

Phone Power: Full-featured business PBX for one to fifty users.

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Phone Power, LLC, headquartered in Los Angeles, California, is a broadband telephone company providing service throughout the continental United States and Canada.

Established in 2005, the company has grown quickly, and expects to sign up their 100,000th customer by the end of this calendar year. One of the reasons for this growth has been a partnership with two of the country's electronic super stores, *Best Buy* and *Fry's Electronics*.

When they purchase the *Phone Power Combo Pack*, residential customers receive both a home adapter and a USB travel adapter, which lets them make phone calls from their computer anywhere in the world. And in today's challenging economic environment, the price of this idea is attractive as well – the initial pricetag of \$79.99 comes with a service credit that can be applied to either a one- or two-year contract, which can then result in free phone service for the first couple of months.

But Phone Power also has a strong presence in the small business arena. The business offering,

Phone Power PBX, is an enterprise-level phone system, available on a per-line basis. All of these business lines include a long list of features, including call hold/waiting/forwarding/ID, speed dial lists, music on hold, conference calling, block/allow lists, contact lists, find me/follow me, do not disturb, anonymous caller rejection, and click to call.

Phone Power PBX also has some not-so-standard features: *Outbound Caller ID* allows a user to choose whether or not their name and number are displayed on outbound calls. The *Voicemail Viewer* allows the user to view and listen to their voicemails from the user interface via the Web; the *Voicemail to Email* feature allows a copy of a voicemail message to be emailed to the user as a .WAV file, while *Fax-enabled Voicemail* allows the user to receive faxes using their Phone Power number and voicemail box.

Phone Power also offers very simple hardware solutions for their customers, with service that can work with any corded or cordless telephone with a standard RJ-11 telephone interface. Customers have two options for the hardware connection: a Grandstream adapter that is provided by Phone Power to customers without charge (a free lease), or the BYOD (bring your own device) option for customers that already have their own hardware.

The Grandstream adapter connects between the customer's telephone and broadband modem, and includes a built-in single port router. Customer-provided (BYOD) adapters may be selected from a long list of approved devices, including those from Grandstream, Linksys, and Polycom. Detailed instructions on how to connect the customer's device to the Phone Power service are sent as part of the installation process, and once that device is configured to point to the Phone Power server, it will download a configuration file to connect it to the network.

Two different service plans are available. The *Single Line Package* includes the phone adapter, unlimited inbound minutes, and 5,000 outbound minutes for a monthly cost of \$39.95. The *Multi-Line Packages* can support up to 50 lines, and include the phone adapter, an auto attendant, unlimited inbound minutes and 5,000 outbound minutes, starting at a monthly cost of \$54.95, plus a nominal activation fee.

A number of add-ons and upgrades are also available on an ala carte basis, including: Direct Inward Dialing, Toll-Free Number, Voicemail Only, Call Hunt Groups, and an Automatic Call Distributor. These additional features are available for an additional monthly fee (typically \$5.00 to \$19.95) on top of the package costs mentioned above.

International calling is enabled by default on all new accounts, with 60 minutes per month to select destinations (over 80 countries) included with the packages. Rates to other destinations can be determined from a simple drop-down menu on the Phone Power website.

Of interest to mobile users is an iPhone application that is currently under development, and expected to be released this spring. Also of note is the company's technical support department, which provides 24/7 live support, and is based in the United States.

Further information on the Phone Power solutions can be found at www.phonepower.com. Our next tutorial will continue our review of various service providers hosted voice solutions.

Author's Biography

Mark A. Miller, P.E. is President of DigiNet Corporation®, a Denver-based consulting engineering firm. He is the author of many books on networking technologies, including *Voice over IP Technologies*, and *Internet Technologies Handbook*, both published by John Wiley & Sons.