

# CURE FOR THE COMMON CARRIER



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## Orion Can Help

### Telecom Cost Reduction

### Network Design

### Network Pricing

- Voice
- Data
- Internet
- SIP Trunking

### Billing Resolution

### Contract Management

### Relocations

### Project Management

### On-Going Telecom Support

### Telecom Consulting

### And Much, Much More!

## ENTERING THE CLOUD

### SOME COMMON FIRST STEPS TO IMPLEMENTING CLOUD SERVICES

With most organizations these days focusing on driving their business, an increasing number of organizations are turning to hosted services. Not only do these hosted solutions often reduce overall costs, but these services also incorporate maintenance and support, freeing you up to focus on those elements that more directly impact your business.

These hosted elements often fall into the very generic term of the “Cloud”. Listed below are some specific elements that may benefit your organization.

**Hosted Telephone Systems** ~ When considering a new telephone system, there is first the purchase of the actual system itself. And then, there are the telephone services including local and long distance. Plus, there are the support and maintenance charges to keep the system working as expected. As all these elements are added up, the overall costs can be daunting.

Instead, an increasing number of organizations are looking to hosted services that bundle all of these elements into one neat package. Compared to the upfront and on-going costs of purchasing a system, these hosted solutions can often significantly reduce your overall costs AND leave the maintenance and support to the hosted vendor.

**Hosted Applications** ~ With every organization, there are a number of applications that are critical to day-to-day operations. What many organizations are finding is that some of these applications such as e-mail and MS Office can be

hosted instead of residing on the customer location. By doing so, organizations are finding that the costs of licensing fees and maintenance of these systems can be greatly reduced. And, the costs of upgrading these applications is minimal vs. supporting them internally.

**Managed Firewall** ~ Organizations have traditionally purchased equipment to protect their internal systems. Instead, many carriers are now providing managed firewall services that are hosted on the carrier end of the Internet connection. Not only does the carrier manage and support the device, but they also can provide on-line portals where you can monitor your firewall activity and proactive notifications should an intrusion attempt be detected. From a cost stand point, the addition of managed firewall services can be minimal compared to the costs of purchasing and supporting an internal firewall.

The migration to managed services is not for everyone. However, if you are looking at the purchase of new equipment, we would recommend looking at the managed service options that are available. When comparing all of the costs of purchase, support and maintenance, many organizations have found how effective these solutions can be.



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**Your Cure for the Common Carrier**

# Telcom Tidbits

## FROM ORION COMMUNICATIONS

### Creating A Baseline

Before making any changes to your telecom environment, it is critical that a current basing be created to ensure a smooth transition.

- **Current Contracts** ~ Know your current contracts to avoid potential termination liabilities.
- **What Do You Like?** ~ What features do you currently have that are a requirement moving forward?
- **How Are You Using Services** ~ Many elements such as fax, security lines, elevator lines, etc. are often overlooked.
- **Create a Wish List** ~ What types of features or benefits would help you moving forward?

### Mobility

One of the biggest challenges that is faced by organizations these days is the ability to keep up with an increasingly mobile workforce. Whether working from home or traveling between customer appointments, users need to stay connected so that they can provide superior support to an ever-demanding customer base. Integrating voice and data to this mobile workforce can be a challenge as new tools are implemented such as tablets, laptops and smart phones. Make sure you are including these capabilities in your planning.

#### Check Your First Bill

Whenever you make a change to your services, make sure that you are checking your first telephone bill. There are often incorrect charges and correcting them quickly will be much easier than down the road. Check for incorrect one-time or installation charges, higher than expected line and usage rates, and/or missed discounts. Many carrier contracts include time frames to reconcile these charges. Missing these windows can minimize your ability to get credits.

### Did You Know ...

Implementing the basic functions of disaster recovery and business continuity can have a minimal impact on your bottom line. Many organizations can implement steps that would protect them 85% of the time for less than \$100 per month, sometimes less than \$10 per month.

## CUSTOMERS SPEAK OUT

### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS OF HOSTED TELEPHONE SOLUTIONS

In a recent study completed by Inzenka, a New York based business growth consulting firm, organizations with less than 500 employees were interviewed. The respondents included organizations that had not yet implemented hosted telephone services as well as those who had converted.

#### Category: Features and Benefits

<b>BEFORE:</b>	63% thought they would have greater features and benefits with a purchased system.
<b>AFTER:</b>	76% found that they received superior features/benefits from their hosted solution.

#### Category: System Management

<b>BEFORE:</b>	74% of the respondents thought an internal system would be easier to manage.
<b>AFTER:</b>	73% found that their hosted solution was easier to manage than their previous system.

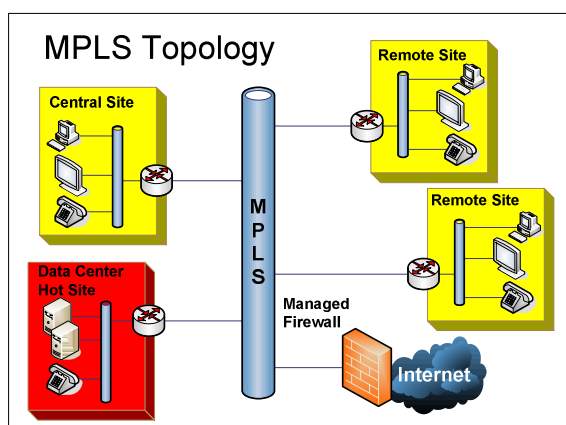
#### Category: Call Quality

<b>BEFORE:</b>	40% of the respondents that call quality would be inferior for a hosted solution
<b>AFTER:</b>	93% found that call quality was better than they expected.

## MULTIPLE LOCATION SOLUTIONS ADDING SERVICES TO YOUR MPLS NETWORK

Many organizations with multiple locations are taking advantage of MPLS as a data WAN solution to interconnect locations. However, these solutions often still centralize critical applications and Internet services at the central site. This topology assumes a single point of failure in that, if the central site becomes unavailable for any reason, all of the locations are negatively impacted.

Instead, an increasing number of organizations are adding some additional services to their network such as managed, off the MPLS cloud Internet and data center applications as illustrated below:



By implementing Internet and/or data center applications off the MPLS network, these services are then available directly to any of the remote locations without first having to access the central site. Not only does this take the load off of the bandwidth at the central site, but it adds a layer of business continuity to support the remote sites. In addition, there are some additional benefits to reviewing the current MPLS topology.

1. **Increase Bandwidth** ~ Access to managed firewalls and data centers no longer require traditional access services provided by the local carriers. Therefore, cost components are limited to port speeds.
2. **Resiliency** ~ Carrier data centers are built to survive including back up power, DR equipment and 24/7 staffed facilities. This functionality can be very expensive if implemented directly by customers.

These days, access to critical data applications and Internet access is vital to the survival of an organization. By implementing these services as a node off of an MPLS network, downtime can be minimized and day-to-day speeds can be increased significantly.

## DRIVING BUSINESS FACTORS

### WHY CUSTOMERS ARE MOVING TO HOSTED SOLUTIONS

Obviously, cost is still one of the main reasons that customers are considering any change to their business environment. There must be an ROI. However, there are many other driving factors to customers considering these solutions for their organization.

- **Flexibility** ~ The only thing that is consistent in business today is change. Organizations must have the ability to adapt to ever-changing business environments to stay ahead of their competition. Hosted solutions often provide the ability to satisfy these requirements and adapt.
- **Features/Benefits** ~ Because these hosted solutions are implemented on a grand scale, many customers find that there are more individual features than if a system had been purchased directly and can be implemented on a user level as necessary.

- **Support/Maintenance** ~ Internal support can be very expensive. And, contracted support can also have high costs and minimal coverage. Hosted solutions often provide for a superior support level leaving upgrades and on-going support in the hands of the provider.
- **Disaster Recovery** ~ What is your plan B if your current services do not work as expected? Company down time can be very expensive and have long lasting negative impacts. With hosted solutions, these DR plans can easily be overlaid providing that peace of mind that services will be available as expected.

In today's business environment, getting more for less can make the overall decision process pretty easy. Although hosted solutions are not ideal for everyone, many organizations are finding that decreased cost and greater overall value makes hosted solutions right for them.

*Your Cure for the Common Carrier*