIP is now more accepted as a means to deliver business critical voice applications, and the early adoption phase is firmly moving into an era of steep growth. "A few years ago pitches for new business would involve a majority of PBX resellers, and we would have to explain to the prospective customer the virtues of hosted VoIP as opposed to CPE," said Gary Pryor, COO, Voicenet Solutions. "Now our competitors in new business meetings are almost wholly made up of hosted VoIP suppliers. The hosted IP market is rapidly maturing. It has moved from being an early adopter type product to a genuine alternative to a PBX system."

One of the forces behind this trend is the ongoing improvement in business Internet connectivity. "We are seeing business grade connectivity products improve in terms of QoS, and critically reducing in cost while providing customers with service level guarantees," Pryor

added. "Due to the nature of hosted IP, feature rich applications can be easily added to customise business telephony solutions. The range of the quality of these applications is rapidly evolving and taking customers into a fully converged communications environment by using everything from FMC, call recording and remote working. The needs of the future business environment match up very nicely with the manner in which hosted IP telephony is evolving."

According to Pryor, Voicenet Solutions is experiencing 'huge interest' in hosted IP Telephony. "Our figures are up year-on-year and demand is increasing especially from the enterprise sector and the FTSE 500. So much so that our projections for the year are to double our current extension numbers," he revealed.

Voicenet's key partners in its hosted IP offering are Broadsoft (software source and support),



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Viatel (partner for un-contended connectivity), BT (number sourcing IPX porting and PSTN traffic), Gamma Telecom (number and PSTN traffic), and murphx (managed DSL connectivity). These elements combine in a way that enables Voicenet Solutions to be a single source for all IP Telephony products, services and components. "Our expanding product portfolio includes hosted VoIP, VNiMobile – a mobile VoIP FMC solution, SIP gateway, hosted call recording, QoS, broadband, disaster recovery and IP phones," said Pryor.

With access to better connectivity and converged solutions, hosted VoIP is primed to take on the mass market. Voice will purely be seen as an application that sits within the converged business tool, and while dealers understand the benefits they find it hard to move from a capex purchase model that generates cash to a revenue-based model that grows.

"It comes down to how they fund that transition and motivate their sales forces," added Pryor. "We have different commission

models depending on the resellers' needs, offering upfront income or long-term revenue."

Hosted VoIP offers great flexibility in that it can accommodate application bolt-ons and additional services so easily. This is the key reason why hosted services will prevail, according to Pryor. "Growing demand for more integration and reduction in costs will naturally steer businesses to hosted services," he commented. "Customers will demand all of their key business systems to integrate and operate in the way they want it to." ■

To find out more about our hosted VoIP propositions call 0207 096 6000 or email: info@voicenet-solutions.com