**What is VOIP?**

VoIP, or **Voice over Internet Protocol,** is a method for turning audio into digital data that can be transmitted over the Internet. Done well, VOIP should not be a different experience than using a regular phone, also called Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS). The exception to this is, unlike POTS phones, VOIP phones will not work when the power or internet services goes out. Public Libraries have the option of hosting their own VOIP system or purchase a hosted service through the Cooperative Purchasing Program or another vendor.

**What is the Cooperative Purchasing Program?**

The Cooperative Purchasing Program offers Ohio public libraries and other entities the benefits and costs savings of buying goods and services through state contracts.

**How can my library participate in the Cooperative Purchasing Program?**

To participate, you must do the following: 1) Your board must pass a resolution to authorize participation in the program. [A sample resolution is here](http://das.ohio.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=203E8ZtgG2A%3d&tabid=304). 2) Complete [the enrollment form available here.](http://das.ohio.gov/Portals/0/DASDivisions/GeneralServices/Procurment/pdf/DAS_GSD_COOP_Eligibility%20Enrollment%20Form.pdf) 3) Pay the special schools and libraries administrative fee $100 annually. 4) Issue a quarterly usage report. Ohio Revised Code 125.04B requires quarterly summary reports on use of the program. For the usage report form, [click here](http://apps.das.ohio.gov/coopmap/coopusagerptform.aspx). More information is available at <http://oplin.org/go/coop>

**Once I decide what I want to purchase from the Cooperative Purchasing Program and my library has followed all the steps to participate, how I order the phones and other services?**

Please contact OPLIN (<http://support.oplin.org>) for details and assistance before purchasing. OPLIN has determined that many public libraries will need to make some changes to their networking configurations in order to use the state’s hosted VoIP solution.

Once the process to join the Cooperative Purchasing Program is completed, whoever is the contact will need to send an email to das.customersupport@das.ohio.gov requesting user access to ServiceNow, the State’s online ordering system.  The email needs to include the name of the library and the name of the person that needs the account along with an address, phone and email. Once the customer service center receives the request, they will assign a ticket number and route the ticket to the group that will be able to provide access.

For more information please contact:

Maureen Studer, Purchasing Specialist

Phone: (614) 728-3723

Email: maureen.studer@das.state.oh.us

Fax: (614) 485-1056

[www.das.ohio.gov/cooperativepurchasing](http://www.das.ohio.gov/cooperativepurchasing)

**What are the up-front and ongoing costs associated with the Cooperative Purchasing Program’s hosted VOIP service?**

First, you will need to consider whether you wish to purchase or lease VOIP phones via the Cooperative Purchasing Program or purchase VOIP phones outside the contract. All current Cisco phones are supported. A catalog of compatible phones (PDF) is available at <http://oplin.org/go/phones>

The current price for the hosted service is $13/month/user. This is set to drop to $12.86 when there are 20,000 users and drops again for every additional 10,000 users. All calls in Ohio are considered local calls. Long distance rate for calls outside of Ohio are billed at $.012 per minute.

There may also be charges for setup. The contract for this service states “New Service Installation costs are not incurred until scope is defined and Non-Recurring project costs, if applicable are executed.” Set-up costs will vary depending on the services needed.

Additionally, the cost to participating in the Cooperative Purchasing Program is $100 per year for libraries.

**Which portions of the costs listed above are eligible for an eRate discount?**

For as long as the FCC continues to fund voice services , it is anticipated the hosting fee of $13 per month, the long distance fees and the installation fees will be eligible for eRate discounts. However phones (leased or purchased) and the phone maintenance plan will not be eligible for eRate discounts.

**What else is included in the Cooperative Purchasing Program’s hosted VOIP service?**

The $13 per user per month fee includes:

* Voicemail, including voicemail deliver to email as an audio file.
* Access to call detail reporting system on demand to manage and report on phone usage.
* 1 MeetingPlace Audio Conference Bridge. A conference bridge allows a group of people to participate in a phone call from multiple locations.
* An exhaustive list of options and pricing is [available](http://das.ohio.gov/Portals/0/DASDivisions/InformationTechnology/IS/Telecom/Cincinnati%20Bell%20SA1%20-%20VoIP%206-22-2012.pdf) with an [amendment here](http://das.ohio.gov/Portals/0/DASDivisions/InformationTechnology/IS/Telecom/Cincinnati%20Bell%20SA1%20-%20VoIP%20Amendment%202%20-%205-20-2013.pdf).

**What about my fax machine?**

To connect a fax machine to a VOIP line, you will need something called an analog profile. Your fax machine will plug into a small adapter, called an Analog Telephone Adapter, which will convert the fax to a digital signal. The adapter is included in a flat rate of $7.27 per month.

**What about call center software?**

Automatic Call Distribution (ACD), a feature that routes calls from an interactive menu, is available for $31.20 per month. The interactive menu is included in the hosting fee.

**What training is available for my staff?**

There are several types of training available through Cincinnati Bell, depending on the staff person being trained. Types of training include: Administrator, Help Desk, and End-User (i.e., Staff using the phones). Training is available through Webex conferencing software at $100 per person, in a classroom at $151.20 per person and a train-the-trainer session at $134.40 per person. Quick Start guides are available at no cost.

**I’ve heard some VOIP phones don’t include 911, is that something I need to be concerned about?**

This service will connect to the 911 call center through e911.

**Will My Alarms Work With VOIP?**

If you have a burglar or fire alarm system that dials a monitoring station you may find that VOIP is not compatible with your alarm system. In these circumstances, your alarm when activated may not reach the monitoring station or your emergency services provider.

**How will the amount I pay for VOIP compare to what I’m paying now?**

Let’s use an example. Memorial Library has 4 long distance lines and 4 POTS lines. Yearly, staff spends 10 hours on the long distance service outside of Ohio. Memorial Library receives a 60% discount from eRate.

**Leased VOIP Phones**

The library chooses the cheapest lease phone option of $14.29 per year:

($14.29 Leased phones X 4 phones) + ($13 per month of service X 12 months X 4 users) +$100 Cooperative Purchasing Program fee +($.012 minute long distance X 10 hours (or 600 minutes) long distance)=$788.36.

On top of this, in FY 2015 the library gets a 60% discount from eRate on eligible services (cost per user and long distance). Annual Cost X 60% Discount of $378.72 (60% on long distance and cost per user) = $409.64.

**Future Phone Costs**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| eRate Fiscal Year (FY) | Amount Spent on POTS Phones | Amount Spent on VOIP Phones |
| FY2015 | $740 | $409.64 |
| FY2016 | $1044 | $535.88 |
| FY2017 | $1392 | $662.12 |
| FY2018 | $1740 | $788.36 |

**POTS Phones**

Under the current setup, the library bundles the 4 POTS lines and the 4 long distance lines for $145 a month.

$145 per month X 12 Months =$1740 Annual Cost.

On top of this, in FY 2015 the library gets a 60% discount from eRate. $1740 Annual Cost X 60% Discount of $1020= $740.

**Should I purchase or lease VOIP phones?**

Let’s use an example. Public Library System has 2 locations. The Library System has 6 POTS lines for which it pays $35.97 a month (bundled). Long distance to the Main Library is $186.40 a month; long distance to the Branch Library is $49.15 a month. Yearly, staff spends 30 hours on the long distance service outside of Ohio. Public Library System receives a 57% discount from eRate in FY2015.

**Purchased VOIP Phones**

If the library chooses to purchase 3 of the cheapest phones and 3 of the next-cheapest phones the costs will be:

($72.10 X 3 Cheap phones) + ($105.25 X 3 Less-cheap phones) + ($13 per month of service X 12 months X 6 users)+ $100 Cooperative Purchasing Program fee +($.012 minute long distance X 30 hours (or 1800 minutes) long distance)=$1,591.60 minus the eRate discount of 535.23 or $1,056.37 for the first year.

Additionally over for the next four years, Public Library System won’t have to purchase new phones. So, the costs for these years are ($13 per month of service X 12 months X 6 users)+ $100 Cooperative Purchasing Program fee +($.012 minute long distance X 30 hours (or 1800 minutes) long distance)=$1060.60 minus the eRate discount of $535 resulting in $525.60 per year for four years. Adding together the first year cost of $1,056.37 plus $525.60 a year for four years equals $3,158.77.

Purchasing VOIP phones means that the library can expect to spend $3,158.77 over a five year period.

**Leased VOIP Phones**

If the library chooses to lease 3 of the cheapest phones and 3 of the next-cheapest phones, the costs will be:

($14.29 X 3 Cheap phones) + ($20.45 X 3 Less-cheap phones) + ($13 per month of service X 12 months X 6 users)+ $100 Cooperative Purchasing Program fee +($.012 minute long distance X 30 hours (or 1800 minutes) long distance)=$1,194.82.

With the eRate discount of 57% on the hosted VOIP service, this is $1,194.82- $535.23 (57% of $936) = $639.59.

So leasing VOIP phones, the library can expect to pay $639.59 annually or $3,297.95 over a five year period.

 Thus, the Public Library System can save a relatively small amount of $139.18 by purchasing VOIP phones rather than leasing them. This amount does not include any setup or installation fees.