

More than a PBX

Asterisk

COMMON SOLUTIONS

Asterisk is a powerful, flexible telephony platform that can be used to build:

Voice Mail Systems

IVR Systems

Audio Conference

Platforms

ACDs

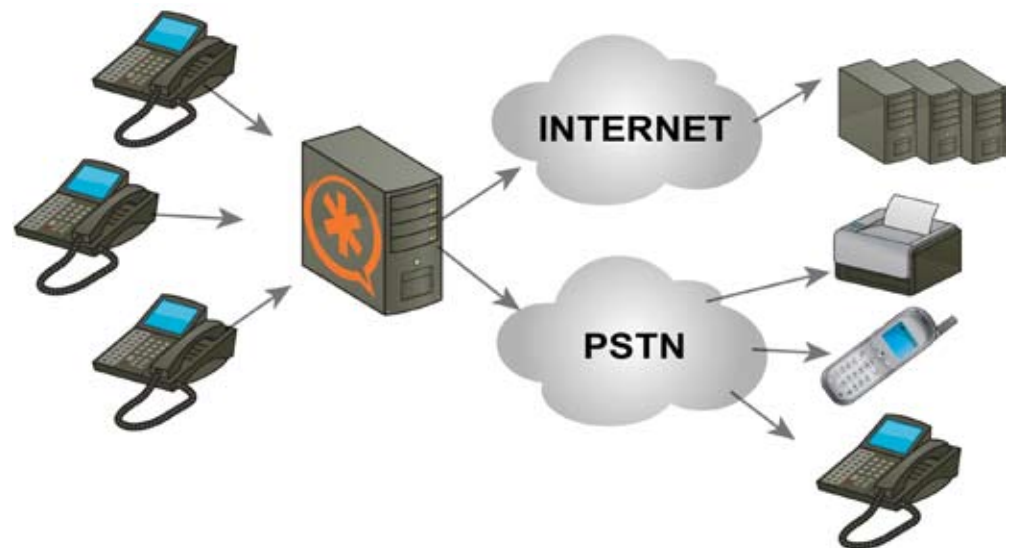
Gateways

PBXs

Powerful, Flexible and Much More than a PBX

Asterisk is often referred to as “the open source PBX.” And while it’s true that you can use Asterisk to build a PBX, a PBX is only one of many applications that can be built with Asterisk.

Asterisk is named after the Unix/Linux wildcard character (*) because like the wildcard Asterisk can be virtually anything. Asterisk is a powerful, flexible telephony platform that can be used to build feature servers, ACDs, gateways, PBXs and more. Following is a snapshot of the most common solutions built on Asterisk.



Asterisk as a Voice Mail System

Voice messaging is generally an expensive addition to traditional PBX systems and carrier switches. Asterisk drastically reduces the cost of implementing voicemail by replace aging and expensive proprietary voicemail servers with a low-cost, flexible and unlimited solution based on Asterisk software, standard computer hardware and Digium telephony interface cards.

In one example, the University of Pennsylvania migrated more than 10,000 voicemail users off a discontinued and unsupported legacy voicemail system and used Asterisk to develop a highly-scalable, unified voicemail system. The new Asterisk-based system was deployed for approximately \$2,000 versus traditional systems that can cost more than \$250,000. Plus, it stored far more hours of messages than the system it replaced.

Asterisk as an IVR

Interactive Voice Response systems (IVRs) empower customers to help themselves while saving money through automation of routine and repetitive tasks. From basic call routing (“Press one for sales...”) to advanced database-driven business applications, IVR is a killer application for virtually any business.

One instance of this occurred in Ireland where a company used Asterisk to build an IVR to work with their existing business phone system. The Asterisk IVR platform and a multi-lingual speech recognition system recognizes and accepts voice commands from callers speaking various languages in Western and Central Europe.

Asterisk as an Audio Conference Platform

Travel can be expensive and time consuming. However, businesses can save time and money by bringing teams together on the phone with an Asterisk-based teleconferencing solution. Traditional conference bridge systems can cost thousands of dollars and generally include per-user or per-call license fees. Building a full-featured, customized or highly-integrated conference bridge based on Asterisk software, stock PC hardware and Digium telephony interface cards can help your business start saving money today.

In the U.S., a well-known financial services firm with 12,000 advisors serving individual investors throughout the country uses an Asterisk-based audio conference platform for internal meetings and training.

Asterisk as an ACD

Automatic Call Distributors (ACDs) allow call centers to handle thousands of simultaneous calls, routing them to agents based on caller input, dialed number, load and other factors. ACD systems typically cost tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars and require specialized training to install and operate. With Asterisk, you can build a powerful ACD for the cost of the server hardware and phones.

A large call center in Canada uses an ACD built on Asterisk to distribute calls to agents at sites across Canada. The centralized ACD monitors the queues in this multi-site environment and directs calls to the next available agent.

Asterisk as a Gateway

Voice over IP (VoIP) gateway systems bridge the gap between cutting-edge IP communications technologies and legacy communications gear. Asterisk's multi-protocol call processing engine makes it the ultimate gateway solution, bridging analog and digital (T1/E1) telephony connections with VoIP protocols like SIP, IAX2, H.323 and MGCP.

For example, a call center has sites in small college towns in the northeastern region of the U.S. to take advantage of an educated workforce and low labor costs. However, it didn't count on the high telecom facilities costs common in rural and otherwise lightly-populated areas. Using Asterisk as a gateway and IAX2 (inter-Asterisk exchange) trunks for voice compression, the call center now sends 100 calls over a T1 line versus the normal 24 calls, reducing the company's leased line costs by \$70,000 per month.

Asterisk as a PBX

Asterisk was originally developed as a PBX and today represents approximately 18% of the global market for business telephone systems. The base feature set includes many of the most popular and powerful features and functionality found in proprietary PBXs. Configuring Asterisk PBX requires knowledge of Linux, telephony, basic script programming and IP networking. For small and mid-size businesses who would rather point and click than compile and script, we offer Switchvox, Digium's award-winning family of IP PBXs. Switchvox IP PBX combines hardware with Asterisk software and a sophisticated, user-friendly GUI for easy access to unified communications and the broad range of other features you would expect from an Asterisk-based PBX.

Asterisk from DOW Networks

DOW Networks is an expert in Asterisk technology employing several Digium Certified Asterisk Professionals (dCAPs) on its technical team. We can design, build and deploy Asterisk systems to serve as feature servers, ACDs, gateways and, of course, feature-rich PBXs. We also offer Asterisk PBX and many of these other solutions as hosted services.

DOW Networks is a next-generation telecommunications service and solutions provider focused on meeting the international inbound and outbound calling needs of call centers, hotels, distributed enterprises and SMBs. From offices in the US, South Africa, Costa Rica and Jamaica, it serves customers in more than 50 countries with telecommunications and enhanced voice over IP (VoIP) solutions including toll free services, international call termination, IP-based PBXs and more.