

IT & Telecoms Considerations When Moving Business Premises

There comes a time in the lifecycle of any business when it is time to move premises, be it for expansion, relocation or contraction purposes. At the time of writing (March 2011) business relocations are definitely on the increase compared to the last few years, so we've put together a 'best practise' paper to aid you in your move.

*IT & Telecoms are the lifeblood of any company. If your phone or IT systems are not working, then your company cannot operate. It cannot be overstated that getting this aspect of your office move wrong (i.e. delays and downtime) can have dire operational and financial consequences for your business. I hope that this guide helps you get your move right - we're here to help. **Don't hesitate to contact us for assistance.***

Mike Kirby
MD Telefonix Voice & Data

Preparation – 6 months before

- Start early. Office moves often take much longer than you imagine and you can never start this process early enough.
- Contact Telefonix Voice & Data. You'll want to talk to us as early as possible so that we can help you make the best choices of office to move to if the cost and speed of data connectivity matters to your business. Connectivity speeds are subject to the distance from the exchange, the quality of the copper wire and/or fibre, and how busy the exchange is. It might even influence your choice of the new office location if the connectivity is not good - as it's all too late once you've moved in. For example, were you aware that:
 - SIP telephony, the new gold standard in IP telephony, can save you thousands over the course of your tenancy. This is only available in certain locations at a certain distance from the exchange
 - FTCC (Fibre to the Cabinet), the fastest connection available to business premises, is not universally available
- Give us time to order new lines on your behalf and have them ready for you well before your move. Current guidelines for ordering new lines and connectivity are:

- ISDN30: 6-8 weeks
 - ISDN2: 4-6 weeks
 - Broadband *DSL: 1-2 weeks (requires analogue line)
 - Analogue: 1-2 weeks
 - Leased Line/integrated T1: 3 months
- The new building that you are moving into might well require additional cabling and IT networks. Contact us with your anticipated staff levels and IT requirement, and we'll work with you to put in new cabling and endpoints. Beware - if you are moving to a listed or old building it might not be possible to run cables, drill through walls, etc. All this needs to be considered well before the moving day.
 - Confirm that the minimum requirements for the server room are met in your new location (including electrical, cooling, dimensions and security). There are alternatives to a dedicated server room including the Telefonix Voice & Data Hosted Datacentre, or virtual hosting. Contact us for further details for either of these arrangements.
 - Strongly consider taking this opportunity to:
 - Build in an automated offsite disaster recovery plan for your data at your new location. New FSA regulations make this a requirement for certain businesses starting 2011.
 - Scan old documentation that you don't need anymore and dispose of the clutter.
 - Review line capacity and see whether you need to order new lines. We can perform a busy line study on your behalf over a set period.
 - You may be able to take your existing telephone number with you when you move using IP Telephony. If it is not possible to take your number with you, you might consider switching to a non-geographic number which can be pointed or transferred to any landline number. If you are not taking your existing number with you, talk to us to leave your new number as part of the message recorded when people call your old number.
 - If you do have to change your analogue phone number, request a good, memorable number instead of settling for a difficult-to-remember 6 digit number offered by BT.
 - In some cases, BT allows for diversion telephone and fax calls to new numbers. Please let us know and we will investigate your particular case.
 - Because of lease requirements, sometimes you will only have 30 days from signing the lease to plan. If this is the case, sign for your telecom services immediately after signing the lease.
 - If you cannot avoid a tight timeframe, request an "expedite" but BT is not dependable in which services it can or cannot expedite. Expedite fees are involved: please contact us to investigate on your behalf.
 - Identify any leased IT (often the photocopier) and telecoms equipment, cancel equipment that is no longer needed and notify the leasing company of your move. You may require technical assistance from your leasing company to move and install equipment such as a photocopier so make sure you book this well in advance.

- Some office items are often overlooked. Consider the following:
 - Backup Generator
 - Security Cards
 - WiFi/DECT points/repeaters
 - CCTV
 - Entryphone requirements
 - Videoconferencing facilities
- Contact Telefonix Voice and Data to integrate these into your IT it telecoms network

Checklist

- Power points - how many and where?
- Floor boxes / data points - how many and where?
- Printers and faxes
- Comms room / cabinets
- Cabling
- Backup generator
- Servers
- Service and support
- Handsets
- Photocopier

Note: you can never have too few power, communications or data points. Consider your likely lifespan at your new office and build in enough to have a flexible office with possible future partitioning or subletting utilizing maximum seating capacity.

Recommended guide for data and power points is 2 per person, with an extra 4 per 4 person group/pod for such items as printers, fax machines etc.

Final Preparation – 1 month before

- Create a detailed inventory of all your IT & telecoms equipment, labeling the leads for each item with the unique code for each item. Box into colour-coded boxes for specific locations in the new office.
- Order additional hardware that needs upgrading, replacing or supplementing. Make sure to test the new equipment at the old location before moving otherwise subsequent fault diagnosis may be unclear.
- Inform your stationery and business card person of any new phone and fax numbers if applicable.
- Make backups of all company data systems, including firewalls and servers.
- Make a contact list of all persons involved in the move, including the weekend contact numbers of all IT and Telecoms technicians. Provide them with all your contact details, a clear map to and the postcode of the new location. Have spare keys cut and give out security code numbers.

- If your new building has a lift, it is generally a good idea to check that it can be used by your removal contractors during the relocation weekend to transport heavy IT equipment. Also ensure that your new premises has safe vehicular access and that there is sufficient space for on-site parking on move weekend.

Move Weekend

- In our experience, arranging the actual move over the weekend leads to the least amount of disruption to your business. Give us sufficient warning and we'll make a team available over the weekend to install and test your IT & telecoms infrastructure, ensuring that everything is as it should be on Monday morning.

Useful Telefonix Voice & Data Contacts

- Kelly Chalmers, first point of contact 01252 333888