NEW BUSINESS · SETUP GUIDE · 2026

How to Set Up a Phone for a New Business (2026)

Australians started 437,150 businesses last financial year. Most of them made their phone decision in about four minutes, using whatever was already in their pocket, and that one shortcut is the hardest thing on this list to undo.

One decision is expensive to reverse and the rest are not. That decision is **the number**, because the moment it is printed, listed and quoted, changing it costs you customers rather than money. Get a business number from day one, not your personal mobile, and make it one you would be happy to still have at fifty staff. **Which type?** A **geographic local number** signals you are a real business in a real suburb and is the right default for most local trades and services. A **1300 or 1800** is worth it when you sell beyond one city, and 1800 costs you more but converts better for enquiries. Many businesses sensibly have both. **How many lines?** Almost nobody needs what they think, modern cloud plans are per user, and what matters is how many calls happen *at once*, which for most new businesses is two.

The short version

What actually goes wrong	When it bites
You cannot hand it to anyone. Your first hire cannot answer the business phone, because it is your phone	The moment you take on help, which is exactly when you are busiest
You cannot switch it off. There is no after-hours, because the business number and your personal number are the same object	Immediately, and permanently
You cannot see anything. No record of missed calls, no idea how many enquiries you lost last month	When you start spending money on marketing and cannot tell what worked
You cannot sell the business. A buyer is purchasing your customer relationships, and the phone number they ring is registered to you personally	At exit, when it is worth actual money
You cannot leave the carrier easily. Personal mobile plans and business services behave differently at contract end	Whenever you next want to change something

Also worth knowing

Type	What it signals	Who pays	Best for
Geographic local (02, 03, 07, 08)	A real business in a real place. Still the strongest trust signal for anyone buying locally	Caller pays a local or included call	Trades, clinics, cafés, professional services, anyone whose customers are within a city or region
Mobile (04)	Reachable, informal, sole-operator	Caller pays mobile rates	Genuinely mobile operators as a *second* number, rarely the right primary business number
1300	Established, national, more than one person	Caller pays the cost of a local call; you pay the rest	Businesses selling beyond one city, or with customers in several states
1800	Free to call. Removes the last friction from an enquiry	You pay the whole call	Enquiry-driven and considered purchases, where one extra call is worth more than the call cost

The asymmetry that makes this the first decision

Almost every other choice on this page can be changed in an afternoon for nothing. Plans, handsets, call flows, greetings, who is in which ring group, all trivially reversible. **The number is not.** Once it is on invoices, signage, listings, review sites and the vehicle, changing it means telling every customer you have, and some of them will not get the message. Spend twenty minutes on this decision now rather than two years of quiet friction later.

Questions the full guide answers

- ☐ Should I use my personal mobile as my business number?
- ☐ What type of phone number should a new Australian business get?
- ☐ How many phone lines does a new business need?
- ☐ What equipment do I need to set up business phones?
- ☐ What should I set up on the first day?
- ☐ What call flows does a small business actually need?
- ☐ How do I avoid outgrowing my phone system?

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**.