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BLOG SPOT
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Lost in Time - Are Traditional PABX Features Overlooked in the UC Rush?

There is no question that change and product development drives benefit to us all, for many products, the change is gradual and almost imperceptible. For Instance, how many of today's new cars are supplied with individual door locks, a telescopic aerial, manual window winders or even an ignition key. We all remember them but have accepted their gradual evolution.

Voice communications for business has developed at a far greater rate, developing from the equivalent of a Ford Model T to Tesla in less than 50 years. Enhancements are generally driven by demand so for much of that period development followed the standard, albeit accelerated 'S Curve' however the Covid Pandemic introduced some unforeseen parameters.

Everyone was undeniably affected in one way or another, it drove major acceptance of unified communications, video, softphones etc as well as changes in the ways in which we work. Of course, all of this was available before the pandemic, their wider up take was just accelerated by the unique situation that we all found ourselves in.

It's good to see the take up of unified communications, the industry has been promoting the advantages for many years, but it took that major swing in work habits to really cement their acceptance into the mainstream but has this accelerated growth resulted in us losing some aspects of the original technology that would still have a role today?

Can Reviving Simpler Technology Improve Today's User Experience?

Our tolerance of 'technology hiccups' seems to have widened, admittedly there are many more interdependencies such as network, security, the platform etc but we used to expect resilience and fault tolerance as a given, especially when making simple voice calls.

Of course, there are always methods to mitigate poor performance or to enhance resilience often, all that's required is a comprehensive knowledge of the main application and how it should be deployed. Sometimes the budget can 'take a hit' so it's important that a thorough understanding of requirements is prepared before planning any changes.

Obviously, not everyone has the in-depth knowledge or experience to understand the best configuration, that's where a partner with a knowledgeable and approachable engineering team can come in and map out the detail but it still must be simple to use and deliver that functionality that has been so important in the past. It's therefore essential to understand the features that simplify and enhance the user experience and often all that you need is to think back to what you found useful and really worked for you in the past.

What about those features that you were using but no longer seem to exist in a hosted UC solution? The traditional features of a conventional PBX still have relevance to most organisations:

- **Centralised Keymaps and Templates**, enable rapid handset deployment by administering keymaps centrally and deploying the configuration automatically thus eliminating the need for individual handset configuration.

- **Manual Night Mode with BLF**, the ability to invoke night mode with a single keystroke on a handset, indicated by a busy lamp/flag

- **Remote Forward on a user with BLF**, remotely set a call forward on a user handset, indicated by a busy lamp/flag

- **Outgoing Caller ID control with BLF**, selectable outbound caller ID from a busy lamp field

- **Account Codes**, select account codes for different call types

- **Load Internal and CRM directories onto the handset**, providing users easy access to contact information

- **Display Text Modifications**, configure unique incoming caller ID's

Of course, I wouldn't highlight these features if they weren't available in our own Dimensions Voice UC platform, and we are not alone in offering this functionality, but it illustrates our commitment to develop a solution that offers all the benefits of cloud-based UC whilst incorporating the traditional features that are still relevant to modern organisations.