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Your Phone System Is Eight Products Now

At some point a business phone system stopped being a thing that makes phone calls. It now answers for you, remembers your customers, queues your team, sets your follow-ups, books your diary, hosts your meetings and sends your texts.

The phone system absorbed eight products and nobody updated the name. It answers as a receptionist, builds the customer record, runs the queue like a contact centre, creates the follow-up task, books into a diary, hosts video and audio meeting rooms, sends and receives SMS, and reports across all of it. **Most of those functions are also sold separately**, which is why a lot of Australian businesses are paying twice for the same capability without ever seeing the duplication on one page. **The reason it consolidated is not ambition, it is data.** Every one of those jobs needs the same three facts, who called, what about, and what happens next, and the platform that handles the call is where those facts are born. **Four things it does not replace:** pipeline and deal management, quoting and invoicing, marketing automation, and real project management.

■ The short version

What it replaces	Typical separate cost	What changes
An answering service or after-hours call centre	Per-call or per-minute, and it rises exactly when you get busy	Fixed cost, no per-call penalty for a good week, and it knows your business rather than reading a script card
Voicemail as the after-hours plan	Free, and expensive in a way that never appears on a bill	The 7pm caller books an appointment instead of leaving a message that gets returned on Tuesday, by which time they have rung someone else
"We will just let it ring out when we are busy"	Nothing, invoiced. Everything, in practice	Ten simultaneous callers are all answered at once, which no receptionist has ever been able to do

■ Also worth knowing

Capability	What it does	Who it is for
Queues with ring strategies	Seven ways to distribute calls across a group, longest idle, simultaneous, round robin and so on, with custom greetings and queue announcements	Anyone whose calls are answered by more than one person
Time conditions	After hours, public holidays, lunch cover and on-call rosters, applied automatically rather than by whoever remembers	Every business with opening hours, which is most of them
Ring groups and shared lines	One number across several devices; answer from any of them; call out as the business rather than as yourself	Small teams, reception pods, multi-site operations
Listen, whisper and barge	A supervisor can monitor a live call, coach the agent without the customer hearing, or join it	Training, escalation and quality work
One queue for voice, SMS and chat	The same team handling more than the phone, without switching tools per channel	Anyone whose customers text as readily as they ring
Multi-site and international	Branches managed as one system; roaming servers so overseas staff stay on the business number	Businesses with more than one address, or staff who travel

The point where those three facts are born is the phone call

For a large share of Australian businesses, trades, clinics, agencies, professional services, venues. **the customer relationship starts with a ringing phone.** Historically the phone system was the one system that threw all three facts away the moment the call ended. Everything downstream then existed to re-capture, by hand, information the phone had already had. That is the duplication that has now closed, and it closed at the phone rather than anywhere else because that is where the data originates.

■ Questions the full guide answers

- ☐ What can a modern cloud phone system do besides make phone calls?
- ☐ Can a phone system really replace my CRM?
- ☐ Do I need separate contact centre software if I only have a few staff?
- ☐ Will an all-in-one platform save money compared with separate tools?
- ☐ What should stay outside the phone platform?
- ☐ Can the phone system book appointments into our existing calendar?
- ☐ Does the platform include video meetings, or is that a separate subscription?

This is the summary. The guide has the detail.

Every point above is worked through in full on our site, with the Australian context, the numbers and the exceptions. If you would rather talk it through, call **1300 881 662** or visit **unidenvoice.com/get-started**.