



Moving Decisions:

*Eight Key Questions for Organizations
Planning to Relocate IT & Telecom Services*



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Eight Key Questions for Organizations Planning to Relocate IT & Telecom Services

At some point, most organizations have to relocate some or all of their operations, raising a variety of financial, strategic and logistical challenges.

Some of these challenges are familiar, such as evaluating new locations, negotiating terms, and managing logistics of the physical move itself. But there is one major set of challenges that has dramatically evolved, especially over the last decade: the relocation of IT and telecom resources. Fortunately, recent developments in IT — notably in the usage of cloud based data solutions — are providing better options while reducing some of the complexity.

This document is intended to provide a broad overview of the major decisions facing an organization planning to relocate — specifically, those related to relocating networking and telephony assets. While every organization has its own unique requirements and challenges, we've listed below some of those most likely to be encountered. The best solution is to work with a professional IT consultant to plan your move, explore your options and manage the actual execution of your plan.

1. Who is the best person in your organization to oversee IT coordination during the move?

Relocations involve an incredible amount of complex IT planning and coordinating — in both technical and scheduling terms. You should determine whether you have the expertise and resources in-house, or need to look elsewhere. Typically, the job requires an individual with significant experience in logistics and project management. Required tasks generally include:

- Collect requirements for systems
- Develop IT relocation budget
- Develop RFPs for systems and professional services for new or relocation items
- Negotiate new contracts or service agreements
- Vendor management
- General construction inputs for design
- HVAC/power for communications rooms
- Rack and system layouts
- Cabling & WiFi design
- Internet Service Provider (ISP) & telecom orders and transition
- Desktop & network printing relocation

It's a high-stakes decision; after all, you'll only have one chance to make a truly successful move. Look for internal personnel with the ability to conduct the tasks listed above, and a workload that will allow them to dedicate themselves to the task for at least two or three months, and probably closer to six. If you cannot find the right skill set and availability in-house, broaden your search to external providers.

2. Does the building have cellular services for all carriers in the building, or will it need to be augmented?

New LEED standards for tighter building envelopes are helping owners maintain or increase the efficiency of HVAC systems, a remarkable accomplishment. The only problem is, these improved envelopes essentially block out the radio frequency (RF) signal for cell services that “bleed” into typical office buildings. (This is why after you move, your initial cell coverage will likely be bad, until you deploy a distributed antenna system to bring the RF signal in. In addition, if cellular services are limited to 1–2 carriers, you’ll need to determine whether corporate mobile phones will work, or if you’ll need to augment the signal or transition to another carrier.

3. Does your new building have fiber connectivity to your ISP or data center?

Most buildings have fiber connectivity for multiple ISPs — but it’s unwise to assume that your particular ISP has fiber capacity or connectivity (or any type of service at all) to a given building. Make a point to determine what type of connectivity is provided by your particular building or buildings. You will have to decide whether you want to use what is already on your premises, or have your ISP “build” it, a process that takes time, and must be factored in the move and in choosing whether to keep or switch service providers. Again, the sooner you start planning this part of the relocation, the better.



4. Will keeping your telephone numbers be important to your organization?

Today, maintaining a corporate telephone number after a relocation is easier than ever. But depending on how far you move from your previous location, keeping your number (or multiple numbers) could be expensive. It's important to understand that the additional cost is not only a one-time expense; depending on your circumstances, your organization could incur an ongoing surcharge of up to 20% of your current charges.

To avoid being blindsided by such expenses, it pays to be proactive. Once you know your new address, contact your service provider and ask for a quote to move the services to the new location. On the other hand, if you will need to change your telephone numbers, you won't have to worry about porting fees and ongoing surcharges. However, you will need to work closely with your communications team to devise a plan for sending external and internal notifications regarding new numbers.

5. Should you move any of your current systems to a hosted, cloud environment, or should you maintain them on site?

Questions about cloud and hosting services are multifaceted, but a few points to consider are:

- **Transitioning your systems and users to the cloud could make your move significantly easier** — not to mention, provide a variety of other strategic benefits, including improved continuity of operations capabilities and cost savings.
- Although many organizations are benefiting from hosted solutions, they require **planning for bandwidth**, and an overall budget transition from capital investments to operating expenses.
- While the total operating cost of hosting is generally higher over a 4–5 year model, **hosting allows organizations to grow or shrink rapidly**, with costs directly associated with the quantity.
- **A premises-based solution typically is more cost effective for an organization that is stable in size** and has staffing to absorb the administration of services.
- **Don't forget about the issue of security** when evaluating the option of a cloud service provider..

6. Should you continue to use your existing vendors, or have them compete with others to provide compatible products?

There's a lot to be said for staying with a provider that has served you well in the past. Even so, writing an RFP and conducting a competitive procurement can save your organization from 10–30% on both the capital and maintenance expenses over the life of a product. The lower range in potential savings is attainable if you seek bids from specific manufacturer distributors for a specific design. The higher range is possible if you develop specific requirements and seek competitive bids from several manufacturers.

7. Should you buy a new Unified Communications (UC) solution, migrate your old one(s), or do some of each?

Before you start planning your IT move, ask yourself two essential questions about your UC or collaborative communications capabilities. First, do your networks meet your current needs? Second, where are your networks in their lifecycle? If they meet your needs and are early in their lifecycles, moving them might make sense. But if your systems are old, and new functionality would provide an increase in productivity, it might make more sense to procure new systems. This is another area where migrating data and apps to the cloud prior to the relocation can significantly reduce the risk and complexity of the relocation.

8. Will you have adequate support for WiFi connectivity?

Most organizations today deploy laptops and cell phones to their users, allowing the users to connect to the Internet internally via WiFi rather than cable. So it's essential to make sure you have the right WiFi systems and security in place before the actual relocation occurs.



Plan on Complexity

As is the case with most decisions involving IT, there are many hard choices to be made, emerging technologies to evaluate, and various potential opportunities, synergies and tradeoffs to consider.

You'll also need to conduct comprehensive planning for the relocation — including establishing a detailed budget for all costs, both operational and one-time, related to IT and telecom.

To learn more about our recommendations and advice for optimizing the results of a relocation of telephony and networking assets, please contact Technology Trends Group at 703.521.1500 or info@ttg-it.com.



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