

# THE CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS OPPORTUNITY



How communication service providers can use cloud numbers to improve loyalty and profitability

**T**he nature of communications technology has changed, thanks to the cloud. It is helping businesses drive efficiencies, reduce costs and tap into new market opportunities, and is a growth catalyst for digital service providers, enabling them to create a global footprint.

Adopting cloud-based telecommunications services eliminates the need for expensive on-site equipment, enhances the productivity of satellite workers and increases service agility. However, keeping up with the demand for global connectivity, service flexibility and reliability depends on having the right partner to manage this at scale.

This paper assesses how digital service providers should address these challenges. **It also outlines the building blocks of cloud communications, the role of global telecom provider and deployment strategies for ensuring high-definition mobile-first voice experiences.**

# THE ENTERPRISE-TELECOMS INFRASTRUCTURE GAP

Be it physical goods or digital services, enterprises today depend on conducting business overseas. As the pace and scale of international operations grow, so does the cost of communications infrastructure.

Telecoms-related expenditure is forecast to reach USD 527 billion by 2019<sup>1</sup>. Currently, however, huge revenues are lost due to legacy PBX infrastructure downtime and other issues caused by traditional communications hardware and IT systems.



**LEGACY COMM. SYSTEM**

-  **High capital costs** (equipment)
-  **Cumbersome processes** (licences in individual markets, regulations, agreements with local service providers)
-  **Restrictive set-up** (heavy infrastructure)
-  **Quality of Service** (loss due to downtime)

Success in this global environment depends on simple, cost-effective connectivity. Colleagues need to communicate with each other, customers and suppliers without worrying about long-distance call charges. Customers want to dial a local support centre number and are reluctant to call overseas and premium rate numbers.

Companies expanding to new geographies want to avoid the hassle of securing telecoms licences, phone lines and purchasing PBX equipment. Their telecoms infrastructure must also support conference calling, telepresence and enterprise-wide communications platforms.



**MODERN COMM. SYSTEM**

-  **Conference calling**  
Multi-location presence, high-quality connectivity, low cost
-  **Telepresence**  
Real-time video/audio conferencing from remote locations; high-quality, high-bandwidth connections needed; reduced cost, travel time and carbon footprint
-  **Enterprise-wide comm. platforms**  
Collaboration, information sharing, users in multiple locations, access from multiple devices

Traditional telecoms hardware is not designed for today's digital economy, posing significant challenges as regards maintenance, scaling and upgrades. Unsurprisingly, enterprises are seeking better alternatives.

Although the use cases and end-user requirements for these communication alternatives may vary, there is one constant – expectations are higher than ever before. For this reason, it is vital that any cloud-based telephony platform is easy to integrate through APIs that allow for easy provisioning, management and troubleshooting. Digital service providers are ideally placed to Capitalize on this market opportunity, if they have the right delivery partner.



<sup>1</sup> Gartner digital business research (October 2015)

# THE CLOUD IS THE NEW HOME OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

Cloud communications has emerged as the solution of choice for CIOs seeking a global communications system that transcends the challenges of legacy hardware. Most enterprises are already using the cloud for IT-based applications such as e-mail or back-up. 90% of companies either have applications running in the cloud or are planning to use cloud apps within the next three years<sup>2</sup>. In fact, by 2018, at least half of all IT expenditure is expected to be associated with the cloud<sup>3</sup>.

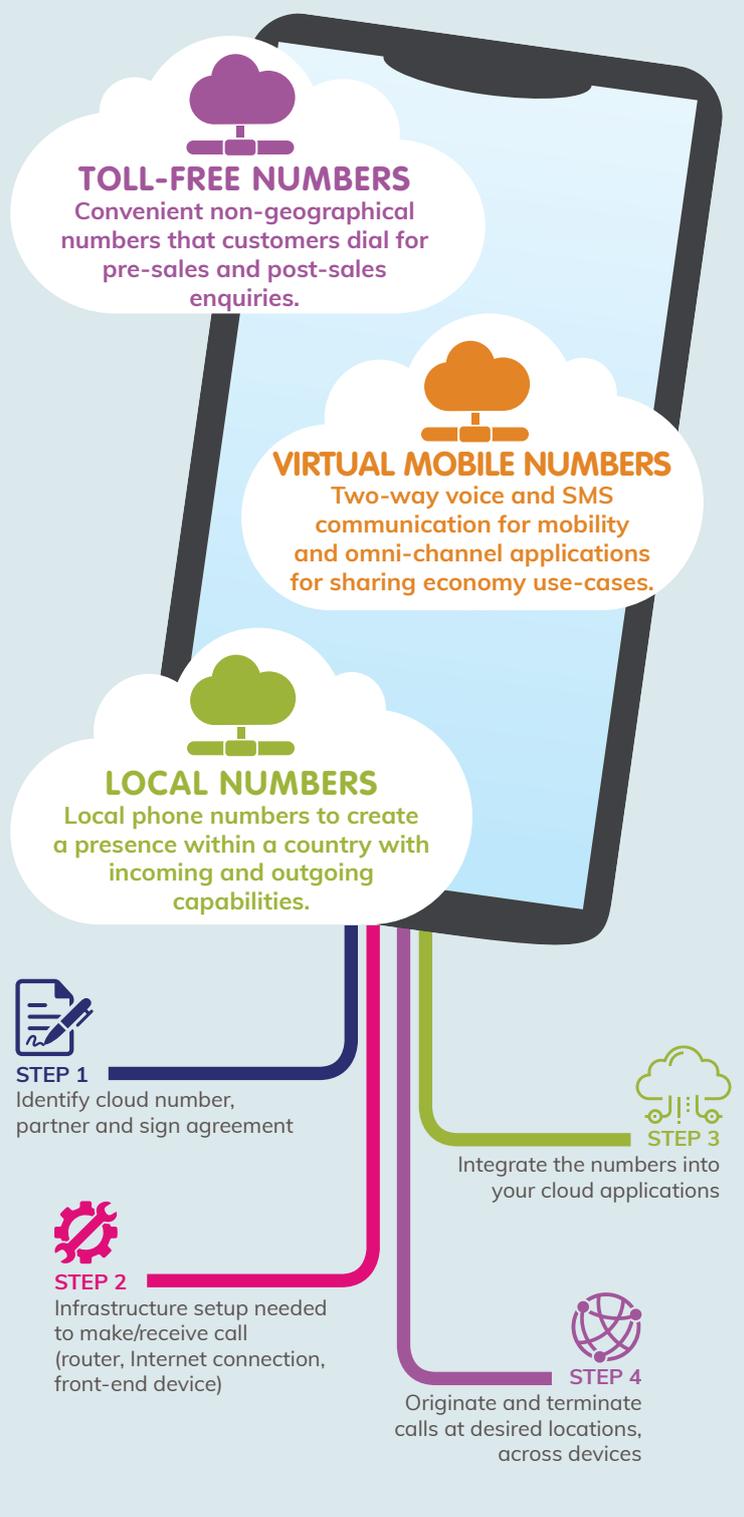
Shifting to cloud-based communication means moving away from separate telecoms infrastructure with a set number of individual phone numbers and extensions. Calls can now be made and received over cloud numbers via the Internet or a secure private backbone, based on the criticality of the usage.

Cloud numbers, also known as virtual numbers, are the fundamental building blocks of cloud communications. These are local numbers also known as toll numbers or local DIDs that can be used for all enterprise telephony needs, for example customer contact, unified communications, enterprise communications and conference calls. Cloud numbers are outsourced, meaning enterprises can quickly and easily set up telephony services in new markets, or offer value-added telephony services, without the hassle of regulatory applications, licence acquisition and so on.

They are easy to use, as applications can originate or terminate calls using cloud numbers on any Internet-connected device. Calls can also be diverted easily to multiple locations, facilitating seamless remote working and operations outsourcing.

Another benefit is that cloud numbers can also allow for two-way voice interactions. This means that not only can customers call a customer service agent, but those agents can also call customers back directly, which makes for a much richer, fulfilling and less frustrating interaction.

## Types of cloud numbers



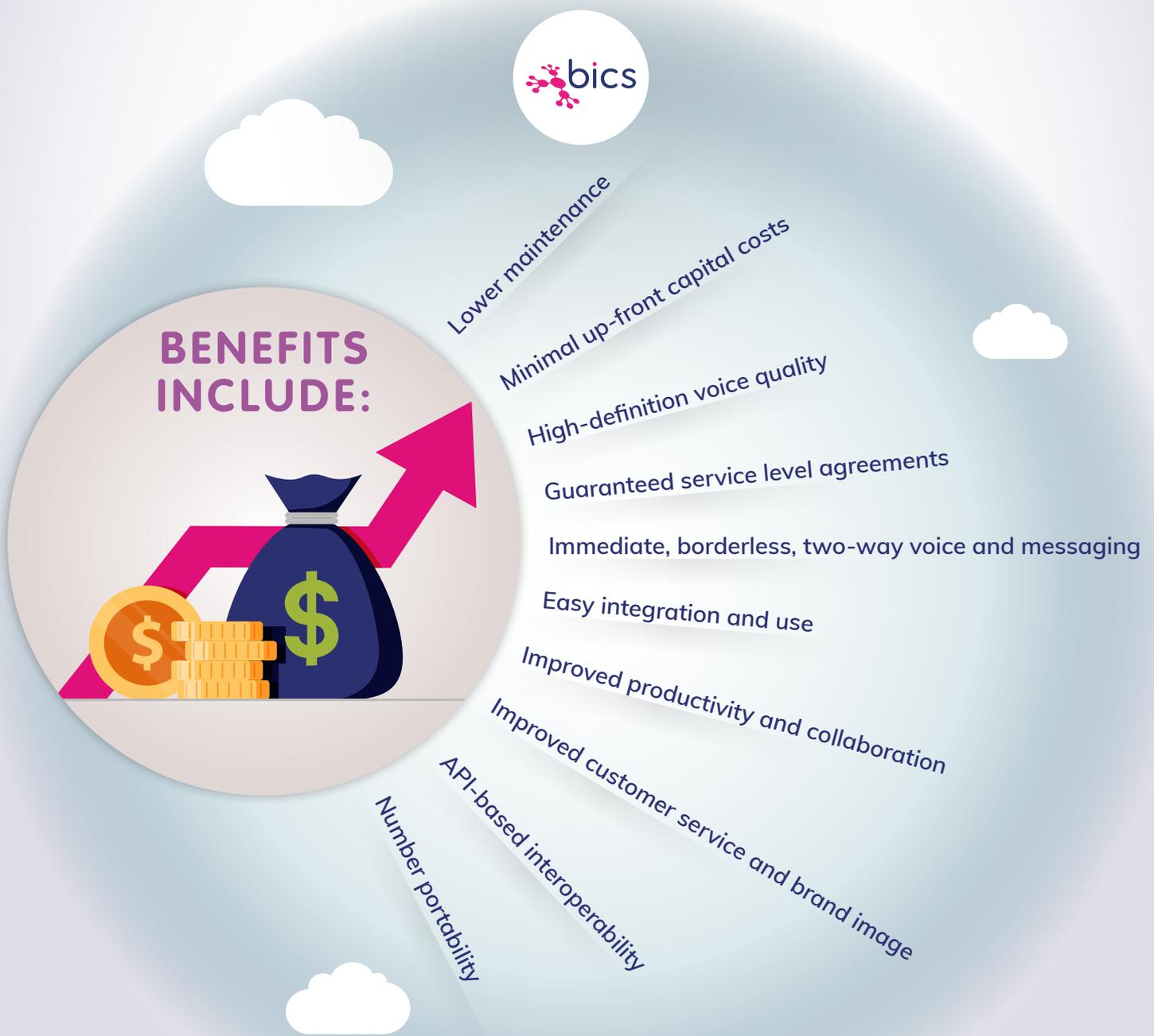
<sup>2</sup> CompTIA cloud computing trends report (November 2014)

<sup>3</sup> IDC FutureScape report: worldwide cloud predictions (2016)

# CLOUD COMMUNICATIONS OFFERS COMPELLING ADVANTAGES

Adopting hosted cloud telephony means that all communications infrastructure is placed in a virtual environment hosted and maintained by a third party – including servers, routing technology, ISDN lines, MPLS connectivity, SIP trunk and anti-fraud services.

Once a provider has been selected, companies then complete a simple agreement outlining the requested service elements, including amount of numbers and expected capacity.



# OVERCOMING THE LIMITATIONS OF TRADITIONAL NETWORKS



**T**he limitations of traditional communications networks can be largely eliminated by switching to cloud numbers.

## Quality of Experience (QoE)

Cloud numbers deliver seamless quality on calls made over carrier-grade telecoms networks. Using high-availability secure backbones, these calls are delivered in high-definition and with outstanding QoE.

## Deployment, ROI and maintenance

The up-front costs associated with the deployment of physical PBX infrastructure makes up a large proportion of the telecoms cost.

Cloud technology changes this. **All the company needs is a router and an active Internet connection and front-end device to make and receive calls, minimising deployment time and offering high scalability.**

## Customer service imperatives

The inability to engage in two-way communications with customers has long been a challenge for the customer service industry. Cloud numbers allow companies to introduce two-way communications, thus empowering customers and improving service delivery in industries ranging from logistics to call centres. By allowing consumers to not only call a customer service agent but also be called back by the agent, two-way communication can make for a much richer, more fulfilling and less frustrating interaction.

## Seamless global connectivity

Traditional telecoms networks can inhibit the pace of geographic expansion for a global enterprise, which has to deal with cumbersome processes such as building their own infrastructure or finding a local telecom partner. Global cloud number solutions can offer a geographic footprint in more than 100 markets around the world, making provisioning in new markets as easy as clicking on a button.

## Local regulations for emergency calls

In many countries, regulations require local phone numbers to be able to access emergency services with the country's short code: '911' in the USA, '100' in India, and so on. The most advanced cloud number services ensure that every local phone number can place an emergency call using the relevant short codes, and it is important for businesses to check whether this capability is offered by their chosen partner.

# THE ROLE OF THE GLOBAL TELECOM PROVIDER

**G**lobal telecom providers are at the centre of communications and service innovation, with established, robust and secure networks. They have the international reach, network transport resilience and local operator relationships needed to access cloud number ranges across the world and deliver end-to-end, on-demand global connectivity. They can also provide protection from voice fraud.

A global telecom provider like BICS acts as a global digital hub for cloud number services, and can instantly provision cloud numbers and deliver fast, reliable connectivity around the world.

## Why choose a wholesale carrier like BICS?



## CONCLUSION

**T**he digital economy mandates greater collaboration, flexibility and the need for mobile-first connectivity solutions. In this context, cloud-based technologies are set to transform business communications.

For digital service providers looking to improve loyalty and profitability, **BICS offers a straight path to the cloud.**

With an extensive cloud number portfolio, international reach and local number support in more than 140 countries, **BICS is unrivalled in coverage and support.**

Building on its position as a leading global telecom provider and cloud communications enabler, BICS makes it easy for businesses to improve efficiencies and cut costs, taking advantage of the potential offered by the cloud.





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FOR MORE INFORMATION  
PLEASE VISIT [WWW.BICS.COM](http://WWW.BICS.COM)

