



Once you have signed a lease, one of the critical next steps is to deal with Telco and Data.

For most businesses, the seamless transfer of telecommunications is the single most critical aspect of their move. The smooth transition of telephone and network connections during the move will minimize productivity loss.

The **location you select for your new office can affect your communications cost**, both in installation fees and monthly charges. Your new location could also affect the areas you can call without toll charges. The size of your metropolitan area and which numbers are frequently dialed could have a tremendous impact on your phone bill.

When planning the move of your telecommunications system, keep in mind you may need a **phone/network room that is clean**, dry, and “environmentally friendly” to high-tech equipment. This room needs to be within your suite and should have dedicated power for your phone system and local area network server.

Some landlords use what is commonly known as a “shared telecommunications service.” This is a pooling of the usage requirements for tenants of the building or development for “volume discounts” that are sometimes passed on to the tenants. If this type of service is available, it is **usually less expensive** for a small business.

Your cabling strategy should consider faxes, modems, LAN connections, and telephones. Most devices can use the lesser expensive Category 3 cable. But LAN connections should be Category 5 in the cable, jacks, and patch panels. Your building landlord may require the use of plenum-rated cable to comply with fire code regulations. **Make sure you have planned adequately for your current and future cabling requirements.** It is less expensive to have an adequate amount of cable and outlets installed before you move than to make changes afterward.

If you will be purchasing a new phone system, give yourself enough time to select from vendors and place an order **at least 60 days before your move**. If your telecommunication needs exceed 100 telephones, add lead time to this estimate. (Consult with vendors regarding their required lead time for system delivery.) If possible, build in at least five years of growth capability into the new phone system.

If your phone number changes, be sure to get an “operator intercept” that will notify callers of your new number or forward the calls directly. This is normally **offered at no change** for a set period of time, which will vary depending on your local service provider. You may be able to extend this period by paying a fee.

The location of the new facility may affect your ability to maintain your current phone numbers. If keeping your current numbers is important, check with your local service provider to determine your geographic limitations.

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Consider your Internet connection requirements. If you have multiple users with individual connections, switching to a network Internet connection using a router and a (T1) data line may make sense.

Contact your local phone directory publisher to **determine their listing and advertising deadlines.** If your move takes place after the deadline, consider

finalizing your lease and having your phone lines installed earlier, so that your new numbers are included in the upcoming white and yellow pages.

Have your telephone system vendor prepare a “cheat sheet” that summarizes the basic operation of the telephones, and have them provide one with each phone at the new location.

ACTION CHECKLIST FOR MOVING YOUR TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

0 - 2 Months Before Move

Select voice and data cabling vendor. Schedule installation. (1 - 2 months)

Make arrangements for phones to be operational on moving day. Decide whether phones will need to be forwarded to temporary or home offices during actual move. (1 month)

Begin installation of voice and data cabling. Cabling vendor should coordinate its activity with the landlord and the landlord's contractor. (1 month)

Hold training sessions for employees to learn new phone system. (5-10 days)

3 Months Before Move

Identify current usage and future needs.

Consider whether to move existing phone system or purchase new.

If purchasing a new system, select three vendors to interview and submit proposals.

Select three dial tone-long distance- Internet (CLEC) providers to interview and submit proposals. Remember to check with landlord for shared telecommunication services.)

Have representatives from voice and data cabling companies review the space and tour the new facility to determine needs.

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