

WHITE PAPER

BLAST OFF! Moving Tips to Ensure a Smooth Office Transition



EXPLORING A NEW FRONTIER IS EXCITING...

but it can also be a time of much frustration. When done properly, a move offers a new start in a fresh space. It also offers opportunities to make the changes you were thinking about but never had the time or didn't want to spend money on something that was needed but not critical. Often changes can be made with little or no extra cost because the change is done as a part of the move. A move when well planned and well executed can be straight forward, efficient, relatively easy, and even fun.

When a move isn't properly planned however, it can be a very annoying time filled with hidden delays, extra costs, and much stress. Stage 2 Networks has assembled some ideas and tips about moving that are based upon our many years experience with moving businesses. While we cannot guarantee there will never be problems, we will be able to ensure that there are a minimum of disruptions and most importantly, that your clients are able to reach you throughout the move.

Below are some tips that will help ensure that your move is a smooth one.

1 CHOOSE A PROVIDER THAT CAN HANDLE ALL OF YOUR TELECOM AND TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

This way you can focus on your business as these providers handle the technical aspects of your operations. In the end, your organization will streamline its processes, save money, and minimize the disruption to your business. It is never too early to start the planning for a move, even if you haven't signed a lease or have a moving date. Call Stage 2 Networks at any time and ask the experts.

2 BE PREPARED AND USE YOUR RESOURCES

If you are moving, you will want to have easy access to your providers' service people, including phone numbers during normal business time and after hours. You may want to print out the contact list or keep it in your phone or PDA. This way you can call them in a heartbeat if you run into some unforeseen problems during the move. If you use Stage 2 Networks to assist your move, we will help by contacting you in advance and during the move to make sure that everything is proceeding according to your plan.

3 EXPECT DELAYS AND PLAN FOR THEM

Be prepared both operationally and financially. It is better to have and not need than to need and not have! Most importantly, find out if you can stay an extra week or month at your current location if the move is delayed, and don't forget to find out the additional cost. Determine if some employees can work from other offices or home if needed. Also, check with your movers, utilities companies, post office mail forwarding (it can take up to 2 weeks for you to receive forwarded mail from the post office), etc.

At Stage 2 Networks, we can help by being able to move you very quickly and adjust the move date as needed. If you are using Stage 2 Networks for phones, we can arrange for the phones to be up and running when needed, even if there are delays or the move is ready sooner than

expected. We can even arrange for your calls to go to multiple locations or your cell phone during the move. We can also assist with allowing people to work from home or other offices as needed.

4 OVER-COMMUNICATE

When moving service from one location to another (whether it is your Internet access, phone service, technology, etc.), make sure all your providers have the same information and timeline. Your service providers should coordinate the switchover with each other at least 20 business days prior to the implementation. Remember the age-old adage—over communicating is better than under communicating. Some providers require more notice than others. You should start the communication process a minimum of two months in advance. Also, don't forget to notify your customers. Send out a newsletter and put a notification on your website.

Stage 2 Networks can help by formatting a newsletter and providing a scheduled mass mailing for you. The notification should let everyone know a tentative move date and then provide a confirmed date. You should also provide an alternative way to be reached during the move. Above all, personally visit your new location frequently and talk to all parties as often as possible. Do not assume that your vendors are communicating with each other.

5 TEST IN ADVANCE

Install and test services at least 3-5 business days prior to your move. We can help by having a Stage 2 Networks technician on site to test the LAN, set up your servers, or other items as needed. If you don't have an IT staff or outside technical consultant, we can even wire the new office for you so that you are able to move in and start right away.

6 CHANGES OF ADDRESS AND CANCELLATIONS

When you move offices and your phone, Internet, email, web hosting, or other technology services that are billed on a monthly, quarterly, or annually basis, you will need to stop billing with these service providers if making a change of vendor or notify them of the new address if keeping them. Since you are the customer-of-record, third parties (i.e., your new service providers) cannot stop billing on your behalf without proper notification. You are responsible for contacting your old service provider to stop billing for these services. Typically, providers will require a 30-day notice period to stop billing.

IMPORTANT TIP—Plan on having overlapping services at two locations. It will cost a small amount to have a few weeks overlap but will save you a lot of time, money and aggravation if there are any problems. This will create some overlapping service but it will protect you from two possible snags:

- The actual date of your transition services may get pushed out longer than you expected, which (without overlap) creates the possibility that you may experience service down time.
- Your old provider may not service you appropriately if they know that you are leaving.

The bottom line is that you don't want to be without service when you change your technology and telecommunications service. Always have a Plan B. Stage 2 Networks can assist you by having connections ready in the new and old locations at the same time. If you contact Stage 2 Networks in advance, we can keep you running at both locations for as long as needed.

7 COORDINATING THE MOVE

Moving is another area where there can be problems. Confirm that the moving company has the correct addresses, date, times, etc. Make sure the freight elevator is available the day of the move. Find out if there are there any restrictions on who can perform the move as well as what and when they can move. Imagine having your movers arrive at 9 AM only to be told they can't move in prior to 5 PM. Make sure the building staff



is not on holiday leave. Sometimes you are not allowed to duplicate keys and have to get them from building management. Be sure that you have enough keys in advance and distributed to those who need access to the building.

Label EVERYTHING. Make sure that the power supplies that come with a particular device stay with that device. Sometimes the power supply will fit multiple machines but the power requirements can be different. **Failure to put the correct power with a device can damage or destroy the device.** Label the computers, the printers, the phones, etc. Label everything so that when it arrives you don't have to figure who gets what. Also label who sits at each desk that is being moved.

8 COSTS

The biggest cost occurs when things are not done in time and the move cannot take place when scheduled. This means that often a company has to pay for two offices and utilities for a month or so while construction is finished, utilities are turned on, etc. This is especially true if the Internet and phones are being moved with traditional methods such as POTS trunks and DSL. Moving legacy telephones and Internet can be expensive. These companies, ILECs, often charge about \$143.00 to move the first line and approximately \$68.00 for each additional line. In addition to the line move fee there are charges for punch down blocks, tax, service order charges, etc. If you are using Stage 2's VoIP service, either with a hosted PBX or with your own PBX and our trunking, these costs can be reduced or eliminated.

You may need your main number remote call forwarded (RCF) which ILECs charge approximately \$20.00 per path plus the cost of a local call and a service charge. With legacy service you'll need two to five days in advance for the RCF to take into effect. Stage 2 Networks can help. With our VoIP service we can do this within minutes. Depending upon your needs, you may also have the ability to do this yourself through a portal.

You should budget time and funds for several hours of technical support for voice, data, phone system vendor, and tech consultant time. You may not need it but be prepared just in case. It is always better to have and not need than to need and not have. Often there is a fair amount of coordination and sometimes on-site coordination that may need to happen between your vendors.

9 CONSTRUCTION

Construction costs and delays are another source of aggravation for many. Often the construction is not finished on time. Additionally, many contractors are pushing to get the low bid so they fail to point out likely sources of delays, overages, etc. Coordinate any construction efforts with your other vendors in order to save time and money. You don't want your phone system scheduled for installation the same day that the carpet is being installed. Additionally, there are items that can be installed more efficiently during construction than afterwards, such as cabling. You will need to comply with the following checklist in order for your PBX system to be installed correctly and your office phone system is set-up properly:

- Your new location should have a dedicated room or closet for your telecom and data equipment.
- The telecom room or closet should have at least 2 sufficient power outlets.
- The telecom room or closet should have a solid wood backboard of at least 3/4" thick on the wall.
- The office must be cabled with CAT5 in order to connect your internet and PBX phone.
- There should be a cable run to each workstation.
- There must be at least one available power outlet per workstation for the phone.
- The cable runs should be terminated on a patch panel.



It is important to have enough electrical outlets and capacity and that they are installed at the correct locations, especially inside your phone/internet closet. You don't want to have to string extension cords across your new office. Design your office floor plan well prior to the outlet allocation. Have your Internet and phone jacks near outlets. Note where your equipment intensive areas are, such as copier, fax, shredder, etc. and plan for their power and connectivity needs as well.

Contact Stage 2 Networks in advance and we can take a look at the new office. We'll provide some ideas on your wiring and even recommend contractors if needed.

10 KEEPING YOUR PHONE NUMBER

You can keep your existing phone numbers when you move. If you use VoIP the move is much easier and less expensive. If you are using POTS lines you may not be able to transfer the number IF the new central office cannot handle the number. This doesn't always happen but in a fair number of cases it does happen. If this is the case, you will need to remote call forward (RCF) the numbers you wish to keep with enough paths to handle all the incoming calls. It is generally \$20.25 per path plus the cost of a local line as well as the cost of a local call. If you have an RCF with three paths, then you can receive up to three incoming calls. The fourth concurrent call will receive a busy signal. Your cost for an RCF with three paths is approximately \$60.75 per month, plus the line at the new location, plus each incoming call will be billed at a local call rate. Stage 2 Networks can reduce or eliminate these expenses with their VoIP service.

11 PHONE SYSTEM

If you have your own premise based PBX, the phone system is a major part of the move. First, make sure you have a vendor who will move the system. Often vendors do not want to move a system if it is over 5 or 10 years old. If anything breaks it can be difficult to get parts. They may move it with no guarantees.

If you were thinking about a new system or a hosted system, this is a good time to make the change if it makes business sense. Stage 2 Networks can help, especially if this is a temporary move. We can provide a hosted system either temporarily or permanently, reducing the need for wiring, hardware, etc.

Be sure that you coordinate with the phone system vendor for any changes or additions. It can take a full day to remove a system and one to three days to reinstall it, run the cables, and program the system. Coordinate with Stage 2 Networks or your current provider for the main number to be forwarded or for a message to be played during the move. With Stage 2 Networks business trunking, we can overlay some hosted PBX features on your business lines that will make the move seamless to your customers. If you don't have a PBX vendor, we can assist you in finding one who will move and service your PBX.





At Stage 2 Networks, we're motivated and inspired every day by our customers and their partners. They use our voice and data products and services to implement a constellation of creative solutions to business problems, while staying connected to what's most important to them – their customers. We run our business in much the same way, and believe that by seeing telecommunications and technology through our customer's eyes, we will continue to develop and deploy meaningful and useful technologies and solutions to satisfy and exceed expectations for your ever changing and evolving needs.

Stage 2 offers a robust suite of products that include Cloud Voice, SIP, Unified Communications (UC), internet connectivity and MPLS. Whether you are a single or multi-site organization with stationary or remote users, Stage 2 Networks' suite of custom, on-demand voice and data solutions is scalable enough to provide you with an integrated and futuristic communications system. Our solutions are designed to fit your specific needs by a dedicated team of the best voice experts in the universe.

Contact Us For more information on Stage 2 Networks Hosted PBX solutions and other services: 212.497.8089 sales@stage2networks.com