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Many executives are either hesitant to make the transition to the cloud or they have it buried under a twenty-page to-do list. Ironically, moving to a cloud-based phone system has the potential to shorten that list immensely. Switching to the cloud provides a secure and effective means of scaling for seasonal spikes. Cloud-based communication systems can also help accounting firms scale year-round.

1. Scalability is Easy to Deploy and Manage

Tax season can be an extremely stressful time for customers, and accounting firms try to ease that stress by scaling to meet customer needs. As a result, IT departments are stretched thin to get additional staff up and running in just a matter of days.

Cloud-based business communication systems can easily accommodate seasonality and a remote, distributed workforce. They take a fraction of the time compared to traditional PBX systems take to deploy, but more important is the fact that it does not require any expensive capital expenditure. With RingCentral, Jackson-Hewitt is able to add new branches/employees to their system in a matter of minutes and the user-friendly interface is simple to learn and navigate. The cloud-based phone system can be a game changer during busy season, but it offers the same simple deployment year-round.

2. Cost-Effective for Scalability

Traditional on-premise PBX systems are cost-prohibitive to deploy, making

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just the first tax season, a sum that will increase annually.

3. Better Flexibility and Accessibility

Cloud-based phone systems allow accounting firms to expand, consolidate or move locations without having to change their communication system. With a cloud-based solution, firms don't have to rely on the unpredictable infrastructure of a temporary or changing workspace. Regardless of their location, they will be connected through their internal system for the features they need.

With RingCentral, firms can add or remove users from their subscription by accessing their virtual extensions online. There's no process of installing or dismantling bulky hardware or phone lines. RingCentral also allows their customers to switch to their subscription plan as they please. If it becomes necessary, they can add or remove features to their service to accommodate the time of year. With a cloud-based communications solution, firms can take advantage of year-round flexibility.

4. Universal Insight and Accessibility

A cloud-based solution is able to connect individual users to the larger, internal company system. Through the cloud, users are able to access analytics, customer information and data through their computer or mobile device. Accountants can access information anywhere, anytime, to increase their efficiency and customer insight.

RingCentral's mobile application offers a user-friendly interface that dispersed employees can easily access with their respective devices, including full-service features such as fax, SMS and video chat, all available from any smartphone or tablet.

If an accounting firm needs to send employees to work remotely or in multiple

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RingCentral uses an advanced call forwarding feature that allows you to forward calls to voicemail or your mobile device if you're away from your desk. The cloud-based solution also provides an auto-receptionist feature, which greets the caller if you're not available. RingCentral's video meetings, business messaging and conferencing functions help accountants stay connected to each other and customers regardless of the season or location.

When an accounting firm switches to a cloud-based phone system, they are switching to a system that adapts to their business needs with uniform quality of service across all their locations. It's flexible and scalable to meet the needs of seasonal customer influxes. They can add or remove users at any time to meet their changing business needs during the busiest and slowest times of year. The cloud-based communications solution could be a game changer during tax season, but the perks are evident year-round.

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Accounting • Technology

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