

# IT<sup>2</sup> TECHNOLOGY TIMES

*“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably”*

## Why Choose IT<sup>2</sup>?

Technology can work in one of two ways: It can give rise to a more profitable, efficient and successful organization, or it can exhaust and frustrate your team, result in downtime and be a big hassle. For this reason, countless companies rely on IT<sup>2</sup> for the security and support of the technology that powers their business. Our Team brings the C-level leadership, experience, skills and toolset to allow you to focus on your business. IT & Telecom is our business.

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## What You Need To Do Before Committing To A New VoIP System

There comes a time when every business needs to invest in a phone system: they're buying a new phone system for their new location or they're upgrading from an older system. Regardless of the reason, they're ready to make the commitment.

Your phone connects you to your customers, so you need it to be reliable. You want it to have a specific set of features (such as voicemail, call groups, call forwarding, conferencing, recording, call reporting, etc.) and you want your investment to be supported for years to come. The question you have is, "Where do I begin?"

**First and foremost, finding the right phone system can be a pain.** Doing research online leaves you sifting through site after site as you look for answers only to find way too much information – and most of it isn't worth your time.

As a business, you're about to drop serious money on a new phone system, so you want to know you're getting what you pay for. Unfortunately, the phone system business is a competitive one, which means it's hard to find websites, reviews and data that isn't biased or skewed in some way. There are countless websites featuring deals that aren't really deals, or websites hosting reviews sponsored by a phone service provider. This isn't helpful.

So, what is helpful? Here's what you need to know.

**Most phone systems are essentially the same.** There may be a few features that vary from system to system, but most VoIP systems will all have the most important features demanded by businesses. Your best bet is to define your phone needs *before* you start searching for a system. Chances are it

**Summer 2021**



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won't take long to find what you're looking for – if you ignore the clutter.

**What you really want to find is a stellar service provider.** You might get caught up in trying to find the best phone with the best features, but none of that matters if you don't get good service to go along with it. You need someone who will be with you every step of the way, from setup and installation to configuration and the all-important support.

**You need someone you can rely on.** That way, if anything goes wrong or you have questions, you have someone you can call. The fact of the matter is that most people aren't and never will be VoIP or phone system experts. Business owners have too much on their plates to learn – from scratch – about a new phone system.

This leads to the questions you should be asking before you commit and buy a new system:

- Who is setting up my new phone system?
- Will they customize it for my specific needs?
- How do I get help if my phone system stops working?
- Who do I call if I have additional questions?

As you vet potential vendors, get exact and direct answers. If they beat around the bush, that's a red flag. They should be able to answer all of your questions in a language you understand. If they don't answer your questions, or you aren't happy with the



answers, find a different vendor.

There are many vendors who will send you a system and leave the rest up to you. If you know what you're doing and have the time to set it up, it's no big deal. But that isn't most of us. And forget about support. If anything goes wrong, you're on your own.

The best thing you can do when searching for a new VoIP phone system is to find an honest, reputable, local phone system reseller that you can verify will do the following:

- Ensure your current network is setup for the system to function properly, to avoid those unpleasant surprises after you've placed your order.
- Set up the system.
- Custom program the system for your business's specific needs.
- Secure the VoIP phone connections – *Tip:* This is an often overlooked network connection that leaves businesses vulnerable.
- Offer personalized and continuous support and training.

In most cases, the answer lies with a dedicated and experienced IT services firm that knows technology and how to translate that to business value. This is the kind of company that not only checks the boxes but can also ensure that your system works with your network without any hiccups.

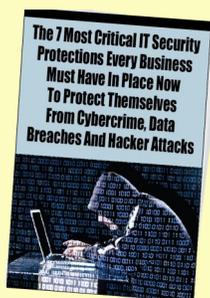
The bottom line is this: Do your research. Ask questions, get answers and be confident in your decision before handing over the credit card and signing on the dotted line. You'll be much happier that you did!

**“In most cases, the answer lies with a dedicated and experienced IT services firm that knows technology.”**

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## Shiny New Gadget



### The Pocket Translator: MUAMA ENENCE

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Learn more at <https://enence.com>



# Going Strong Or Burning Out?

*"Burnout is what happens when you try to avoid being human for too long."*

–Michael Gungor

## What Is Burnout?

Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by:

- Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
- Increased mental distance from one's job or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
- Reduced professional efficacy

This is considered in occupational context and should not be applied to experiences in other areas of life.

Ask yourself, how many times have you felt burnout in your career? Those who are highly engaged in their work are more likely to have burnout, not necessarily people who just "clock in and clock out." Just because someone is productive does not mean they aren't at risk.

Why do we keep putting ourselves in stressful situations? Stress can be an addiction.

- People want to make sure they are good enough and want to feel valuable.
- It can give you the sense of feeling significant and important.
- There's a sense of guilt and fear of not doing enough.

As long as stress is satisfying those needs, you will not get rid of that behavior. Start flipping how you are satisfying your needs in order to get rid of that behavior.

## Burnout Signals - Emotions And Feelings

If you are feeling like this every day, you may be burnt out:

- Physical and emotional exhaustion
- Lack of energy
- Feeling sad or hopeless
- Lack of joy from things that used to bring you joy at work



- Diminished connection with colleagues
- Feeling like you are not contributing anything to your job

## What Is The Cause?

- Heavy workloads
- Job insecurity
- Frustrating work routines (too many meetings, far too little time for creative work)
- Crunch on downtime that is necessary for restoration

## Burnout = High Resources + High Demands

### High Resources:

- Supervisor support
- Rewards and recognition
- Self-efficacy and work

### Low Demands:

- Low workload
- Low cumbersome bureaucracy
- Low to moderate demands on concentration and attention

### What's Needed?

- Employee support/high resources
- Acknowledgment/feel good about work
- Opportunities for recovery from stress
- Mental and emotional well-being

### Re-Evaluate

- Zero-base meeting calendar
- Team up the A-players
- Culture around "precious time" and wellness

Mark Comiso has over 25 years of experience in founding, building and scaling numerous companies. He's been with start-ups and publicly traded companies, including digital marketing agencies, SaaS companies and much more. He's renowned for helping other entrepreneurs grow their own businesses, and as a longtime member and leader within Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO), he's well-suited for the task!

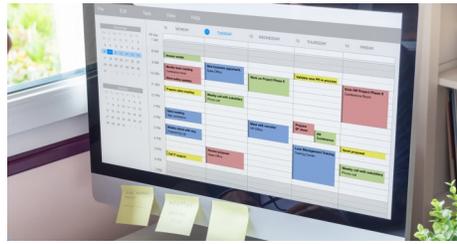
## ■ ELIMINATE WORKPLACE DISTRACTIONS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

While most of us accept that distractions will be a part of our day, if your intention is to get things done and to stay productive and focused, you'll need to minimize those distractions. No, we'll never be able to eliminate them 100%, but we can certainly try. Here's what you can do to cut distractions.

### Block Time On Your Calendar (And Stick To It).

Use your calendar to its full advantage. Mark time off for e-mails, for *all* projects, phone calls, Zoom calls, you name it! If it's part of your normal day, put it on your calendar. Even throw on time for miscellaneous stuff. Then

share it with all relevant parties and stick to it. If you're working on a project between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., that's the word.



### Use Sound To Your

**Advantage.** A common source of distraction is sound: it can be office chatter in the background or even neighborhood sounds (for those working from home). Find a sound that complements your workflow. It might be chill music or the sounds of rain or a babbling brook. Find the right sound that helps you zone in and blocks disruptive sounds.

*Forbes, March 15, 2021*

## ■ A NEW WORLD REQUIRES NEW LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Last year marked a major shift in how companies do business. This shift also meant leaders had to change as well. In 2021, adaptation is the name of the game. There are several points leaders have to recognize in their communities and their workforce.

**Things won't go back to the way they were.** The future will be defined by a new normal. Expectations are different – the expectations of customers and of employees. Buying habits have changed, and work habits have changed. For example, much of the workforce expects a remote or work-from-home option or greater flexibility from the traditional “9-to-5 at the office” model. If you don't adapt, it may be harder to find qualified employees for your team.

**You have to experiment.** As you adapt to the changing world, you have to experiment more. This includes your approach to running your business, the products or services you offer, your marketing, hiring practices and so on. Be opening to trying new things, see what works and what doesn't – and let your employees do the same. It's all about encouraging ideas. *Forbes, Jan. 16, 2021*

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