

Three Reasons Not to Trust Your Phones to "Honest Sam"

We know it may sound ridiculous, but purchasing your phone system or having it maintained from an unauthorized reseller is no different than purchasing a used car from "Honest Sam." Here are three simple reasons why the quality and service you will receive from an unauthorized vendor will be on par with those fly-by-night used car lots we all know to avoid.

Reason # 1: Unauthorized = Inexperienced

An authorized vendor for a specific phone system must maintain technical certifications and participate in continual education programs on that system as it evolves. If you are dealing with someone who previously worked for an authorized reseller on a system, their knowledge on that system begins to get stale the moment they cease to participate in the ongoing certification process.

Look at it this way: You are selecting a vendor for your system that you plan to have a relationship with for the life of the system. This will be the one who will install the system, make recommendations for configuration and upkeep, install new features as they become available, and most importantly be the one you rely on if the phones go down — for hours, days, or possibly weeks. So...do you want to trust someone whose expertise on your system is shrinking at every moment?

Reason # 2: Maintaining Your System will be a Challenge (to say the least)

Many businesses may have purchased their system from an authorized reseller, but then turn to an unauthorized source for system upkeep. The idea here is to save money on maintenance costs, but the cost is usually far higher in the long run.

Most manufacturers will void the warranty on a phone system the moment an unauthorized vendor touches their product — meaning that the business is now on their own when it comes to maintenance. And that maintenance will be a headache when dealing with a vendor that might service 5-6 different phone system brands.

It's very unlikely that they will have the parts needed to immediately address a problem. Parts will have to be sourced on the open market; this means potentially relying on an Internet vendor who is selling used or refurbished parts instead of new. This can add days to the overall length of the service period and cause issues down-the-road when you try to integrate these parts with another system.

Ask yourself a simple question: When you buy a Chevrolet, do you take it to the Ford dealership for service? Maintaining your phone system with a vendor that lacks manufacturer-direct parts and real dedicated expertise on the system is a similar decision.



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Reason # 3: Because You Want Your Business to Grow

You want your phone system to grow and expand with your business. You want new features to be added to your system as they become available. And you want the capabilities that will really drive new levels of productivity into your business — capabilities such as Unified Communications. Unified Communications can enable an employee to communicate in real-time with anyone inside or outside their organization, regardless of their location and regardless of the end-user technology in-use (cell phone, laptop, etc.).

The problem is that in order to gain these robust new enhancements, a phone system must have regular software updates. Also, when you add a new feature, a software conflict may be created that needs to be addressed. As with parts, when you are dealing with an unauthorized reseller, you will not be able to access software directly from the manufacturer. You could end up with a faulty software revision and not have anywhere to turn to uncover the source of the problem.

This leads to three questions: When you have to download and install software updates, bug fixes and patches on a regular basis, do you want cost driven up by obtaining software through a middleman? And more importantly, how do you know you will even be able to obtain software for new applications and features as they are introduced? Finally, will an unauthorized reseller really be able to support the growth initiatives you are planning for your business?

Are You Still Ready to Do Business with "Honest Sam?"

All three of these reasons come back to one basic truth: Your phone system is the lifeblood of your business. If your copier goes down, you can work around it. If your office Internet goes down, you could even work around that failure for a brief period of time. But how long do you think you can work around it when no one can reach your business, and your employees cannot reach out to your customers? By trusting an unauthorized phone system reseller, you are placing the critical communications of your organization in their hands.

When protecting the integrity of your daily operations, and ensuring the future growth of your company, is it really worth the risk?

Unified Communications Demonstrating Strong Growth

A study performed by Commfusion and UC Strategies projects that the "True" UC market will reach \$2.43 billion by 2012¹.

¹ "Unified Communications Market 2007-2012," Unified Communications Strategies, <http://www.ucstrategies.com/detail.aspx?id=3598&LangType=1033&terms=Commfusion>



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