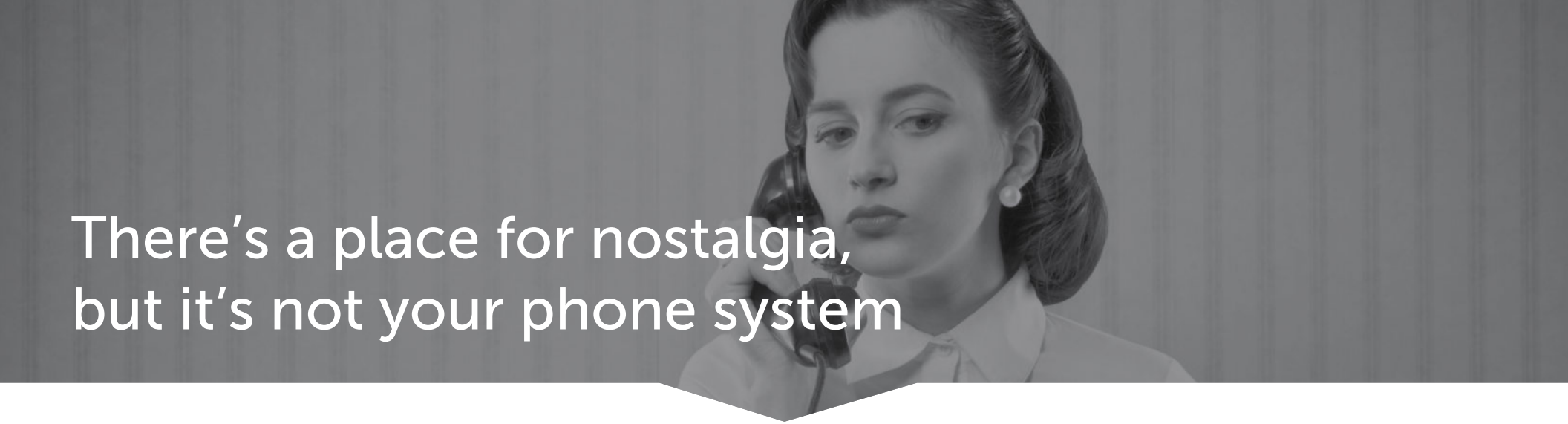




THE HIDDEN COSTS OF NEGLECTING YOUR SMB PHONE SYSTEM





There's a place for nostalgia, but it's not your phone system

It can be nice to relish the memories of simpler times. But as great as it can be to fondly remember the way things were, you can't let it hold your technology – and your business – back. The price could be lost productivity, lost revenue, lost operating budget and even lost customers.

Fortunately, today's business phone systems are designed to eliminate the financial and operational challenges of older systems. And when it comes to your customer and employee experiences, nostalgia alone won't cut it.

[Read on to learn why you should ditch that old phone system.](#)

Old technology threatens your revenue stream.

Alexandra Myers • Segment Marketing Manager • Direct Capital



It's great if you update your business to the newest, most technologically advanced point-of-sale systems on the market. But if you aren't utilizing all of their functionalities, are you really benefiting? The same goes with your phone systems. Having a working, high-tech phone at your business is something you know you need, but knowing how to use it properly is just as important.

If you're a local business, customers want you to stay local. You will be much better suited – and better remembered by your customers – if you stick with a local area code in your phone number.

Being aware of common phone system mistakes and working to fix them will make sure you aren't missing out on sales opportunities. It will also keep your customers from becoming frustrated, and ultimately making a call to your competitor.

Don't get left in the dust of today's tech.

James Smith • President • Universal Connectivity



Technology is in a state of constant change, making it very easy to get left in the dust of today's business environment. Hosted technologies – cloud – based services, are the new standard for managing technology. Phone systems are no exception.

Phone systems, including hosted voice over Internet protocol (VoIP), are incredibly complicated and can easily confuse individuals from IT right up through the C-level. People are very busy and frankly don't care to spend time learning the granular details of a phone system.

The average worker spends five hours a month on the telephone. The average call center worker could spend five to seven times that per month on the phone. The top two priorities for companies that have customer contact centers? Improving the customer experience and agent productivity. Decreasing cost is third on the list.

New systems let you punch above your weight.

Nisha Pandey • Founder • SEO Techy World

Okay, you're running a small business. But, do you have to think small? Or, have you got ambitious growth plans?

If you're going for growth, make sure you've got a phone system that will grow with your vision. For a start, it should let you punch above your weight and communicate as efficiently as your bigger rivals. And, it should have the flexibility to adapt to change and opportunity immediately.

So, how does a phone system do all that? It can if you deploy a hosted PBX. With a hosted PBX option, instead of spending your valuable funds on telephone infrastructure or hiring a technician to run it, you pay an affordable monthly fee that covers the service and its maintenance. Now, you've got capital to invest in other essential areas and access to a great phone service.

Good systems build positive impressions.

Daniel Harris • Market Research Associate • Software Advice



Given the importance of online channels in today's economy, small businesses may treat phone system programming as an afterthought rather than a matter of strategy. But to gain a competitive edge, you must ensure the best experience possible across all the channels your business uses to reach customers.

Your small business phone system isn't only a crucial link to your customers – it's also an opportunity to build positive impressions of your brand. However, this works both ways. Poor use of your phone system can weaken your customers' trust in your company's ability to deliver quality products and services.

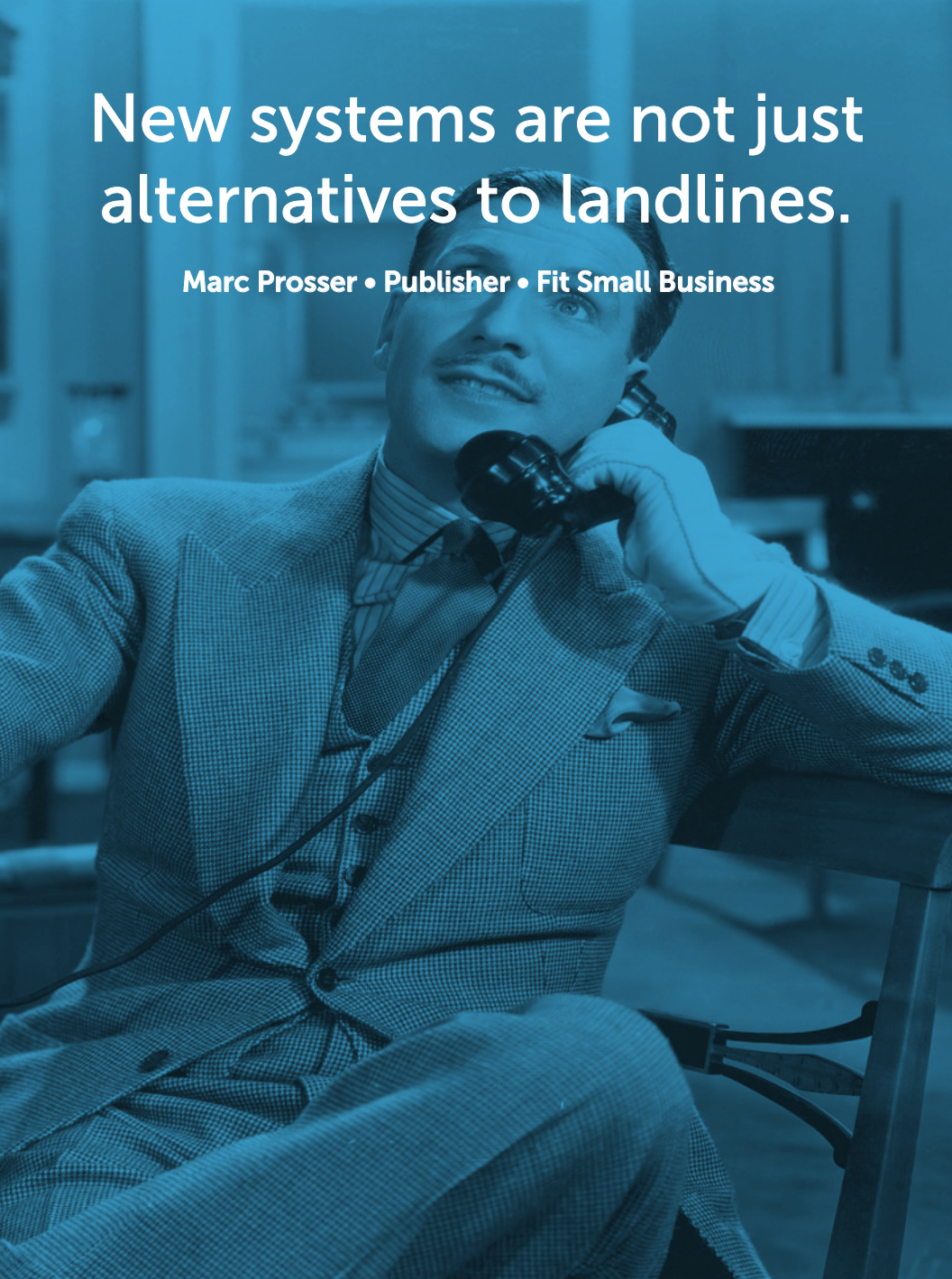
Good systems mean more referrals.

Jason Rueger • Author • Fit Small Business



Maybe you have been on the fence for a while about whether or not to get a phone system for your business. Well, it's past time to hop off the fence. With the evolution of VoIP phone technology, you can now get all the features and convenience of a traditional business phone system for much less hassle and cost. Instead of having to set up physical lines for every phone, VoIP uses your Internet connection to make calls. So the only caveat is that you want to make sure your Internet is fast enough before committing to a VoIP system.

Have you ever experienced that sickening feeling in the pit of your stomach when you walk into the office and listen to a frustrated message from an important client? With VoIP features such as find me/follow me and call routing rules, you can have important calls sent straight to your personal cell phone or have them ring all the members of the team simultaneously to make sure someone picks up. That means happier clients and more referrals.

A man with a mustache, wearing a light-colored suit and a patterned vest, is sitting in a chair and talking on a black rotary telephone. The image has a blue tint.

New systems are not just alternatives to landlines.

Marc Prosser • Publisher • Fit Small Business

Traditional small business phone systems have historically had a large advantage over VoIP phones from a call quality standpoint. However, due to increases in Internet speeds and technology innovation among VoIP service providers, this is no longer the case.

Switching to a VoIP phone system usually means buying new phones. You can technically use your old phones paired with an adapter, a softphone on your computer, or an app on your cell phone. But to get the most functionality you'll want to purchase new VoIP handsets. These range in price from \$30 for a basic device to several hundred dollars for phones that support HD video conferencing.

VoIP technology has advanced to the point that it's no longer merely an alternative to landlines. A VoIP system can provide a business features they were never able to achieve with a landline, while also saving money and improving productivity.

Today's tech will save on call costs and upgrades.

Jeff Nolte • Owner • Cheasapeake Telephone Systems



If you're still using a traditional PBX or key phone system, you should consider getting rid of it once and for all. Here are just a few reasons to make the move to today's technology:

Lower start up costs. Traditional business phone systems generally required a significant upfront investment in dedicated hardware. New systems can be deployed on data infrastructure or arranged off-site on a service provider's platform.

Lower monthly costs. You'll save on call costs, moves-adds-changes, maintenance, and upgrades.

Wealth of features. You get all of the traditional features you have grown accustomed to, with the added advantages of unified messaging, video, presence, call center capabilities, and single phone number mobility, just to name a few.



Starting new can lower TCO while gaining features.

Chad Van Derrick • Director • Governance SAP

Back in the day, the heart of an office phone system was a large closet filled with a jungle of copper wires and some mystery boxes running a PBX to route calls. Installation was expensive, telephones were expensive, long-distance service was expensive – and to top it off, the learning curve for maintaining it all was huge.

Starting with a new system may be the best option for capitalizing on the lowest total cost of ownership while gaining the newest features. Requiring just a broadband Internet connection and a contract with a VoIP provider, next-generation PBX systems feature auto-attendant, automated call distribution, voicemail, and conference bridges – all for less than \$1,000. Plus, they're simple to manage through their Web-based interfaces.

Why not update your phone system?

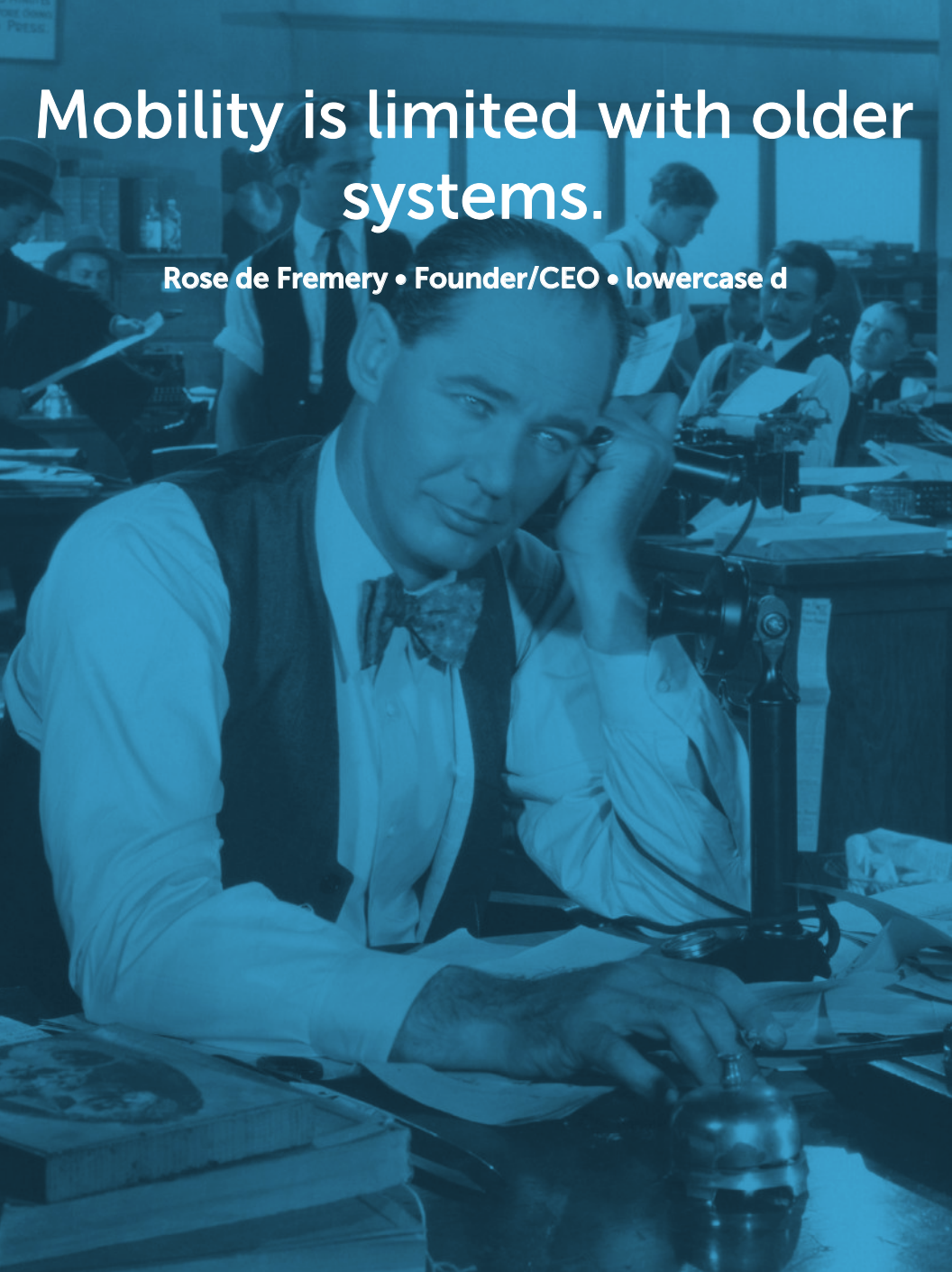
Dave Mace • Marketing Writer • K-Coe Isom

We can't afford it. Actually, your dealer probably offers flexible payment options and there are many affordable lease plans, as well.

The system is working fine for now. Exactly – for now. If your system is more than 10 years old, it is probably past the period of planned obsolescence and at or near very limited support and parts availability.

We don't need all those fancy features. Keep two things in mind. First, a shiny new, durable, reliable phone system doesn't have to come with lots of bells and whistles. Second, you might want to take a second look at some of those features that can make even a small, simple office more productive and customer-friendly.

Our IT guy says we don't need a new one. Put your IT guy on the phones for a day and see if he changes his tune. A good telephone system provider will take a good hard look at your needs and design a solution that fits.



Mobility is limited with older systems.

Rose de Fremery • Founder/CEO • lowercase d

If you're using a legacy system, it's likely that your options for mobile access are limited. If your staff need to access their office phone line while traveling, they may have to dial in and enter a cumbersome series of commands to access voicemail features. UC mobility apps allow users to send and receive calls from their office line on their mobile device of choice, and they also provide convenient access to voicemail as well as other standard VoIP features.

Legacy phone systems are not known for being budget-friendly, and they are especially prone to causing sticker shock when the time comes to upgrade or significantly expand your systems.

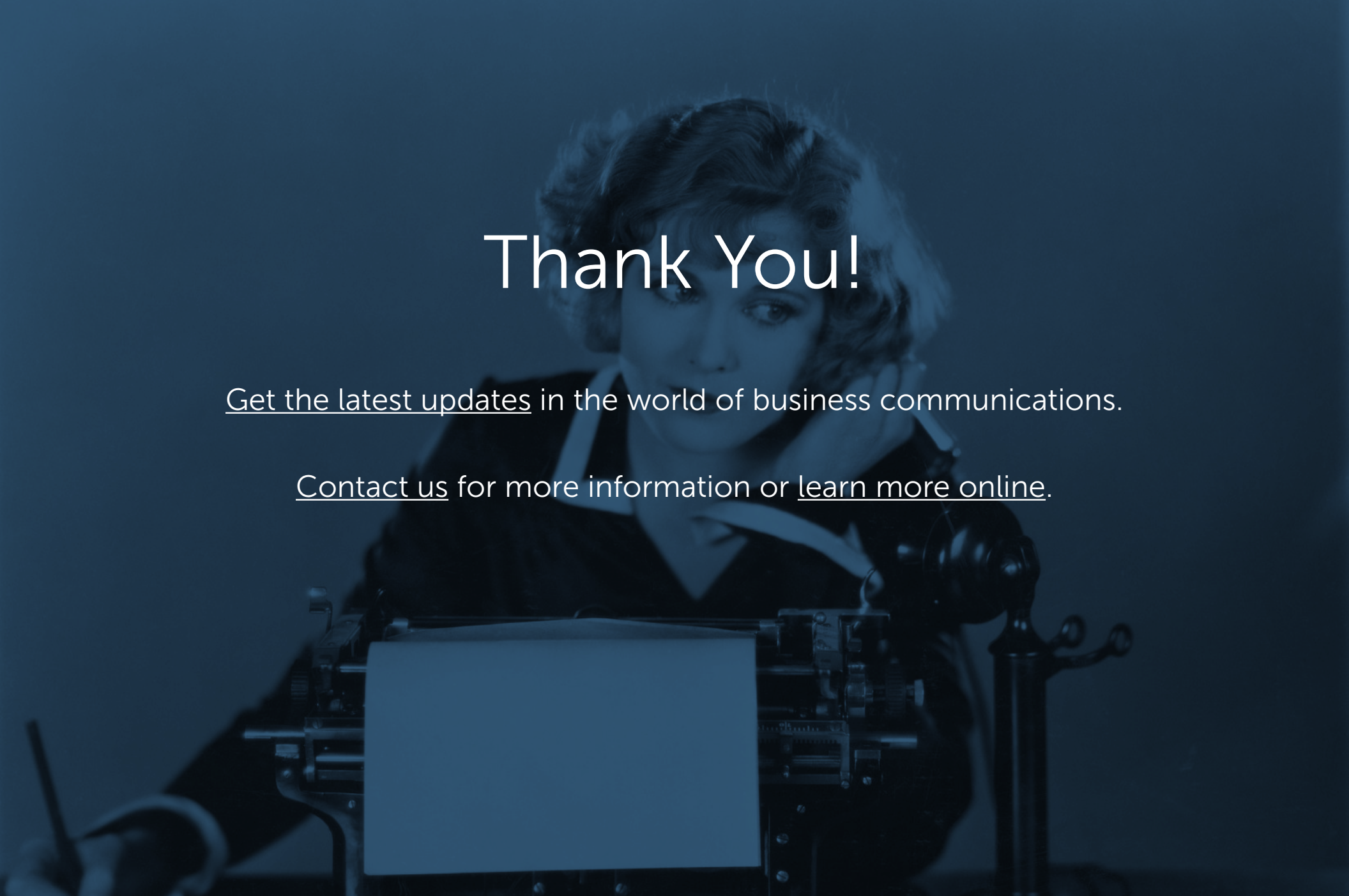
If your company is thinking ahead to future productivity gains and innovations it would like to bring to the workplace, you may also want to consider upgrading to a UC service for these reasons.

Well-developed systems encourage advanced use.

Don Fluckinger • Senior Media and Content Strategist • MSLGROUP

IT managers face an uphill battle convincing hospital CFOs that ripping out their old phone system and replacing it with a unified communications (UC) system will actually save money. Focusing on return on investment (ROI) will help paint the picture for you.

The bottom line on UC systems is that they reduce costs by porting hospitals' calls to the Internet, thus eliminating or greatly reducing those hospitals' reliance on phone company services and the gear it entails. Furthermore, the more well-thought-out a UC implementation is, the faster a hospital gets to its advanced uses, such as direct integration with electronic health record (EHR) systems.



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